

TREATMENT PROGRAMS

for dyslexia intervention

The best option for dyslexia intervention is to seek out a literacy specialist. The ADA, SPELD and the LDA hold registeries of suitably qualified specialists. Structured Language (MSL) therapy often referred to as the Orton Gilligham or OG or structured literacy approach is recommended. See the MSL fact sheet for more information. There is research to back up the efficacy of one to one instruction as the most effective form of instruction. Good teaching will be more effective than a one size fits all program.

MSL therapists are often not available in an area or unaffordable. This guide was designed as a brief outline of treatment programs, computer programmes and at home programs that are available as an alternative to MSL therapy. The programs were selected due to their wide availability across Australia, online, computer programs or through books or booklets. This is meant as a brief list of programs and treatments that are **evidenced based or follow the science of what makes a good quality literacy program for children with learning difficulties. Not all have been research but are fundamentally sound.** The program developers have a proven track record of professionalism. Programs are also recommended by members of this group. There are other evidenced based programs in Australia which are not widely available so they are not included. It is worth noting that intervention programs are most effective when followed correctly and students are given time for mastery and automaticity before moving onto the next level.

This is meant to be brief introductory guide with general recommendations and parents should research all programmes thoroughly before undertaking any financial commitment. Not all programs will be suitable or successful for all children. The list has been created in good faith as a community service. Inclusion on the list is not meant as an endorsement by Dyslexia Support Australia. **No financial incentive is received by Dyslexia Support Australia for inclusion on this list.**

Fundamentals of a good literacy program

"Effective literacy programs are adaptable to the students needs as identified by assessment

- The content presented must be mastered to the degree of automaticity.
- Fundamentally important is the mastery of skills before a student moves to the next section.
- A good program includes assessment tools so a student is started at the correct level of instruction.

"A high-quality reading program also includes assessment strategies for diagnosing student needs and measuring progress, as well as a professional development plan that ensures teachers have the skills and support necessary to implement the program effectively and to meet the reading needs of individual students."

National Reading Council: preventing reading difficulties in young children

Effective literacy programs include all areas of research proven instruction.

"There are no universally effective programs, but here are knowable principles that need to be incorporated in all programs about how we teach written language."

Maryanne Wolf, researcher and parent, in Proust and the Squid, 2007, p. 209

"As it has become increasingly apparent that substantial numbers of children are failing to become skilled readers, a consensus is emerging among reading researchers, practitioners, and policy makers concerning the critical role that decoding plays in the reading process (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998).

While this renewed interest in phonics is certainly a welcome development, we will make limited progress unless decoding instruction is grounded in what we know about the stages of reading development, the structure of the English language, and the strategies students employ to learn it. Decoding instruction might be termed the "technical" part of teaching reading. It requires knowledge of language, including phonology and the structure of orthography; knowledge of how children learn language; and strategies for teaching a writing system incrementally even as the purpose of reading is kept in focus."

Louisa Moats

1. **Phonemic awareness:** The ability to distinguish, produce, remember, and manipulate the individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Explicit instruction in sound identification, matching, segmentation, and blending, when linked appropriately to sound-symbol association, reduces the risk of reading failure and accelerates early reading and spelling acquisition for all children.
2. **The alphabetic code: Phonics and decoding:** Knowledge of the predictable correspondences between phonemes and graphemes (the letters and letter combinations that represent phonemes). When good readers encounter an unknown word, they decode the word, name it, and then attach meaning.
3. **Fluent, automatic reading of text:** Reading text with sufficient speed and accuracy to support comprehension. Fluency can be enhanced with various instructional techniques and with reading practice.
4. **Vocabulary development:** Reading comprehension depends heavily on knowledge of the individual word meanings in a text, and those meanings are learned by repeated exposure to a word's use in context and by explicit, direct instruction in word meanings.
5. **Reading comprehension:** Requires comprehension skills and strategies, background knowledge, and verbal reasoning.
6. **Syllable Instruction:** A syllable is a unit of oral or written language with one vowel sounds. By knowing the syllable type, the reader can better determine the sound of the vowel in the syllable. Syllable division rules heighten the reader's awareness of where a long, unfamiliar word may be divided for great accuracy in reading the word.
7. **Morphology:** The Structured Literacy curriculum includes the study of base words, roots, prefixes, and suffixes.
8. **Syntax:** Syntax is the set of principles that dictate the sequence and function of words in a sentence in order to convey meaning. This includes grammar, sentence variation, and the mechanics of language.

