

# TESTING ANXIETY

Quarterly Newsletter of the APS Mental Health Committee

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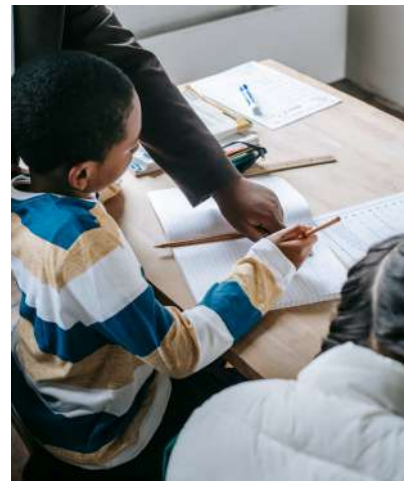
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Test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety that many students of all ages experience. This happens when students worry they will not perform well on something they deem as important. It is the top learning challenge that students face and can be mild, moderate, or severe. A small amount of the natural stress response can be helpful. However, in large amounts, it can become debilitating to students and to their performance.

Tests are a necessary part of education and today, the amount of standardized testing is increasing. It is important that we recognize when a child is experiencing more than a healthy amount of worry when it comes to tests so that we can find help and teach proper coping strategies. Asking your child specific questions about his or her nerves and what is causing them is the first step towards dealing with this challenge.

"Test Anxiety (for Kids) - Nemours KidsHealth." Edited by Kathryn Hoffses, KidsHealth, The Nemours Foundation, July 2018, [kidshealth.org/en/kids/test-anxiety.html](https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/test-anxiety.html).  
Tornio, Stacy .contest-social .share-links svg. "More Kids Than Ever Are Dealing With Test Anxiety, and We Need to Help." We Are Teachers, WeAreTeachers, 14 Mar. 2019, [www.weareteachers.com/test-anxiety/](https://www.weareteachers.com/test-anxiety/).

# TIPS FOR REDUCING TESTING ANXIETY

## Leading up to the test:

1. Ask your child what's making him nervous.
2. Help him prepare little by little; create a study schedule.
3. Find study methods that are comfortable for him; flashcards, reciting facts, rereading, completing a study guide.
4. Boost confidence: give honest and specific praise, point out small successes.
5. Ensure that your child gets enough sleep and eats a good breakfast before the test.

## During the test:

1. Work on positive self-talk: replace and anxious thoughts with encouraging thoughts.
2. Teach calming techniques:
  - a. Breathe deeply from the belly.
  - b. Tighten various muscles then relax them.
  - c. Close your eyes and count to 10.
  - d. Focus on the present moment, on what the 5 senses are experiencing.
3. Help your child accept that he might not know something and need to move on.
4. Break up complicated questions into smaller parts.

## After the test:

1. Debrief the test with your child and after he receives his grade. Ask how he felt and what he could do differently next time.



References

## PARENT RESOURCES

"9 Tips for Helping Grade-Schoolers Cope With Test Anxiety" from [understood.org](http://understood.org)

"Six Ways to Help Kids Tackle Test Anxiety" from [pbs.org](http://pbs.org)

"More Kids Than Ever Are Dealing With Test Anxiety, and We Need to Help" from [weareteacher.com](http://weareteacher.com)

"Test Anxiety" from [learningcenter.unc.edu](http://learningcenter.unc.edu)



## CRISIS HOTLINES

**CMH- OTTAWA CO. 24 HOUR HELPLINE**

1-866-512-4357

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION HOTLINE**

1-800-273-TALK (8255)

**"BE KIND TO YOUR MIND" HOTLINE**

1-888-535-6136

(24 Hour Hotline for MI residents seeking help around depression, anxiety, anger or loss)

Wright, Lexi Walters. "9 Tips for Helping Grade-Schoolers Cope With Test Anxiety." Understood, Understood, 16 Oct. 2019, [www.understood.org/en/school-learning/learning-at-home/homework-study-skills/9-tips-for-helping-grade-schoolers-with-learning-and-thinking-differences-cope-with-test-anxiety](http://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/learning-at-home/homework-study-skills/9-tips-for-helping-grade-schoolers-with-learning-and-thinking-differences-cope-with-test-anxiety).

Hurley, Katie. "Six Ways to Help Kids Tackle Test Anxiety." PBS, Public Broadcasting Service, 28 Mar. 2021, [www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/six-ways-to-help-kids-tackle-test-anxiety](http://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/six-ways-to-help-kids-tackle-test-anxiety).