

LIFTING LITERACY – Empowering neurodiverse learners

SPELD NZ Conference in Auckland – 28 & 29 September 2019

In this two-day conference, internationally recognised experts will share their evidence-based strategies and resources to help those who struggle with literacy.

This will be an outstanding professional development opportunity to learn from those at the forefront of supporting neurodiversity.



Dr Lillian Fawcett (Australia)

Lillian is a literacy specialist and creator of the highly acclaimed Cracking the ABC Code resources and strategies.



Professor Pamela Snow (Australia)

Pamela is a psychologist, speech pathologist and researcher with a special interest in language and literacy vulnerability in the early school years and adolescence.



Sarah Sharpe (New Zealand)

A SPELD NZ-trained teacher, researcher, advocate and consultant, Sarah is the creator of Kāpiti College's highly successful specialist programme for neurodiverse learners.



Paul Russell (Australia)

Teacher, artist, playwright and children's author, Paul inspires reluctant readers and writers with stories based on his own experiences as a child with dyslexia.



Jaimee Wiggins (New Zealand)

After SPELD NZ Teacher support, Jaimee went on to gain a BA majoring in English and Theatre Studies. An actress, artist and model, she also tutors at-risk youth.

For more on our conference speakers, see pages 4-7.

For more conference details, see SPELD NZ's website: www.speld.org.nz/news-events/speld-conference-2019



Kia ora tātou,

Welcome to another year with SPELD NZ.

My thanks and congratulations to our Professional Standards Committee and all those involved with overseeing SPELD NZ's new Level 5 training programme. Gaining NZQA approval was a rigorous process. The new 60-credit New Zealand Certificate

in Teaching Individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities will take effect from 2020. As with our current Level 5 training, the new programme aims to equip educational professionals with top quality skills and knowledge to meet the learning needs of people with dyslexia and other SLD.

One of our key roles is advocacy on behalf of those with specific learning disabilities. In March I met with the Hon Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education, Ministerial Advisor Kirsty Christison, and Nicky Hampshire, Private Secretary – Education. The Minister is very interested in the work of SPELD NZ and our submission in response to the Government's draft Disability and Learning Support Action Plan. The Minister's plan includes a number of people in funded specialist support roles, to ensure that those with learning needs are matched up with learning support facilitators, government agencies and organisations such as SPELD NZ. The proposals are currently waiting on Cabinet funding approval. If fully implemented, they could greatly enhance support for those with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities.

While meeting with the Minister, I took the opportunity to invite her to open this year's SPELD NZ conference ***Lifting Literacy - Empowering neurodiverse learners***. We encourage you to make the most of this wonderful professional development opportunity. You'll find out a lot more about our presenters in this issue of *The Record*.

In consultation with staff, SPELD NZ's Board has been reviewing proposals for change within National Office and staff in our regional offices. The proposals include the appointment of a new staff member to support Executive Officer Jeremy Drummond and the team at National Office, as well as streamlining some of our office services to ensure efficiency gains. We are confident that the changes will result in better services to all members. We're also keen to support all of our hard-working professionals and volunteers around the country.

On behalf of the Board of SPELD NZ, I wish you all a fulfilling year and we look forward to seeing you at our 2019 conference in Auckland.

Peter Scanlan – SPELD NZ Chairperson

New PSC Teacher Rep – Terry Gentle

I'm originally from Dunedin but have lived in Southland for the last 40 years. I enjoyed being a full-time parent while raising our three children. As they grew older, I decided the time was right to train as a teacher. Working in the classroom really opened my eyes to the number of children 'falling through the cracks'. I really wanted to know WHY, which was the motivation to embark on SPELD NZ training.

Since then, it's been a never-ending journey of discovery about how learning occurs and how specific learning disabilities impact on academic learning. I've had the privilege of getting to know many unique and delightful SPELD students and seeing the gains they can make with the right support.

Over the years of teaching and gaining knowledge, I felt more and more committed to SPELD as the best intervention for those struggling with school learning, and in many cases, also struggling with behavioural issues in the classroom. I became aware that our Professional Standards Committee was looking for new members, but it took a while to realise that perhaps I could make a contribution. I'm very glad I did. I feel like I'm still 'learning the ropes' but I have the utmost respect for the calibre of the (not very many) people on PSC. It's a privilege to be working with them for the future of SPELD NZ.

