

Anxiety in Teens & Young Adults

Presentation to Greenwich United Way
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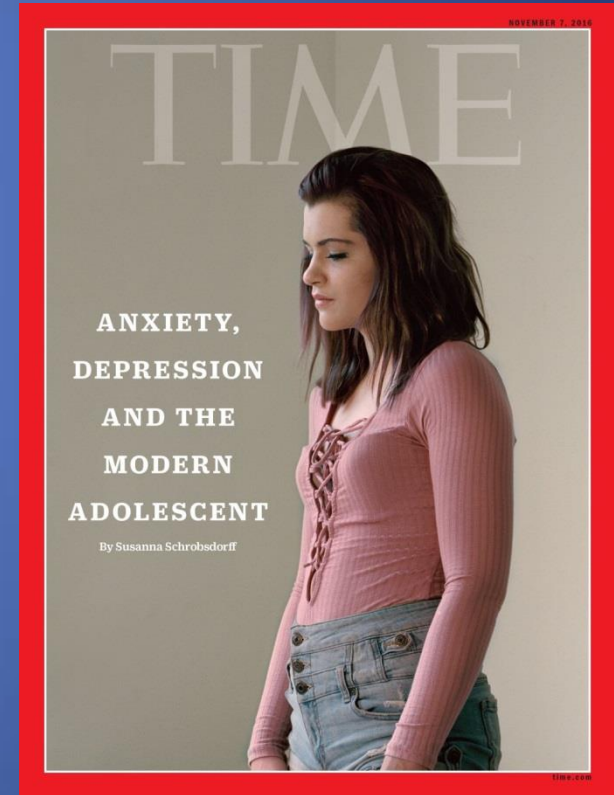
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Jessica Schilero, Family Centers



Anxiety in Teens & Young Adults

1. What's the problem, and is it getting worse?
2. What is it like to live with anxiety?
3. What is happening in our schools?
4. What should adults know?
5. Resources
6. Q&A



What's the problem?



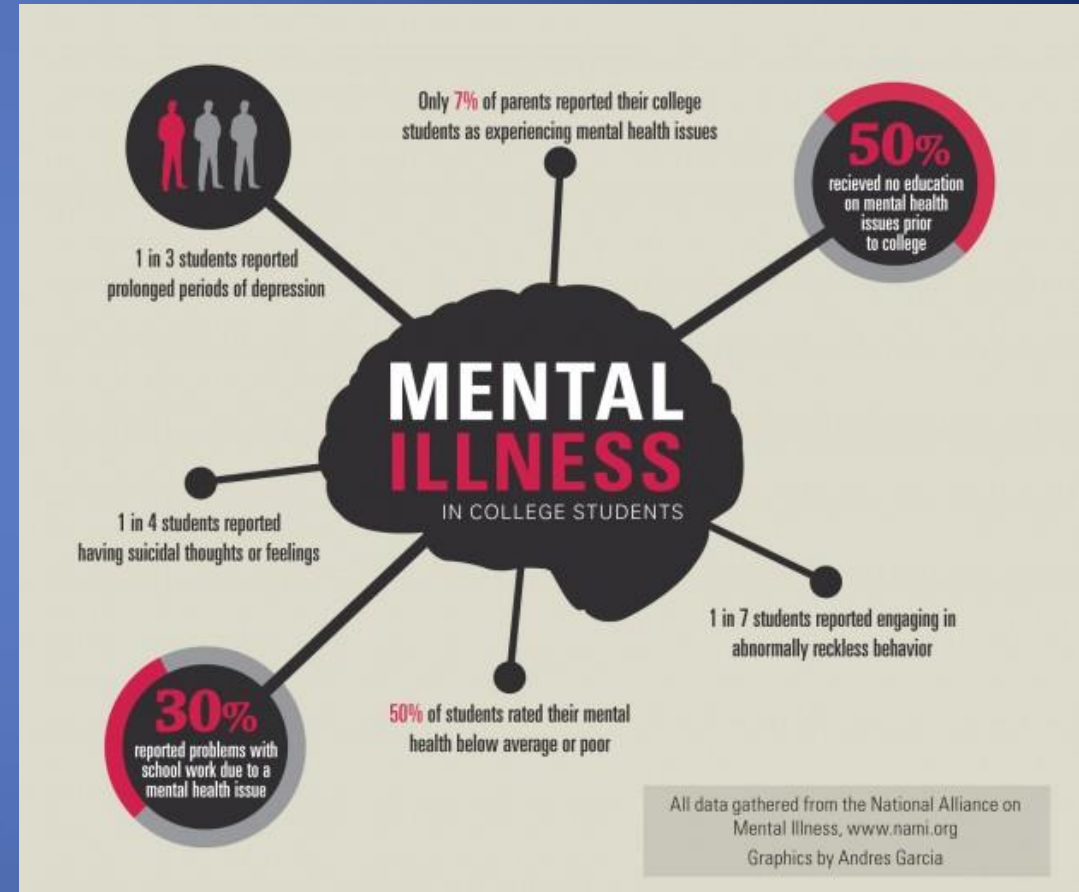
- Stress vs Anxiety
- Types: Generalized Anxiety Disorder, social phobia, panic disorders, specific phobias
- Affects 18% of US pop every year
- 8% of US pop takes an anti-anxiety drug
- Average age of onset = 11 y.o.
- More prevalent in women
- Often co-occurs with depression, substance misuse

