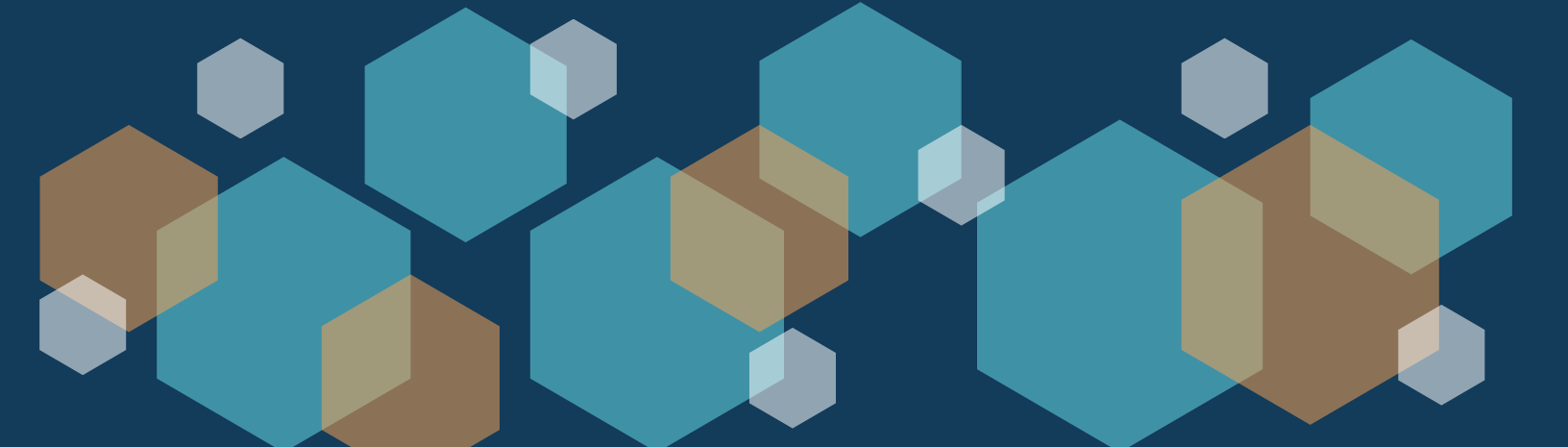




TEEN RESOURCE

Back-to-School Anxiety Worksheet

A Teen-Friendly Guide to Understanding Anxiety and Building a Coping Plan

Before You Begin

There are no right or wrong answers. Use this worksheet on your own or with a parent, caregiver, counselor, therapist, or another adult you trust.



Before We Start: Check In With Yourself

Before working through the worksheet, take a moment to notice how you're feeling right now.

When I think about going back to school, my anxiety is at a:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

0 = no anxiety at all | 10 = the most anxious I can imagine feeling

Right now, going back to school feels:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| ☐ Exciting | ☐ Hopeful |
| ☐ Nervous | ☐ A mix of things |
| ☐ Overwhelming | ☐ Something else: _____ |
| ☐ Stressful | |
| ☐ Uncertain | |

What's On My Mind?

Sometimes anxiety feels like one big worry. Breaking it into smaller pieces can make it easier to understand what's actually bothering you.

The part of going back to school I'm most worried about is:

Something I'm actually looking forward to is:

Understanding My Anxiety

Anxiety can show up in your thoughts, emotions, body, and actions. Learning how it shows up for you can make it easier to recognize when you need support

Something I'm actually looking forward to is:

How ADHD and Anxiety May Affect School

My feelings

- ☐ Nervous
- ☐ Scared
- ☐ Irritated
- ☐ Embarrassed
- ☐ Overwhelmed
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Frustrated
- ☐ Something else: _____

My body

- ☐ My heart beats faster
- ☐ Stomachache or nausea
- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Sweaty or shaky hands
- ☐ Tightness in my chest
- ☐ Restlessness
- ☐ Feeling tired
- ☐ Trouble sleeping
- ☐ Trouble concentrating
- ☐ Something else: _____

My Anxiety Cycle

Think about a recent school situation that made you anxious. Slowing the moment down can help you notice the pattern.

