

Warning Signs of Dyslexia

Preschool and Kindergarten Warning Signs

If **three or more** of these warning signs are present—especially if there is dyslexia or ADD/ADHD in the family—the child should be tested for dyslexia when they reach **five years old**.

- Delayed Speech: Not producing any words by the first birthday; may not begin talking until age 2–3+
 - Mixing up sounds in multi-syllabic words (e.g., *aminal* for *animal*, *bisghetti* for *spaghetti*)
 - Early stuttering or cluttering
 - Difficulty learning to tie shoes
 - Confusion with directionality (left/right, over/under, before/after)
 - Late to establish a dominant hand; may switch between hands
 - Difficulty completing phonemic awareness tasks
 - Cannot identify rhyming words (e.g., words that rhyme with *cat* or *seat*) by age 4½
 - Difficulty learning letter names and sounds
 - Trouble articulating sounds such as R, L, M, and N
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Reading Difficulties

- Can read a word on one page but not recognize it on the next
 - Knows phonics but struggles to sound out unfamiliar words
 - Slow, labored, and inaccurate reading of single words
 - Reads aloud in a choppy manner and often ignores punctuation
 - Becomes tired quickly when reading
 - Reading comprehension may be low due to effort spent decoding
 - Confuses letters like **b** and **d**
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Spelling Difficulties

- Spelling is significantly weaker than reading
 - Extreme difficulty with vowel sounds
 - May perform well on a spelling test but cannot retain words shortly after
 - Frequently misspells common high-frequency words (e.g., *they*, *what*, *where*, *does*, *because*)
 - Misspells even when copying from a board or book
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Handwriting Issues (Dysgraphia)

Often related to visual-motor integration challenges:

- Unusual pencil grip (e.g., thumb positioned over fingers)
 - Writing is slow, effortful, and non-automatic
 - Letters are formed with unusual starting/ending points
 - Difficulty aligning letters on lines
 - Copying from the board is slow and frustrating
 - Handwriting may be poor or difficult to read
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Math Difficulties

While many individuals with dyslexia are strong in conceptual and visual math:

- Challenges with directionality, sequencing, and memorization
 - Difficulty with reading math problems
 - Struggles with step-by-step processes despite understanding concepts
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Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD)

- ADD/ADHD is a separate condition from dyslexia
- Research shows that **at least 40%** of individuals with dyslexia also have ADD/ADHD