



The Talking DLD Podcast Transcript

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S04 E01 – Phonics & DLD

Have you ever wondered why children with Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) struggle to read? Children with DLD are at a higher risk of finding learning to read and spell more challenging than their peers who don't have DLD. This is because reading comprehension relies on listening comprehension, which is essentially understanding spoken language, an area we know people with DLD need support.

In this episode we're joined by Alison Perry, Founder of [Soundality Pty Ltd](#) and a Certified Practising Speech Pathologist (CPSP, Speech Pathology Australia). Together, we explore strategies to support people with DLD to learn to read using evidence-based approaches.

00:00 - Nat (Host)

Talking DLD, developmental Language Disorder One in 14.

00:06

DLD.

00:08 - Shaun (Host)

The DLD Project.

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The Talking DLD Podcast.

00:12 - Nat (Host)

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00:15 - Shaun (Host)

Hi everyone. It's Shaun here. Children with DLD are more likely to have difficulties learning to read and spell than their peers. In this episode, I'm talking with Alison Perry, founder of

Soundality, Sounds Right Trainer and speech pathologist. All about phonics and DLD. Welcome everyone to this episode, or the first episode of the Talking DLD podcast for 2023. I am so excited to be joined today by Alison Perry, who I'm going to get to introduce herself and tell us a bit about her background, her clinical work and her connection to DLD. So, Alison, I'll hand over to you.

00:54 - Alison (Guest)

Thanks, Shaun. I was a bit chuffed to be your first guest for 2023. It has instructed me that it's actually February. Anyway, thank you for having me on. So I'm a speech pathologist by trade. I finished studying a good 15 years ago also, which, upon reflection, dld was not actually a thing. I mean, it clearly was a thing, but it wasn't actually a term that was used. It was well before the consensus we now have on the terminology reached with Dorothy Bishop and her colleagues. So since graduating, I've worked with, often preschool and school age children and their families in not-for-profit organisations and also in private practice, and I've done some work with educators to better understand how to support their students in their classrooms. And in my clinical work, yeah, I've worked with lots of families over the years and doing assessments and providing therapy for primarily yes, speech, language, literacy difficulties. That's kind of been my little bubble of speech pathology and inevitably some of those students have had DLD, whether they were diagnosed with it at the time or perhaps that was something to come in their future.

02:19 - Shaun (Host)

I love when we start talking about how long we've been practicing, because I feel like there's this hesitation, it's like my goodness, it's that long, and I would say that that must make me older than you, now that I think about it.

02:32 - Alison (Guest)

Unless, my maths is just wrong, which is possible.

02:36 - Shaun (Host)

It's very possible, and the thing that I love is you've done so much travel as well. We've actually connected since you've moved from WA to Queensland, which has been fabulous for us and so fortunate to have your expertise on the East Coast now.

02:52 - Alison (Guest)

Well, thank you. And it's actually back to the East Coast. I grew up in Sydney, so I tried yeah University of Sydney and under people like Dr Natalie Monroe. So, yeah, I grew up and lived and worked in Sydney in yeah for my early career and then off to WA before heading back to the East Coast and landing in Brisbane.

03:14 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, and we've appreciated it because you've worked both clinically and we're going to talk a little bit more about your current work at the moment but it's been through that that you know I've been able to learn and benefit from your expertise as well. You've worked, as you said, as a clinician for quite some time, and particularly in that speech, language and literacy space. But I know that you know those language and literacy difficulties often go hand in hand.

03:41

Why do you think so many children with DLD struggle with learning to read? And you know they end up coming to our caseloads and we get the joy of working with them. But you know what are your thoughts on that?

03:53 - Alison (Guest)

Such an important question to understand and I think sometimes you get students presenting with a literacy difficulty which after a little bit more digging you realise there's some underlying language spoken language difficulties as well. This is quite a big one because I think we need to delve a little bit deeper into what literacy actually is. But certainly we've got, you know, plenty of research studies that highlight that significant overlap between the existence of literacy difficulties and language difficulties. So yeah, when we consider why children with DLD struggle, sometimes it overlaps with reasons why other children struggle as well.

04:35

But to understand that our written alphabetic system was invented about 5,000 years ago, in fact to record our spoken language and specifically to record the individual sounds in words. So at a foundational level, learning to read means developing an understanding of that link between the sounds that we say and the letters that write them down, and this is commonly called phonics, that relationship. So children need to be taught how to break apart this stream of sounds that you know we speak in connected sentences. So they have to learn to break those sentences up into words and break those words up into word parts and individual sounds, and they also need to even learn how to manipulate those individual sounds in words as part of the learning to read process. So it's really quite complex even at that level.