-NIMH, Anxiety & Depression Assn of America, 2013 Medical Expenditure Panel

Anxiety is Increasing among Young People

- Incoming college freshmen feeling “overwhelmed”: 18% (1985) → 29% (2010) → 41% (2016)
- Undergrads reporting “overwhelming anxiety”: 50% (2011) → 62% (2016)
- Doubling of hospital admissions for suicidal teens

-Various sources; see NY Times report, 10/11/17



Why is it getting worse?

- Culture ≠ appropriate adolescent dev't
 - Focus on constant achievement
 - Increasing perfectionism
 - Protective society
 - Lack of free time
- Too much pressure, not enough practice
→ lack of resilience, delayed adulthood
- Worsened by screens / social media

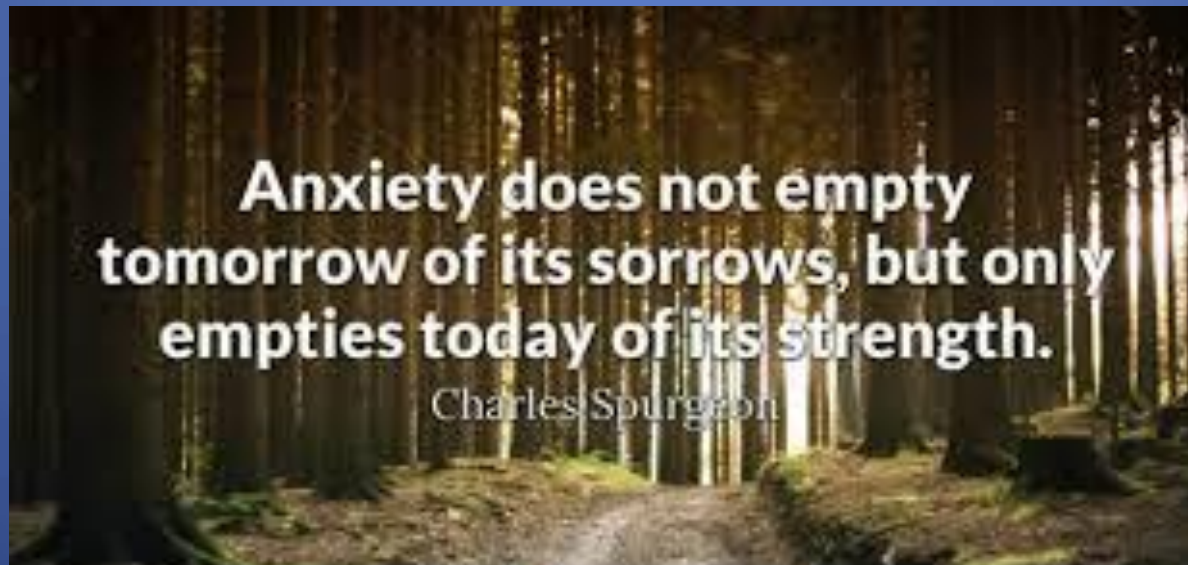


Affluence is a risk factor

What is it like to live with anxiety?

