

IAO

MAY, 2023

# ACCREDITOR

Exclusive

**IN  
CONVERSATION  
WITH**

DR GAGANPREET KAUR



Featured

## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSATION**

- Mental Health Awareness And Its Importance

## **HOW DOES EDUCATION AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH?**

- Educational Attainment And Mental Health

## **MANAGING STRESS IN HIGH SCHOOL**

- Signs and Management of Stress in High School Students

FEATURED  
ACCREDITATION

**INSTITUTIONS DEMONSTRATING  
DEDICATION TO QUALITY  
LEARNING**



# CONTENTS

## Featured

### **01 MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS: THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSATION**

Mental health isn't just about having or not having a mental illness. Our well-being is affected by all aspects of our lives, and that, in turn, affects how we experience life, work, and time with our loved ones. Now, the conversation is more critical than ever.

### **02 HOW DOES EDUCATION AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH?**

Higher levels of Education are associated with better mental health. Education is one of the most precise indicators of life outcomes, such as employment, income, and social status. It is thus a strong predictor for improved health and well-being.



**Exclusive**

## **IN CONVERSATION WITH DR GAGANPREET KAUR**

An in-depth conversation with Dr Gaganpreet Kaur regarding her experience in dentistry and her views on the education industry.

## **FEATURED ACCREDITATIONS**

A list of institutes successfully cleared IAO's accreditation process and earned full accreditation. Learn about their path to complete certification with the International Accreditation Organization.



## **03 MANAGING STRESS IN HIGH SCHOOL**

Stress is defined as our physical and mental responses to some external event. We discuss in this article some common reasons high school students feel stressed and what they can do about it.



# Editor's

# Note...

## Prioritizing Mental Health in Today's World

In today's fast-paced and demanding world, it is imperative that we shine a spotlight on the often-neglected topic of mental health. With the increasing prevalence of stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns, it is crucial for us to take a step back and acknowledge the importance of caring for our emotional well-being.

In this edition, we delve into the multifaceted aspects of mental health, aiming to raise awareness, foster understanding, and provide valuable insights on how to prioritize our mental well-being. Our dedicated team of writers and experts have compiled a collection of articles, interviews, and resources that offer guidance, support, and inspiration.

From exploring self-care practices and stress management techniques to discussing the significance of seeking professional help and destigmatizing mental health, our aim is to empower our readers with knowledge and tools to navigate the challenges they may face.

We encourage you to take the time to engage with these articles, reflect on your own mental health journey, and share the knowledge with your loved ones. Together, let us create a community that prioritizes mental health, embraces open conversations, and supports one another.

Remember, your mental health matters, and taking care of yourself is not selfish—it is essential. We hope that this edition serves as a reminder to nurture your emotional well-being and seek the support you may need.

Jeff Wright, Editor in Chief

# Mental health awareness: **The importance of conversation**

By Allaya Cooks-Campbell



It's impossible to have a conversation about health and wellness without talking about mental health. Nearly one in five adults in the United States has a mental illness or mental health condition. That's nearly 52 million people.

However, mental health isn't just about having or not having a mental illness. Our well-being is affected by all aspects of our lives, and that, in turn, affects how we experience life, work, and time with our loved ones. Now, the conversation is more critical than ever. In 2021, the prevalent feeling of the year was languishing. BetterUp's research found that more than 55% of workers weren't mentally ill but wasn't thriving either.

As the pandemic has brought physical health center stage in an unprecedented way, it's time to look at the other significant components of well-being. The conversation around mental health awareness has never been as public, as prevalent, or as important. After all, building awareness is critical to learning how to care for your mental health.

In this article, learn what mental health awareness is and how it makes a difference in your personal and professional life.





# What is Mental Health Awareness?

---

So what does mental health awareness mean, and how do you promote it? Mental health awareness is the ongoing effort to reduce the stigma around mental illness and mental health conditions by sharing our personal experiences.

Because of misconceptions about mental health and mental fitness, people often suffer in silence, and their conditions go untreated. Mental health awareness is a significant social movement to improve understanding and increase access to healthcare.