05:31

So once they've learned sorry, it's not a chronological thing, but alongside learning how words are comprised of individual sounds, they need to be learning the links between those sounds and the letters that we have in what is a really complex alphabetic system in English. So I suppose a bit of a fun fact would be fun for me. Anyway. We've got about 44 speech sounds that we say in English and we have around 250 spellings, so letters or letter combinations that we can use to write down those 44 sounds. So it is something that, yes, it's a really complex system and can take many years for even a child without a DLD to master. So that process I've just described is called decoding. Decoding so it's that learning the logic of how letters link with sounds and vice versa, how sounds link with letters, and we use that interchangeably whether we're reading or spelling, and that's a vital component of learning to read. You have to be able to lift those words off the page. But it's not the only component of reading. So before I talk about the other component, I'll just make it clear that this process of decoding isn't a natural thing. It's not something that our brains were ever designed to learn. We've not evolved that skill to learn it just through osmosis. Yet who knows what will happen in several thousands, who knows how long it would take. But our brains are not designed to learn this just through being read to. It needs to be a really explicit instructional process and just understand that it often takes well over three plus years to build towards being a really automatic, proficient reader like we enjoy as skilled

readers. So I mentioned that decoding is one component which children can certainly struggle with building that skill.

07:37

But reading is certainly also about making meaning of those words, so learning you know the vocabulary for what those words are, learning how sentences go together and paragraphs on a page. There is so much more to written text and written language and this comes under the strand of comprehension. So, yeah, we often talk about reading comprehension and if a student comes to me in my clinic with reading comprehension flagged, I'm certainly going to be looking at their sentences, I'm certainly going to be looking at their spoken language because, yeah, reading comprehension relies on listening comprehension. So the understanding of spoken language, as I'm sure many of your listeners would understand, there's so many strands to that. So there's vocab and syntax, there's literary devices like metaphor, there's the need to make inferences and predictions from what we read to. You know, think beyond the words on the page, and that's that. With our background knowledge, I mean it's quite incredible that any of you absolutely amazing that anybody learns to read Exactly.

08:50

And I think you know to also understand why it does take so long to get to the stage of being an expert, to be being a skilled reader, and there's some really nice models. So things like Boff and Tomnas, the simple view of reading, holiscabras, the reading group, these are models which you can throw into Google, but I know you could put some links in the show notes as well.

09:12 - Shaun (Host)

I'm sure we can do that, absolutely yes.

09:15 - Alison (Guest)

To just highlight. You know that there are these two major components, so the decoding process and also the listening comprehension that needs to come into considering how we become skilled readers. So I suppose, considering all of that, it's then no surprise that children with DLD are at a much higher risk of finding learning to read and spell more challenging than their peers who don't have DLD. There's a really nice article that's written by Professor Pamela Snow. I think she delivered it at the Elizabeth Usher Memorial Lecture and she's. It's an open access article and it's called Language is Literacy is Language. So I will definitely get you to link that because it goes through what I've just talked about in a lot more depth.

10:06 - Shaun (Host)

And a little a little plug Our next podcast. The lovely Pamela Snow will be a guest on.

10:12 - Alison (Guest)

That's exciting I think that's it. I think it's. There is so much to it, and you might have heard the term. You know, learning to read isn't rocket science, or teaching reading isn't rocket science, but it is, there is so much to it. So when we consider that, yeah, our written system

is speech, written speech written down, plus so much more than yeah, surely it's no surprise that that individuals with DLD will find that process even more challenging.

10:44 - Shaun (Host)

Absolutely, and I think you know love. You know you're explaining that there's these sounds because often parents will say, oh, but there's 26 letters. You know if they just memorize the 26 letters and it's actually. You know, if we go back through the history of spoken language and how it came to be and then how it was written down, you know there's so much. You know that goes into the actual creation of language and then the written component of language and, as you've said, you know English has got gotten probably more complicated with as we've adopted and taken on all of these bits and pieces. But then you've got to make sense of it.

11:21

I was thinking of a client that I've worked with just recently where, you know, it was very clear that the oral language was an area of need. But even just things like the working memory needed to focus on the decoding and the explicit instruction meant that both components of that simple view of reading was something we needed to work on. And I know here I'll do a little plug. In a recent systematic review that I've published last year, we actually found that most of the research around the academic achievement of children with DLD was in and around literacy. You know, in particular reading. So it's obviously something that it's been well documented and something that you know children with DLD frequently struggle with.

12:08 - Alison (Guest)

And it ties into I mean it's frequently referenced in articles and research around the Matthew effect and it's that big reference to the rich get richer and the poor get poorer generally around vocabulary acquisition. And yeah, certainly, you know, when you flick over into being able to read and learn from what you read and develop your vocabulary from what you read, because so many words occur in written texts that don't come, we don't.

12:35 - Shaun (Host)

Yes, so much richness yeah.

12:37 - Alison (Guest)

And again, you know the skills of inferencing, like what could that mean based on the other words around it and the topic that I'm reading about? So if we have, yeah, an individual who's also not learning to read at the rate of their peers and isn't being read to or accessing written texts through audio books and various other methods that divide, just widens and widens, yeah, I don't mean. If you can't read, school is really hard.

13:06 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, that switch, isn't it? From learning to read and then the remainder. You know you said that three ish years that we use for, or allow for, learning to read. Then, all of a sudden, the remainder of schooling relies on this assumption that you can read. And if you can't, my gosh, it's tricky.

