

Helping Your Anxious Teen

Practical tips and resources for parents and young people to manage anxiety and overthinking are provided below. This guide offers simplified information and helpful links.

Managing co-occurring anxiety can be particularly challenging for teens with autism or ADHD, as they may experience difficulties with sleeping, eating, and emotional regulation.

[Get Started](#)



YM YoungMinds



The best tips for managing anxiety I learnt...

Bea, 19, shares some tips she learnt in therapy that have helped her manage her anxiety and...





The Mental Health Crisis

▼ Delays in Accessing Professional Support

High demand on children's mental health services, like CAMHS, often results in lengthy waiting times, particularly for non-urgent cases. Limited medication options for under-18s, often only available after a crisis or extensive assessment, exacerbate existing inequalities. Teens may face significant delays in receiving support or necessary medication unless their situation escalates to a critical level.

▼ Rising Mental Health Challenges

Recent studies show an alarming increase in anxiety and depression among teenagers, with 1 in 6 young people now experiencing a mental health problem. The COVID-19 pandemic has further intensified these issues, leading to increased isolation and digital dependency. Social media pressures and academic stress contribute significantly to this growing crisis.

▼ Impact on Education and Development

Schools report growing numbers of students struggling with mental health issues, affecting both academic performance and social development. Many students miss classes or struggle to concentrate due to anxiety or depression, creating a cycle of academic pressure and mental health challenges. Limited school counseling resources mean many students don't receive early intervention support.

▼ Family and Community Impact

Parents and carers often feel overwhelmed and ill-equipped to support their struggling teenagers. The strain on families can be significant, affecting relationships, work-life balance, and the mental health of other family members. Community support services are increasingly stretched, leaving families to navigate complex challenges with limited professional guidance.



Understanding Anxiety and Overthinking

1

Pervasive Worries

Anxious teens often struggle with persistent, intrusive thoughts that disrupt daily life.

2

Physiological Impacts

Anxiety can manifest physically in many symptoms like rapid heartbeat, sweating, digestive issues, and muscle tension.

3

Avoidance Behaviours

To cope, teens may withdraw from social situations or activities they once enjoyed.

Relaxation Techniques

Deep Breathing

Slow, deep breaths can calm your mind and body. Even though it might seem simple and is often dismissed, it is an effective tool.

1

2

3

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Tensing and releasing muscles, one by one, helps your whole body relax.

Mindfulness

Focusing on the present moment helps quiet anxious thoughts. The 5,4,3,2,1 technique: 5 things I can see, 4 things I can feel, 3 things I can hear, 2 things I can smell, 1 thing I can taste.

Cognitive-Behavioural Strategies

Challenging Negative Thoughts

Identifying and reframing unhelpful thought patterns can reduce anxiety.

Cognitive Restructuring

Learning to identify and replace challenges with more balanced and realistic ones can help manage anxiety.

Problem-Solving Skills

Learning to break down and address specific worries can sometimes provide a sense of control.

Open Communication

Validating Feelings

Listening without judgment and acknowledging the teen's experience can build trust.

Collaborative Solutions

Involving the teen in developing coping strategies promotes a sense of agency.

Seeking Support

Encouraging the teen to connect with trusted friends, family, or professionals can provide needed guidance.

Creating a Supportive Environment



Establish Routines

Predictable daily schedules can provide a sense of stability.



Open Communication

Foster an environment where the teen feels heard and understood.



Promote Self-Care

Encourage healthy habits like sleep, nutrition, and exercise.





Healthy Coping Mechanisms

1

Creative Expression

Journaling, art, or music can provide an outlet for emotions.

2

Physical Activity

Exercise releases endorphins and promotes overall wellbeing.

3

Social Connection

Spending time with supportive friends and loved ones can reduce isolation. This should always be on the child's terms however. Having a sense of control over situations is important, not forcing interaction.

Support in Pembrokeshire



Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen Mind



For Young People | Pembrokeshire and Carmarthen Mind - Mental Health ...

This phone is monitored between 5pm and 10pm Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening.
If we don't answer straight away leave a message and we'll get back to you ASAP.

Mental health appointments

for 12-18 year olds

in Haverfordwest



Wellbeing workshops

for 12-18 year olds

in Haverfordwest



6-week mental health course

For 11-18 year olds

in Haverfordwest & Pembroke Dock