# How can Mental Health Awareness Help?

---

Mental health awareness is critical to promoting mental health treatment and behavioral health. It's a necessary and foundational conversation for changing to a more proactive model of mental health.

Right now, we only fill our tanks when they're on "empty." Developing awareness helps us recognize the signs and symptoms when we're feeling "off" — just as with physical illness. Here are four essential benefits of mental health awareness:






1.

# It Helps you understand your Symptoms

---

Sometimes, there is magic in having a diagnosis. Despite the stigma around the term, it's simply a shorthand for a collection of symptoms that occur together

Especially with mental health conditions, which are difficult to pinpoint — and sometimes impossible to find — on a test, a diagnosis can be incredibly validating. It can help people feel less alone and make it easier to find treatment. Pay attention to your symptoms. For example, you might feel like your mental health worsens with social media use.



## 2. Starts a conversation

---

Mental health awareness is an ongoing conversation, but until recently, it's only been had in whispers. But because a common feature of many moods and anxiety disorders is distorted thinking, talking about it can be immensely therapeutic.

Building a support network and speaking with a licensed mental health professional is critical to alleviating symptoms of many mental health conditions.

Unfortunately, stigma creates silence. It also makes it difficult to ask for support at work or in other environments that might be made more challenging by a mental health diagnosis.



# 3. Better Education

---

Caregivers, employers, parents, family members, and loved ones must understand mental health's impact on daily life. However, while mental health conditions can make daily life more difficult, they also don't have to prevent you from having a fulfilling and engaging life.

When the people in your life understand and prioritize mental health care, it makes it easier to take the actions you need to do to take care of yourself and thrive.

A silhouette of a person lifting a barbell, superimposed on a large, textured brain graphic. The brain is rendered in shades of yellow and orange, with visible neural pathways. The person is in a squatting position, holding the barbell above their head with both hands. The background is a dark, textured grey.

4.

## Promotes mental fitness

---

Many of us have fallen into the trap of thinking of mental health solely related to mental illness. However, having a mental health condition and being mentally fit is possible, and the absence of a mental health condition doesn't necessarily ensure mental fitness.

Expanding our understanding of mental health issues and wellness to incorporate mental fitness, a proactive approach to emotional health, well-being, and cognitive agility. It allows us to live more purposefully, clearly, and passionately. Reducing the stigma around mental health is essential to embracing mental fitness.

# Three tips to promote **Mental Health Awareness**

How can individuals, especially non-clinicians, make a difference in promoting mental health awareness? A big part of it is learning to talk and share about mental health openly.

When quiet about mental health and fitness, we allow stigma to continue. That silence makes it harder for people to prioritize their mental well-being



Here are several ideas to **promote mental health awareness** within your community.

## **Speak up for yourself**

How often do you see someone take a mental health day? And how often do you see them being honest about it? Many of us feel our physical well-being is more important than our mental well-being.

We take a day off when sick but not when we feel emotionally drained or exhausted. The next time you take time off, be honest with your team that you're taking the time for your mental well-being.

When you participate in self-advocacy for your mental health, you empower others to do the same. You'll inspire others to do the same.

## **Learn more about mental health**

Take the time to learn about mental health and mental fitness. But beyond that, learn how to differentiate the two. Learn about common mental health conditions, signs of burnout, and how to care for yourself when experiencing symptoms.

It can be helpful to watch your warning signs to know when you're starting to get triggered or overwhelmed. If you find resources that benefit others, share them with those around you.

## **Talk to a coach**

One of my favorite things about working for BetterUp is that every person here has a coach. Whether I'm talking to a manager, a colleague, someone in another department, or an executive, it's common for us to share stories or insights from our coaching sessions.

At BetterUp, we have a culture of personal development and mental fitness. It's perfectly acceptable to take time for the Inner Work® that makes our outer work sustainable and more successful.

# Why is Mental Health Awareness so important?

---

Mental health isn't just a conversation for people with mental health disorders. It impacts our social, emotional, physical, and cognitive well-being.