Effective programs emphasize direct, systematic, intensive, explicit and sustained instruction.

"Individuals with dyslexia or a related difference require explicit, direct and systematic instruction in both oral and written language. (National Reading Panel 2007) (Australian Dyslexia Working Party document 2010) (National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy ."
Australian Dyslexia Association

"coherent design includes explicit instructional strategies that address students' specific strengths and weaknesses, coordinated instructional sequences, ample practice opportunities and aligned student materials, and may include the use of targeted, scientifically based instructional strategies as appropriate."

National Reading Council: preventing reading difficulties in young children

- Systematic and Cumulative: Good instruction requires that the organization of material follows the logical order of the language. The sequence must begin with the easiest and most basic elements and progress methodically to more difficult material. Concepts taught must be systematically reviewed to strengthen memory.
- Direct Instruction: instruction requires the direct teaching of all concepts with continuous student-teacher interaction.

Effective programs have integrity of the program's instructional approach and materials.

The directors of the program should have a very high level of personal and professional integrity and trustworthiness. Academic qualifications, experience in the educational field and evidence of passion and integrity are important. Literacy is very profitable so many programs are not designed with the student in mind but rather are financially motivated.

Effective programs do not promise a cure or a quick fix.

Some organizations and individuals make exaggerated claims about their products or offerings. They may insist that their programs can accomplish in a few short months what more realistically can take years of hard work. They may insist that their programs works for all children with dyslexia or another learning difficulty.

Such claims should raise serious questions about the credibility of those who make them. False promises often create frustration and loss of self-esteem for a child who does not make the gains predicted.

There is evidence to show which types of instructional approaches are likely to be effective for helping people with different patterns of learning. Unfortunately, none of these instructional approaches is a “quick fix.”

A program can sound very scientific, even though the claims being made are not supported by evidence. Parents must become “consciously skeptical” of such claims.

Effective programs are evidence based and driven by reading research and not ideology.

"An evidence-based practice can be defined as an instructional strategy, intervention, or teaching program that has resulted in consistent positive results when experimentally tested (Mesibov & Shea, 2011; Simpson, 2005). The implementation of high quality research is needed in order for intervention strategies to be considered an evidence-based practice (Odom, Collet-Klingenberg, Rogers, & Hatton, 2010). Boutot and Myles (2011) further define “quality” as research that incorporates experimental, quasi-experimental, or single-subject research designs; is replicated multiple times; and is published in peer-reviewed professional journals. It excludes evidence that is supported by anecdotal reports, case studies, and publication in non-refereed journals, magazines, internet, and other media news outlets (Boutot and Myles, 2011)."

John Hopkins School of Education <http://education.jhu.edu/PD/newhorizons/Journals/specialjournal/MarderandFraser>

If the program itself has not been researched for efficacy it should at the very least incorporate all the essential elements of a good reading program.

"Current research tells us unequivocally that struggling learners benefit: When the structure of spoken and written language, beginning with phonemes, is represented for them explicitly, sequentially, directly and systematically In the context of a comprehensive reading program"

Judith R. Birsh Catherine Ghassemi

References

Whole-Language High Jinks

How to Tell When “Scientifically-Based Reading Instruction” Isn’t

Louisa Moats

The Content of Professional Development. (November, 2000). Every Child Reading: A Professional Development Guide. Learning First Alliance.

United States of America (US) Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read (NRP, 2000a,b)

Fact sheet: International Dyslexia Association: effective reading Instruction

Fact sheet: International Dyslexia Association: When educational promises are too good to be true.

Doing Your Homework:

What Are the Criteria for Remedial Reading Programs?

by Sue Whitney, Research Editor, Wrightslaw - See more at: <http://www.wrightslaw.com/heath/read.remед.criteria.htm#sthash.HWQSpbRh.dpuf>

At home learning systems

ABC cracking code

Australian

<http://crackingtheabccode.com/>

ABC cracking the code was developed by an Australian psychologist Dr Lillian Fawcett Ph.D., B.Ed., B.A. (Psychology) Specialist Dyslexia-SPELD teacher whose contribution to discussions in Dyslexia Support Australia are highly valued. Programs are available for reading, writing and spelling.