Outside of teaching, I've been a piano teacher and am interested in all things musical. I majored in music at the University of Otago. I've done the musical direction for a number of local shows over the years and am currently dusting off the baton again for Gore Musical Theatre's *Wizard of Oz*.



I currently enjoy living in Gore. Though my husband and I have retired from full-time work, we haven't looked for greener fields yet. Or should that be 'put out to pasture'? Fields down here are pretty green. We have three grandchildren in Invercargill and one in Christchurch so that keeps us busy as well.

Update to page 2 of *The Record* December 2018 issue – The 'Judith effect':

After we sent the December issue to our printers, we became aware that NZCER had again changed its processes regarding Level C registration. Level C assessors now must be registered Educational Psychologists or active SPELD NZ or LDANZ Assessors.

Courses

SPELD NZ Introduction to Specific Learning Disabilities



"This was fantastic with loads of information to take home to my son's school and my role as a teacher aide."

"I have found this so valuable and informative and have some wonderful ideas going forward."

These courses are a great way to learn insights into why specific learning disabilities (SLD) occur and what it is like to have dyslexia or other SLD. They also offer constructive, practical strategies to help these learners in the classroom and at home.

The Level 3 NZQA-approved courses are held over two days and are suitable for anyone with little or no prior knowledge about specific learning disabilities. Parents, grandparents, teacher aides and teachers are all welcome.

Christchurch: 23 & 24 May and 5 & 6 September

Wellington: 30 & 31 May 2019 (TBC)

Auckland: 6 & 7 June

Hawke's Bay: 20 & 21 June (TBC)

Gisborne: 1 & 2 August (TBC)

Taranaki: 31 October & 1 November (TBC)

There may also be introductory courses in other regions during the year. If you're interested in one for your area, do contact us, as they may be run according to demand.

For more details, see the Training page of our website www.speld.org.nz or call **0800 773 536**.

SPELD NZ Assessor Training 2019

"Judith's knowledge is impressive and her passion engages the learner."

This training is in two parts. Part A provides training in the administration and interpretation of the Woodcock-Johnson IV test batteries and the assessment of those with specific learning disabilities. Applicants must meet NZCER Level C eligibility. Those wishing to become a SPELD NZ Assessor may be invited into the Part B mentored programme. For more information, see the Training page on the SPELD NZ website www.speld.org.nz/speld-training, email eo@speld.org.nz or call 0800 773 536 Ext 5.

Scholarships may be available to subsidise the cost of training. (This training is not an NZQA-approved course.)

NZ Certificate in Teaching Individuals with Specific Learning Disabilities – 2020

"It was absolutely fantastic. It gave me the knowledge I needed and I saw many things that we could do as a school that would improve meeting the needs of these children."

This is a mainly online, Level 5 NZQA-approved new programme for those wishing to extend their knowledge and expertise in teaching, or learning about people with SLD. It is also the pathway for those interested in becoming a SPELD NZ Teacher. Enrolments are accepted from anyone with a New Zealand-recognised teaching qualification (secondary, primary or Early Childhood), or with a tertiary qualification and experience in working with learning. SPELD NZ scholarships may be available for teachers in some parts of New Zealand.

For further information on all our courses, see the Training page at www.speld.org.nz, call 0800 773 536 Ext 5 or email southern@speld.org.nz



SPELD NZ is seeking passionate people to join our team of Teachers & Assessors

"I am loving the one-on-one with my student and am enjoying the challenge of planning what to teach him and when. My mentor has been lovely, giving me support as well as space to work things out for myself."

Children with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities often suffer years of failure and despondency at school. You could be the one to nurture them to success. We need teachers and assessors throughout New Zealand. Scholarships may be available to help fund the cost of training. To find out more, see the Training page of our website www.speld.org.nz



Find us on Facebook and share inspiring stories, news and information with your friends and colleagues.
Search under 'SPELD New Zealand'

2019 Conference Presenters

Cracking the Code

Australian Dr Lillian Fawcett is a literacy specialist, author and parent who developed the highly acclaimed Cracking the ABC Code resources in response to her son's difficulties learning to read and spell.



better meet the needs of the neurodiverse learner. Their effectiveness has since been validated by empirical research carried out by universities around the world.