Unfortunately, many people don't receive the treatment they need because of the stigma associated with mental health. Some don't even realize that treatment is available. When these people suffer quietly, they feel lonely and disenfranchised. We miss out on their brilliance. Every year, suicide is one of the top three causes of death in the United States. And it's been on the rise in recent years. This applies to all economic classes, ethnicities, and genders, although some groups are at a markedly higher risk.

Every suicide is a tragedy. Death by suicide comes at a high cost. Not only does it warrant financial losses, it's, more importantly, devastating for the survivors of the person who died. We never truly know how our actions impact another person, but if raising awareness can save a life, it is a truly worthwhile endeavor.



## Exclusive

Revealing the Artistry of Smiles:

# DR. GAGANPREET KAUR

Expert Dentist and Aesthetic Surgeon  
Crafting Beautiful Smiles

## Interview:

**Q. What is the biggest challenge working in the education industry while being in such a key position?**

A. Working in the education industry while heading an aesthetics and beauty institute comes with challenges. One of the biggest challenges is staying abreast of the rapidly evolving trends, technologies, and techniques in the beauty and aesthetics field. The beauty industry constantly evolves, with new treatments, products, and innovations emerging regularly. As a leader in the institute, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant, up-to-date, and aligned with industry standards is essential. This requires continuous research, networking with industry professionals, attending conferences and workshops, and keeping a finger on the pulse of the ever-changing beauty landscape.

Another significant challenge is balancing creativity and practicality in the curriculum. Aesthetics and beauty education require a blend of theoretical knowledge and hands-on practical skills. Finding the right balance between teaching the artistic aspects of beauty, such as makeup techniques or hair styling, and providing students with a solid foundation in the scientific and technical aspects of aesthetics can be challenging. Designing a curriculum that nurtures creativity and self-expression and emphasizes the importance of hygiene, safety protocols, and client care is crucial.

Additionally, the education industry faces challenges related to student engagement and retention. In the beauty and aesthetics field, where practical skills play a vital role, it is crucial to ensure that students remain motivated and actively participate in their education. This can be achieved by creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment, offering hands-on experiences, providing regular feedback, and organizing industry-relevant events and competitions to keep students engaged and excited about their learning journey. Overall, while heading an aesthetics and beauty institute in the education industry is rewarding, it requires constant adaptability, a deep understanding of industry dynamics, and a commitment to providing students with a holistic and industry-relevant learning experience.





**Q. During your entire career. Which milestone felt most accomplished and why?**

As a dentist, aesthetics, and cosmetology trainer, several milestones are significant and personally fulfilling. However, the most accomplished moment was when I saw my first batch of students graduating with the certification from my academy, and seeing them successful was the proudest moment. Apart from that, when I get positive and with a smile feedback from my patients and students, then there is a great feeling of accomplishment.





## Q. Educationists are usually advised to share their experience and learning. What information dissemination method is the most effective for this purpose?

Several methods can be considered when collectively disseminating information and sharing experiences and learnings as an educationist. The choice of method may depend on the target audience, the nature of the information being shared, and the desired impact. Here are some effective methods of information dissemination:

**1. Teaching and Classroom Instruction:** The traditional method of sharing knowledge and experiences through direct teaching in a classroom setting remains a powerful and practical approach. Educators can directly engage with students through lectures, interactive discussions, and hands-on demonstrations, fostering an environment of active learning and knowledge transfer.

**3. Online Learning Platforms and Webinars:** With the rise of technology and e-learning, online platforms and webinars have become increasingly popular for information dissemination. Online courses, webinars, and virtual workshops provide flexibility and accessibility, allowing educators to reach a wider audience. These platforms also facilitate engagement through multimedia content, interactive discussions, and networking opportunities.

**6. Mentoring and Personal Guidance:** Providing one-on-one mentoring and personal guidance to students or aspiring educators can be an impactful method of sharing experiences and knowledge.

**2. Workshops and Seminars:** Conducting workshops and seminars allows for more focused and in-depth information sharing. These sessions can be designed to address specific topics, skills, or areas of expertise. Workshops provide opportunities for interactive learning, practical demonstrations, and collaborative problem-solving, allowing participants to gain valuable insights and apply the knowledge gained.