13:22 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And there's, I mean, you would know, the work of Sue's.

13:27

Leetow and her colleagues, my boys and they've done research into the effect on mental health for individuals who struggle with reading. I mean it's so far reaching and obviously you know Professor Pam Snow talks as I work around what happens in the justice system and the number of people involved there who have really low levels of literacy. So it's just it becomes so far reaching and so, yeah, if we can get it right from the beginning, let's give it the absolutely best red hot dough.

14:04 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, 100%. So my next question was talking about this term phonics. You know phonics gets bandied around a lot and we certainly already talked about it a bit today. But maybe for the sake of you know, clarity or transparency when you talk about phonics as we move forward, what do you mean when you talk about phonics?

14:26 - Alison (Guest)

So phonics as a broad term just refers to the linking of sounds in words, spoken sounds in words, with the letter or groups of letters that write them down. That's it. So phonics is an approach to teaching reading and, yeah, you know, we've got solid evidence that a phonics based method is the best way. But there are different ways to approach this phonics instruction. So I'll give you a non exam.

14:57 - Shaun (Host)

Yes, I love it.

14:58 - Alison (Guest)

And I'll tell you, yes, I mean what I'm about to describe will be enough to unlock the code for some kids. But some kids is not good enough. We need to be doing all the best for all kids, but you could be reading Harry McCleary from Donaldson's Dairy. Can you tell that? I've got a toddler and you're looking at the letter H and H says you know whatever sound, you're going to stick with it and then, as you go through the take that book, you're talking about how you know that letter makes the sound Okay. So I mean, that's still phonics, it's not systematic, it's not structured, it's not giving the opportunity, the child opportunity, to apply that knowledge in a meaningful way. Right, and there's obviously lots of holes, but it's still phonics. So what I'm talking about with phonics in the way that is going to best support children to read, needs to be a far more structured, systematic approach, which I can tell you a bit more about in a moment.

15:56 - Shaun (Host)

I'm going to talk about that plenty, I'm sure, today, and I think it's also for I know some parents or parents do listen to into our podcast. I'm going to touch base. I touch at the end on talking about parents supporting their children. But I think it's actually about being a discerning consumer when there's so many reading instruction programs out there and knowing actually what they mean, and that some approaches will include phonics that aren't systematic in their instruction.

16:28

I think people often get, you know, surprised or caught off guard by that. You know that we of course want to include phonics, but we want it to actually be taught in a very structured manner, in a way that's developmental in its approach and and where the child is at which I might throw to the next question, and we can actually unpack this a little bit further how does that sound? It's on the tip of my tongue, so I thought let's just go on. So, alison, you're probably best known nowadays, also a speech pathologist, but also a sounds right trainer through your work at soundality. Can you tell our listeners what is sounds right and perhaps even what it's not?

17:08 - Alison (Guest)

I would love to. I love talking about all. Things sounds right, so sounds right. W R I T sounds right is a phonics program and it's something that I trained in about 10 years ago. It was, and it was very welcome, because in my speech pathology degree I didn't end up particularly well equipped to teach reading and spelling in the most effective way that I could, so it really added quite a number of I was going to say feathers to my bow.

17:41 - Shaun (Host)

I'm not sure that's the right feathers to cap or strings to bow. I think I will jump in as the parent, the tired parent, of a toddler.

17:52 - Alison (Guest)

Thank you, that's very kind Sure we were just talking about sleep before we jumped on board.

17:57 - Shaun (Host)

for clarification for everyone listening how important it is lack of sleep. Yes.

18:04 - Alison (Guest)

I nearly nailed it, but I missed it by a mile anyway. But so sounds right is yeah, it's a phonics program and it's something that was originally designed to be taught in classrooms from the first year of school and generally over three year period, sometimes four year period depending on the kids and the speed of progress that they make. It's what is known as a structured linguistic phonics approach. The component of linguistic in there is that it starts with what children do learn naturally and that's the spoken sounds of their language. So that is something we're biologically primed for. Just through exposure We've got those areas of the brain that can line up and connect when we are exposed to the spoken sounds of an oral language. So it relies on that as the foundation and then teaches children to map those spoken sounds to the letters and groups of letters that write it down. So, yeah, it's referred to as a speech to print approach. It's a program that's also really easily adapted and very effectively adapted to be used in intervention settings, so in either one on one which is often what I've used it for in the past small groups to provide key pop or catch up instruction for students who may be a fallen behind or need that extra support in their literacy development as well, which can be for a range of reasons. It's a program that's only accessible to educators or and parents included. We often train parents in the approach as well, certainly accessible through a training program, a training course. So the co-founder of

the program, a man named John Walker, once told me when we first met. He said look, you can teach a kid to read with a stick in the sand, and quite beautifully. In fact, my, that was a lot of what I did with my three and a half year old at the time because we were traveling camping across Australia. So we did a lot of stick in the sand.

