

Turning Performance Anxiety Into **STRENGTH**

Who Experiences Performance Anxiety?

Performance anxiety can arise in sports, arts, public speaking, tests, and more. It's frustrating when nerves stop you from showcasing the effort you've put in, but you're not alone in feeling this way.

Understanding Performance Anxiety

Performance anxiety stems from your body's fight-or-flight response, often triggered by a fear of failure or embarrassment. Those with social anxiety disorder may experience it more frequently, especially in front of an audience. Symptoms can include rapid heartbeat, shaking hands, or excessive sweating. While a little anxiety is normal, it becomes an issue when it negatively impacts your performance.

If left unchecked, performance anxiety can lead to negative thought patterns, where one anxiety-driven poor performance reduces your confidence for the next, creating a downward spiral. Recognizing and managing it early can help you break this cycle.

Keep this in mind!

When facing performance anxiety, remind yourself of the hard work you've put in. You've prepared, and you are capable. A little nervousness is natural and can even fuel your best performance!

Managing Performance Nerves

Rest and Fuel

Get a good night's sleep and eat a balanced meal before the big day.

Establish Rituals

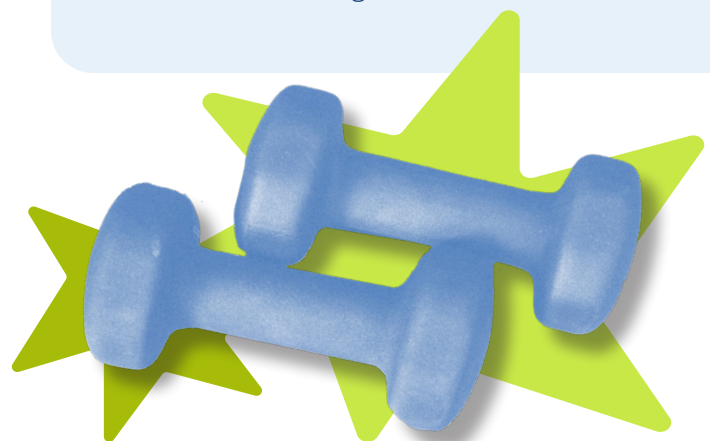
Find a calming pre-performance routine that makes you feel grounded.

Embrace Anxiety

Instead of eliminating anxiety, accept it as part of the experience. Channel that nervous energy into focused performance.

Seek Support

If your anxiety feels overwhelming, don't hesitate to talk to a professional or trusted mentor for guidance.



Mobilization Activity

Performance Reflection and Action Plan

Step 1: Reflect on a Past Performance

Think of a time when you felt anxious during a performance (sports, presentation, test). What were the symptoms of your anxiety? How did it impact your performance?

Step 2: Create a Plan

Write down three strategies from the “Managing Performance Nerves” section you’ll use next time. This could be a new pre-performance ritual, a reminder to rest, or practicing mindfulness beforehand.

1

2

3

Step 3: Take Action

Partner up with a classmate or teammate and share your reflection. Encourage each other by discussing how to hold one another accountable to your plans. Together, you can build confidence and reduce performance anxiety as a team or group.

active minds

YOUR VOICE 
IS YOUR POWER.

This resource was created for the Your Voice is Your Power resource hub.
A collection of mental health resources for youth and young adults who are looking to begin or grow as a mental health leader.