**4. Writing and Publishing:** Sharing experiences and learnings through writing and publishing is a powerful method to reach a broader audience and leave a lasting impact.

**5. Professional Presentations and Conferences:** Participating in conferences, symposiums, and professional presentations allows educationists to connect with peers, share research findings, and exchange ideas.

It is important to note that the effectiveness of information dissemination depends not only on the chosen method but also on effective communication, clarity, and engagement with the audience. Combining multiple methods and adapting to different learning styles can enhance the overall impact of information dissemination as an educationist.



**Q. Recently, there have been many reports and trends of students opting for alternative education methods, such as distance learning, diplomas, and short courses. Etc. Instead of traditional degrees, what is your view on this?**

The increasing trend of students choosing alternative education methods, including distance learning, diplomas, and short courses, over traditional degrees reflects the evolving education landscape. This shift signifies a positive transformation in the educational paradigm. Alternative methods offer flexibility, accessibility, and specialized knowledge acquisition to a broader range of learners. They cater to individuals with diverse needs, such as working professionals seeking upskilling opportunities or individuals looking for targeted skill development in specific areas. Furthermore, these alternatives often provide efficient and focused learning experiences, allowing individuals to acquire relevant competencies in a shorter time frame. While traditional degrees hold value in specific fields, the rise of alternative education options signifies the growing importance of practical, industry-specific knowledge and lifelong learning. It is essential to recognize the changing educational landscape and adapt our perspectives to embrace the value of these alternative methods alongside traditional degrees.



**Q. As an educator, what's your perspective on the current education system in your region, and how do you think it can be improved or revolutionized if required?**

The current education system in my region has improved over the years with technological advancements and world-class infrastructure for students. However, some upgrades are still required, such as doctors needing to be trained for their skills, adding to a study of entrepreneurship training which helps them better administer their clinics and hospitals shortly.



**Q. Please share your philosophy of the ideal education a person can achieve regardless of its methods and processes. E.g., it could be simply a moment of enlightenment or a lifelong struggle to gain perspective; how would you describe the best education or lesson one can get?**

The ideal education transcends the confines of methods and processes, encompassing a lifelong journey of self-discovery, growth, and enlightenment. It is not confined to the walls of a classroom or the pages of a textbook but extends to every facet of life. The best education ignites curiosity, fosters critical thinking, and nurtures a thirst for knowledge. It empowers individuals to question, explore, and seek understanding, encouraging them to develop their unique perspectives and unlock their full potential. It goes beyond acquiring facts and figures, emphasizing the cultivation of empathy, compassion, and global awareness. The best education instills a love for learning that lasts a lifetime, inspiring individuals to continuously seek wisdom, broaden their horizons, and contribute meaningfully to the world. It is an ongoing pursuit of truth, enlightenment, and personal growth, encapsulating the profound realization that education is not merely a means to an end but a transformative and liberating force that shapes individuals and society.

The best Education or Lessons can be obtained by practicing. Though no one is perfect, learnings and life lessons lead to near perfection. So education gives you knowledge and learning. Real-life practice gives you lessons leading to success stories shortly.



## Q. Do you have any parting words of wisdom for educationists and students?

As a medical dentistry and cosmetology trainer and practitioner, I have witnessed the transformative power of knowledge, compassion, and dedication in shaping tomorrow's dental professionals. Here are some words of wisdom to inspire and guide you on your journey:

**1. Embrace Lifelong Learning:** Dentistry is a dynamic, evolving field. Stay curious, and embrace new research, advancements, and technologies. Commit yourself to lifelong learning to provide the best care for your patients and stay at the forefront of dental innovation.

**3. Master Communication Skills:** Effective communication is the cornerstone of successful patient interactions. Strive to listen actively, communicate clearly, and explain complex dental concepts. Establish trust, address concerns, and involve patients in their treatment plans to foster a collaborative approach.

**5. Foster a Team Approach:** Dentistry is rarely a solitary endeavor. Embrace collaboration and respect the contributions of your dental team. You create synergy and enhance patient outcomes by fostering a positive and supportive work environment.

