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## ReachOut apps aim to support teens battling social pressures

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Brittany VonowThe Courier-Mail

Girls in lingerie protest



**YOUNG girls feel as though they are born into a “giant beauty contest”, a leading child psychologist has warned.**

The related stress of body image and school could paralyse young people from achieving their full potential, Dr Michael Carr-Gregg said.

With one in six young Australians suffering from anxiety, he said they could struggle to relax, sleep and concentrate on work and study.

Dr Carr-Gregg said the main factors of stress included school and body image, and difficulty coping with stress.

“Many girls in particular feel like they have been born into a giant beauty contest and it wasn’t that bad 20 years ago,” he said.

“Really severe stress disorder impacts on four of the key development tasks – it can stop them from performing at school and from making friends, it can affect relationships with the family and it will stop them from taking healthy risks. It can press the pause button on life going forward.”

But there is help – slow breathing and writing down worries could be the key to help young people deal with the stresses of modern life, with two apps released today by ReachOut Australia to tackle the epidemic.

One app, ReachOut Breathe, helps a user reduce the physical symptoms of stress and anxiety by slowing down their breathing and heart rate, using an iPhone or Apple Watch to monitor the process.

The second, ReachOut Worrytime, encourages a young person to write down their worry.

Dr Carr-Gregg said that both apps worked well to help a young person deal with their stress.

“By the time a young person gets around to looking at their stress again, quite often the conditions and circumstances have changed and the worry was completely unnecessary and futile,” he said.

Originally published as [Teen angst? There’s an app for that](#)