

## Adolescent Anxiety

Anxiety occurs in the same rates for adolescents as adults but with better treatment outcomes!

### Symptoms

Although everyone can experience a different combination of symptoms, the following experiences are common for adolescents with anxiety:

#### Physical Reactions

These include chest pain, stomach issues, heart rate or breathing changes, feeling dizzy or lightheaded, sweating, trembling

#### Behaviour Changes, especially avoidance

Such as refusing to go to school or participate in activities

#### Emotional Reactivity, especially fears

Such as unrealistic fears of not being perfect or being embarrassed

#### “Crooked Thoughts” or beliefs that aren’t true

Such as catastrophic or all-or-nothing beliefs, like “everyone will hate me”

#### Excess & Extreme Worry

Anxious youth worry about more things, more often, & in more extreme ways than their peers.

#### Dependence

An overreliance on parents or others, repeatedly asking questions, and demands for comfort

### Treatment Works!

Psychotherapy – in one study, 77% of Canadian youth remained free of generalized anxiety for at least one year after short term psychotherapy. Early intervention is a key factor.

School support programs -- to build skills, resiliency, & offer support.

Self-care strategies – such as eating well, exercising, positive social interactions, & having fun

Medication – when the anxiety is severe or difficult to treat by the above methods

Talk! – Build awareness & have important conversations about anxiety & psychological health

**Resources** -- Right by You Campaign – Tools for parents <http://rightbyyou.ca/en/resources>

Anxiety BC Youth - <http://youth.anxietybc.com/>

Canadian Mental Health Association – Youth & Self-Injury [http://www.cmha.ca/mental\\_health/youth-and-self-injury/#.WVUeAojyu70](http://www.cmha.ca/mental_health/youth-and-self-injury/#.WVUeAojyu70)

**References** -- Anxiety BC Youth. ABC’s of Anxiety. Online.

National Institute of Mental Health (2017). Child & Adolescent Mental Health. Online.

Right By You (2017). Bringing Canadians together to better support teen mental health. Online.

Canadian Mental Health Association (2016). Youth. Online.