WHAT HAPPENED?

What situation or thought started the anxiety?

**WHAT DID I THINK?**

What was I telling myself in that moment?

**WHAT DID I FEEL IN MY BODY?**

What sensations did I notice?

**WHAT DID I DO?**

Did I avoid, leave, shut down, seek reassurance, procrastinate, or do something else?

**WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARD?**

Did it help temporarily? Did the anxiety come back?

**WHAT COULD I TRY NEXT TIME?**

One small response that might help me move through the anxiety.

04 / NOTICE AVOIDANCE

Is Anxiety Making Me Want to Avoid Anything?

Avoiding something may make anxiety feel better for a moment, but it can sometimes make the situation feel harder the next time.

Right now, going back to school feels:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ Going to school | ■ Asking for help |
| ■ Certain classes | ■ Turning in assignments |
| ■ Talking to teachers | ■ School activities |
| ■ Talking to other students | ■ Riding the bus/getting to school |
| ■ Eating in front of others | ■ Other: _____ |
| ■ Participating in class | |

Something I avoid because it makes me anxious

One small step I could take toward facing it

05 / CONTROL

IN MY CONTROL

Examples: asking for help, preparing my backpack, sleep, practicing a coping skill, how I respond.

NOT IN MY CONTROL

Examples: what other people think, unexpected changes, another person's behavior.

When something is outside my control, how can I take care of myself or respond in a helpful way?

Tools I Can Use When Anxiety Shows Up

You don't have to make anxiety disappear before you can move forward. Sometimes the goal is simply to help your body and mind feel a little more grounded.

5-4-3-2-1 Grounding

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

Slow Down Your Breathing

Take a slow breath in through your nose. Pause. Then slowly breathe out. Repeat a few times and notice whether anything changes in your body.

Bring Yourself Back to the Present

What is happening right now – not what am I worried might happen?

“I can feel anxious and still take the next step.”

07 / MY PLAN

If I start feeling anxious before school, I can:

If I start feeling anxious during class, I can:

If I feel overwhelmed by an assignment, I can:

If I need help but I'm nervous to ask, I can:

If I'm having a really difficult day, one person I can reach out to is:

Something that helps me feel calmer or more like myself is:

What I Want Adults to Know

Sometimes anxiety doesn't look like anxiety from the outside. Use this page to help the adults in your life understand what anxiety looks like for you.

When I'm anxious, it might look like:

What actually helps me is:

What usually makes it harder is:

One thing I wish my parents, caregivers, teachers, or other adults knew:

Someone I would feel comfortable sharing this page with:

Remember What You Bring With You

Anxiety can make it easy to focus on everything that could go wrong and forget about everything you've already made it through.

Something I've handled before:

A strength I have:

Someone who believes in me:

Something I'm proud of:

One thing I want to remember when school feels hard:

After the Worksheet

You made it through the worksheet. Before you're done, check in with yourself one more time.

After completing this worksheet, my anxiety is at a:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

0 = no anxiety at all | 10 = the most anxious I can imagine feeling

Did anything feel a little clearer after working through this?

☐ Yes

☐ Not yet

☐ A little

It's okay if your number didn't go down. The goal isn't to make every anxious feeling disappear. Learning what you're feeling, recognizing what you need, and knowing what you can try next are important steps too.

One thing I'm taking away from this worksheet:

One small thing I can do next:

You Don't Have to Figure It Out Alone

Going back to school can be a big adjustment, especially when anxiety is involved. If school anxiety is making it difficult to attend school, participate in class, complete assignments, spend time with other people, or get through your day, consider talking with a parent, caregiver, school counselor, therapist, or another adult you trust.

Asking for support can be part of the plan.

