



Anxiety & Depression

Shannon Morrill MA, NCC,
LPC Director of Social Services, Aurora Behavioral health

1 IN 5

People are affected by mental health challenges each year.

In Arizona, that's approximately 1.4 million people



I don't need someone to fix the problem, sometimes it just helps to know someone is listening.

- Adolescent Patient



Understanding Anxiety

Signs & Symptoms

- **Excessive worry and overthinking**
 - “What If/ Should I?”; feeling thoughts and emotions are out of one’s control, racing/intrusive thoughts
- **Restlessness/difficulty focusing and concentrating**
 - Impacting work performance and /or personal relationships
- **Indecisive/difficulty making decisions**
 - Outfits, plans, menus, activities, etc.
- **Worrying about future stressors**
 - Ex. If I go to the game then “what if?”
 - Avoiding others and activities as a result
- **Physical symptoms**
 - Tired, headaches, upset stomach, muscle aches, fatigue, diarrhea, easily startled, shaking, heart racing, twitching, sweating, shortness of breath, light headedness

Signs & Symptoms, Continued

- **Performance dip in school/work**
 - Poor report cards, poor testing results, poor attendance
- **Loss of interest in activities they used to enjoy**
 - Noticeable drop in social interactions
- **Changes in sleep/rest**
 - Trouble sleeping at night, exhaustion for no apparent reason, always worn down
- **Changes in appetite**
 - Loss of appetite, feeling bad or guilty about what they ate, inability to enjoy meals once favored
- **Substance use disorder**
 - Using drugs and drinking as forms of self-medication
- **Avoiding people, places, and things that trigger the anxious feelings**

Teens who have had past trauma or abuse are at a higher risk for developing an anxiety disorder

Treatment

- Improve Sleep Patterns
- Improve nutrition and physical fitness
- Increase positive communication with family and peers
- Increase time spent outdoors and decrease exposure to electronics, phones and plug in activities
- Try activities such as yoga and mindfulness, (Breathe app)
- Increase self care activities
- Emotional regulation skills

Treatment, Continued.

- Encourage healthy communication and problem solving
- Set healthy boundaries
- Seek professional advice if anxiety continues to impact students day to day school performance or family relationships
- There are different options based on their need:
 - Outpatient psychiatry
 - Counseling
 - Outpatient group therapy
 - Inpatient care

32%

of American teens between the
ages of 13 and 18 have an anxiety disorder.

Understanding Depression

Signs & Symptoms

- Persistent feeling of sadness
- Loss of interest in activities
- Change in attitude
 - More withdrawn, angry, irritable, sad, sensitive
- Problems in various areas of life
 - Social, school, grades, family, job, self care, leisure activities, responsibilities
- Substance use disorder, using drugs and drinking as forms of self-medication
- Insomnia or sleeping too much

Signs & Symptoms, Continued.

- Emotional and cognitive changes
 - Sadness, crying/tearful, anger, frustration, hopeless/feeling empty, irritable
 - Decreased interest and pleasure in regular activities
 - Increased conflict
 - Reduced self esteem and confidence
 - Feelings of guilt and worthlessness
 - Negative thinking / feelings and focus on failure/self criticism
 - Thoughts of suicide

Risk Factors of Anxiety & Depression

- Having issues that negatively impact self-esteem
 - Obesity, peer problems, long-term bullying or academic problems
- Having been the victim or witness of violence
 - Physical or sexual abuse
- Having other mental health conditions
 - Bipolar disorder, an anxiety disorder, a personality disorder, anorexia or bulimia
- Having a learning disability
 - Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Having ongoing pain or a chronic physical illness
 - Cancer, diabetes or asthma
- Having certain personality trait
 - Low self-esteem or being overly dependent, self-critical or pessimistic

Risk Factors, Continued.

- Abusing alcohol, nicotine or other drugs
- Being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender in an unsupportive environment
- Having a parent, grandparent or other blood relative with depression, bipolar disorder or alcohol use problems
- Having a family member who died by suicide
- Having a dysfunctional family and family conflict
- Having experienced recent stressful life events, such as parental divorce, parental military service or the death of a loved one
- Biological changes in hormones for teens

Treatment

- **Take steps to control stress**
 - Increase resilience and boost self-esteem to help handle issues when they arise
- **Teach your child problem solving and coping skills**
 - Let them know they can talk to you, or suggest others they can talk to if they feel too scared to talk to you. Help foster those relationships so they feel comfortable going to another person.
- **Reach out for friendship and social support**
 - Especially in times of crisis
- **Maintain ongoing treatment, if recommended**
 - Even after symptoms let up, to help prevent a relapse of depression symptoms

Knowing the warnings signs and symptoms can help you identify if you are feeling depressed.

Don't wait: The quicker you begin seeking help for your depression, the faster and more effectively you can work through it.

Treatment, Continued.

- **Stay active:** Exercise can increase endorphins in the body which can help improve your mood.
- **Journal:** Track how you are feeling throughout the day in order to look at your improvements or areas for growth.
- **Sleep well:** Sleeping is essential for a healthy and balanced life style.
- **Eat healthy:** Lots of sugar, fast food and processed foods can make you feel sluggish and tired. Utilize more fruits, vegetables, and whole foods in your diet. Make sure to drink plenty of water.
- **Understand negative thinking patterns:** Be aware of negative thoughts, and challenge yourself to have a more positive outlook.
- **Relax!** Try learning some “mindfulness” techniques.



There should be no stigma attached to reaching out for help. We struggle as humans, and we are just that, humans that deal with life's crisis and life's problems

- Nikki Kontz, Clinical Director, Teen Lifeline.



Increasing Communication

Ways to Help Your Teen

- It's okay to use the word suicide
 - “I am concerned with how you are acting or behaving lately and would like to help you. Are you have thoughts of suicide?”
- Be aware that your teen is paying attention to how you cope as a parent to stress
 - Try to lead by example and explain how you cope.
- Be transparent with your teen and let them know how you get help, and how you behave on social media
- Try to remember
 - Their stress or life challenge may not seem as big or large in your opinion, but can really be weighing on them
 - Let your teen talk things through and make it a safe place to talk.
 - This may be the first time they have experienced this intense sadness, stress or fear and these thoughts can be scary or overwhelming
 - Seek professional help if you see your teenagers depression not increasing

Resources



FOR A FREE
ASSESSMENT,
CALL OUR
SERVICES
HELPLINE 24/7



4 8 0
3 4 5
5 4 2 0

A U R O R A A R I Z O N A . C O M

Teen Lifeline

602.248.TEEN

Teen Text Line: **741-741**

Maricopa County Crisis Line

602.222.9444

Aurora 24/7 Admission Line

480.345.5420

Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1.800.273.TALK

Additional Resources

- Find a mental health expert:
 - Counselor, Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Mental Health Treatment Provider
 - Call the number on the back of your insurance card. Ask for referrals in your area.
 - Can request referral for: Partial Hospitalization Program (group therapy 5 days a week)
 - Intensive Outpatient Program (group 3 days a week)
 - [Psychologytoday.com](https://www.psychologytoday.com)
- School Counselor