

2021 Tonga Report / Get to know / Teachers / Student difficulties perceived by the teacher /  
Student difficulties identified by teachers

















## Student difficulties identified by teachers

Teachers were asked to indicate the proportion of their students they believed were experiencing specific difficulties. The response choices were percentage brackets: '0%–20%', '21%–40%', '41%–60%', '61%–80%', or '81%–100%'. Percentage brackets were used so that teachers could more easily report how many students were experiencing difficulties, but they are broad groups. All responses in these percentage brackets were combined and used to calculate averages that could show more detail than, for example, '0-20%'.

These average proportions of students that teachers considered were showing signs of these difficulties by year level are shown in Table TT2.5.

Table TT2.5

### Students affected by various difficulties as identified by teachers

Difficulties	Year 4	Year 6
Lack of basic knowledge or skills	 25% (2.4)	 25% (2.2)
Reading impaired	 22% (2.9)	 20% (2.0)
Poor health	 16% (1.9)	 14% (1.7)
Absenteeism	 17% (1.6)	 20% (2.5)
Hunger	 12% (1.1)	 13% (1.2)
Lack of sleep	 13% (1.1)	 16% (1.7)
Behavioural issues	 20% (1.9)	 23% (2.3)
Difficulty focusing attention & concentrating	 27% (2.8)	 24% (2.3)

Average percentage of students affected by various difficulties as identified by teachers, Tonga, PILNA 2021

( ) Standard errors appear in parentheses.

The most common issues identified by teachers for both year levels were a lack of basic knowledge or skills (year four, 25%; year six, 25%), reading impairment (year four, 22%; year six, 20%), behavioural issues (year four, 20%; year six, 23%), and difficulty focusing attention and concentrating (year four, 27%; year six, 24%).

Poor health, absenteeism, hunger, and lack of sleep were reported as issues affecting between 13% to 20% of students across both year levels.