"Cracking the ABC Code provides evidence-based programs designed to systematically teach literacy skills to students struggling with reading and spelling. The phonic-based, multisensory material utilises well-research literacy learning principles and strategies, and is designed to make a significant difference in a relatively short time-frame. A key point of difference to other phonic based programs on the market is the inclusion of memory retention strategies and orthographic knowledge (e.g., spelling rules), and the interlinking of phonological awareness, reading accuracy, reading fluency, syllabification skills, reading comprehension, spelling and writing. It is suitable for young children through to illiterate adults." Dr Lillian Fawcett

Understanding Minds

Australian

<http://www.understandingwords.com.au>

"Understanding Words® is actually three programs: Reading Accuracy: Foundations, Reading Accuracy: Advanced Decoding, and the Comprehension program.

The Reading Accuracy programs consist of 215 graded lessons that teach phonological awareness, letter-to-sound conversion rules, word-decoding skills, spelling skills and a limited number of spelling "rules", and how to read the 110 most frequently occurring irregular-words (e.g., come). Students apply this knowledge and skill to activities that require them to read sentences, stories, and passages with comprehension questions attached.

The Comprehension program consists of 110 lessons that teach higher-level language skills, such as how to make predictions, understanding of figurative language (e.g., idioms), and how to make inferences when listening and reading. Students are taught a method for determining the meaning of new words that helps them acquire vocabulary independently.

Both programs are administered by following detailed teaching scripts that tell the teacher, teacher assistant or parent helper everything they need to say and do to administer the program effectively."

Little Learners Love Literacy

Australian

<http://www.learninglogic.com.au/about-us>

"The Little Learners Love Literacy is sequenced into 7 stages to teach children the 44 sounds of the English alphabet.

It is efficient teaching both reading and spelling.

It is explicit - no guessing games or strategies.

It provides resources for children to apply and practise their reading skills.

While working with students who needed additional support, Maureen Pollard realised there was a need for explicit and sequential phonemic awareness and phonics teaching in Australian classrooms. When she helped teachers change their approach and pedagogy, the overall literacy results improved drastically ... and Learning Logic was born. "

Spelfabet

Australian

<http://www.spelfabet.com.au/>

Alison Clarke is a highly respected speech pathologist who has an excellent blog and many resources online. She is a valuable member of Dyslexia Support Australia. She also has a resource list of recommended books, programs and software. She sells online affordable downloadable resources.

Multilit

(available at reading clinics and at home)

Australian

<http://www.multilit.com/>

Multilit is a program that has come out of the research of the highly regarded MUSEC department at Macquarie University. It has been updated as new research on reading comes to light. It is not multisensory but can be used with the reading doctor WORDBUILDER app to add a multisensory element. The WORDBUILDER app has been designed with multilit in mind. There are reading centres throughout Australia. It is quite repetitive which is both its strength and weakness and may not suit children who need a more multisensory interactive approach. It is often implemented in a school setting. "MultiLit offers both the Reading Tutor Program and the Word Attack Skills –

Extension Program online, delivered by our tutors in a similar way to attending the Literacy Centre."

"MultiLit was coined as an acronym for 'Making Up Lost Time In Literacy' in 1995 to refer to the ongoing program of research and development into more effective instruction for low-progress readers conducted by Professor Kevin Wheldall and his colleagues at Macquarie University Special Education Centre. The MultiLit Research Unit was then established to provide a focus for systematic scientific inquiry into how best to meet the instructional needs of students who are struggling to acquire basic reading and related skills, for whatever reason."

Barton Reading and spelling system

American

<http://www.bartonreading.com/>

Susan Barton is a highly regarded dyslexia specialist. This system is designed to be implemented at home. Often the levels can be bought second hand. Barton has many positive anecdotes in Dyslexia Support Australia. Just note as it is American so some spelling has to be adapted.

