



# COUNSELING CONNECTION

## MARCH NEWSLETTER OVERCOMING ANXIETY

### BPA Student Support & Services

#### What is Test Anxiety?

Does taking a test make your child overly stressed? Too much stress can get in the way of kids achieving their potential. Standardized testing has become more common, and so has test anxiety. Worrying that they won't do well can make it harder for your child to focus at the moment.

Test anxiety is one of the biggest challenges students face today. It can show up in students of all ages at testing time. Students can be 100 percent prepared and ready but then freeze up when they sit down to take the test. Kids with test anxiety perform at least half a letter grade below their peers. Test anxiety increases mistakes, reduces reasoning and working memory, creates confusion, and lowers test scores. More importantly, it's harmful to the well-being of our children.

Test anxiety can lead to decreased confidence and avoidance of schoolwork, but we can use strategies to help children cope with the stress.

#### Tips for Parents

You can also use the following tips to help your child feel their best on test day:

1. Encourage plenty of exercise
2. Get plenty of rest
3. Avoid excessive screen time
4. Provide a protein-rich breakfast in the morning
5. Encourage your child with a big hug and positive affirmations
6. Provide helpful test-taking tips such as:
  - Use the process of elimination to cross out the answers that you know are wrong.
  - Make an educated guess
  - Read all the answer choices before choosing one.

Standardized tests don't define your child as a student, much less as a person. Sometimes, children's anxiety is caused by their desire to please parents or other adults.

Put tests into perspective. Encourage children to do their best, but remind them that one test won't make or break their future. Tell them they will be loved and valued no matter how well they do on the test.



believe  
in  
yourself