



Exam Stress and Anxiety:

A Guide for Older Children and Teenagers



Exam season can be a stressful time for you, your teachers, and your family.

The pressure to perform well and hit target grades can feel overwhelming, and lead to feelings of stress and anxiety that spill over into home life, too.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to manage difficult feelings, and successfully navigate this challenging time.



Look at the signs of exam stress on the next page.
Do any of them sound familiar?

Exam stress looks different for different people, but can include...



Being 'snappy' or argumentative

Feeling low or tearful

Spending more time alone

Sleeping less, or more, than usual

Losing interest in hobbies and activities

Physical symptoms e.g. headache, nausea

Struggling to eat well

Feeling overwhelmed

Difficulty focusing or concentrating

How to manage feelings of stress and anxiety

Everyone is different, and what works for you may not work for someone else. It's important to create a toolkit of strategies to help you manage difficult feelings.

Shift your self-talk

Talking kindly and positively to yourself can help you manage feelings of overwhelm. It takes practice at first, but over time, it can help you change your mindset.

Take action

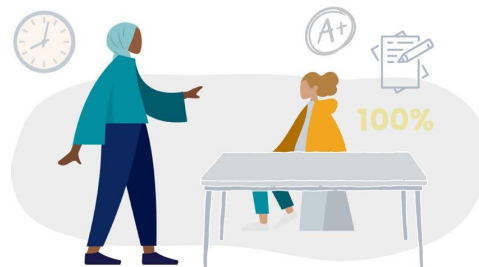
It's tempting to procrastinate when you experience anxiety. By taking small steps, like organising your workspace or creating a planner, you can break the cycle of procrastination.

Prioritise self-care

Balance is important, and you can only thrive when you create time to meet your physical and emotional needs, e.g. exercising, socialising, relaxing, gaming etc.

Practise mindfulness

Mindfulness can help you become more aware of your thoughts and be more present in what you are doing. It helps you see things more clearly so you can adjust your perspective.



Talk to somebody

If you feel alone or isolated, it can be helpful to talk to someone. This might be a friend or family member, a trusted adult at school, or even a charity or other organisation.

**For more strategies
and further support,
you can contact:**



[Young Minds](#)

[Mind](#)

[Childline](#)

