

ANXIETY

Google defines anxiety as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease. It is the leading mental health issue among American youths³. 32% of teens will meet criteria for an anxiety disorder³, but 80% of them won't get treatment¹. The typical age for anxiety to seriously develop is 13⁵. Types include separation, phobia, social, panic, or general anxiety.

Causes include shy personalities, physical differences, social media, traumatic experiences, abuse, influence of family with anxiety and more. It can lead to depression, suicide, self-harm, drugs and more. It can negatively affect work, relationships, sleep, and more. The Bible says we can be free of anxiety if we give it to God (1 Pet. 5:7), ask for His help (Phil. 4:6) and trust Him, especially when things don't make sense (Prov. 3:5-6). We need to train our minds to think of good things (Phil. 4:8) and our thoughts to obey what Jesus says (2 Cor. 10:5). God promises His Spirit will help us through the difficulty (Rom. 8:26-28) one day at a time (Matt. 6:34). For those who struggle with anxiety, Jesus promises us peace (John 14:27) and rest (Matt. 11:28-30) so we're able to live the life he has prepared for us (1 Cor. 2:9).

STATS & QUOTES TO CONSIDER

Anxiety and depression are treatable, but 80 percent of kids with a diagnosable anxiety disorder and 60 percent of kids with diagnosable depression are not getting treatment.

Anxiety is a normal part of childhood, and every child goes through phases. A phase is temporary and usually harmless. But children who suffer from an anxiety disorder experience fear, nervousness, and shyness, and they start to avoid places and activities.

Research shows that untreated children with anxiety disorders are at higher risk to perform poorly in school, miss out on important social experiences, and engage in substance abuse.

It's not uncommon for someone with an anxiety disorder to also suffer from depression or vice versa. Nearly one-half of those diagnosed with depression are also diagnosed with an anxiety disorder.

The adolescent brain is extraordinarily sensitive to stress. – *Laurence Steinberg*

Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health disorders of childhood and adolescence.

Nearly one in three adolescents (31.9%) will meet criteria for an anxiety disorder by the age of 18.

High school students today have more anxiety symptoms and are twice as likely to see a mental health professional as teens in the 1980s.

Regular anxiety becomes a disorder when young people have out-of-proportion responses to things most of us cope with easily.

In the past 10 years, there has been increasing recognition of anxiety in young people by health care providers, including a 17% increase in anxiety disorder diagnosis.

Anxiety symptoms are minimized or ignored. As little as 1% of youth with anxiety seek treatment in the year symptoms begin.

At some point, anxiety affects 30% of children and adolescents, yet 80% never get help.

The anxiety teens experience – known as social anxiety disorder (also referred to as social phobia) – is very intense and can potentially interfere with every aspect of their life.

It can be difficult to determine what's normal and what's not when it comes to teen's emotions and behaviors.

Although social anxiety disorder can develop in childhood or adulthood, it often develops in early to mid-adolescence (typical age of onset is 13).

Learned behavior (often from parents), genetics, and the environment all likely play a role in the development of social anxiety disorder.

Globally, social anxiety disorder is the third most prominent mental health issue.

Following are several risk factors for the development of social anxiety disorder in teens:

- Being female (social anxiety is more common in females than males)
- Having a close family member with social anxiety or another anxiety disorder
- Being shy, withdrawn, or hesitant to try new things
- Having any kind of noticeable physical or health issue, such as a deformity, speech impediment, or large scar or birthmark may lead to the development of social anxiety
- Painful or traumatic experiences, such as being bullied or sexually abused

Teens with social anxiety disorder have an increased risk for suicide, especially if they're also suffering from depression, bipolar disorder, or another anxiety disorder.

Some teens with social anxiety disorder and other anxiety disorders attempt to cope in self-destructive and potentially dangerous ways. They may start using alcohol or recreational drugs to ease the emotional pain or make themselves feel less anxious (or more confident)

in social situations. They may also engage in non-suicidal self-harm behavior such as burning or cutting themselves.

Although fears and worries are typical in children, persistent or extreme forms of fear and sadness feelings could be due to anxiety or depression.

Examples of different types of anxiety disorders include:

- Being very afraid when away from parents (separation anxiety)
- Having extreme fear about a specific thing or situation, such as dogs, insects, or going to the doctor (phobias)
- Being very afraid of school and other places where there are people (social anxiety)
- Being very worried about the future and about bad things happening (general anxiety)
- Having repeated episodes of sudden, unexpected, intense fear that come with symptoms like heart pounding, having trouble breathing, or feeling dizzy, shaky, or sweaty (panic disorder)

Anxiety may present as fear or worry but can also make children irritable and angry. Anxiety symptoms can also include trouble sleeping, as well as physical symptoms like fatigue, headaches, or stomachaches.

It is not known exactly why some children develop anxiety or depression. Many factors may play a role, including biology and temperament. But it is also known that some children are more likely to develop anxiety or depression when they experience trauma or stress, when they are maltreated, when they are bullied or rejected by other children, or when their own parents have anxiety or depression.

Anxiety disorders can interfere with daily activities such as job performance, school work, and relationships.

The number of children with diagnosed anxiety -- but not depression -- has increased in recent years, according to the new report.

