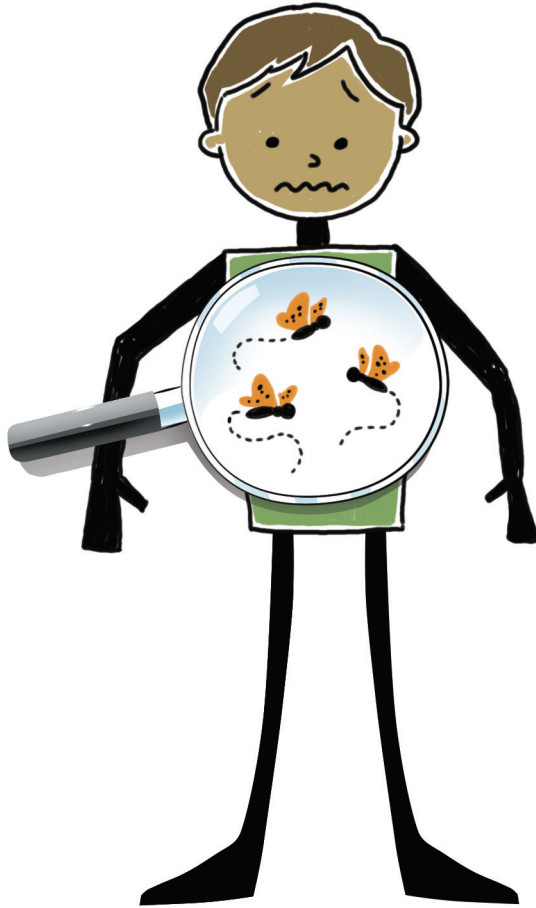
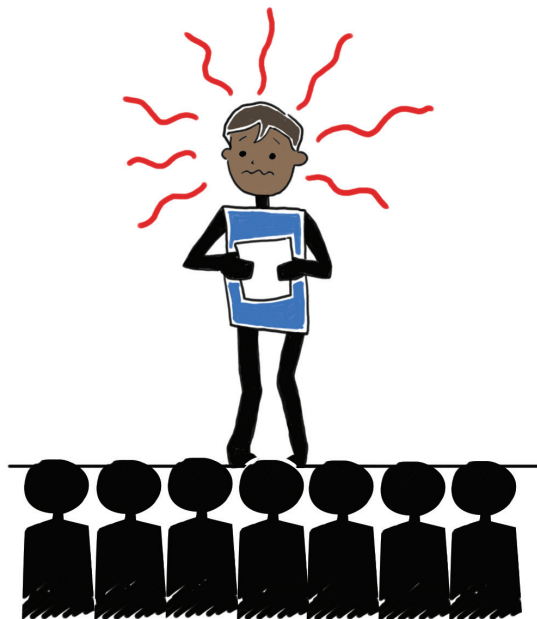


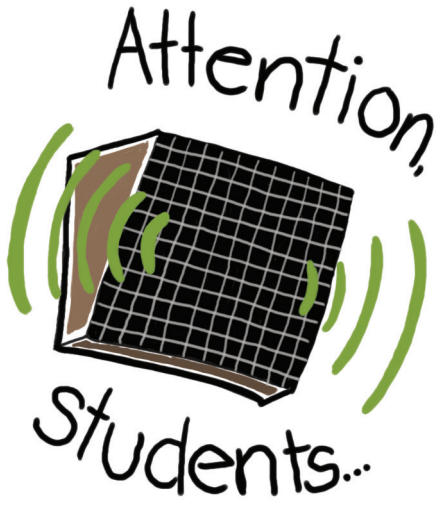
# Let's Talk About Anxiety



Do you ever feel butterflies in your stomach when you have to speak in public, or maybe your hands get sweaty and your heart pounds before a big test? **Stress** is the cause of these physical changes in your body. Fear, worry, embarrassment, and dread are emotions that may trigger this feeling. When the stress starts to build or reoccurs often, it becomes **anxiety**. Rest assured that everyone feels anxiety from time to time. It's simply part of being human!

People feel anxious in response to different things. Some people have a fear of being embarrassed or of being judged by others. So, social events trigger their anxiety. Other people feel anxious around spiders, snakes, or dogs. Some people feel anxious when playing a sport. Others feel anxious before taking a test. Watching a scary movie can cause anxiety, even when you know the movie isn't real!





Everything was going great *until* the intercom beeped for afternoon announcements. Principal Paisley reminded us to bring our gym clothes because Wednesday would be the first actual day of P.E. She also told us to memorize our new locker combinations for the lockers in the gym. I groaned and laid my head on my desk. Gym class sounds like the absolute **WORST**.

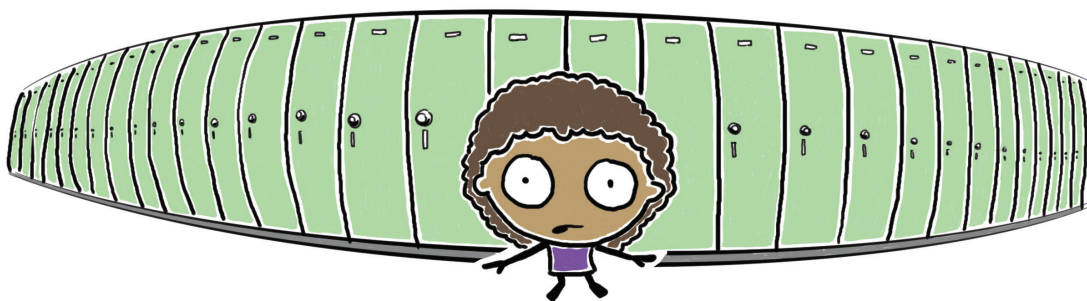


Now, I am home writing in this journal and staring at my neatly folded gym clothes. I can't stop **feeling anxious** about gym class tomorrow. My emotions have been up and down all day, like a wild rollercoaster ride!

*What happens if it takes me an eternity to change my clothes?*

*What if I forget my locker combination???*

*What if I can't remember which locker is mine???*



I looked at the list of mindfulness skills from Mrs. O'Connor and decided to try star breathing. I stretched out my left hand like a star and placed my right pointer finger at the bottom of my thumb. I **inhaled** as I traced up my thumb, paused at the top, then I **exhaled** and traced down the other side of my thumb. I kept going until I traced each finger on my hand, and I felt everything in my body start to slow and relax. And now, I am off to bed, **calm and sleepy...**

