

**“MORE THAN MAINSTREAM”**  
*A Community Response to the*  
*“Hidden Disability”.*

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Developed and Presented by

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# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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## The Problem

- Children, young people, their families and schools often do not realise the “hidden disability” exists
- Children internalise the problem (“I’m just dumb”)
- Impact is far reaching for the child, young person, families, schools and communities at large
- Average to above average intelligence
- Good eyesight / good hearing
- 10 % of school children impacted by SLD / dyslexia
- This equates to 91,000 students impacted by SLD in Victoria and 300,000 across Australia
- Fragmented / specialised service continuum, working in isolation of each other

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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**Auditory Processing**

**Visual Processing**

**Organisational Deficits**

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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## Auditory Processing

- **Memory deficits**
- **Phonological and phonemic awareness deficits**
- **Figure ground discrepancy**
- **Auditory sequencing / Deficits**
- **Expressive / Receptive Language Deficits**

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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## Visual Processing

- Memory deficits
- Sequencing / tracking / “decoding”

## Organisation or “Executive Dysfunction”

- Chronic inability to self organise due to auditory / visual processing deficits and due to inability to think sequentially

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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## Impacts

- Attention / Concentration
- Reading / Spelling / Writing
- Classroom discussions
- Self management
- Social management
- Self esteem
- Ambitions / Aspirations

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

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## Resulting in

- Low self esteem / low expectations
- Behavioural difficulties (in the home and school environments)
- Anti social behaviours /criminal behaviours
- Extreme sibling rivalry / violence
- School refusal
- Low school retention rates
- Social Isolation
- Suicidal Ideation

# Counting the Cost

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- High incidence (*Gorman 2003, Loudon et al 2001 etc etc*)
- Linkages to poor academic outcomes (*Green 2002, Levine 2003, Loudon et al 2001*)
- Linkages to health and well being issues (*Rowe et al 2004, CAMS 2004*).
- Linkages to anti social behaviour (*Kirk and Reid 2001, Wolf 2004*)
- Huge financial implications (*Centrelink 2004, Dept of Justice 2003*)
- Wasted potential (*Atkinson 2004*).

# Compounding The Problem!

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**We are working in isolation of each other!**

- **Partial understanding of the problem (no one has all the expertise!)**
- **We are not speaking the same language**
- **Disjointed service continuum**
- **Sometimes working against each other (doubling up / tensions)**
- **Limited or none existent community linkages**
- **Partial management only**
- **Wasted resources**
- **Disempowered families and communities**

# Dyslexia / Learning Difficulties

## A.I.M. MODEL

### ASSESSMENT (Timely)

W.I.S.C. Educational  
Audiology Speech  
Pathology etc.

What is happening?

S.L.D?

### INTERPRETATION

Of results into "our  
language"

D.O.E Psychologists,  
parents, teachers,  
children

### MANAGEMENT

- Home Based Strategies
- School Based Strategies
- Collaborative Approach

Strategies

**"BEST PRACTICE"**

# “MORE THAN MAINSTREAM”

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- Schools, families, and Community based organisations working in partnership
- “Tuned in” to SLD (*staff workshops, parent education courses, individual management / individual learning plans / PSG*)
- More Than Mainstream- stage one = three schools in Mooroolbark, up to thirty parents of grade 5 to grade 7 children, involved in two parent education courses
- Profile Development
- PSG’s initiated, “*parent/ teacher collaboration to tackle a shared problem, **alliance of experts***”
- More Than Mainstream – stage two =replicating the above in Knox
- +SLD youth Supports
- Whole of Community Response
- Working together towards “Best Practice”

# WHAT WORKS

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- Recognising, Understanding and Naming the Difficulty (Cunningham and Firth 2005)
- Full range of assessments (*Levine 2003*)
- Empowering families -*knowledge is power (Louden et al 2001)*
- Linking the community (*Greaves, 1995, Louden et al 2001*)
- Utilising expertise (*Levine 2003,*)
- Having a plan (*Giorcelli / Cooke 2004, Gorman 2003*)
- Keeping it simple (*Lyon 2005*)
- Communication (*Levine 2003, Louden et al 2001*)
- **WORKING TOGETHER!!**  
(*Gorman 2003, Levine 2003, Louden et al 2001 etc*)

# **“MORE THAN MAINSTREAM”**

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**Thank-you for listening to my  
Presentation**

**Glyn Jones  
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