20:17

Phonics work sounds like lessons, but it's very much about keeping the resources, the actual physical resources, low, because it considers the teacher as the expert. It is about teacher training, so building teacher knowledge and teacher capacity, because if we understand how the written system works, if we understand how to teach it in a structured, explicit, systematic way, then we are going to be the best resource to teach students and, you know, including struggling students. So yeah, it's very much supposed just to add one thing, because I could talk a lot about it. But one more thing would be. I can't promise it's only one, but I'll add another thing, and it's the development of the program is very much grounded in the cognitive science around how we best learn.

21:08

So we consider cognitive load, we consider spaced practice and the importance of things like interleaving. So it's not a drill and kill and death by worksheets kind of approach. It's very hands on, it's multi sensory, it keeps the cognitive load low. So students, when students are learning something new, it's just drip fed, it's just a small amount of new information at a time and that's practiced until it's permanent and it's that kind of repetition that's really important because we need mastery before we move on to a new piece of knowledge or a new skill. What it is not? I do quite like that question. It's not an approach that is going to use memorization, and whole word memorization, which often relies on visual memory, which I mean our visual memory is quite unimpressive. It has a cap, it's a quite a limited capacity, just like our working memory is as well.

22:12

So it's not using that as a strategy, because I see lots of kids coming to my clinic from around year two and three and they've been going okay in their reading, seems, but then they hit that critical peak where their visual memory is just full and they no longer have any more capacity to take on new words and memorize them, and it's also becoming apparent that they don't have any strategies to read or spell words that they've not previously seen. So that's very much what it is not. It's about teaching kids to read not just words like cat, cat, cat, but words like catastrophic. You know we go through the full range of. You know the complexity of spellings and polysyllabic words. We want kids to be absolute experts in how our written system works.

23:08 - Shaun (Host)

And I may have pinched the last part of that question because I did the sound threat training in maybe 2020. I feel like there was some lockdowns happening.

23:21 - Alison (Guest)

Yes, a fairly pregnant belly of me, of mine, probably.

23:24 - Shaun (Host)

Possibly. And I remember distinctly one of the very first things you said was this is what it is, but also this is what it's not. And I think being in a room of parents, clinicians, teachers, saying that you know, this is what we're going to be working on today, but also it wasn't a day, it was quite a few days in fact. But then also what it's not was. You know we're not teaching children to guess. You know we're not using a three queuing system where we're saying just have a look at the pictures, let's, let's have a go, let's use predictable patterns to learn to read. You know we're actually teaching them very authentically.

24:07

These are the skills you need in order to go this is a word and how to you know, approach that, make sounded out, make meaning of that. You know it's, it's a white, explicit. I mean, I can't say that enough. Probably it's very explicit, isn't it In the way that you approach sounds, and in fact, a lot of people, from memory, said I've never thought about sounds in words as much as I have whilst doing this course.

24:34 - Alison (Guest)

Yes, which always lights me up, and I I'm like and I'm not sorry for that, go home sounding out words. You're going to be annoying your friends and family and kids if you've got them. Yeah, it's music to my ears, but it is when people do the training they're like oh it just makes sense, I get it, I get how to teach it this way. It's very much about including what is necessary and just getting rid of all the extra fluff that can end up being, you know, a cognitive overload or might be a crutch that kids then can't let go of later on as things get more complex. Yeah, we just want to keep it to the bare minimum that is necessary.

25:19 - Shaun (Host)

And I think for me, thinking about a having I mean, I've been thinking about it. I've been providing some form of literacy instruction for over a decade, you know. So I'm thinking at this point I'm bit stale, need a few new ideas, and that's really. I think I might have even said that to you as I, as I signed up, you know I'm really looking for some ideas. You know, I feel like I've got some principles down pat, but I want to approach, doing it and structuring it, and I love that. I can very systematically work my way through and it removes my cognitive load as a clinician or maybe as a teacher working with you know the students that I'm supporting and know that where I'm at and where I need to go next.

26:00 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, which is so important because if you're a teacher in a classroom of 30 students with varying, you know support needs and behavioral challenges. Potentially, yeah, you still need to teach through that as much as you can it does. It frees up that load to track student progress and be responsive in your teaching and support behavior as you need to move through those other things. Yeah.

26:23 - Shaun (Host)

Now you may feel like you've answered this next question, but I'm going to ask it anyway because you may have other things that you want to add. But why do you think that systematic phonics instruction is so critical for learning to read, particularly for those students we're working with with DLD?

26:39 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, I mean, this is a question I wish was discussed in every teacher training, in every classroom, in every speech pathology training, anyone working with kids teaching them to read. I'd start with saying that fortunately, it's not just what I think. I think it's not important. This has been the problem for too long is that people have taught reading based on what people think, not what scientific decades of scientific research actually tell us. And brain science, you know, quite literally studying people's brains under scanning technology. So it's. But what I will share is, yeah, based on solid evidence from a good two or three decades. We've already spoke about just a moment ago that our visual memories have a limited capacity, of really unimpressive limited capacity. So methods that encourage, you know, wrote, memorization and then guessing I mean it's all well intended before doing sounds right I most certainly would have been seen doing encouraging methods that I you know, when you know better, you do better, right.

27:51 - Shaun (Host)

So there is no absolutely and blame in this.

