



DIGITAL MEDIA PROJECT

# *Stress & Anxiety Among High School Students*

Podcast & Infographic

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## **Brainstorm:**

Theme:

Teacher and an anxious student; techniques to reduce stress and anxiety

Main Topics to cover:

- Academic Stress
  - Know what kind of learner they are and not put too much pressure on them
  - Acceptance in school, academic success
- Personal Issues
  - Weight, sports, fitting in
- Social Issues
  - Good and bad friendships
  - Speaking out

Points to speak about:

- Lack of focus
- Things you used to enjoy are no longer exciting
  
- Opening up to others about how you're feeling
- Open up to friends? (ask for friends, you are not alone)  
sometimes these things happen for no reason
- Awareness and reassurance - talk to students about it
- Interests
- Talking to family
- Counselors
- Teachers are important → noticing when students may be not acting like themselves
- Calmness
- Making friends
- Managing feelings and understanding what is going on
- Talking/writing
- Exercising/taking up a hobby and taking breaks
  
- Know when to refer student to professionals  
→ Medical interventions, therapist, psychologist,

### **Division of labour:**

Brainstorm for podcast script: Kevin, Emilie and Gabriella

Rough draft of script: Kevin, Emilie and Gabriella

Rewriting and editing of script: Emilie and Gabriella

Recording podcast on Audacity: Kevin, Emilie and Gabriella

Finding fade-in and fade-out background music: Emilie

Finding narrator music: Gabriella

Editing and combining script with music on Audacity: Kevin

Creation of title page on Canva: Emilie and Gabriella

Brainstorm for infographic: Kevin, Emilie and Gabriella

Creation of infographic on Canva: Emilie, Kevin and Gabriella

**Script (Storyboard for podcast):**

**Narrator:** Emilie Garon

**Sam (Student):** Kevin Paquette

**Ms. Avery (Teacher):** Gabriella Riccio

(0:00)

Introduction:

*(Introduction fade-in music)*

*(Music fades a little bit)*

(0:16)

**Narrator:** Hi, and welcome to our podcast about stress and anxiety among high school students. Today, we will witness a conversation between an anxious student and his concerned teacher, and discuss various stressors in school and life in general, as well as the appropriate techniques that students and teachers can use to help themselves or others. Now, let's meet our anxious student.

*(Music gets louder, then drops back down)*

(0:48)

**Sam:** I'm Sam. I'm in grade 10 and I have some big exams coming up. I haven't been feeling like myself over the past few weeks now, and I just really don't know why or what to do. My friends have started spending less and less time with me and they don't answer my texts and ignore me on Snapchat and Facebook... and I just don't know what to do, I feel like i have no one.

(1:11)

**Narrator:** Now that we met Sam, let's meet our helpful teacher.

*(Music fades out)*

(1:18)

**Ms. Avery:** Hello, I am miss Avery and I have a been a teacher at this school for 7 years. Lately, I noticed my student Sam acting different. He keeps to himself more often and is less focused in class. During lunch hours, I noticed him eating alone, which is unlike him. I believe it's time for me to step in and see what's going on.

*(New narration music fades in)*

(1:43)

**Narrator:** Let's see what happened when Ms. Avery decided to approach Sam.

*(Music fades out)*

(1:49)

**Ms. Avery:** Hi Sam, how's it going? How are you feeling today?

(1:53)

**Sam:** Um... I'm okay.

(1:56)

**Ms. Avery:** I wanted to talk to you about something I've noticed recently, if that's okay with you.

(1:59)

**Sam:** What's wrong? Am I failing? Did I do something wrong?

(2:03)

**Ms. Avery:** No no, nothing like that! I just wanted to ask how you've been feeling lately.

(2:07)

**Sam:** I don't know, I just know I haven't been feeling like myself the past little while.

(2:13)

**Ms. Avery:** It's okay to not feel okay! If you're up to it, why don't we have a little chat about it? Maybe we can figure it out together.

*(Music fades in)*

(2:21)

**Narrator:** It's important to know that one must not push the student to talk about it. It is common that the students who may be struggling with their mental health may not know why they are feeling the way they do. For this reason, Ms. Avery decided to break down various possibilities as to why Sam may be feeling off.

*(Music fades out)*

(2:41)

ACADEMICS:

(2:42)

**Ms. Avery:** Is it school that's bothering you?

(2:45)

**Sam:** Well I mean... it's a huge year in terms of applying to CEGEP and I keep hearing that the exams are so important for the grades on our transcript. And what if I don't do well? Then I don't get into CEGEP...then I don't get into my program... then I don't have a future.. and oh my god...

(2:56)

**Ms Avery:** Oh woah woah woah woah... Hold on there, let's take it one step at a time. Exams can be very stressful for students, but they are not the end all be all.

(3:06)

**Sam:** I know, but like, the exams are what decide if I succeed or not.

(3:10)

**Ms. Avery:** Sam, success is subjective for everyone. You shouldn't compare yourself to others. How about you make yourself a realistic schedule?

*(Music fades in)*

(3:19)

**Narrator:** Setting yourself realistic goals is key. More often than not, students find themselves making lengthy to-do lists, and only end up disappointed at the end of the day when they got nothing they wanted to accomplish done. Instead, try choosing one task to do at a time, or maybe do the easiest thing first in order to boost your confidence and stay motivated throughout your studying.

*(Music fades out)*

(3:46)

**Sam:** I think that sounds like a good idea but I just don't know how I can make a realistic schedule based on how much I have to do in so little time.

