

DYSLEXIA GUILD SUMMER CONFERENCE 2015

SpLD ASSESSMENT IN CONTEXT

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



Kevin Geeson
Dyslexia Action
Chief Executive

10.15 – 10.30am Lecture Theatre, Welcome

Kevin Geeson is Chief Executive at Dyslexia Action. Under Kevin's leadership Dyslexia Action has launched an ambitious five year strategy to reach more children, young people and adults living with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, through the development of new and existing services. Prior to joining Dyslexia Action Kevin spent a number of years working in the charity and education sectors. This included a seven year period as Chief Operating Officer for the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and a three year period as Vice Principal of Guildford College of Further Education.



Professor Amanda Kirby
University of South Wales

10.30 – 11.30am Lecture Theatre, Keynote Speaker

Biography

Professor Amanda Kirby is an experienced researcher and clinician as well as a parent of an adult with Developmental Co-ordination Disorder, ADHD and dyslexia. She has worked as a GP, in adult psychiatry and is medical advisor to The Dyspraxia Foundation and ADDIS. She has a chair in developmental disorders in education at the University of South Wales and has lectured extensively to over 30,000 parents and professionals. Amanda founded *The Discovery Centre* (part of the University of South Wales) over 18 years ago, a trans disciplinary centre for children and adults with neurodiverse challenges which is recognised internationally for its work. She has written over 100 papers and 9 books on Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism and ADHD and has developed a unique person-centred computer profiling system, the Do-IT Profiler (www.doitprofiler.com) used in education, welfare to work, employment and the Criminal Justice System. Amanda works internationally with support organisations and chairs Movement Matters, the UK umbrella organisation for DCD/dyspraxia groups,

Presentation

Why I got 'into all of this'. What is DCD and how it presents in children and adulthood? What is key in assessing children, adolescents and adults? How it overlaps with other Specific Learning Difficulties. Focus on intervention in short and long term. Development of the DOIT Profiler system and rationale.



Dr Meesha Warmington
University of York

12 noon – 1.00pm Lecture Theatre, Speaker

Biography

Dr Meesha Warmington is a Senior Teaching Fellow and researcher in the Department of Psychology at the University of York. Her research examines executive control (i.e., attention, working memory and cognitive flexibility), language and literacy development in bilingual children and adults. She is currently investigating cognitive-linguistic processing in Hindi/Urdu children.

Meesha's research also focuses on the cognitive and neurological mechanisms underlying language learning in typical (children and adults) and atypical development (e.g., dyslexia). She is specifically interested in lexical consolidation and the role of sleep in mediating these processes and is also interested in dyslexia assessment. With Professor Maggie Snowling and Dr Sue Stothard, Meesha has developed and standardised the York Adult Assessment Battery- Revised to assess dyslexia in higher education.

Presentation

There is increasing interest to determine if bilinguals have acquired appropriate language skills given their age and language background. Yet, the assessment of bilingual language attainment is compounded by a number of factors (e.g., lack of valid and reliable standardised tests in *both* languages). Against this backdrop, I will discuss the language profile of a specific group of bilingual children (i.e., Hindi-English) on varied measures of oral language (English and Hindi) as well as elucidate on the challenges regarding language assessment of bilingual children as well as the York Adult Assessment Battery.

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Mary Daly
The Dyslexia–SpLD Trust

12 noon – 1.00pm 2nd Floor, Speaker

Biography

Following a teaching career of over 25 years Mary Daly has held senior cross phase LA posts within the areas of EAL, Diversity and Inclusion and SEN. Whilst working with the National Strategies, Mary was a senior advisor leading on the Inclusion Development Programme (IDP); an on-line CPD programme for teachers on teaching and supporting pupils with Dyslexia, Autism, Social Emotional and Mental Health needs, and Communication needs. She has also produced online training materials for NASEN, Ambitious About Autism and the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust. Mary was recently commissioned by Dyslexia Action to produce DfE funded guidance for schools and LAs to support them in the implementation of the SEN reforms with a specific reference to evidence based practices which support children and young people with literacy difficulties and dyslexia-SpLDs. The guidance is freely available from the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust website at:

www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/4/resources/2/for-schools-and-local-authorities/overview/

Presentation

This session will demonstrate how a strong school SEND Information Report coupled with a comprehensive Local Offer can effectively meet the needs of children and young people with literacy difficulties and Dyslexia-SpLDs. It will guide delegates through the graduated approach showing examples of how schools can use ongoing assessment, appropriately trained staff and good universal teaching supported by the use of targeted and evidence based interventions to enhance their practice and meet their duties within the new SEND code of practice. Delegates may wish to download the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust's Guidance for schools and LAs in advance of this session. It can be found at

www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk/4/resources/2/for-schools-and-local-authorities/279/online-guidance-on-the-sen-reforms/



Professor Julie Dockrell
UCL Institute of Education

1.45pm – 2.45pm Lecture Theatre, Keynote Speaker

Biography

Julie Dockrell is Professor of Psychology and Special Needs at the UCL Institute of Education. She is director of the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Centre and Editor in Chief of *Research in Developmental Disabilities*. Qualified as both an Educational and Clinical Psychologist the main focus of her research is on language development and difficulties and how these impact on children's ability to access the curriculum.

Presentation

Language and communication skills are central to children's ability to develop literacy skills (reading and writing). In this presentation I will consider issues which practitioners should consider when assessing language skills. I will argue that current screening measures do not meet psychometric prerequisites to identify language problems and there are significant challenges in the interpretation of language assessments, where socio-economic status, language status and dialect, hearing impairment and test characteristics impact on results.

Psychometrically sound assessments of language are an essential component of developing effective and efficient interventions. The language trajectories of preschool children vary substantially; current screening measures have significant limitations. Composite measures of language performance are better indicators of language problems and disorders than single measures of component skills. However dynamic assessment processes may offer a better indication of response to intervention.