"Hundreds of students from five to 50 years of age have used the Cracking the ABC Code material and made significant improvement in their reading and spelling in a short time frame," she says. "And I'm really happy to tell you that although my son is not a world-class speller, he is an avid reader. He completed a university degree in commerce and is now a fully qualified chartered accountant.

Lillian's dream is for everybody to be fully literate. Her programme also improves reading skills in children with autism and ADHD.

"You're never too old to improve your literacy skills. I worked with a 48-year-old. When he came to see me, he had the literacy skills equivalent to that of a 7-year-old and was unable to read the PowerPoint slides he used to train workers on mine sites. After doing Cracking the ABC

Lillian's collection of simple but strongly evidence-based, multi-sensory resources and strategies is designed to improve everyone's spelling, reading and writing skills, but particularly students who struggle with literacy.

"There is a lot of material on the market that systematically and explicitly teaches phonics, which the research shows is consistently the most beneficial for these students," she says. "However, this material tends to be slow paced, it doesn't use strategies from the memory research, and it doesn't consistently teach high-order orthographic knowledge."

Drawing on her academic background and professional experience in both education and psychology, Lillian developed a range of activities and strategies she believes

Code programmes, not only could he finally read the slides, he realised there was room for improvement, and made quite a few changes to them.

"Acquiring literacy skills at this age is extremely difficult because of the competing life demands of work and family, but it's tremendously empowering in terms of opportunities and feelings of self-worth."

For more on Dr Lillian Fawcett, see <https://crackingtheabccode.com>

"Hundreds of students from five to 50 years of age have used the Cracking the ABC Code material and made significant improvement in their reading and spelling in a short time frame."



2019 Conference Presenters

Unlocking the potential for vulnerable learners

Professor Pamela Snow's expertise spans the educational, health, welfare and justice sectors. She's passionate about improving literacy outcomes for children and adolescents at risk.



A qualified speech pathologist and registered psychologist, Pamela is also an author, researcher and Professor at La Trobe University in Victoria, Australia.

Pamela's work has been published in a wide range of international journals and she's frequently asked to address education, health, welfare, and forensic audiences.

In 2017, Pamela was appointed to the Expert Panel on Year 1 Literacy and Numeracy by the then Federal Minister for Education. This panel recommended the trial of a Year 1 phonics screening check in Australian schools, along the lines of that used in schools in England since 2012.

Pamela's research bridges multiple aspects of risk and vulnerability in childhood and adolescence, linking with the education, welfare and justice sectors. Much of her current focus is on the early language-to-literacy transition and ways in which this is best supported in the early years at school. Pamela says she's most passionate about removing the barrier of poor teaching from children who start school behind their peers, due to psychosocial disadvantage.

"My criticisms here pertain to the pre-service teacher education, not to teachers themselves who I generally find to be eager to improve their knowledge and practice," says Pamela. "Education academics are, however, in the main, very stuck in an ideological place that does a great injustice to children in the tail of the reading curve – whether due to disadvantage, to disability, or to some combination of both."

When working to level the playing field for those who don't fit mainstream learning norms, Pamela believes we should have high expectations of, and for, all students. She says a teaching workforce that's highly knowledgeable and skilled in teaching reading in an evidence-informed way, can help to reduce the effects of individual differences in the classroom.

"It is critical, however, that teachers and schools avoid fads and fashions, and so-called snake oil merchants, of whom there are many in the developmental disorders space."

"I do think it is critical, however, that teachers and schools avoid fads and fashions, and so-called snake oil merchants, of whom there are many in the developmental disorders space."

This is an issue Pamela discusses in her 2017 book, *Making Sense of Interventions for Children with Developmental Disorders*, co-authored with Dr Caroline Bowen.

Pamela's other area of expertise is at-risk adolescents.