**7. Embrace the Power of a Smile:** Remember that your work can transform lives. A confident smile can improve self-esteem, enhance overall well-being, and positively impact a person's quality of life. Cherish the opportunity to bring joy and confidence to your patients through your expertise.

**9. Embody Professionalism:** Uphold the highest standards of professionalism in all your interactions. Demonstrate respect, integrity, and accountability in your words and actions. Strive to be a role model for the dental community and inspire others to follow suit.

**2. Develop Empathy and Compassion:** Treat each patient as a unique individual with their fears, concerns, and aspirations. Develop a deep sense of empathy and compassion, as these qualities enable you to connect with patients on a human level and provide exceptional care.

**4. Be a Perfectionist with Integrity:** Dentistry demands precision and attention to detail. Strive for excellence in every aspect of your work, ensuring your patients' highest quality of care. However, always maintain your integrity by adhering to ethical standards and putting the well-being of patients above all else.

**6. Emphasize Preventive Care:** Prevention is vital to maintaining oral health. Educate your patients on the importance of regular check-ups, proper oral hygiene practices, and healthy lifestyle choices. Empower them to take control of their oral health and prevent future dental issues.

**8. Practice Self-Care:** As healthcare professionals, it is essential to prioritize self-care. Nurture your physical and mental well-being, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and seek support when needed. By taking care of yourself, you ensure you can continue providing the best care to your patients.

**10. Never Lose Sight of Your Purpose:** Remember your profound impact on people's lives. Each day, you have the opportunity to alleviate pain, restore confidence, and improve oral health. Stay passionate and committed, and always remember the noble purpose that drew you to dentistry in the first place.


Remember your profound impact on people's lives. Each day, you have the opportunity to alleviate pain, restore confidence, and improve oral health. Stay passionate and committed, and always remember the noble purpose that drew you to dentistry in the first place.

# How Does Education Affect **Mental Health?**

---

By Dr. Nicola Williams, Ph.D.





Higher levels of education have been associated with better mental health. Causal relationships are notoriously difficult to establish and are generally multifactorial. Nevertheless, education has been shown to be one of the clearest indicators of life outcomes, such as employment, income, and social status. It is thus a strong predictor for improved health and well-being.

Meanwhile, lower levels of educational achievement have been linked to lower socioeconomic status. But there is no simple strategy to improve a nation's health and economic success. In the past, compulsory schooling laws, which imposed a legal obligation on children to stay in school longer, were found to lead to deleterious outcomes in mental health.

This article looks at the associations between education and mental health, the link to socioeconomic status and other factors such as age and gender, and the political intricacies involved in alleviating the problems for future generations.



# Educational attainment and mental health

---

Higher levels of education have been associated with better mental health. The reasons touted are that educated people have a greater number of choices and thus more control over their lives and better security. Those in receipt of higher education are liable to earn more throughout their lifetimes.

Conversely, job satisfaction among educated people has been found to be surprisingly low, and this could be because of high aspirations, which sometimes prove to be unfeasible. Similarly, life satisfaction can also be lower in this demographic cohort.

Meanwhile, low education has been linked to a lack of a sense of control and resilience. A corollary of low educational attainment can be lowered socioeconomic status. Lower education is associated with "a lack of psychosocial resources" (Neimeyer, H. et al., 2020) —such as a sense of control, resilience, the ability to delay gratification, and access to cultural activities —and exposure to more day-to-day stressors. These negative factors have been strongly correlated with the onset of depression.





# Education and socioeconomic status

---

Multiple factors may contribute to the association between socioeconomic status and mental health. Notwithstanding the challenges, research has uncovered a correlation between lowered socioeconomic status and problems with mental health. A gradient in mental health has been found in analyses of the independent indicators of occupation, income, and education, and this is continuous throughout a lifetime.

