

Anxiety in Teens: Information and strategies that begin at home

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Overview

- What are they?
- How common?
- Issues in teens
- Causative factors?
- Perpetuating factors?
- What to do...
- Questions?

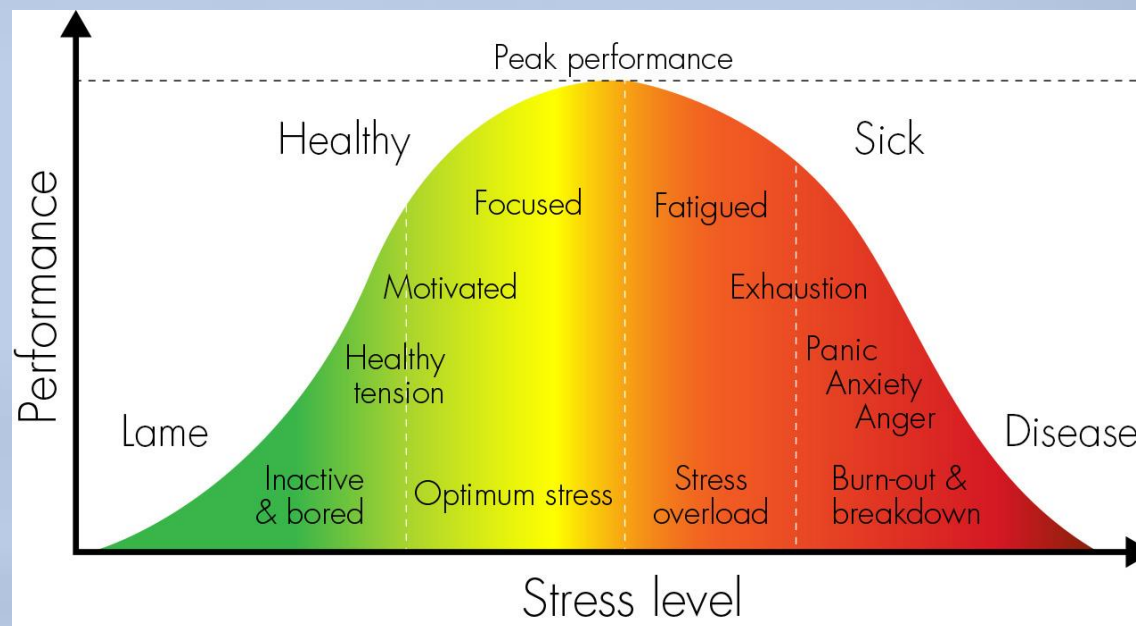
Anxiety Defined: www.anxietybc.com

- Anxiety is our body's reaction to perceived danger or important events. Anxiety is like an internal alarm system. It alerts us to danger and helps our body prepare to deal with it. For example, it allows us to jump out of the way of a speeding car. It also helps us to perform at our best, like when you are studying for that final exam. Anxiety is something that everyone experiences from time to time.

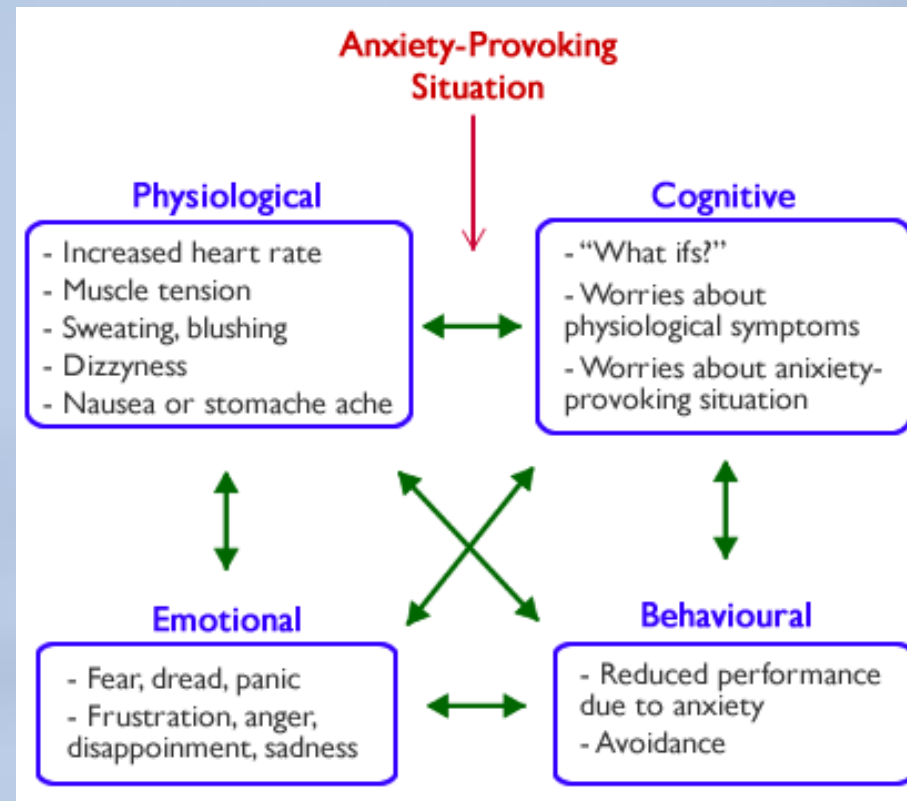
Signs/symptoms of Anxiety in Teens

- Somatic complaints (e.g., stomach aches, headaches)
- Avoidance (e.g., school, outings, friends)
- Sleep disruption (e.g., onset, nightmares, sleepwalking)
- Irritability
- Poor concentration/working memory
- Mood instability

Relationship between anxiety and performance



Anxiety: a Full Body & Brain experience...