"Over the last 20 years, I've been involved in a number of studies examining the oral language and literacy skills of adolescents in the youth justice system and those in or leaving the state care system," she says. "These are the most vulnerable young people in any community and their needs and profiles are an indicator of how well systems are catering to the tail of the curve."

Sadly, Pamela says, the findings support the notion of a 'school-to-prison pipeline' and show that a lot more could be done in schools to support vulnerable learners.

For more on Professor Pamela Snow's writing and research, see <http://pamelasnow.blogspot.com>



2019 Conference Presenters

Sharpening Minds

Sarah Sharpe's passion for work in the neurodiversity field was sparked after she trained as a SPELD NZ Teacher. She went on to establish and run the hugely successful dyslexia education programme at Kāpiti College. Its neurodiverse-friendly practices have gained nationwide recognition as the gold standard of support in schools.



"My aim is to expand and embed knowledge, understanding and practice around meeting the needs of the neurodiverse learners nationwide."

"Our dyslexic students' NCEA and junior school results are overwhelming proof of the success of our programmes, academically," says Sarah. "This is being achieved alongside significant improvements in student motivation, participation and emotional wellbeing."

In recent years, Sarah has taken her expertise further afield, educating other educators. She now also works as a consultant and delivers hands-on practical workshops and presentations, providing insights for schools and colleges around the country.

"The purpose of this professional development is to enable educators to acknowledge neurodiversity, to identify students who may be dyslexic, dyspraxic, dysgraphic or dyscalculic, and to implement appropriate individualised teaching strategies," says Sarah. "My aim is to expand and

embed knowledge, understanding and practice around meeting the needs of the neurodiverse learners nationwide. It's essential if we are to level the playing field within the education system and have neurodiversity not only acknowledged but, more importantly, celebrated and championed."



Select Committee members visiting Kāpiti College.



Together with her neurodiverse learners, Sarah made a documentary and attracted massive media attention in 2015 when she accompanied them to Parliament. They gave emotional testimonies to members of the Education and Science Select Committee. Sarah described how many of the school's Year 10 students with dyslexia, dyspraxia and dysgraphia arrived unaware that they had a specific learning difference and had spent the first 10 years of their lives thinking they were stupid. After hearing their presentation, Select Committee members visited Kāpiti College to experience best-practice dyslexia provision in a school setting.

2019 Conference Presenters

Encouraging a passion for writing

Author Paul Russell is on a mission to unleash the creativity of children with dyslexia.



Paul is a primary school teacher with two degrees, an artist, playwright and children's book author. He's always had a vivid imagination and a plethora of ideas. But growing up with dyslexia, he struggled to spell and teachers slathered his work in corrections.

"I have always written," Paul says. "It was the only way I could get the stories out of my mind and get to sleep. I had a really supportive mother who, instead of yelling at me for not sleeping, bought me note pads and a bedside lamp. I may have turned away from writing, however, if it wasn't for my 10th grade English teacher, Clinton Max, who told an impressionable 16-year-old me that I really was quite a talented writer and if I got good enough I could always pay someone to correct the spelling. It was this simple statement that gave me the confidence to keep writing."

With the focus removed from his spelling, Paul's stories flowed, his confidence grew and he went on to become a teacher and writer.

Paul published his first junior novel, *Journey to Eos*, in 2014. His picture book *Grandma Forgets* tackles the difficult subject of dementia and was named on the Children's Book Council of Australia Notables list in 2017. Paul's second picture book, entitled *My Storee*, is based on his life growing up with dyslexia. Paul's latest book is *Incurable Imagination*.

Paul is now passionate about children's literacy and building their appetite for the written word. He wants to encourage other children with dyslexia to explore their creativity without feeling stifled by their difficulties with spelling.

Paul cites Roald Dahl as his greatest influence because he proved that you don't ever need to lose your imagination or childish spirit. It's probably not surprising to learn that his favourite book is *Peter Pan*.

"It's the only book I loved as a child but it still gets better every time I read it."

Making a difference

Jaimee Wiggins knows first-hand the challenges that neurodiversity can bring. The model, actress and university graduate has worked hard to overcome her dyslexia and is keen to share her story to help others.

