



Helping the Struggling Student in Math

Having a child that struggles with math is a common problem many parents face. The reasons why a child may struggle in math can vary. Some students may have a hard time understanding the language of math. When you don't understand the terminology used in math such as "factor" and "denominator", following along can become difficult. Other students may have issues memorizing complex procedures and basic math facts. Teaching your child memorization techniques and using repetition are great skills that will help improve memory skills.

Sometimes students with attention issues will struggle with math because they have trouble staying focused on multistep problems. Chunking the work or breaking it down into smaller steps can help. Other students may not understand that math requires hard work and dedication. Coach your child to not to worry if they are not getting concepts as fast as their peers. Praise their efforts to try and don't focus just on final grades.

A smaller group of students may struggle because they have a learning disability or another type of disability that affects their ability in math. Keep in mind however that despite having a disability, many students with the right supports can still be highly effective in math. If your child is not making progress in math and you suspect a disability, talk to your school about conducting an evaluation to learn more about what may be causing the issues.

No matter the reason your child struggles in math, there are a lot of strategies parents can use. Keep in mind that there is never an instant fix and that improving in math will take time and effort. Below are some resources to get you started:

- A nice article about the signs of dyscalculia:
<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/signs-symptoms/could-your-child-have/signs-of-dyscalculia-in-children>
- Ideas to help your child use abstract thinking in math:
<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/math-issues/how-can-i-help-my-child-use-abstract-thinking-in-math>
- A good article about how to help children with word problems:
<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/math-issues/good-at-math-bad-at-word-problems-how-to-help>
- Ideas to help your struggling student with middle school math:
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/math-tips-for-parents/middle-school-math/>
- When to get a math tutor for your child:
<http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/math/math-tips-for-parents/when-to-get-a-math-tutor-for-your-child/>
- Tips on how to memorize math facts:
<http://www.parenttoolkit.com/academics/news/math/to-master-basic-math-facts-strategize-then-memorize>
- Tips to help students with tricky math homework:
<https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/learning-at-home/homework-study-skills/how-to-help-kids-with-tricky-math-homework>

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