



## Newsletter

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### 1. Director's message

As we approach the end of the financial year for 2011-12 and roll into 2012-13, The Trust has undergone some changes in structure and staffing with the co-directorship role being merged into one and the bedding in of the development officer. We wish John Rack all the best in his new role as Head of Research and Development with Dyslexia Action and look forward to Melissa Wood, our development officer, extending our networks and supporting our sustainability plan. Sadly Claire Sugg, our administrator, is moving on but we welcome Paula Malone, her replacement, with open arms. Sharanjit Sahi has provided excellent maternity cover for The Trust Manager and has exceeded our expectations; we will be very sad to say goodbye to her at the end of April this year.

#### **The Trust at The Education Show**

The importance and value of bringing together the leading third sector organisations with experience in dyslexia-SpLD and literacy to work collaboratively on projects and to agree messaging and common goals can never be underestimated. This was made ever evident to us at the recent Education Show in Birmingham. The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust shared a stand with our colleagues at The Communication Trust; both Trusts agreed that this was a valuable forum to gather views from our stakeholders on current educational issues. We were delighted to engage with some inspirational newly qualified teachers and trainee teachers who reported mixed messages regarding the amount of SEN included in their initial teacher training. Some had as little as one to two hours throughout their course whilst others had more. What they were all in agreement with was their thirst to know more. This was a shared message with all who we spoke to on the Trust stand during the three day period. We were encouraged by the commitment and dedication of practitioners in schools who felt that there wasn't enough information and resources to support them in the classroom for those children with dyslexia-SpLD. We took our final copies of the IDP (Inclusion Development Programme) materials, which teachers greedily devoured within hours.



We had very little to take home with us at the end of the show which again is an illustration of teachers' desire to know more and improve their practice when supporting pupils with dyslexia-SpLD in the classroom.

### **Trust Stakeholder Day**

Our Stakeholder Day on 18<sup>th</sup> April at the Charing Cross Hotel, London will be an excellent opportunity for anyone working in schools to learn more about best practice models and what we, as a sector, are doing to improve outcomes for children and young people with dyslexia-SpLD in schools. Please see below for further details.

We can celebrate some significant impact on schools; The Phonics Screening Check (currently available to the 300 pilot schools and available to all schools from summer 2012) now has solid guidance on what teachers should do for those pupils not reaching the required level in the acquisition of phonics.

Ministers regularly reference Trust involvement in key initiatives such continuous professional development with The Literacy and Dyslexia-SpLD Professional Development Framework, Interventions for Literacy and resources for schools. This is a good example of what the dyslexia sector can do together.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light pink background. The signature appears to be "Mel Byrne" written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mel Byrne  
Director

## **2. Focus on ...**



Springboard for Children uses a mixed economy of SpLD qualified staff, volunteers and interns. Currently we have 10 interns who have come to spend a year working in our literacy centres to gain an in-depth understanding of the barriers children experience to literacy acquisition, how to teach children strategies to overcome these difficulties to enable them to become competent readers and writers and, equally as important, to help children believe in themselves as learners. These are the words of one of our current interns:

*I always liked the idea of being a teacher one day but never knew why until this year. Before moving on to university I wanted to go out into the world and do something that mattered, find something that would change my life. I never expected my life changing experience would help change the lives of others as well but with Springboard I have seen the dramatic difference that tutoring and mentoring has on children who are struggling to read and write. There is nothing better than seeing a child develop from only being able to read the word 'cat' to reading whole books. I now know why I want to be a teacher. It's more than just a job. It's a responsibility to develop a child's ability and nurture their confidence. It is showing children who are behind in class that they can read and they can write proper sentences. It's giving them the courage to try, to make mistakes and to learn. Springboard trains you to be a person of high importance in children's lives by spending one on one time focusing directly on their specific needs and abilities.*

Interns start towards the end of August each year and stay until the following July. We provide extensive training, accommodation, food, and 15 children who need their help to achieve their potential. In return the interns embark upon a journey that often results in a career in teaching. It is gratifying to know that Springboard interns are bringing specialist knowledge and skills to the mainstream classroom.

If you would like information about the intern programme please visit our website [www.springboard.org.uk](http://www.springboard.org.uk)

### 3. Project Highlight



#### **The Literacy and Dyslexia-SpLD Professional Development Framework Project**

The Professional Development Framework project has had a very exciting three months. As many of you know, the Framework is an online tool, designed to give a personalised self assessment of skills and knowledge for anyone working with dyslexic learners. Each user then receives individual feedback, plus a selection of recommended multi-sensory resources, including key literature, videos and workplace activities. It can be accessed:

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/professionaldevelopmentframework/>

In the last three months we have:

- Responded to stakeholder feedback to launch a 'new look' framework



The 'new look' will be launched on 14<sup>th</sup> April. The Framework is now easier to access. We have added the word 'literacy' to the title to ensure that the Framework is used widely across settings and not perceived to be a tool for specialists only. The core level has also been made more accessible. So please log on and let us know how we've done!

- *Held a 'case studies in progress' conference*

This event showcased our case study work with schools. It was attended by representatives from NASUWT, three local authorities, The Autism Education Trust, The Council for Disabled Children, Dyslexia Action, The British Dyslexia Association and The Institute of Education. A short film of the day will soon be available on the Dyslexia/SpLD Trust website.