27:55 - Alison (Guest)

But why systematic phonics instruction is so important is because I mean several different reasons. It's an invention. The written system is an invention, and to learn how an invention works, you've got to be trained, and you've got to be trained by someone who really knows what they're doing. You know, if I was learning to fly an A380, I'm not going to just sit back and watch someone do it for a little while. I need explicit, step by step instruction. I need a lot of practice outside the cockpit before I get put in the cockpit, before I assume full responsibility for flying that plane. So yeah, having something that's systematic. It means that nothing is left out to chance. It means that all students can keep up and have that. You know, teachers have the ability to notice the ones who need that extra support to keep them up and catch them up. I suppose that's from the teacher side of things, but from the children. They need to be able to trust the written system. If they learn the logic of how it works, then they can trust in how it works and you know they're not no longer crushed and confused or getting tummy pains when they're asked to read something.

29:13

In a classroom I worked with a little girl actually she's just popped it to my head she was in preps and she was only five and she was just a petite little creature. She was tiny, you know, needed a big cushion to sit up on the stool, and I don't believe she had ongoing literacy challenges. I don't think there was a language or a literacy learning disorder underlying anything, because we only work together for a very short period of time, because I don't know long term. But the progress she made in that time was quite incredible. And she marched in. She went from this tiny little student, trampled under the task of, you know, reading a book, to marching in, grabbing the book out of my hands and sitting down, saying I can read this, I just need to say the sounds and I know what to do. Like, oh man. And she did choose, she went through and did it.

30:04

So for students to have trust in the system, confidence in themselves, you know, all of that is what we need. But I mean, I think everything is, I think, couldn't be better summed up by a

quote that does the rounds on social media from time to time, which is by Professor Catherine Snow and Professor Connie Jewel I think that's how you say her surname from an article, perhaps even a chapter in a book they published. I'm not sure exactly where it's from, but their words were explicit teaching of alphabetic decoding skills is helpful for all children, harmful for none and crucial for some. And I think you know, if there's any argument, you're not going to get a better one than that.

30:49 - Shaun (Host)

Pretty compelling. I love that thought about putting trust back into written language. I think part of what I experience is children as a clinician, is children who see a word and immediately freak out and they've been told so many times oh, there's no rhyme or reason. But when you actually start to impact, particularly for those pesky vowels you know that we use in our English language and start to say, well, these sounds, these actually make all the same sound. You know, these are all these letters all make the same sounds. We spell it these different ways that they can actually start to see those letter combinations and go oh, actually I already know what sound that makes and so therefore I've got that, you know, trust in learning, in reading.

31:45

And the other thing that I would say has been a huge aha moment for me since doing the sounds right, training myself is approaching teaching multi syllabic or poly syllabic, I think, is the word that's used in the training words because I felt that for me I didn't have trust in the way that I was teaching it and I felt sometimes we were using all of these other approaches. But to actually go, here are words that follows the systems. You know, these are the same rules, but it's longest. You actually need more working memory, more attention you know, more focus to just to do these, but you actually have those skills and let's work on it together. I would say that I've probably be. One of the biggest changes for me was approaching multi syllabic or poly syllabic words. You know, when you see the word construction and you know locomotion and all of these other words that they might be afraid of. You can actually help, walk alongside them and help them build confidence in something that initially feels undoable and all of a sudden becomes an incredibly powerful tool.

32:54 - Alison (Guest)

And when you do get those lessons out there and your kids just start to apply the tools that you're teaching them, it's it is really exciting. I actually had a boy who was here three at the time and I taught him about the strategies we use breaking the word into syllables and the syllables into sounds, and applying the scaffolding we have to break it down and build it up. His mum came the next week and said I found his notebook. He'd been on the school bus to an excursion and back again and he had been doing a sounds right lesson with his mate on the bus.

33:27

So there was like fantastic and wed mess day, so I'd been teaching him about the spelling voice and how to tackle words that had more than one syllable. That's it Like a good test of if you know someone. Something is if you can teach it to someone else.

33:43 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah.

33:44 - Alison (Guest)

I mean, it's probably comes as no surprise that that mum was actually in the leadership team at a school and marched into the next staff meeting with a sounds right poll and said we need to, we need to train, and they've been using it for about three or four years now.

34:00 - Shaun (Host)

I mean it's compelling when you see that change, you know, in the young people and I mean I grew up in what would have been balanced literacy. You know how we describe this sort of three Q system. Let's look at the picture. If you're not sure, move on. You know we use all of these strategies thinking that they're very helpful, but actually at the root of it it seems simple. But to actually teach them to look at a word and to identify the sounds, to actually then combine those sounds to make the word and make meaning of it, it almost feels, when you say it like that, too easy, like it seems, like it should be. You know this excruciatingly challenging beast and, like we said earlier, it is rocket science. There is a lot to it, but at its core, you know why teach all of these extraneous methods when what we really need to do is get them to see a word and go. Well, these are the components of it and this is how it goes together.

34:57 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, let's not make it more challenging than it needs to be.

