



Helping College Students with Anxiety

Going away to college is a big transition for students and their parents. It's normal for teens to feel stressed or anxious during times of change, whether it's leaving home for the first time or beginning a new semester. But while a certain level of stress is healthy and even motivating, too much stress can cause problems and affect one's health, productivity, and relationships.

How common is anxiety among college students? A [2015 national survey](#) of 19,000 college students showed that in a 12-month period, nearly 60% reported feeling overwhelming anxiety, with a third feeling so depressed they found it difficult to function. Fortunately there are ways to manage stress and reduce, or even prevent, some of the problems it can create.

Is it an Anxiety Disorder?

Most, if not all, college students will feel anxious and stressed at some point, whether it's from academic challenges or social pressures. Mild anxiety is normal and can prompt an individual to study and complete assignments.

However, a [generalized anxiety disorder](#) may be present if the person experiences chronic, exaggerated worry, tension, and irritability that appear to have no cause or are more intense than the situation warrants. Physical signs, such as restlessness, trouble falling or staying asleep, headaches, trembling, twitching, muscle tension, or sweating often accompany these psychological symptoms.

The good news is, anxiety is treatable and there are a number of options available:

- **Therapy:** One highly effective and proven therapy is cognitive-behavioral therapy, or CBT. CBT helps the person identify,

understand, and change the thinking and behavior patterns that cause anxiety.

- **Medication:** Medications, such as antidepressants and anti-anxiety agents, may be prescribed in conjunction with therapy in order to control debilitating symptoms.
- **Self-Management, Complementary and Alternative Treatments:** Stress and relaxation techniques such as exercise, meditation and yoga, may help reduce anxiety.

For many people, one or more of the above treatment options are very effective in reducing their symptoms.

If you, or someone you know, is interested in primary care, addiction recovery services, or mental health care for children or adults, contact InterCommunity. To receive services at any of our Hartford or East Hartford locations, please call 860-569-5900.



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