(3:55)

**Ms. Avery:** Okay Sam, you have a lot of time to study for your exams. First of all, you need to always remember to breathe, and after you set your realistic schedule; take your time and read over your notes. Look at what you're not sure about, and don't forget that you have so many resources out there, you could even come for remediation during lunch hours. Anything is possible if you set your mind to it. The first step, however, is to believe in yourself and to not let yourself down.

*(Music fades in)*

(4:29)

**Narrator:** Like Sam, many students struggle in school because they get so overwhelmed. It is important for teachers to know what kind of learners their students are. This will allow them to accommodate for their needs during exam periods. If a student's anxiety is getting in the way of their performance, the teacher can allow the students to possibly write the exams in a different location or even provide possible extensions for assignments.

*(Music fades out)*

(4:55)

PERSONAL ISSUES:

(4:57)

**Ms. Avery:** Is there anything else that's bothering you Sam?

(4:59)

**Sam:** My friends are getting bigger muscles and I'm not gaining anything but weight, they're all on the school sports teams but I can't even kick a ball. I don't want to try out for any teams because they're all so great and I suck so bad.

(5:12)

**Ms. Avery:** Physical wellbeing goes far beyond being on a sports team Sam. Is there anything that you have wanted to try? Like a sport or playing an instrument or anything actually?

(5:22)

**Sam:** Not really... I mean I've wanted to try dancing ever since I saw that show a few years back.

(5:27)

**Ms. Avery:** Great! Why don't we talk to Mrs. McGirr about trying it out? They just started auditions for a new Irish Dancing show.

(5:34)

**Sam:** I don't know, I really don't have any talent but...

(5:37)

**Ms. Avery:** You never know until you try Sam! Why don't we give it a shot?

(5:43)

**Sam:** I'm still out of shape though, I don't think I'll fit in there.

(5:46)

**Ms. Avery:** Your success won't be determined by your appearance, Sam. It's about your hard work and determination. That's how you'll succeed in anything you want to do.

*(Music fades in)*

(5:56)

**Narrator:** Struggling with self-esteem is very common throughout adolescence. Teens tend to compare themselves to one another and are very critical about themselves in terms of physical appearance, their weight and what their friends look like. It is important to remember that body image, self esteem, and mental health tie in with one another. If you tell yourself that you are not good enough at something like a sport, or a hobby, often times you won't succeed in what you are doing, and as a result blame yourself. On the contrary, taking time to take care of yourself in good and bad times will help you be more comfortable with the way you look and feel, and ultimately help raise your self esteem. It is important to remember that things won't always be perfect, but trying is the first step to success and growth. When placing realistic expectations, we tend to impress ourselves and succeed far more than we would have imagined.

*(Music fades out)*



(7:00)

SOCIAL ISSUES:

(7:03)

**Ms. Avery:** I remember you said something about your friends not being very nice to you recently.

(7:09)

**Sam:** I wouldn't say that they've been mean to me, I think they've just been distant because they have a lot coming up too.

(7:13)

**Ms. Avery:** Ok, I see what you're saying. I don't think it's right for them to just ignore you because you've been a little bit different the past little while. I don't think that they're really good friends if they do that.

(7:24)

**Sam:** But they're my friends, I'm sure they didn't mean to make me feel bad.

*(Music fades in)*

(7:31)

**Narrator:** It's important to distance yourself from people who might belittle you even if you do consider them your friends. Depending on the situation, it's important to communicate with your friends and let them know how you're feeling and what may be bothering you. Highschool can sometimes be a hard time for students to feel accepted or to fit in.

*(Music fades out)*

(7:50)

**Ms. Avery:** Sam, maybe you should talk to your friends about it and see why they've been treating you this way.

(7:55)

**Sam:** But, I'm nervous to do that. What if they judge me for talking to them about it.

(8:01)

**Ms. Avery:** You'll never know unless you try. You know, sometimes you need to try to see if these people are actually worth being your friends and if, after you tell them how you feel, they do judge you, then it is up to you to rethink your friendship and

see if they should stay in your life or if you should walk away from them.

(8:20)

**Sam:** Yeah, you're right. Thank you for reaching out. It really means a lot to me.

*(Conclusion music fades in)*

(8:26)

**Ms. Avery:** And, if you do have any other questions or you just want to talk about it, you know that you can talk to friends or family. In the end, there are so many people out there to listen and to help. Just remember to never give up on yourself.

(8:43)

CONCLUSION:

(8:45)

**Narrator:** When a student is not feeling like themselves, they shouldn't hesitate to reach out for help. Sam was lucky enough to have a concerned teacher like Ms. Avery, but that's not everyone's case. No one deserves to feel down everyday, or anxious. Even reaching out to a friend can help you find comfort. Depending on the type or severity of your situation, you may need to go beyond your local environment. There are doctors, therapists, counsellors, and even psychologists that can provide the help you may need. When you feel like it's becoming all too much, remember how important it is to take care of yourself. Meditate, exercise, practice mindfulness, or do find something that helps you relax. Wellbeing does not mean the same thing for everyone. It is completely different for you and me. Should we let our fears get in the way of our happiness? That would only hold us back from growing as individuals. Fears can only make us blind of all the possibilities and opportunities we can face in our lifetimes. Some people break down in the presence of fear, and these are the people that sometimes need a little reminder to thrive when faced with diversity.

*(Music fades out)*

When times get tough, it is important to remember that you are not alone.

## References

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