35:01 - Shaun (Host)

And particularly for our young people with the LD who do have those oral language difficulties. You know I've utilized lots and lots of reading approaches. I'm right there with you. I've done things that I wouldn't do again and I always will be vocal. You know, often in Facebook groups you get a bit of a jump on. You know people say, oh, I've done this or I'm doing this, and it's a bit like, oh, no, don't do that or don't do this, you should do that. And I'm pretty quick to jump in and say I've done all of those things too and I've learned that that probably wasn't the best thing for the kids that I was trying to support. But maybe, allison, you've worked with lots of kids, particularly over a number of years. Maybe you could tell us about a time you've worked with a child using soundtriders and approach and maybe describe their progress for reading. I'm hoping it'll be a compelling story, but it's over to you. You tell us what you'd like us to hear.

35:50 - Alison (Guest)

It's. I mean, I mentioned just that little girl, the little preppy impact that that had in such a short period of time, but I feel like that's an easy story. That's where she probably didn't have underlying difficulties. She had, you know, been taught using methods that were encouraging her to guess and learn through visual memorisation and that wasn't working for her. So I feel like that's an easy one. But there's a student who, when I think about some of my the stories are just, you know, fill my heart with joy.

36:26

It's a boy that I worked with, for it would have been about two years and you'd know we've got as a speech pathologist you sometimes have clients in your lives for a lot longer than that as well. And this boy came to me when he was grade three with a extremely diligent mother who had already done a lot of providing support, a lot of home practice for this young man. He is autistic. He had a language disorder. He'd been assessed fairly recently at the time that I first saw him, by a cognitive psychologist, potentially a cognitive neuropsych, and identified as having low cognitive ability. I believe he had an ADHD diagnosis as well. So you know, in terms of labels he had lots. Just a beautiful young man. We had a lot of fun, fantastic sense of humour.

37:27

But when he came to me, very, very limited reading. He had had previous therapy targets, so literacy wasn't something that you know in his life, previously being something that he was maybe ready to tackle. But mum approached me because, yeah, she felt that she needed support beyond what the school was offering. So he had a few letter sound links but beyond that wasn't really reading whole words other than a few like sight words, kind of short, just small sight words memorized. So we started at the beginning of our Sounds Right programme and the scope and sequence that we follow through.

38:08

We generally didn't progress at the speed that you would in a mainstream classroom. He required a lot more repetition and that's common in students who are struggling with their literacy learning. It's not that they need a different method or some magical approach, it's that they need structured synthetic phonics, but more of it. It's increasing the intensity to support the working memory demands that they often have. So we chipped away and his mum was quite incredible at completing home practice and I would send home decodable readers, which gave him lots of opportunity to start to apply his skills in little short stories, lots of sounding out and I remember mum saying like Alison, when will he stop sounding everything out? Like remember, we just get into reading.

39:01 - Nat (Host)

I'm like I don't know, I don't have an answer for that.

39:04 - Alison (Guest)

but he will, you know, trust the process. He is learning what he needs to and laying down the pathways in his brain that are gonna serve him well long term. So after working with him like weekly during term time for about two years, we've moved into the extended code of the program. So that meant that he if he saw words that had one letter representing one sound so words like m-at, but also sp-l-at and words with some diagrams like C-H, say splash, sp-l-ash, he could read and spell those words really accurately. We'd started moving into the extended code so learning how some sounds can be spelled in more than one way. So learning like that the A sound could be AI and it can also be A-Y and a split spelling of A in like a word, like cake. So he was learning that and he was developing the conceptual understanding of how the system works, that the same sound can be spelled in more than one way. He was also understanding when we came across spellings like O, so just the letter O, for example, he was learning that it could represent the sound O like it does in hot and it can also be O like in know and go. So he had learned it to the point he was applying this

independently. So it really showed that depth of understanding and development of his own logical system.

40:34

And so we finished up because I ended up off on maternity leave. He did carry on with another clinician after that and just a few months ago I was in touch with his mom because I just wanted to see how it was going. He just started high school this year but he's still slow and steady in his reading. But he said this year was the first year that he read all his birthday cards. So it's moments like that where he says a young man who can socially participate, he'll be able to text his mates and read safety labels and all of the things that come with the hour to read.

41:19 - Shaun (Host)

Love it. I love listening. Often people we talked about your little pocket rocket before and her quick blossoming into reading, but it's also those clients or those people that we work with, that need that ongoing support, and learning to read takes more than three years. Or maybe they've had some pretty interesting literacy instruction today and you're really bringing it back to the beginning.

41:47

I am very controversially last year for a young man with DLD. A young little fellow with DLD spoke to mom and said look, I really feel like. I know we've been working on oral language for quite some time, but I think it's time to switch up to literacy. You know you've only been at school for six months, but we already knew we've done some pre-literacy work before going to school and it made me go.

42:08

Well, actually, I think it's time to you know, make sure this is consolidated and it really is taking quite some time. But you know, with support, weekly support, and you know what's happening at school, it just keeps tipping away bit by bit. And then on the other side, I can think of a young lady that I worked with who came to me in upper primary school with DLD and the school said oh, she's illiterate. You know, which I always find a fence to when somebody tells me that someone's illiterate, because you know, I take it as a bit of a challenge or a red rag to a bull you know, no, not as good as you ought to read yet.