- *Engaged in a strategic roll-out for local authorities in Norfolk and Suffolk*

This large-scale case study explores the impact of the Framework on strategic planning right across a geographical region. We took a 'two-pronged' approach, working with strategic decision-makers as well as a team of advisory teachers who will cascade the Framework to at least 50 schools. We will also present at their conference in July.

- *Continued dissemination across the country*

This has included presenting at a Durham conference, attended by 150 teachers; speaking at Derby University's first SEN conference and making initial contact with over 30 teaching schools nationwide.

- *Attended Policy Review meetings at the House of Commons*

This crucial aspect of our work involves making sure that Dyslexia/SpLD provision and professional development remain firmly at the top of the national agenda. I look forward to our next phase with eager anticipation!

Dr. Amelia Roberts, Project Researcher

## 4. Latest News

We would like to invite you to attend our forthcoming conference on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at The Charing Cross Hotel, London -

### **"The economic benefit of effective and early intervention; the wider benefits"**

The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust is pleased to announce our forthcoming Stakeholder Event exploring how effective and early intervention can have a positive impact on the schools economy and help inform decisions about the optimal time and optimal level of interventions.



This free event is aimed at all those working with children and young people with dyslexia or specific learning difficulties and literacy difficulties. We will be presenting models of best practice ranging from individual support to a whole authority approach and exploring how, in a climate of change and cuts, schools can maximise their resources to gain the best social return on investment from interventions and support.

Keynote speakers confirmed;

- ***A whole authority approach to inclusive practice for dyslexia-SpLD*** : Jane Beaumont, Cornwall Dyslexia Service
- ***The importance of continuous professional development in SEN***: Lorraine Peterson, Chief Executive, NASEN
- ***The economic benefit of effective and early intervention; the wider benefits***: Dr John Rack, Head of Policy and Research, Dyslexia Action

The event is **FREE** for you and any of your colleagues or family to attend who are interested in the topics being covered. To book your place, please email [paula@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk](mailto:paula@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk) or call 01344 381564.

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### **New Trust literature**

The Trust has just published a new leaflet aimed at parents entitled 'Questions about Dyslexia?' It includes an explanation on dyslexia, how you can tell if your child is dyslexic and what to do next. The leaflet is available to view on our website or hard copies are available from our office.

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/inline/questions-about-dyslexia.1328185611.pdf>

We have also produced a flyer targeted at schools highlighting what each of our partner organisations offers specifically to schools and teachers. The flyer also contains information on the school-specific resources and projects the Trust is involved with.

<http://www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/media/downloads/inline/schools-leaflet.1332159836.pdf>



### **New 3 Tier training programme for professionals launched by the AET**

This new programme offers nationally delivered face-to-face training for professionals working across all education settings for pupils aged 5 - 16 years through the Training Hubs.

Go to <http://www.autismeducationtrust.org.uk/en-gb/training-hubs> for further information.

### **BDA Handbook 2012**

The new Dyslexia Handbook 2012 is now available. Co-edited by Professor John Stein and Dr Kate Saunders, this year's handbook is full of useful articles, ideas and personal stories about dyslexia.

The Handbook is £10 and can be purchased through the BDA website or by contacting the BDA office on 0845 251 9003.

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### **Communication Ambassadors**



I CAN and The Communication Trust have been rolling out a new grass-roots initiative is to create a national network of 400 volunteers that take on the role of Ambassadors for children's speech, language and communication.

The Communication Ambassadors will reach out to 8,000 families in the most disadvantaged areas in England - sharing information and awareness about children's language development and where to get help if there is a problem.

In partnership with the Local Authorities and clusters of Children's Centres , 414 Communication Ambassadors have now been recruited across 20 locations up and down the country - generally from local parents, grandparents and carers.

Ambassadors have received training and resources from I CAN to carry out peer-to-peer support to other parents. The volunteers have received a set of resource materials in a goody-bag that they can use to distribute to their target audiences as they reach out to 20 further families in the area.

The Communication Ambassador project will run through to the end of March 2012, starting in locations in Hackney, Islington, North Yorkshire, Reading, Stoke, Bristol and Coventry, and then expanding to other areas around the country. For more information on Communication Ambassadors, please contact [volunteering@ican.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@ican.org.uk)

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We have a new Facebook page - please 'like' us to receive up-to-date news and views, <http://www.facebook.com/dyslexiaspldtrust>



And please follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/#!/dyslexiaspld>





## 5. Diary dates

### **The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust Stakeholder Day**

18<sup>th</sup> April 2012, Guoman Charing Cross Hotel, London

### **NASEN Live**

23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> May 2012, Reebok Stadium, Bolton

### **Dyslexia Awareness Week 2012**

7th to 14th October 2012

### **TES Special Educational Needs Show**

12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2012

## 6. Your say

As part of our 'Empowering Parents and Carers' project, parent information sessions have been held across the country over the last couple of months. We have had some great feedback and will be advertising the next sessions on our website very soon.

Comments from the sessions included:

*"I have so much more confidence now and know what to say to his teacher"*

*"I feel empowered"*

*"It's so helpful to know there are other parents in the same boat"*

*"My son actually put a note on his Facebook page to say that he was looking forward to coming to his second information session"*

*"That was good and I'm glad I came"*

**If you have an item you would like included in the newsletter, please email the Editor, Melissa Wood at [melissa@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk](mailto:melissa@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk)**