

Evolve Counseling

& Behavioral Health Services

Gilbert, AZ

(480) 590-3915



Recognizing the Signs of Anxiety & Depression

Anxiety

A teen is more at risk for anxiety if:

- They have had issues that negatively impact self-esteem, such as obesity, peer problems long-term bullying, family issues or academic problems.
- They have been the victim or witness of violence, such as physical or sexual abuse
- They have a learning disability or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- There is any history of abusing alcohol, nicotine or other drugs
- They are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender

The signs of anxiety:

- Excessive worries, nervousness or fear
- Panic
- Perfectionism
- Constant apprehension
- Feeling tense or stressed all the time
- Racing thoughts
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling out of control
- Constant worry about criticism or disapproval
- School refusal
- Shaking
- Difficulty breathing
- Headaches / stomachaches

Depression

A teen is more at risk for depression if:

- They are female because females develop depression twice as often than males
- They suffer from chronic illnesses or other physical conditions.
- They have a history of substance abuse

The signs of depression:

- Extreme sensitivity to rejection or failure
- Low self-esteem
- Feelings of guilt
- Frequent complaints of physical illnesses such as headaches and stomachaches
- Threats or attempts to run away from home
- Has a hard time getting out of bed (oversleeping)
- Sad, blue, irritable and/or complains that nothing is fun anymore

Whether it's anxiety or depression, how you can help:

- Pay attention to their feelings. You know your child the best. If they are different than usual, trust your gut
- Stay calm. Always stay calm. It's the parent's job to be the calmest person in the room. This is really hard sometimes, but it is important.
- Recognize and praise small accomplishments. It might seem like you are rewarding the things that they are "supposed to be doing." That's okay for now. The goal is to build them up.
- Don't punish mistakes when they are trying. Focus on effort not outcome. If your teen is trying, that's a great thing.
- Be flexible, but help provide structure. You may need to reconsider your usual structure and expectations for a bit. That's okay, it's not a permanent change. The goal is to build them up.
- Get professional help, if needed. Don't be afraid to reach out to Counselors and Social Workers if your teen is not responding to anything you try.

Resources:

Evolve Counseling's Videos on Parenting During the Quarantine:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCixDJOG0ppudTvvI3XXQtfw>

3 Tips on Talking-And Listening-to Your Anxious Teen:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2018/06/3-tips-for-talking-and-listening-to-your-anxious-teen/>

Parent's Guide to Teen Depression:

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/depression/parents-guide-to-teen-depression.htm>

How to Help Teenage Girls Reframe Anxiety and Strengthen Resilience:

<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/52994/how-to-help-teenage-girls-reframe-anxiety-and-strengthen-resilience>