At just 22, her determination to push past the obstacles has seen Jaimee become a Miss Universe New Zealand finalist, score acting roles on *Shortland Street* and numerous modelling jobs, and graduate from Waikato University with a BA in English and Theatre.

Jaimee is also excited to have recently started working as a mentor for at-risk youth.

"I work for a company called Springboard," she says. "We go out and contact at-risk youth who want to gain their NCEA level 2 credits. It's ironic because kids actually respect me more because I'm dyslexic; it gives us common ground."

After struggling in primary school, Jaimee was identified as having dyslexia at the end of intermediate school. She'd experienced all the challenges many neurodiverse learners face: comprehension difficulties, trouble pinning down words and letters to actually read them, frustrations with maths.

After her diagnosis, Jaimee says she initially felt very isolated and ashamed, but some great teachers, including a SPELD NZ Teacher, helped give her the skills and tools to cope, and the self-belief to identify her strengths. In her final year at John Paul College in Rotorua, many of her teachers adapted their strategies to suit her learning style.

"I was no longer afraid to discuss my dyslexia and the more

I talked to my teachers, the more they came to understand my learning style," she says. "Having teaching staff on board certainly changed the direction of my life. Dyslexia was no longer an embarrassing secret, but part of me as a person."

At school, Jaimee found both art and drama provided a creative outlet. She says performing in front of hundreds of people was easier than solving a maths problem. Although English was a struggle, she developed a fascination with words and invested a lot of time and effort into it, eventually choosing to study English at university – much to the surprise of many.

Jaimee says that despite being hard, university was an incredible experience, and one that helped her prove to herself that with hard work, anything is possible.

"The road to success isn't a straight line - it's got bumps and wobbles but still reaches the same goal."



Increasingly, the term neurodiversity is being used to describe people with dyslexia and other specific learning disabilities. Here's why.

I wish for a world
that views disability,
mental or physical,
not as a hindrance
but as unique attributes
that can be seen
as powerful assets
if given the right
opportunities.

Oliver Sacks

Neurodiversity is a term that originated in the late 1990s. It acknowledges that everyone's brain functions differently and that all abilities fall within a spectrum. SPELD NZ recognises that every individual has a range of strengths and weaknesses or neurological differences. These differences can be identified through comprehensive assessments and then an individualised teaching programme can be designed to lift or address weaknesses, as well as to recognise and build on personal strengths.

Sarah Sharpe, head of Kāpiti College's famed dyslexia-friendly education programme, says the term 'neurodiverse' doesn't hold the same negative connotations as DYSLexia, DYSgraphia, DYScalculia and DYSpraxia.

"We are all on a continuum," says Sarah. "The term neurodiversity is a truer reflection of the diversities that exist within the human brain. The world should accept and accommodate this different way of thinking – and indeed embrace and nurture it."

Virgin founder Sir Richard Branson has added 'dyslexic thinking' to his list of skills on LinkedIn and urges others with dyslexia to do the same.

"I know how difficult school can be for a dyslexic student," he says. "I was branded lazy and stupid because I couldn't understand what was on the blackboard – it was a jumble to me. While there is a better understanding of dyslexia than when I was at school, I'm often told stories about children who are still struggling now."

In spite of his difficulties in the classroom, Sir Richard believes dyslexia has given him a massive advantage in life, helping him to think creatively and laterally, and to simplify things, which he considers a huge asset when building the Virgin businesses.

Made by Dyslexia, the charity Sir Richard helped launch, recently teamed up with Ernst & Young to assess the value of dyslexia in the working world.

"The report delves into how the world of work is changing fast and how a revolution in skills is needed," says Sir Richard.

"Huge advances in technology will continue to challenge and change how we work and automation is creating new roles whilst displacing others, leading to a change in demand for workplace skills. The potential impact dyslexics could have on the future of work is huge."

Sir Richard says the report outlines how many people with dyslexia have skills that will be really important to business – the ability to think flexibly and creatively and to solve really complex problems.

"Many dyslexics also have great communication skills, which will become really valuable to all businesses as we embrace new technology.