**A guide to looking after your mental health can be found [here](#).**

There have been attempts to establish a causal relationship between socioeconomic status and mental health. Two different models have been used to assess this relationship:

## ➔ Selection model

*Explains the differential social gradient by individual downward drift after the onset of mental health problems occur*

## ➔ Causation model

*Assumes factors linked with socioeconomic status contribute to the onset of mental health issues in the first place*

Research findings specifically looking at depression have been inconsistent. But there is growing consensus in support of the causation model. The WHO recommended that researchers balance their research efforts by considering positive mental health (PMH) -- comprising emotional, psychological, and social well-being. There is currently a paucity of studies opting to analyze either of the two models --social selection or causation --in the context of PMH.



# Gender and age are also important

---

Researchers have found gender and age to be important sociodemographic factors in studies looking at the educational level of attainment concomitant with socioeconomic status in association with negative mental health outcomes. Women are at higher risk than men (9.9% compared to 4.2%, Maske et al. 2016). The risks are also much greater for members of the younger population than they are for older adults.

Older retired people with a higher level of educational attainment and a positive attitude toward leisure have been discovered to enjoy better levels of well-being, better social lives, and better cognitive function.

Engagement with leisure activities helps offset the major stressors associated with getting older such as losing loved ones and health-related concerns about disability and disease. A higher level of education has also been correlated to a better perception of age-related physical, life, and professional changes.

A photograph showing a group of students and a teacher gathered around a table in a classroom. They are looking at a laptop and a tablet, appearing to be in a collaborative learning activity. The teacher, a man with glasses and a plaid shirt, is leaning over the table, pointing at the laptop. The students are smiling and engaged. The background shows a classroom setting with a window and some storage bins.

# Educating only those who want to be educated

Given the above findings, does more education always then improve mental health? Research has demonstrated that this is only sometimes the case. In many people staying in education can have deleterious effects on mental health. Researchers studied the problem after educational reforms in Britain in the early 1970s recommended raising the minimum age for leaving school from 15 to 16.

The whitepaper, 'Education: a framework for Expansion,' was presented to parliament in 1972. Although the reform marginally improved educational attainment and raised inspiration levels, it had no impact on social mobility. Instead, researchers discovered that critical reforms served to increase the risk of depression and other mental health problems in adulthood.

The results did not suggest that the physical act of staying in school was the problem. Rather the findings were the result of forcing low-achieving teenagers to stay in an academically focused environment under which they were not thriving. Researchers posited that the reforms might result in long-term unintended consequences to mental health.

Although better educational attainment has been linked to better individual mental health outcomes, there remain differentials of age and gender to be attended to. Furthermore, improving the nation's mental health is not simply a case of prescribing better opportunities for improving education, as past attempts to do so have revealed. This prescription is not suited to all. Researchers have begun instead to search for solutions and interventions to tackle the existing inequalities, and more such research is now needed.

Monthly Announced

# Featured Accreditations

IAO saw an overwhelming amount of institutes applying for accreditation, eager to be recognized globally through our seal and certificate. Here in the IAO featured accreditations, we include the most dedicated institutes striving to provide high-quality education and are certified globally by IAO.

#1



## IAO GRANTS FULL ACCREDITATION TO JOMS INTERNATIONAL BEAUTY ACADEMY & SALON

**Joms International Beauty Academy & Salon** has passed our scrutiny system and achieved full accreditation. For years, the institute has worked for its vision that aims to lead and be recognized as a training institution, prospective, of professionals of excellence, generating new knowledge, granting values and principles following the development of the common good, from an innovative seal, which is distinguished by its community of learning globally.



## IAO GRANTS FULL

## ACCREDITATION TO ASHA; THE HOPE

**Asha The Hope** has successfully passed all the requirements, and therefore, its membership has been renewed. Now part of IAO's list of fully accredited institutes, Asha The Hope is committed to helping fresh graduates achieve the skills and expertise required to take their careers to the next level. The institute offers them comprehensive technical training to acquire, maintain and optimize their Industrial Automation skills.

**Asha, The Hope** is a learning gateway that focuses on inner transformation through expanding your consciousness by self-development and raising cultural intelligence. Asha, The Hope is proud to be one of the first platforms to offer online accredited courses, which use effective teaching methods and bring forth the students' dynamic understanding of the mind, life, and how it works. All students are valued and supported through their learning journey and attaining a professional title of achievement.



