

< Could your child have...?

# Signs of dyscalculia at different ages



By Understood Team



Signs of **dyscalculia** aren't always easy to spot. This checklist can give you a better idea of dyscalculia signs at different ages, like trouble with counting and **number sense**.

Keep in mind that all kids have trouble with math from time to time. But kids with dyscalculia struggle a lot more than other kids the same age.

Dyscalculia **isn't the same as math anxiety**. But kids with dyscalculia often have strong emotions around math. They might get upset or frustrated when playing board games, for example.

Refer to this list of signs as you observe your child. Use it to talk about what you're seeing with your child's teacher or health care provider.

## Signs of dyscalculia in preschool

- Has trouble learning to count and skips over numbers long after kids the same age can remember numbers in the right order
- Doesn't seem to understand the meaning of counting – for example, when you ask for five blocks, your child just hands you a large group of blocks, rather than counting them out
- Struggles to recognize patterns, like smallest to largest or tallest to shortest
- Has trouble understanding number symbols, like making the connection between “7” and the word *seven*

- Struggles to connect a number to an object, like knowing that “3” applies to groups of things like three cookies, three cars, or three kids

## Signs of dyscalculia in grade school

- Has trouble learning and recalling basic math facts, like  $2 + 4 = 6$
- Still uses fingers to count instead of using more advanced strategies (like mental math)
- Struggles to identify math signs like + and – and to use them the right way
- Has a tough time understanding math phrases, like *greater than* and *less than*
- Has trouble with place value, often putting numbers in the wrong column

## Signs of dyscalculia in middle school

- Struggles with math concepts like commutativity ( $3 + 5$  is the same as  $5 + 3$ ) and inversion (being able to solve  $3 + 26 - 26$  without calculating)
- Has a tough time understanding math language and coming up with a plan to solve a math problem
- Has trouble keeping score in sports games and gym activities
- Has a hard time figuring out the total cost of things and keeping track of money (like on a lunch account)
- Avoids situations that require understanding numbers, like games that involve math

## Signs of dyscalculia in high school

- Struggles to read charts and graphs

- Has trouble applying math concepts to money, like making exact change and figuring out a tip
- Has trouble measuring things like ingredients in a recipe or liquids in a bottle
- Lacks confidence in activities that require understanding speed, distance, and directions, and may get lost easily
- Has trouble finding different approaches to the same math problem, like adding the length and width of a rectangle and doubling the answer to solve for the perimeter (rather than adding all the sides)

If you think your child has dyscalculia, learn about the [\*\*next steps to take\*\*](#). You may want to talk with your child's teachers about what you're seeing. Together you can come up with a plan to get your child the right support.

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## About the Author



**Understood Team** is made up of passionate writers and editors. Many of them have kids who learn and think differently.

## Reviewed by

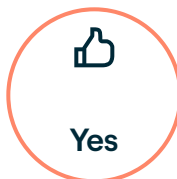




**Daniel Ansari, PhD** is a professor in developmental cognitive neuroscience at Western University, Canada.

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*Understood For All Inc.*

*145 Hudson Street, Suite 5B*

*New York, NY 10013-2150*

*Media inquiries: [media@understood.org](mailto:media@understood.org) (preferred) or **(516) 654-7584***