The 2 Most Dangerous Words

(for someone with anxiety)...

Guilt	How	Devil
Spider	Death	Poison
Agony	Shark	Suffocate
Injection	What	Ghost
Illness	Sickness	Blood
Jail	Explosion	Hospital
Skeleton	Knife	Choke
When	Monster	Divorce
Fire	Panic	Kill
Rat	Fear	Psychologist
Attack	Germ	Snake
Tomb	Dog	Gun
Uneven	Bomb	If
Crazy	Sickness	Suffering
Zombie	Worry	Drowning

Anxiety Disorders

Disorder or disruption?

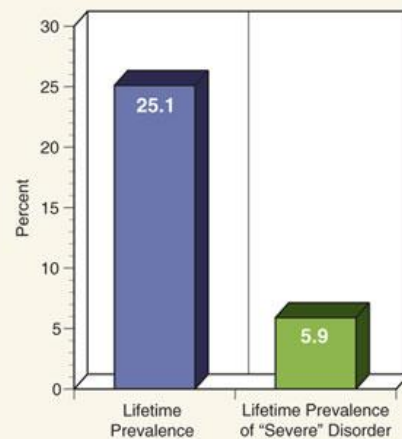
Anxiety Disorders: DSM-5

- Social anxiety
- Selective mutism
- Generalized anxiety
- Specific phobia
- Panic disorder
- Agoraphobia
- Separation anxiety
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Substance/Medication induced anxiety

Prevalence of “any” Anxiety Disorder

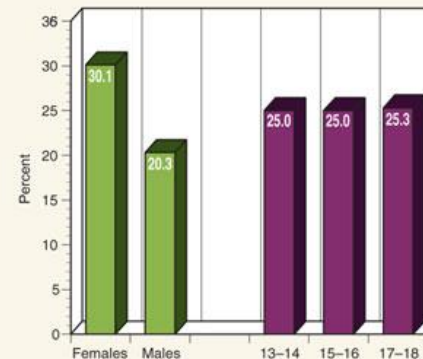
Lifetime Prevalence of 13 to 18 year olds

- **Lifetime Prevalence:** 25.1% of 13 to 18 year olds
- **Lifetime Prevalence of “Severe” Disorder:** 5.9% of 13 to 18 year olds have “severe” anxiety disorder



Demographics (for lifetime prevalence)

- **Sex:** Statistically different
- **Age:** Not statistically different



- **Race:** Statistically significant differences were found between non-Hispanic whites and other races

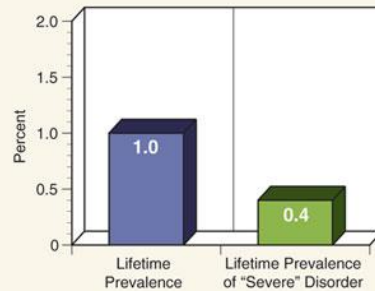
¹Merikangas KR, He J, Burstein M, Swanson SA, Avenevoli S, Cui L, Benjet C, Georgiades K, Swendsen J. *Lifetime prevalence of mental disorders in U.S. Adolescents*. Under review.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

Generalized Anxiety Disorder

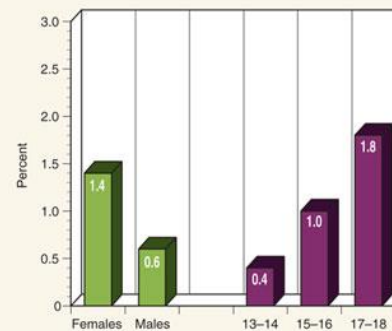
Lifetime Prevalence of 13 to 18 year olds

- **Lifetime Prevalence:** 1.0% of 13 to 18 year olds
- **Lifetime Prevalence of "Severe" Disorder:** 0.4% of 13 to 18 year olds have "severe" hypomania



Demographics (for lifetime prevalence)

• Sex and Age



• Race: Not Reported

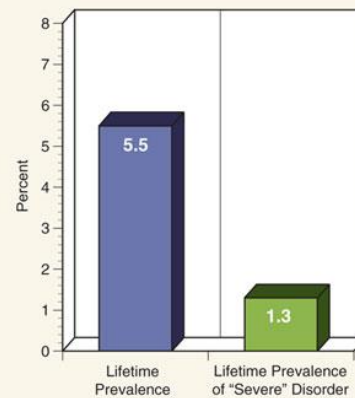
Merikangas KR, He J, Burstein M, Swanson SA, Avenevoli S, Cui L, Benjet C, Georgiades K, Swendsen J. Lifetime prevalence of mental disorders in U.S. adolescents: Results from the National Comorbidity Study-Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2010 Oct;49(10):980-989.

Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia)

Social Phobia

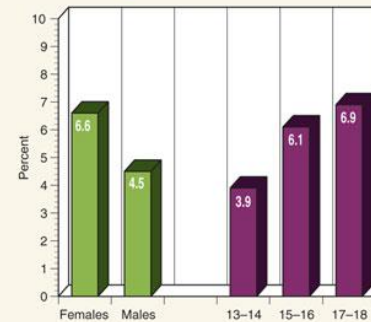
Lifetime Prevalence of 13 to 18 year olds

- **Lifetime Prevalence:** 5.5% of 13 to 18 year olds
- **Lifetime Prevalence of "Severe" Disorder:** 1.3% of 13 to 18 year olds have a "severe" disorder



Demographics (for lifetime prevalence)

• Sex and Age



• Race: Not Reported

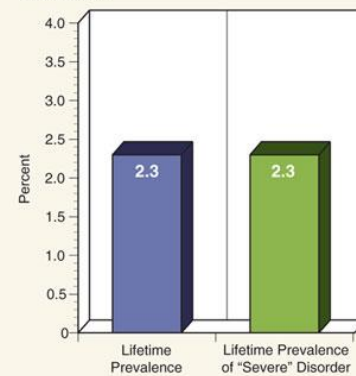
Merikangas KR, He J, Burstein M, Swanson SA, Avenevoli S, Cui L, Benjet C, Georgiades K, Swendsen J. Lifetime prevalence of mental disorders in U.S. adolescents: Results from the National Comorbidity Study-Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A). *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2010 Oct;49(10):980-989.

Panic Disorder

Panic Disorder

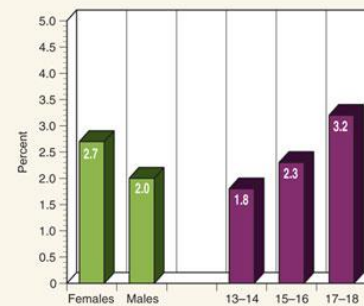
Lifetime Prevalence of 13 to 18 year olds

- **Lifetime Prevalence:** 2.3% of 13 to 18 year olds
- **Lifetime Prevalence of "Severe" Disorder:** 2.3% of 13 to 18 year olds have "severe" hypomania



Demographics (for lifetime prevalence)

• Sex and Age



• Race: Not Reported

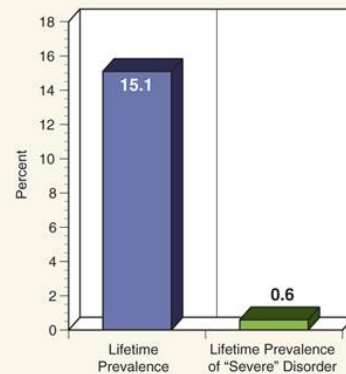
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Specific Phobia

Specific Phobia

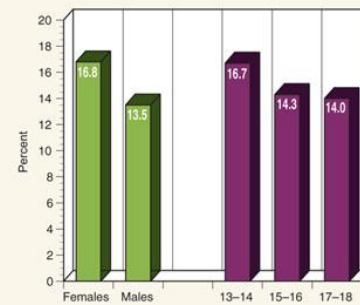
Lifetime Prevalence of 13 to 18 year olds

- **Lifetime Prevalence:** 15.1% of 13 to 18 year olds
- **Lifetime Prevalence of "Severe" Disorder:** 0.6% of 13 to 18 year olds have a "severe" disorder



Demographics (for lifetime prevalence)

• Sex and Age



• **Race:** Not Reported

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Challenges measuring anxiety in teens

- Often relies on self-report
- Alexithymia
 - Trouble articulating cognitions
 - May be unaware of anxious thinking
 - Vague physical symptoms
- Transient states of anxiety
- Becomes part of the vernacular

Need for Treatment

- Anxiety has the potential to significantly interfere with many aspects of day-to-day functioning:
 - Social development/peer relationships
 - Daily life skills/independence
 - Learning/academic achievement
 - Family relationships/functioning

Causative Factors

- Genetics...sorry folks ☹️
- Increased demands (socially, academically, etc.)
- Trauma (experienced and/or witnessed)
- Greater understanding of symptoms/diagnoses

Perpetuating Factors:

- Parents (sorry folks ☹️)
 - Modelling
 - Bull-Dozing
 - Demands exceeding capacity
- Peers
 - Contagion effect
 - Pressures
- Schools
 - Performance
 - Expectations
- Media

What to do...

- Do not ignore
- Be very aware of your reactions (Stay calm and parent on)
- Label what you see
- Model good coping skills
- Build resilience
- Tolerate discomfort in your child
- Be mindful of expectations
- Reward effort (bravery)

- Teach relaxation (e.g., breathing)
 - Mindfulness
 - Exercise
 - Sleep
 - Screen hygiene?
-
- Look at treatment options, if necessary

Questions?