42:49

Yes, and this child had really come through with this very you know, whole language balance literacy type approach to reading instruction.

42:58

It didn't make sense for her and I caught her one day reading a word upside down that I'd written on a notepad and I thought interesting, tell me more.

43:12

And very quickly realized that when provided with very systematic approach and this is in upper primary school, you know this young person's you know well into high school now A

that it wasn't too late to start working on a systematic approach to phonics because it helped with their reading.

43:29

But what was the most fascinating in trying to link my two cases, you know two examples together my little fellow and my you know high school aged clients with DLD that by accessing literacy it actually reinforced their language acquisition because all of a sudden we were talking about these words and using them in lots of different ways and they were able to read independently and access language that we don't use in day-to-day conversation. So I actually thought it's beautiful change in their oral language because all of a sudden they had access to the power of reading and that ability to continue to reinforce it and engage in it meant that they became more independent in their own language learning as a person with DLD and I really love that about reading you know it gives them that opportunity to sort of control their own destiny to a certain degree.

44:23 - Alison (Guest)

And once you know how to read, you can't switch it off, like if I put a word up on you know and showed you a word and said, don't read this, Shaun, that you have no capacity to not read it.

44:34 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, I'm gonna take on that and I'm gonna do something with it, absolutely.

44:38 - Alison (Guest)

I've just remembered something that it's quick one to share. But I ran into a teacher in the school holidays, someone I trained quite a few years ago, and her whole school uses the sounds right approach. She's just taken on a new role as a literacy coordinator role, because she had been the head of the learning support team. But they had so few numbers requiring literacy support in the school that they couldn't justify having a teacher to do it, so they focused her and her skills. So I'm like well, that's it. You know when you're changing, you know those students who you know are struggling and they're just not struggling. They actually don't need extra additional sessions. You're doing the right thing.

45:32 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, fantastic, and I'm sure there were some kids with DLD in those classes.

45:36 - Alison (Guest)

Negatively.

45:37 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, okay, so I've already alluded to my next question, because we get contacted by parents all the time, very frequently asking for support around how they can help their child learn to read, and I once got into a bit of a Twitter discussion on whose roles and responsibilities it is to teach reading and, you know, is it the teachers, the parents, both, and I think there were some very different views. But I think the main challenge comes about when schools use other approaches to reading instructions. You know you might have landed on your feet and you've got a school that's using a systematic approach to phonics instruction to build the

foundations of their reading programs, but do you have any advice or recommendations for parents who want to help their child learn to read, particularly if they're faced with? You know, different approaches?

46:35 - Alison (Guest)

It's tough and I feel for every parent who finds themselves in that situation. I think parenting is hard enough when things are going smoothly, but yeah, when you find yourself faced with this challenge, it can be really quite challenging. I think. I mean, knowledge is power and I think if you can equip yourself with some information about what is effective reading instruction, that's a really good starting point. I would probably suggest Alison Clark's blog. So Alison Clark is a speechologist based in Melbourne and she's got a blog and she's also the resources and things. She's also got a private practice called Spellforbett and she's got a like all parents tab and writes in a beautiful, humorous style as well, I mean. So she's got some great stuff on there.

47:28

But it, I mean it's a minefield. There is so much out there that is getting parents in this situation that isn't necessarily going to be, you know, resulting in money well spent, usually at the end of the day. So the other resource that's quite handy is five from five. So that website, five from five, has lots of really good information on there that's freely available. I'd be directing them to the OS spelled website. So a US PELD, so that's the network of not for profit organizations who support families and individuals with learning difficulties and disorders, so they've got some really trustworthy information to read through. From a sounds right perspective, we have two parent courses which are freely available. So if you just type into Google help your child to read and write and add in sounds right, there you'll get a link to a free online course with a few hours worth of instructional videos and then you can go through the platform called you Demi, so you DEM why you Demi or Udemy, actually know how you say.

48:44 - Shaun (Host)

I was going to say I've had a family do it just over the weekend, so people still using it all the time.

48:49 - Alison (Guest)

Beautiful. I've got like 10s of thousands of people who've done it across across the world over the last several years it's been available. So there's part one and part two and it's yet designed for parents to. I mean for that exact reason. You know, I want to help my child get off on a good start to read and write Whether or not my school is always and providing a structured phonics approach. So that's where it's done and springboarding off that. I've had quite a number of parents end up contacting me saying can I do? Sounds right, can I do the full training and enrolling, either in the four day face to face course or the six week online course. There's no prerequisites, is no prerequisite knowledge. It is a very intensive and practical course but it's it is accessible to anyone who wants to learn how to teach someone to read and spell in a really effective way.

49:40 - Shaun (Host)

I think we'll link all of those URLs in the show notes for anybody who is looking for that fantastic information that. I know you can't see me, but I was nodding along as Allison was mentioning all of those amazing resources.