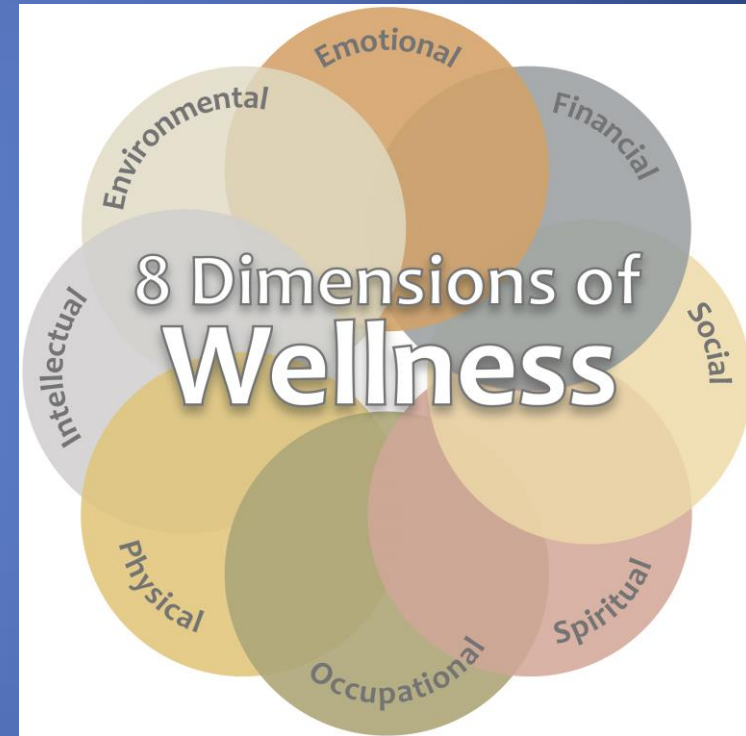
Eliza's story

- What led up to anxiety
- What made anxiety worse
- Behaviors (what it looked like)
- Impact
- How it felt



What helped?

- Therapy (Group, Individual, DBT)
- Meds
- Alternative school
- Yoga
- Art
- Music
- Social Activities



My Life Now

Well For Willow:

