

Anxiety in the Mathematics Classroom

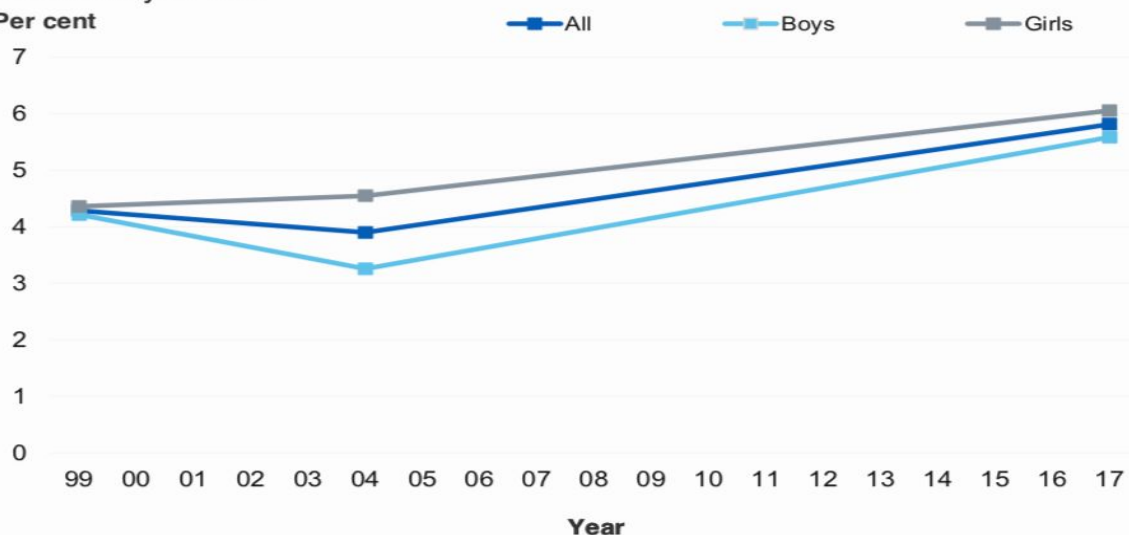
Despite the common public opinion, our students are not experiencing a huge increase in mental health disorders. There is a small rise in emotional disorders and this could be partially contributed to by society's willingness to talk about mental health issues in a more open manner. The reduction of stigma has been wonderful for our students as those needing help can now access it more easily.

From a longitudinal study by the NHS titled "Mental health of children and young people in England; 2017" where rigorous, detailed and consistent methods were used to assess for a range of different types of disorder according to International Classification of Disease (ICD-10) diagnostic criteria. All cases were reviewed by clinically-trained raters. This is a significant difference from self screening questionnaires.

Figure 6: Prevalence of emotional disorders by sex, 1999, 2004, 2017

Base: 5-15 year olds

Per cent



Source: NHS Digital

Mental health of children and young people in England; 2017 Accessed: 20 March 2019 at:
<https://digital.nhs.uk/pubs/mhcypssurvey17>

Emotional disorders included: Anxiety disorders such as separation anxiety, specific phobias, social phobia, panic disorder, agoraphobia, PTSD, OCD, GAD, and 'other anxiety' as well as Depression.

Keeping this in mind, we now turn to the reason you are here - What can be done?

Remember:

All behaviour has meaning!

It is our job to figure out how to make the negative coping strategies less desirable than doing what is expected.

- Praise appropriate and brave behaviour
- Model brave behaviour
- Encourage independence
- Demonstrate unconditional acceptance
- Set reachable goals
- Create opportunities for change

In order to keep stress from overwhelming students:

- Listen and validate their feelings
- Be a calming influence
- Be positive
- Assist with realistic thinking
- Help them "Let it Go"
- Help them see the bigger picture
- Allow them to talk it out/write it out/draw it out
- Remind/show them how to use
 - progressive relaxation
 - [Deep breathing](#)

Slides available at:

http://bit.ly/Anxiety_in_math