"Let's support our children and celebrate their imagination, creativity and problem solving – the skills of the future." Sir Richard Branson



"We should be supporting children with dyslexia to realise their potential, starting at school and running right through to the world of work. Made by Dyslexia is calling on policymakers and schools to ramp up their efforts to better identify dyslexics early on and introduce more supportive ways of teaching dyslexic students. We should stop trying to get all children to conform to thinking the same way. Let's support our children and celebrate their imagination, creativity and problem solving – the skills of the future."

Our thanks to:

<https://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/value-dyslexic-thinking>

Former Wanganui SPELD student, Glenn Huijs, offers advice for parents of children with dyslexia

Early school years – I don't remember a lot of the first year at school but I did enjoy it. It wasn't until the second and third years that I really felt different from the other kids. I felt like the kids with learning difficulties go one of two ways: they become the bully because it's easier to make kids scared of you and they will not be mean to you, or they become withdrawn and quiet. Both kids will continue to struggle to learn.

My SPELD teacher, Doris – I started SPELD at age seven and went through to about 16. Doris is an amazing person and her biggest triumph with me would have been helping me get School Cert English. I was one of four people in my class of 20 that my English teacher did not want to be in the class because it would bring the average mark down. Doris had a passion for teaching. I think the best thing she taught me was to think outside the box. Doris became a friend as well as a teacher. She came to my wedding and I keep in touch with her.

Explaining the difference – I never understood how to explain dyslexia, such as it makes letters appear backwards, upside down etc because I have never seen the letters any other way. I feel a better way to explain dyslexia is to think of a part of your brain that holds letters, numbers and words as a kitchen sieve. No matter how many times you are told language rules etc and you try to hold that information, it just goes straight through – that's the frustrating part of it.

Secondary school – I always remembered a time at secondary school when my English teacher made me read in front of the class, even after going to him repeatedly asking for this to not happen. It was the worst year of my life. I learnt nothing in school, worrying about that class. That was cruel and to this day it was a massive blow to me at a very crucial age. I've always wanted to talk to this teacher and explain the damage he had done to me when it was probably something he never even thought of again. The early tools always made me laugh. I was given a small device that you would type in how you think the word was spelt and it would give you the correct spelling. But you had no idea if it was the correct word or spelling because you didn't know how to spell it in the first place, which made for some very interesting writing at school.

Work – During the later years at school, my parents got me into motocross and I quickly figured out I could strip the bike and put it back together with no problem whatsoever,

so when I left school I looked for an apprenticeship and found it at a small engine repair shop. Working was easy for me because it was straightforward using a broom, cleaning up – the basics. Once I got further into the job, I was good at problem solving. This is something a person with dyslexia would be familiar with. I did this job for 10 years or so before I took a job as an engineer at a factory and threw myself in at the deep end, again problem solving to help me excel.

Reading and writing is only a small part of the job, maybe five percent at most.

Parents – I spent years worrying about having a child that would have reading difficulties. When I did have a child, he was born with a partial chromosome two deletion, which means he will never walk or talk. He is the most special person in my life and has made me realise that having a child with dyslexia was not as big a deal as I was worried about. You should bring them up by pushing their interests, encouraging good work ethics and building up their self-esteem - that is the biggest head start you can give them. I am so thankful my parents did this for me.



Advantages – Try not to think of dyslexia as a massive disadvantage. There are good things you can take away from it. You just have to use your brain in a different way. The world has come a long way and with all the new technology, dyslexia is no longer something to be scared of. There are a lot of advantages. You tend to work harder for things that come easy to others, which makes you a stronger person. I have a good memory for taking things apart and putting them back together, which has helped me a lot in later life with my passion, motorsport. My memory skills help me to remember breaking points and lines around the track faster than others, which is definitely an advantage.

Where I am today – To tell you the truth, from time to time it can get frustrating, but for the majority of the time it doesn't affect me one bit. I use my phone a lot and it is easy just using the notebook app. A lot of my good friends don't even know I am dyslexic. Now I am 35. I struggled with school but when I left I realised my disadvantages were with spelling and reading but my advantage was being able to work hard and I made it through my apprenticeship as a mechanic. I bought my first home, got married to my amazing wife and had a beautiful child. We've now built a new home and have most of the mortgage paid off. I work as an engineer at a factory and I live comfortably. I also get to race cars on the weekends – not too bad for a kid with dyslexia.