<http://turningpointct.org/lets-talk/forum/blog-well-willow/>



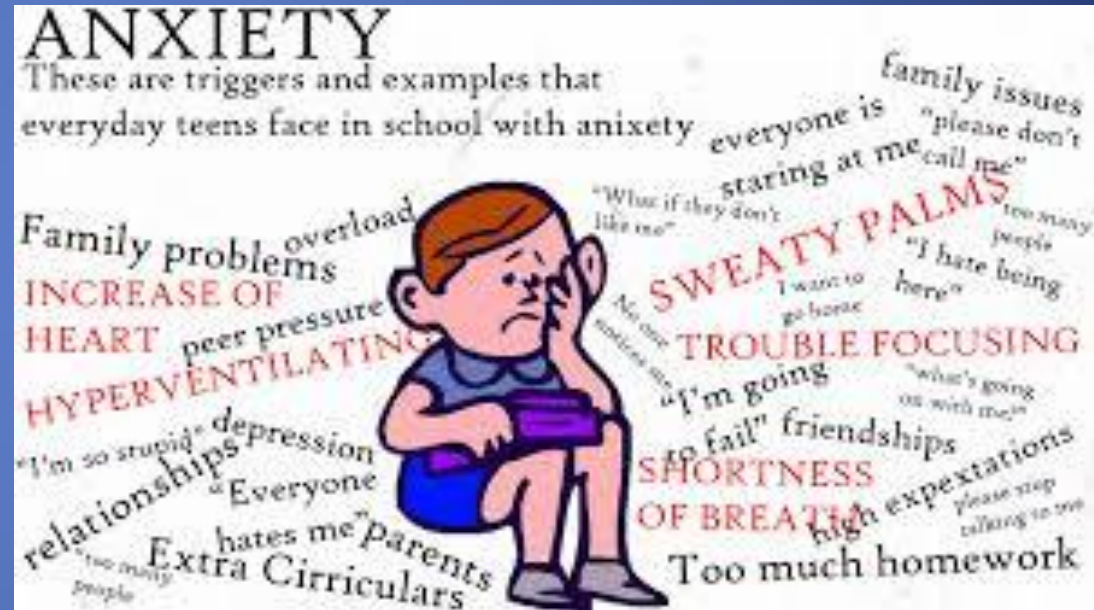
Graduating from Hope
Academy



Willow

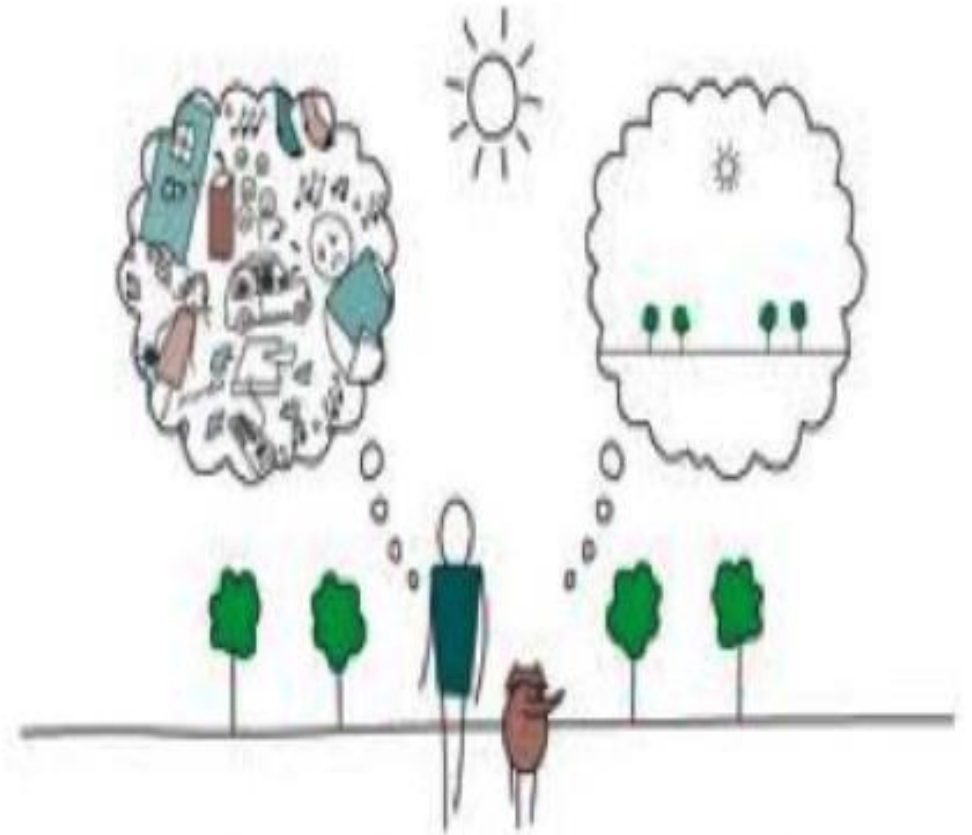
What are we seeing in the schools?

- What is happening at the middle school level
- Helping students understand anxiety & interpret their stress levels
- Providing tools for students to cope with anxiety
- What sort of accommodations are being made for students with anxiety



LET'S TRY SOMETHING...

1. Get comfortable in your chair
2. Place both feet grounded on the floor
3. Close your eyes. Keep them open if preferred
4. Inhale through your nose for the count of two
5. Exhale deeply through your mouth



Mind Full, or Mindful?

What should families know?

