

THE OMG

Anxiety Check

A parent guide for noticing what may be happening underneath a teen's behavior.

The goal is not to diagnose anxiety. The goal is to make anxiety part of the conversation when your teen suddenly changes, withdraws, avoids, or says, “I don’t care anymore.”

Pause. Notice. Get curious.

When a teen’s behavior changes, ask: **“Could anxiety be part of what I’m seeing?”**

1	TENSION Does your teen seem unusually tense, restless, irritable, overwhelmed, or unable to relax?
2	THOUGHTS Are there repetitive worries, unwanted thoughts, intrusive thoughts, or thoughts that feel difficult to shut off?
3	REASSURANCE Are they repeatedly asking: “Am I okay?” “Are you sure?” “Do you think I’m good enough?” - and the reassurance only helps briefly?
4	AVOIDANCE Are they pulling away from school, sports, friends, activities, people, places, or situations that make them uncomfortable?
5	PERFECTIONISM Does a mistake feel disappointing - or devastating? Are they constantly comparing, reviewing, or afraid of failing?
6	BODY Is worry showing up physically: stomach discomfort, nausea, headaches, shaking, racing heart, sleep difficulty, or muscle tension?
7	IMPACT Is this beginning to interfere with school, sports, sleep, friendships, family life, confidence, or everyday functioning?

LOOK FOR A PATTERN - NOT A SCORE. One sign does not mean your teen has an anxiety disorder. Patterns, intensity, frequency, and impact matter.

Change the conversation

Instead of trying to fix the feeling immediately, ask questions that help you understand it.

Instead of: “Why are you acting like this?”

Try: “You seem different lately. What has been feeling harder?”

Instead of: “There’s nothing to worry about.”

Try: “What is your brain telling you might happen?”

Instead of: “You’re fine.”

Try: “I can tell this feels really big to you.”

Instead of: “Just stop thinking about it.”

Try: “Does the thought keep coming back even when you don’t want it to?”

Instead of: “You’re good - stop asking.”

Try: “I notice you need me to reassure you a lot. Does the worry come back soon after I answer?”

Instead of immediately solving it

Try: “Do you want me to listen, help you think it through, or help you find support?”

One powerful question

“Are you trying to leave the situation - or trying to escape how you feel when you’re in it?”

When to consider more support

Consider talking with a qualified mental health professional when anxiety, intrusive thoughts, reassurance seeking, avoidance, perfectionism, or physical distress is persistent, escalating, or interfering with daily life.

Important: Physical symptoms should not automatically be attributed to anxiety. New, significant, persistent, or concerning symptoms should also be evaluated by an appropriate medical professional.

HELP. DON’T FIX.

Understand what’s underneath. Then help them move forward.

About the OMG Anxiety Check

The OMG Anxiety Check is an educational framework created by One Mindset Go Counseling to help parents notice possible anxiety-related patterns and begin healthier conversations with their teenagers. It is not a diagnostic assessment and does not replace individualized medical or mental health care.

Learn more: onemindsetgo.com | One Mindset Go Counseling | © 2026

Educational references: American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and International OCD Foundation (IOCDF) pediatric anxiety/OCD resources.