Student Contributions

Carcass

On the beach sits a wooden figure that is rough to the touch of a finger.
Shiny spikes glisten in the sunlight.
Salty waves brush over the dead carcass of the deep.
No-one knows where it came from...but it's there.

By James Daniel (10)



SPELD NZ Teacher, Raewyn Maingay, says:
"James uses his wonderful vocabulary to create beautiful poetry and great comic books despite having a severe spelling disability."

Change is a universe

It is everywhere
All around us
You will find change in
Families
Space
Children
Mountains
Skies
Weather
Moods
Seas
Forests

Change is all around us

Change is as constant as the universe, always expanding
Change is like a shark, always moving
Like a shark, it can be terrifying
Like a hurricane, change can be deadly, swirling around in a colossal circle
Change flows and goes, old to new, just like the sea
Sand drifts get sucked out, changing in tiny bursts
Like happy, energetic children, change never sits still
Powerful trees, dark green, with bright, light blue sky, filtering through the branches, a changing scene

The weather of my changing moods

Sunshine joy

Stormy anger

Rainbow silliness

A warm calmness

Change is a universe.

By Lennix Allan (11)



SPELD NZ Teacher, Eleanor Boyce, writes: "Lennix was preparing for an oral presentation at school. The theme was 'change' and he brainstormed many ideas before selecting some to expand upon. In the photo Lennix is doing a Tangoes puzzle (Chinese in origin) where pieces are manipulated to create patterns. Lennix finds it is good to do this at the start of a lesson as it 'settles' his brain. He works very purposefully and diligently at it."

Two SPELD NZ students in Christchurch have received a welcome boost towards their tertiary studies.

SPELD NZ's Canterbury Local Liaison Group has awarded Jean Seabrook Scholarships to Louise Jolley (below left) and Tiarna Hill (below right). These \$500 scholarships are for SPELD NZ's Canterbury students over the age of 15 who have demonstrated good progress over the last year and intend to pursue tertiary education.

Both Louise and Tiarna have overcome difficulties and made significant headway in both their SPELD NZ lessons and in their education in general. Both also lead busy lives outside of school with a range of sporting and community service interests.

Tiarna is now studying nursing at TAFE in Queensland and Louise is studying marketing and management, plus political science at Canterbury University. She hopes to eventually work for a service organisation such as the Blind Foundation or Greenpeace.

By Penny Thomson (SPELD NZ Canterbury LLG Convenor & Teacher)



Says Louise:

"Dyslexia over the years has been a life lesson, a struggle as well as forming me into the person I am today. Ever since I was little, I always wanted to read and I refused to let some teachers assume that just because I am dyslexic, I wouldn't be able to read or write. I have achieved this in the last two years with the help of a SPELD tutor. I was lucky enough to receive the Jean Seabrook Scholarship award and the Te Kura Ex-pupils Association Prize for 'Outstanding Determination in Overcoming Difficulties'. Ultimately, the pieces I had lacked for so long began to fill in and complete me and influenced me to become the person I am today. I am thankful for the SPELD organisation, especially my tutor, Isobel, and my family for the support they gave me over the years."

Louise's mum, Kristine, comments: *"It was a wonderful moment to see Louise being rewarded for all her hard work over the last few years. SPELD has made a huge difference to her life. The tutoring with Isobel has given her the tools to flourish with confidence. We only wish we had joined years ago!"*

Says Tiarna:

"I would like to say a huge thank you to Linda, my SPELD Teacher. I did not believe it when I received the envelope from SPELD with the Jean Seabrook Scholarship Certificate inside. Thank you, Linda, for believing in me and having faith in me."