1. Recognize which behaviors are part of *typical* adolescent and young adult development
2. Recognize causes for *concern*:
 - Intense and long-lasting moods, depression, panic attacks, self-injury or suicidal thinking
 - Social withdrawal, perfectionism and unrealistic standards, obsessive about or neglectful of hygiene
 - Multiple distractions to the point of not being able to complete responsibilities, lack of focus that interferes with daily work or tasks, regularly late for appointments
 - Verbal or physical aggression ...

What should families know, *cont'd*

... Causes of concern, continued:

- Substance use, drinking and driving
- School refusal or lack of connection to school or peers
- Causing trouble with family members, teachers or colleagues
- Becoming paralyzed with indecision
- Isolation from family, breakdown of communication, routine lying and hiding things
- Often up nearly all night, sleeps almost all day on weekends, routinely late because of sleep schedule

How to Help at Home

1. Take away stresses that they don't need
2. Validate
 - Validation improves relationships
 - De-escalates conflict and intense emotions
 - Shows that: we are listening, we understand, we care about the relationship
3. Be non-judgmental
 - Teens and young adults experience pressure everyday. Home should be a respite from the real or perceived judgments that teens and young adults feel in their daily lives
4. Let go of trying to “fix”



Types of Treatment



- When to seek treatment?
- Types of Treatment
 - Individual talk therapy
 - Group therapy
 - Psychiatric evaluation/ medication
- <http://www.familycenters.org/>

Resources

- Free crisis resources:
 - Mobile crisis: 211, option 1 (choose kids or adults)
 - Alternate # in Greenwich: 800-203-1234
 - Kids in Crisis: 203-327-KIDS
 - Crisis Text Line: Text CTL to 741741
 - CT's Substance Use Access Line: 800-563-4086
- Peer support (by and for young people):
 - CT's Young Adult Warmline (7 days, 12-9pm): 855-6HOPENOW
 - TurningPointCT.org

Resources, cont'd

- Treatment (*see blue resource guide*):
 - Family Centers, other local providers
 - Child Guidance Centers throughout the state
- Support groups (*see list of free groups*):
 - NAMI, NAMI-CAN, and more
 - Triangle Community Center
- Online screenings & downloadable resource lists:
 - HealthyMindsCT.org
- Mental health & wellness apps (*see list*)

NEED HELP?

Facing a mental / emotional crisis?
Call mobile crisis:
Dial 211, option 1
• Press 1 again for a youth in need
• Press 2 for all other crisis

Not safe at home / in a relationship?
CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence:
1-808-774-2900
www.CTcadv.org

Gambling problems?
Contact CT hotline:
1-888-789-7777

Drug & alcohol problems?
Call state assessment infoline:
1-800-563-4086

Considering suicide?
National Lifeline:
1-800-273-TALK

Help with housing, utilities & more?
Dial 211, option 3

Kids have behavioral problems, emotional issues or special needs?
• Get services at your local Child Guidance Center
• Advocacy & support at FAVOR: 1-800-563-3232
• Special education help from CT Parent Advisory Council: www.cpacinc.org

Mental illness affecting your family?
1-800-950-NAMI

Need LGBT support?
www.ctpridecenter.org

OTHER CT RESOURCES

Young Adults:
Visit www.TurningPointCT.org or call the Peer Warmline (Wed-Fri 12-6pm): 1-855-6-HOPENOW

Statewide Legal Services of CT:
www.slscct.org

Get Your Check Up from the Neck Up:
www.HealthyMindsCT.org

Immigrant support: Call IICConn at 1-203-336-0141

Resources on mental health & substance use:
www.CTClearinghouse.org

Older Adults:
www.ct.gov/agingservices

CT's InfoLine: Dial 211 or visit 211ct.org

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Readings

- New York Times, October 11, 2017: “Why are More American Teenagers Than Ever Suffering from Severe Anxiety?”
- Amy Morin, *13 Things Mentally Strong Parents Don't Do*
- Jean Twenge, *iGen* and “Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?” (The Atlantic, September 2017)
- American Psychological Association, *Speaking of Psychology* (podcast), episode 18: “The Mental Price of Affluence” with Dr. Suniya Luthar