

Managing Stress^{!!} and Anxiety in School

Going to high school and college is an exciting time. New relationships. Challenging academics. Significant doorways to life-long achievements. For many students, heading to high school or going away to college can come with stress and anxiety, and for some of us, these feelings can be difficult to navigate. Students of color are more likely to experience higher levels of stress and are more likely to keep their feelings to themselves.

What is Anxiety?

Anxiety is often defined as intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations. Fast heart rate, rapid breathing, sweating, and tiredness may occur. Anxiety can be normal in stressful situations such as public speaking or test-taking. Anxiety can be an indicator of an underlying challenge or disorder when feelings become excessive and interfere with daily living.

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOURSELF WITH STRESS AND ANXIETY

1. Take action. Stressful situations affect all of us from time to time, yet these challenges don't need to hold us back. Choose to start your school year by taking action and confronting stressors directly as they arise.

2. Find your unique strengths. Be conscious of who you are and the family and culture that stands behind you. Being true to yourself and your unique skills and abilities focuses on your strengths and can help you pursue your goals and diffuse stress.

3. Know that your mental health and physical health are related. Physical activity, a healthy diet, regular sleep, and relaxation exercises may all help reduce anxiety. To manage symptoms effectively, avoiding caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and other drugs.

4. Advocate for yourself. Know your limits and define your needs — and then ask where on campus you can find support. This may involve finding activities that center you and diffuse stress, such as joining a student association, support group, or finding a quiet place to simply sit, breathe, and journal.

5. Give yourself a daily thumbs-up. Choose to confront at least one challenge per day. Give yourself a mental thumbs-up every time you do.

WHAT IF YOU'RE FEELING OVERWHELMED AND NEED ADDITIONAL HELP?

If you are overwhelmed by feelings of stress, depression, or anxiety, know that you are not alone. There is help a text or call away.

- Text **STEVE** to 741741
- Call or Text **988**, the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.nationalsuicideline.org/)

Talk with a trained crisis counselor 24/7/365. It's free and confidential — and it helps. Visit [stevefund.org/youthhealingsspace](https://www.stevefund.org/youthhealingsspace) for more tips, resources, and our BACK-TO-SCHOOL TOOLKIT

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About the Steve Fund

The Steve Fund is the nation's leading organization focused on supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of young people of color. We work with colleges and universities, nonprofits, researchers, mental health experts, families, and young people to promote programs and strategies that build understanding and assistance for the mental and emotional health of young people of color