

Counselor's Corner - Jamaica Elementary

Does your child get anxiety when they are preparing for a test or quiz? How can you as the parent help ease your child's worries or at least help them try to prepare?

Below are some ideas you can go over with your child. Every child is different so you might have to try a few different techniques to see what works best.



I
got
this

Illustration provided by Sarah Pecorino
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TEST ANXIETY

What is test anxiety?

Test anxiety is the worried, nervous, or scared feeling that happens to you when it's time to take a test or a quiz.

How does it affect me?

You might experience headaches, sweating, nervous stomach, crying, trouble breathing, and a faster heartbeat. You may feel angry, worried, hopeless, helpless, and overwhelmed.

Test anxiety can also bring on negative thoughts. You might say things like, "I can't do it" or "I'm probably going to fail". You may also be thinking about the worst possible thing that can happen. Some people experience a "blank out" which means that they forget everything that they studied!

What can I do about it?

- 1** Be prepared! Do a good job studying so that you can feel confident about taking the test. Start studying a few days before, and make sure that you are understanding what you're reading.
- 2** Use positive self-talk to quiet the negative thoughts in your head. Say things like, "You can do it!" or "You've got this!" Picture yourself doing well on the test!
- 3** Find ways to calm your body before, during, and after the test. The more relaxed you are, the better you will be able to focus on doing a good job.
- 4** Take your time and focus on one question at a time. Take deep breaths and read each question carefully. Don't spend too much time on one problem.
- 5** Talk to a parent, school counselor, or teacher. They might be able to work with you to come up with coping skills that can help you be successful.

SIGNS OF Test Anxiety

- Headaches
- Nausea/upset stomach
- Extra sweating
- Difficulty breathing
- Fast heartbeat
- Dizziness/lightheadedness
- Sense of panic
- Muscles tight or tense
- Focusing on past mistakes or poor performance
- Worrying about the consequences of failure
- Mind going blank
- Thoughts racing
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling inadequate or not enough
- Feeling helpless
- Thinking negative thoughts
- Procrastinating
- Comparing self to others

Test Anxiety STRATEGIES

Get prepared.

- Attend study sessions.
- Take practice tests.
- Review notes.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Pack your bag, pack your lunch, and lay out your clothes the night before.

Practice Self Care.

- Get enough sleep the week leading up to the test.
- Eat healthy meals.
- Do your favorite movement-based activities or exercises.
- Practice yoga.
- Speak kindly to yourself.
- Spend time with people you love.

Practice Calming Strategies.

- Practice controlled breathing exercises.
- Make a test-day mantra. Practice repeating it to yourself.
- Practice grounding exercises.
- Practice progressive muscle relaxation.

Change Your Thinking.

- Check your thoughts. Are they absolutely true? Are they based on facts? Are you assuming the worst or jumping to conclusions? Replace these thoughts with more realistic and positive thoughts.