## IAO GRANTS FULL ACCREDITATION TO ELLEN TECHNOLABS

**Ellen TechnoLab** has successfully passed all the requirements, and therefore, its membership has been renewed. Now part of IAO's list of fully accredited institutes, Ellen TechnoLabs is committed to helping fresh graduates achieve the skills and expertise required to take their careers to the next level. The institute offers them comprehensive technical training to acquire, maintain and optimize their Industrial Automation skills.

**Ellen TechnoLabs** is an Industrial Automation Training Centre offering comprehensive professional training covering areas of the industrial automation field and the complete cycle of a project. It is conducted in small groups and comprises classroom sessions, practical training, and hands-on experience to ensure maximum learning and enhance expertise in product competency, engineering, and project execution.



## IAO GRANTS FULL ACCREDITATION TO OXFAA UNIVERSITY

**Oxfaa University** has passed our scrutiny system and achieved full accreditation. The university has worked for its vision that aims to lead and be recognized as a training institution, prospective, of professionals of excellence, generating new knowledge, granting values and principles in accordance with the development of the common good, from an innovative seal, which is distinguished by its community of learning globally.



# Managing Stress in High School

Our reasons may vary, but everyone experiences stress. Here are some of the common reasons high school students feel stressed and what they can do about it.

---

By Pamela Reynolds



*Exams. Choosing a college. Figuring out what to do with your life.*

No doubt, high school can be a high-pressure time in life. And high school students, as a result, get stressed out.

In fact, according to the American Psychological Association's Stress in America 2020 survey, teens who are already under stress due to the normal pressures of high school have felt even more stress in recent years, thanks to the pandemic. About 43 percent of teens surveyed in 2020 said their stress levels had gone up, and 45 percent said they had a hard time concentrating on schoolwork. Many reported feeling less motivated.

Although life has mostly returned to normal, that doesn't mean the stress that high school students feel has disappeared. The typical challenges that anyone faces in high school continue as they always have and, in some cases, have grown more complicated. Consequently, surveys suggest many teens continue to experience a decline in mental and physical health.

If you're in high school and stressed, we get it. In this blog, we'll talk about what stress is, what triggers it, and how you can manage it.





# What is Stress?

**“Stress”** is a term we use constantly in conversation, but **what does it really mean?**

Stress can be defined as our physical and mental responses to some external event. The event might be considered “good,” like preparing to go to the prom, or bad, like feeling tense after an illness, an argument with a friend, or while preparing for an upcoming test.

The good thing about most stress is that it usually goes away once the external event causing the stress is over.

Alternatively, there is a type of stress that results more from an internal dialogue than an external event. We call this “anxiety.” It involves persistent feelings of dread or apprehension that interfere with your daily life, even after the test, the argument, or prom, is just a distant memory.



## Why Are Teens So Stressed?

Simply being a teenager can be hard. Your body is changing. You may be grappling with your sexuality or gender identity. Add to that the academic demands of high school and throw in the pressures of social media, and the tension mounts.

**“Some of the common triggers of stress in teens might be anxiety to perform well in academics such as getting into a good college, peer pressure, interpersonal relationships, or body image issues,”** says Sakshi Khurana, Research Fellow at Harvard’s Weisz Lab for Youth Mental Health. **“Other larger issues that the world is going through — for example, climate change or war— might also act as stressors for teens as they are learning about the world.”**

The most common source of stress for high school students, according to the 2017 APA Stress survey, is the school itself, with about 83 percent of teens identifying the school as a major stressor. The second biggest source of student stress (according to 69 percent of students) was getting into a good college or deciding what to do after high school. The third biggest teen stress was financial concerns for the family (65 percent of students).



## Here's a quick breakdown of broad categories of **factors that may stress you out:**

---

### **Academics:**

In high school, not only are you worried about next week's English, History, or Calculus exam, but you're also worried about applying to college and taking the SATs too. It can all feel overwhelming, and you may feel pressure to please your parents and teachers.