"The Barton Reading & Spelling System is an Orton-Gillingham influenced phonics intervention program unique in that it is designed for individuals with and without formal training in teaching reading. This program allows tutors to work with young students through adults who struggle with learning to read. The publisher suggests that it will take a student with classic or moderate dyslexia who is tutored twice a week, in one-on-one hour long sessions, two to three years to complete the entire Barton Reading & Spelling System." [**http://www.bartonreading.com/FCRR.pdf**](http://www.bartonreading.com/FCRR.pdf)

Toe by Toe

U.K.

<http://www.toe-by-toe.co.uk/>

Toe by Toe is similar to Multilit in design. It needs to be done frequently in small amounts and is effective when used according to instructions. It is not multisensory and can be a little dull but is effective for many children.

Alpha to Omega

U.K.

<http://www.dyslexiaactionshop.co.uk/alphatoomegateachershandbook.html>

Orton Gillingham book based program with teacher guide and student books. Can be used in conjunction with Word Shark program. Available from loan from some SPELD libraries. Available from book depository, Amazon and other book retailers.

"For over 30 years, the Alpha to Omega programme has offered practical help in teaching reading, writing and spelling to adults and children with learning difficulties, including dyslexia. By following closely the normal pattern of phonological language acquisition, the Alpha to Omega course helps to accelerate students' learning.

The Teacher's Handbook provides detailed lesson plans for each stage of the course. Recently revised and updated by Dyslexia Action , the 6th edition is out now and comes with a separate Student Book.

The Student's Book contains all the reading passages and exercises.

The Activity Pack CD-ROM provides an extensive supply of photocopiable worksheets that are designed to develop and reinforce the key teaching ideas in the Teacher's Handbook."

All About Learning Press

US (ships to Australia...note American spelling)

<http://www.allaboutlearningpress.com/>

A multisensory Orton Gillingham booklet program easily implemented at home.

"All About Reading is a complete program that teaches phonics, decoding, fluency, and comprehension in a fun and engaging way. All About Spelling teaches encoding skills, spelling rules, and multisensory strategies to help your student become a proficient speller for life."

Beat Dyslexia

U.S.

Available at online book retailers such as ACER, Amazon and Book depository.

Each Beat Dyslexia pack contains photocopiable activities, reading and spelling cards and an audio CD.

"The well-established "Beat Dyslexia" series supports those students struggling to read, write or spell. The comprehensive programme develops literacy skills by combining successful phonological approaches with the very best of conventional, multi-sensory and structured teaching methods. The series takes pupils from the earliest stages of letter recognition through to full literacy. Using a wide range of imaginative approaches, the activities are carefully structured so that all the goals are small and attainable. Pupils gain confidence through consolidation and success as they develop their reading skills and build a sound understanding of basic spelling and grammar. The wide variety of phonic activities are based on multi-sensory techniques that assist the teacher in maintaining pupils' interest and enthusiasm - making them ideal for those with short concentration spans. Although primarily designed for dyslexic pupils of all ages, in one-to-one or small group sessions, the careful use of visual and aural approaches, in a clearly structured progression, make them suitable for any pupil struggling to acquire literacy skills. In-built assessment is provided through the progressive series of engaging reading passages and spelling tests."

Computer programmes and apps

Computer programs are often available from these educational specialists

<http://www.east-west.com.au/>

<http://www.spectronics.com.au/>

Reading Doctor Programmes and Apps

Australian

<http://www.readingdoctor.com.au/>

The software is designed by speech-language pathologist Dr. Bartek Rajkowski, PhD, who is very active in dyslexia advocacy in Australia. It is well worth going to a seminar by Bartek which are advertised on the website.

There is a reading program and a range of apps. Apps like WORDBUILDER are designed not to be stand alone but work really well with programmes such as toe by toe or multilit to make them multisensory.

"Word builder

- Make words from letter-sound patterns

- See, hear and play with the sounds in words
- Fun, intuitive, powerful teaching tool
- Developed by a reading specialist
- Scientifically based
- Complements any phonics program
- Fully customisable
- App available on iPad"

"Reading Sounds™ 1 Pro uses a unique, highly effective, patented system to teach children to associate letters and letter patterns with the sounds they make. It also teaches blending, segmentation, sight word recognition and other key literacy skills found through research to be crucial in the development of reading and spelling ability. The program automatically adjusts learning support for each student. It identifies each student's skill strengths and weaknesses. It spends less time on established skills, and more time with more support on areas of skill weakness, leading to fast and effective learning. It is ideal for children aged between 4 and 8 years old, although it is suitable for older children who are experiencing reading difficulties."

