



Mathematics Anxiety



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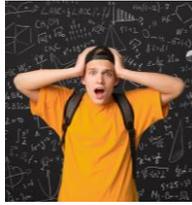


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Defining maths anxiety

- "The panic, helplessness, paralysis, and mental disorganization that arises among some people when they are required to solve a mathematical problem" (Tobias and Weisbrod, 1980)
- "Feelings of tension, apprehension, or even dread that interferes with the ordinary manipulation of number and the solving of mathematical problems" (Ashcraft & Faust, 1994)
- "A negative response to a person's previous, current, or anticipated experience of maths. This might include learning, evaluative, and applied contexts and typically comprises emotional, cognitive, and behavioural components" (Kirkland & Hunt, 2025)



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Empirical observations



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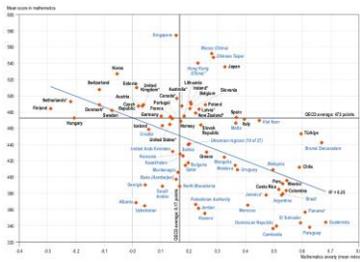
Micro & macro behaviours

- Engagement
- Attention
- Task performance
- Test performance
- Overall attainment
- Study/career decisions



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Maths anxiety and performance: PISA 2022



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Some psychological correlations (antecedents?)

- Shame
- Self-beliefs (mindset, self-concept, self-efficacy)
- Value / motivation
- Enjoyment
- Other anxiety
- Appraisal of previous experiences



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Alternative pedagogy



Co-operative learning



Flipped classroom



Gamification of calculation problems



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Emotion regulation

- Expressive writing (mixed results)
- Psychodrama therapy (limited testing)
- Relaxed breathing (consistent results)
- Bibliotherapy (promising results)
- Dog therapy (some paws for thought)

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Appraisal

- Turning a threat into a challenge (Jamieson et al., 2016)
- Reappraising previous experiences of maths? (Hunt & Maloney, 2022)
- Deconstruct feelings of shame? (Hunt et al., in prep.)

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Toolkit approaches

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DOI: 10.1111/obv.12964

PAPER *Developmental Science* WILEY

Math anxiety and math achievement: The effects of emotional and math strategy training

Maria Chiara Passolunghi | Chiara De Vita | Sandra Pellizzoni

KNOWLEDGE AND RECOGNITION OF EMOTIONS

THE IMPORTANCE OF MATHS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

SHORT STORIES

EMOTION REGULATION ACTIVITIES

COGNITIVE REAPPRAISAL

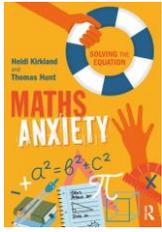
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ADDRESSING MATHS ANXIETY

A GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

MATHEMATICS ANXIETY RESEARCH GROUP
UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

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- What is Maths Anxiety?
- Who experiences it?
- Can it measure it?
- What is involved in Maths Anxiety?
- Who and what can influence it?
- What can we do to provide support?
- Can teachers experience Maths Anxiety too?



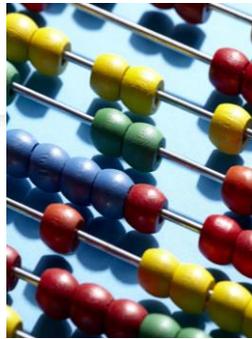


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Summary

- Maths anxiety is multidimensional
- Individual differences and external factors need to be considered
- A multi-pronged approach to addressing maths anxiety is best
- Need to target thought processes, behaviour, and emotion regulation



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