

# 10 Signs Your Teen Is Stressed Out

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Although teens don't have to worry about bills, a career, or holding down a household, they experience different sources of stress. They deal with issues like bullying, peer pressure, and academic issues which can be very stressful.

Without appropriate support, stressed-out teens may be at a higher risk for [mental health problems](#), academic problems, and health issues. So it's important to be on the lookout for warning signs your teen is feeling stressed out. Then, you can intervene sooner, rather than later.

Here are some of the top signs that your teen is stressed out.

## 1. Headaches and Stomachaches

Stress often leads to physical health complaints. Frequent headaches, stomachaches, and other somatic concerns may be a sign of stress.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Sleep Issues

Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep can be a sign of stress.<sup>2</sup> And it can be a vicious cycle. An overtired teen is less likely to be able to tolerate stress.

Some stressed-out teens sleep too much. A teen who always wants to go back to bed after school or one who tries to sleep all day on the weekends may be trying to escape her stress.

### **3. Educational Problems**

Sometimes stress-related problems stem from school-related issues. At other times, academic problems result because a teen is stressed out. If your teen's grades have declined or if your teen's attendance is poor, consider whether the change may be stress-related.

### **4. Increased Irritability**

Although teens can be moody by nature, a stressed-out teen is likely to be more irritable than usual. A teen who becomes irritable over small inconveniences frequently may be feeling overwhelmed by life's challenges.

### **5. Changes in Socialization**

Stress is likely to change a teen's social habits. Social isolation can be a sign your teen is struggling with stress.<sup>3</sup>

Spending more time in her room or a lack of interest in talking to friends could mean your teen is having difficulties.

## **6. Frequent Illness**

Teens who are stressed out are also more likely to get colds and other minor illnesses. They may miss school or social events often due to illness.

## **7. Negative Changes in Behavior**

Behavior problems often result when a teen is stressed out. You may see increased behavior problems ranging from skipping school to talking back. Don't excuse negative behavior just because it's stress-related, however.

## **8. Difficulty Concentrating**

When teens have a lot on their minds, it's hard for them to concentrate on their work.<sup>4</sup> They may become easily distracted in class and might have increased difficulty staying on task while completing their homework.

## **9. Negative Talk**

You'll often hear stressed-out teens use a lot of negative talk. For example, a teen may say things like, "No one likes me," or "Nothing ever seems to go right." Although it's

normal for teens to make these comments sometimes, if you're hearing them too often, it's likely a sign of stress.<sup>5</sup>

## 10. General Sense of Worry

Stressed teens often worry about anything and everything. They may worry about all the possible bad things that could happen or they may worry about how others will perceive them. If your teen has been expressing more worry than usual, it could be due to stress.

## When to Seek Professional Help

Many teens aren't able to say, "I'm stressed and this is the reason why." Therefore, their behaviors often signal how they're feeling.<sup>6</sup>

If you suspect your teen is struggling with stress, start a conversation about it. You may also want to teach your teen some simple [stress management techniques](#).

If your teen's stress seems to be interfering with school, family, household responsibilities, or friends, it may be time to seek professional help.<sup>4</sup> Symptoms lasting more than two weeks could be a sign that your teen may have an underlying mental health problem, like [depression](#) or [anxiety](#).

Talk to your teen's pediatrician if you have concerns about

stress. It's important to rule out any physical health issues and to discuss treatment options. A physician may refer your child to counseling.