

The stress abyss of high schoolers

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“ I think there should be a good balance between being a good student and being able to enjoy your high school life.” -Vanessa Minnillo Now, if this balance existed, teenagers’ experiences would be a million times easier. But that is absolutely not the case, and everyone is always scurrying around, hoping for just one minute for the world to stop and never being able to find peace. Teenagers, particularly high schoolers, in this day and age, live frantic and hectic day-to-day lives. Many are sleep-deprived and constantly complaining about one awful thing: stress.

Why are they always stressed? Adults always reiterate the fact that teenagers have not yet reached the point where they are worried about income, taxes, finding jobs, or providing for themselves – but they fail to realize that teenagers simply have a completely different spectrum of life aspects to worry about. High school stress is grossly overlooked, and so are the causes, which is a huge problem due to the fact that no one is putting much effort into fixing it. Here are some of the reasons teens suffer from chronic stress: Grades: Students have to keep their grades up. Everyone is gunning for a 4.0 or higher, worrying about the weighting system with honors and AP classes. The question is not whether a college would like to see them drowning in work, but which type of work they’d like to see them drowning in.

Standardized Tests: Around 38% of students report having test anxiety between moderately high and high levels, which can cause them to score poorly on standardized tests like the SAT or ACT, which can heavily influence what a college admissions officer thinks of the student, even if they are a brighter and more qualified student than someone else who scored higher

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than them. In the months leading up to the test, students are finding tutors and studying hard, in preparation for a few hours of their life that they feel will determine where their future goes. Extracurriculars: Aside from spending hours on homework and projects every night, high schoolers have to pick and choose which after-school activities to participate in. It's all about being a leader, but not for the sake of the club - for the sake of another check on a college application. Clubs are everywhere, and students either must get elected to leadership positions or start their own club.

Athletes must be constantly practicing and preparing for college scout visits. Musicians must be winning competitions and rapidly improving. Work: In addition, high schoolers start to get jobs at 16 years old, or some at 15, if they obtain a work permit. Balancing an after-school job with extracurriculars and academic pursuits is exhausting, and it's no wonder that so many students feel as if they can't handle it. Social Media: Like any human being, teenagers seek interaction. This is the main reason that high schoolers enjoy staying connected to others, and technology gives them the means to do so easily.

Social media itself is typically not the problem, but the by-products of loss of sleep and distraction from schoolwork can create bigger issues. However, students who learn of high-pressure situations between friends, family members, or anyone else can also feel the effects of stress. Procrastination: Because so much of the work given to students is mindless and/or tedious, students tend to put it off until the last minute and avoid the work by distracting themselves with other means such as watching television, playing video games, or interacting with others on social media who also are

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procrastinating. This creates issues when students see that a deadline is rapidly approaching them and this will cause them anxiety over the work. As it can be seen here, high schoolers are constantly under a load of mental, emotional, and physical pressure that is too much for them to handle.

Adolescents are commonly seen as whiny and annoying, but they do have their reasons, especially when nobody who has the time is doing anything to assist them.

The future is in the hands of our teenagers, and overworking them is not the way to get them motivated to change the world. So, if you hear a teenager complaining about their work and issues at school or at home and think that they don't know what it even means to be an adult, remember that they, too, have a full plate.