Nessy Learning Programme

U.K. online access by subscription

Used to be available by CD (may be able to get a copy PC only for CD)

<http://www.nessy.com/uk/>

The Nessy Challenge diagnostic test is so helpful for parents to determine what areas need remediating. The animated rules are fun and engaging. There are also printable worksheets and animated mnemonic strategies. It is particularly engaging for Lowe primary and easily navigated even for kindy kids. Go online for a trial game and many of the animated rules are available on YouTube.

"The Nessy approach to learning has been developed by a team of experienced specialist teachers at the Bristol Dyslexia Centre. Nessy programs use a combination of strategies and games. All the learning techniques are developed in the classroom. Once they have proved to be effective, they are transferred into a digital program. The unique blend of Nessy characters, humour and rewards engages children in the learning activities."

There are also a number of Nessy apps which address one area each.

Word shark

U.K

<http://www.wordshark.co.uk/wordshark/wordshark-home-use.aspx>

Words shark can be difficult to use so requires a fair bit of parental input. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the Alpha to Omega Program.

"Wordshark is a computer program that combines the fun and excitement of bright, multi-sensory games with the serious task of learning to read and spell. More than 60 colourful games have been designed by teachers to teach and reinforce reading and spelling using over 9,000 pre-recorded words. The varied combinations of games and word lists create both variety and motivation."

The computer will need a DVD drive (or a USB port if the program is purchased on a USB)

Windows XP, Windows 7, Windows 8

Macs: OS X version 10.6 to 10.9

A microphone - inbuilt or otherwise, is also needed if you would like to record your own words.

Units of sound

U.K.

<http://www.unitsofsound.net/>

This program comes recommended by a few of our British MSL tutors. There are a few resource packs to support the program and a hard copy of software available for PC only. There are products for professionals and home users. Used in schools in the UK.

"Units of Sound v6 goes online

The new modern design creates an inviting student environment for the four key skills of Reading, Spelling, Memory and Dictation. With Units of Sound Online you can log on from school, home, or anywhere with internet access.

Units of Sound is suitable for Key Stage 2 through to adults.

New version 6 features include:

Online Access

Writing Activities

Extra tutor resources

AutoRoute (keeping the skills in sync)

Windows and Mac compatibility"

"Units of Sound is a proven tool for teaching students in schools, colleges and community centres who need support with their literacy. With a screening placement, student progress display and a screen tutor to show students how to use the programme correctly, Units of Sound enables all students to learn independently."

Phonics Hero

<https://www.phonicshero.com/about/>

Available as an android or apple app.

A 7 day free trial is available for phonics hero. It has been recommended by a number of members.

"The methodology underpinning Phonics Hero (formally known as Get Reading Right Digital) comes from the school based Synthetic Phonics program, Get Reading Right. The team behind Get Reading Right, who developed Phonics Hero in a joint venture with Katherine Wood and Jonathan Hooker, are a team of world-class and respected educators, leading industry consultants and book publishers in Synthetic Phonics."

Phonics international

U.K.

http://www.phonicsinternational.com/new_buy_now.html

http://www.phonicsinternational.com/Brief_overview_of_Phonics_International_in_a_nutshell.pdf

"Phonics International as a spelling programme:

Please note that the order of introducing the letter/s-sound correspondences can be planned flexibly when Phonics International is used as a spelling programme for older learners. Focus on a specific sound, for example, and teach all the spelling alternatives for that sound using resources from whichever units the focus sound is featured. Alternatively, look at the level of vocabulary in the core Sounds Book Activity Sheets and parallel I can read texts and Questions to ascertain their suitability for providing language comprehension and spelling word bank activities.

Phonics International as an intervention programme:

Phonics International can be used as an 'intervention programme' for learners of all ages with gaps in their alphabetic code knowledge and/or weak phonics skills."