Based on repeated surveys of a nationwide sample of parents, the study provides new information on the burden of anxiety and depression among US children and adolescents.

“With (social media), it's all about the self-image — who's 'liking' them, who's watching them, who clicked on their picture,” said Marco Grados, associate professor of psychiatry and clinical director of child and adolescent psychiatry at Johns Hopkins Hospital. “Everything can turn into something negative ... Kids are exposed to that day after day, and it's not good for them.”

Anxiety, not depression, is the leading mental health issue among American youths, and clinicians and research both suggest it is rising (2018).

Based on data collected from the National Survey of Children's Health for ages 6 to 17, researchers found a 20 percent increase in diagnoses of anxiety between 2007 and 2012. (The rate of depression over that same time period ticked up 0.2 percent.)

The data on anxiety among 18- and 19-year-olds is even starker. Since 1985, the Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA has been asking incoming college freshmen if they “felt overwhelmed” by all they had to do. The first year, 18% replied yes. By 2000, that climbed to 28%. By 2016, to nearly 41%.

A new study led by Jean Twenge, a San Diego State University psychology professor, finds that five times as many high school and college students are dealing with anxiety and other mental health issues as youth of the same age did that were surveyed back during the era of the Great Depression.

BIBLE VERSES TO CONSIDER

1 Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."

Philippians 4:6-8 "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

2 Corinthians 10:5 "We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

Romans 8:26-28 "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who[a] have been called according to his purpose."

Matthew 6:34 "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

John 14:27 "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Matthew 11:28-30 (Jesus) "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

1 Corinthians 2:9 “However, as it is written: ‘What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived’— the things God has prepared for those who love him.”

Psalms 94:19 “When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.”

Matthew 6:27 “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

Romans 4:8 “Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.”

Hebrews 10:22 “Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.”

Philippians 1:29 “For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him.”

2 Thessalonians 1:6 "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you."

John 15:18-21 "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me"

1 Peter 4:12-13 "Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed."

James 1:2-4 "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

1 John 4:18 "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."

1 Peter 3:14 "But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. 'Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.'"

2 Timothy 1:7 "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."

Isaiah 40:30-31 "Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

Joshua 1:9 "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[a] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Luke 12:22-31 "Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? "Consider how the wild flowers grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

Psalm 34:4 "I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears."

Jeremiah 17:7-8 "But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

Psalm 23 "The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Colossians 3:15 "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."

2 Thessalonians 3:16 "Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you."

Psalms 55:22 "Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken."

Proverbs 12:25 "Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up."

Hebrews 13:5-6 "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Psalms 56:3 "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."

Revelation 21:4 "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Romans 15:13 "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."

Matthew 19:26 "Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

Psalms 125:1 "Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be shaken but endures forever."

Philippians 4:19 "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus."

Romans 12:12 "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

Hebrews 11:6 "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."

Romans 5:1-5 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we[a] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we[b] boast in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we[c] also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us."

Romans 10:17 "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ."

Galatians 5:22-25 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

Psalms 37:23-24 "The Lord makes firm the steps of the one who delights in him; though he may stumble, he will not fall, for the Lord upholds him with his hand."

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you."

Colossians 3:2 "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."

1 Corinthians 10:13 "No temptation[a] has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted[b] beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

Romans 8:31 "What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?"

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 "May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word."

Hebrews 13:6 "So we say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?'"

Psalms 139:23 "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

1 Timothy 6:12 "Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

REFERENCES

1. Anxiety and Depression Association of America, “Children and Teens”, 2010-2018. <https://adaa.org/living-with-anxiety/children> (accessed April 2019).
2. Anxiety and Depression Association of America, “Facts & Statistics”, 2019. <https://adaa.org/about-adaa/press-room/facts-statistics> (accessed April 2019).
3. Child Mind Institute, “Anxiety and Depression in Adolescents”, 2019. <https://childmind.org/report/2017-childrens-mental-health-report/anxiety-depression-adolescence/> (accessed April 2019).
4. Child Mind Institute, “Understanding Anxiety in Children and Teens”, 2019. <https://childmind.org/our-impact/childrens-mental-health-report/2018report/> (accessed April 2019).
5. Evolve Treatment Centers, “Social Anxiety Disorder in Adolescents”, 2019. <https://evolvreatment.com/for-parents/parent-guides/social-anxiety-disorder/> (accessed April 2019).
6. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “Anxiety and Depression in Children”, March 2019. <https://www.cdc.gov/childrensmentalhealth/depression.html> (accessed April 2019).
7. National Institute of Mental Health, “Any Anxiety Disorder”, November 2017. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/any-anxiety-disorder.shtml> (accessed April 2019).
8. Wolters Kluwer Health, “More Than 1 in 20 US Children and Teens Have Anxiety or Depression”, Science Daily, April 2018. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2018/04/180424184119.htm> (accessed April 2019).
9. Amy Ellis Nutt, “Why Kids and Teens May Face Far More Anxiety These Days”, *The Washington Post*, May 2018. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2018/05/10/why-kids-and-teens-may-face-far-more-anxiety-these-days/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.b0dc65cb04cc (accessed April 2019).
10. Center For Discovery, “Why Today’s Teens Are More Depressed Than Ever”, November 2016. <https://centerfordiscovery.com/blog/todays-teens-depressed-ever/> (accessed April 2019).