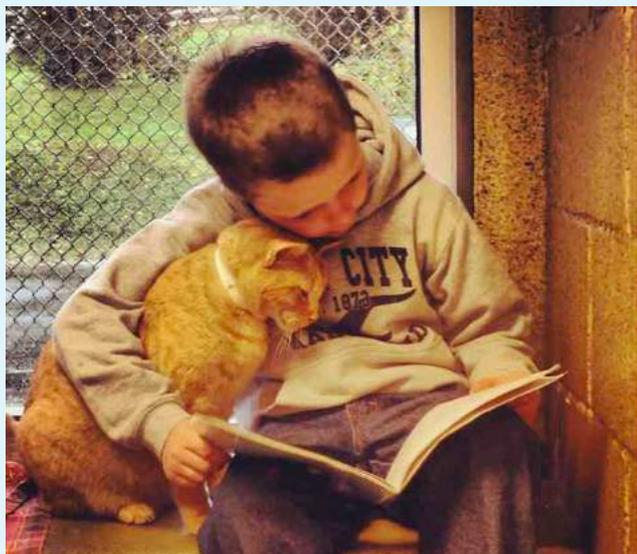
"I have found the Learning Support facility at TAFE very user-friendly and helpful. They treat you as a person not someone with a disability, which I was very relieved and the total opposite from my previous school experience."

Tiarna's mum comments:

"As a family we were very proud watching Tiarna receive the Jean Seabrook Scholarship. Tiarna's SPELD Teacher, Linda, took the time to get to know Tiarna and connect with her, which made all the difference. Sometimes the small things go a long way to making a huge difference to students like Tiarna who have struggled through school, so thank you, Linda, for being part of our daughter's learning journey."

Thanks!

Give the gift of reading to a child in need



SPELD NZ believes that all children deserve the chance to succeed at school, and we are continually fundraising to help subsidise our services for low-income families. Please consider a donation to assist a child who would otherwise not have an opportunity to receive the support that could transform their lives.

Here's what one parent told us:

"Oh my gosh, thank you so so much. This is a great help. As a family with three kids, we just get by with what we have. This subsidy means that we can get D the help he needs, without having to worry where we will get the funds to do the initial assessment. It means that my son will now be able to regain his self-confidence because he will get the help to be able to do what his peers are doing and so much more! This means my son will no longer be the 'naughty' child, he will be seen as the child that only needed a little help. This means he will be seen as the child that can and will achieve his goals and so much more! We as a family thank you. You will never know how much this means to us".

The students who challenge their teachers the most,



need their teachers the most.

Thank you to our sponsors for 2018-2019

From everyone involved with SPELD NZ, we'd like to express our thanks and appreciation for the grants, donations or other assistance we have received over the past 12 months.

As a not-for-profit, SPELD NZ tries to keep all fees for families as low as possible to make our services accessible. We receive no government funding, so grant money is essential to help cover our operating expenses and ensure the continuation of SPELD NZ's work. Our heartfelt thanks to:

Acorn Foundation, Auckland Airport Charitable Trust, Bernard Chambers Charitable Trust, Betty Campbell Trust, COGs, Community Trust of Southland, DV Bryant Trust, Eastern and Central Community Trust, Foundation North, Four Winds Foundation, General Charitable Trust South Canterbury, George Sevicke Charitable Trust, Gwen Rodgers Charitable Trust, Gwen Malden Charitable Trust, Hawkes Bay Foundation, Hutt Mana Charitable Trust, Invercargill Licensing Trust, Invercargill Licensing Foundation, Ilot Charitable Trust, JBS Dudding Trust, Julie Goodyer, Kings College Trust, Len Reynolds Trust, Lion Foundation, Lottery Grants Board, L W Nelson Trust, Manchester Trust, Mary Lloyd SPELD Auckland Trust, Mr & Mrs George Denton Trust, Mt Wellington Foundation, Network Tasman Trust, Nikau Foundation, Norah Howell Trust, One Foundation, Otago Community Trust, Page Trust, Philip Dallow Trust, Redwood Trust, Freemasons of Hutt Valley Lodge, Freemasons of Remuera Lodge, Riccarton Youth Trust, Sir John Logan Campbell Residuary Estate, SkyCity Auckland, SkyCity Hamilton, Taranaki Savings Bank, TG McCarthy Trust, The W Duncan Bickley Trust Fund, Vernon Hall Trust Fund, Vogelmorn Foundation, Wellington Community Trust, Winton and Margaret Bear Charitable Trust, J N Williams Memorial Trust/HB Williams Turanga Trust, WelEnergy Trust, West Coast Community Trust, and the many others who have given donations or volunteered their time.