### **Social Stress:**

Even without the pressures of academics, life in high school can be demanding. Dealing with friends and classmates, starting new romantic relationships, and handling bullies and peer pressure online and off, can be a lot to handle.

### **Family Issues:**

If your parents are divorcing, if your family is experiencing financial problems, or even if you just have trouble getting along with siblings, your stress levels can go up.

### **Trauma:**

Dramatic life events ranging from a death in the family to an accident to emotional and physical abuse can cause stress. Also, in this category, you can include the collective trauma of global events such as school shootings, terrorism, and natural disasters.

### **Big Life Changes:**

Changes like moving and starting a new school can be a major stress for teens.



## What are Signs of Stress in High School Students?

If you're a high school student feeling stressed, you may not even recognize the symptoms.

In fact, many symptoms of stress might be considered normal for teens who are also dealing with natural hormonal and physical changes. For that reason, it's important to consider whether behavioral changes can be linked in time to an external event.

### Signs of stress include:

- Feeling more agitated, anxious, short-tempered, or depressed
- Getting sick more often
- Having more headaches, stomachaches, or other aches and pains
- Feeling more tired than usual
- Not being able to sleep or sleeping too much.
- Skipping meals or overeating
- Neglecting chores or hobbies
- Trouble concentrating and forgetfulness
- High blood pressure

**According to the APA 2017 survey, the most common symptoms of stress among teens were**

- Insomnia,
- Overeating or eating unhealthy foods,
- Skipping meals,
- Feeling angry, nervous, or anxious,
- Feeling fatigued, and
- Snapping at friends and classmates.



# Why is Stress so Problematic for Teens?

Let's be clear, a little bit of stress is a normal part of life and sometimes even desirable.

Stress can act as a motivator, getting us to do things we might not otherwise. Good stress is called "eustress" and can help get you excited and energized about that first date or taking the stage in your first musical.

But too much unrelieved stress can lead to mental and physical health issues.

Your body reacts to stress by releasing a hormone called cortisol which regulates blood pressure and immune function. If you're stressed all the time and your body produces too much cortisol, it can lower your immunity, raise your blood pressure, and impair your cognitive performance.

**"In the teen years, due to hormonal changes, stress tends to influence the emotional functioning of the brain, which in turn impacts the cognitive and executive functioning,"** says Khurana.

You might not be able to sleep; you may overeat or develop digestive, cardiovascular, or immune problems. Stress can even put you at a higher risk for developing mental illnesses like anxiety or depression.



## What are the Best Techniques to Help Students Manage Stress?

Since too much stress is not a good thing for your mind or body, you should think about incorporating a few stress management techniques into your daily life.

**“A few techniques that might help teens manage stress are relaxation through deep breathing, meditation, or mindfulness, channeling energy into sports or creative pursuits such as music, art, theater, and forming meaningful relationships or friendships,” says Khurana. “Additionally, every culture has its own way of enabling young people to manage stress, so drawing from those traditions might be helpful as well.”**

Here are a few ideas of how high school students can learn how to deal with stress at school:

- Keeping a journal
- Getting plenty of exercise
- Eating healthy, regular meals
- Making sure you get enough sleep
- Meditating
- Downloading an app that provides relaxation exercises (such as deep breathing or visualization) or tips for practicing mindfulness
- Limiting excess caffeine in soft drinks or coffee
- Reaching out to friends or family members who help you cope in a positive way
- Making time to do fun things
- Learning to recognize and prepare for stressful periods by doing all of the above

With so many big life decisions ahead, getting through high school happy and whole can definitely feel challenging at times. It's easy to see why so many high school students feel stressed. The good news is that there are solutions. Adopt the strategies above, take a deep breath, and remember, it's not forever!



**Did You Know?**

IAO Accredited  
Institutes  
Enjoy an Increase  
of 42% in their  
Admissions

Apply for Accreditation

visit: [www.iao.org](http://www.iao.org)

[www.iao.org](http://www.iao.org)

1-785-626-8371 (IAO)

1-855-5237-426 (IAO)

[info@iao.org](mailto:info@iao.org)