49:53 - Alison (Guest)

And I think I might just add that there is a buzz phrase that's been throwing around, thrown around a lot over the last few years, called the science of reading, usually with capital letters. Yeah, I think there are some approaches that haven't been particularly well designed in their instructional methodology, that have updated their websites to include all the buzz, the right words, but at their core they don't necessarily really take into account what what the reaches, such as saying so, just do be a bit wary, and I mean the spots we places that we've just spoken about, to go a fairly readable and in fact I think Os spelled actually has a document that lists the programs and the characteristics that you would be looking for in those.

50:42 - Shaun (Host)

So we might actually links explicitly to that as well. Particularly when parents here are certain program or a certain name, then you can kind of go and have a bit of a look to see if it matches up with what we've been talking about today.

50:54 - Alison (Guest)

And fortunately, some states, the Department of Education in some states, are starting to be far more specific in what they're requiring schools to teach. When it comes to reading and spelling, there's a lot of states well behind the able still. But you know, with the introduction of the New South Wales new curriculum there's, for example, there's a lot of positive changes that will hopefully have a really strong flow and effect.

51:22 - Shaun (Host)

And we can only hope that that helps in Queensland, because I'm thinking about the fact that I was one of those parents who school was using an approach other than a systematic approach to phonics. And you know, there was this moment I remember, when talking about my, my youngest daughter's reading abilities with their classroom teacher and they'd said that obviously they, you know, been responding and we're talking about that, but it was through the sheer blood, sweat and tears of their parents at home going through and very explicitly providing the instruction that she needed because she had a number of risk factors related to prematurity that put her, you know, potentially behind the eight ball. And I sat there as a speech pathologist who specializes in language and literacy. It was also a researcher and it was really hard to change somebody's mind. It's actually, you know, I sat, there is somebody you think I could talk the hind leg off of donkey and all of the research at my fingertips. I think I'm pretty compelling when you really put me to a task and it was really hard.

52:32

As a parent I felt very disempowered at times and you know people would listen, but really to get that systemic change you know it comes from lots of people, you know, making that noise, sharing that their experiences. And I've, you know, now I've got this amazing little girl who reads for pleasure, which I think is just oh the like. The beauty of you know reading is

this independent desire to pick up a book. I never thought well, I wasn't sure that I would see it in my children, but when you do, I just so appreciate the fact that they'll do that, knowing that there are lots of kids out there, he just that wouldn't be there. I think it's just a cup of tea, you know, I think there's some noise that we need to keep making around. Good literacy instructions in school, but we will get there, I'm sure I have every confidence.

53:25 - Alison (Guest)

I know that lots of speeches and parents are doing, but I also want to acknowledge all those teachers that are, you know, turning the tide and in the face of a huge amount of, you know, personal discomfort, actually, I need to do something differently and sometimes very, very different, like a, you know, full 180 from what they've been doing, which can be extremely uncomfortable and very bright.

53:54 - Shaun (Host)

Which brings us to talking about teachers. How might teachers need to approach their reading instruction differently for students with DLD in their classrooms?

54:05 - Alison (Guest)

Well, I think, making the assumption that a structured, systematic, explicit phonics approach is already in use as a tier one, support so a whole class, not support, sorry, a tier one. Daily instruction.

54:20 - Shaun (Host)

Yes.

54:21 - Alison (Guest)

Then I mean that's going to be an excellent starting point and within that I mean it sounds right. We talk about how to differentiate within your whole class instruction but, yeah, acknowledging that there will be some students that will require tier two support, and that's actually I mean it can look slightly different depending on your students and resources and things that you have. But that to support is ideally small group repetition of the key components that is happening in that whole class daily instruction. So it's kind of more of the same, more opportunity for repetition and practice to master those skills and knowledge so you can continue to move on with the class. And then you're going to have some students who, despite really quality evidence based instruction at tier one and additional small group repetition, still require something additional.

55:16

And that tier three is usually individualized where possible and targeted intervention, so high intensity, short but frequent bursts and that level different to what's happening in the whole class. So that's kind of the the keep up sorry, the catch up component that you'd be been needing for some students. But that's certainly going to give students with DLD the very best finding chance to keep up with their peers. And in addition to that, you know, and that need for additional repetition, just considering the other accommodations and appropriate adjustments that are suitable for students with DLD and the particular individual. And I know you've done lots of work in regards to working with students. You know to identify what does work for them, not just telling them what should work for them.

But again, we need to consider the individual strengths and weaknesses. But yeah, I mean I'd love to hear your perspective on that.

56:17 - Shaun (Host)

To Shaun I think well, I am nodding again with what you've said around the reading instruction. I think that the repetition that comes through and that you we need to practice this and we need to be masters of those skills, is something that modern classrooms generally move quite quickly. So actually finding that space within your instruction to be able to say, look, this child needs more repetition, particularly if they've got behavioral needs, they've got attentional needs. You know there's working memory that comes into play here, that often these coexist alongside their language difficulties and something that we need to consider within those in the mix. And the other thing is that you can actually simplify the language of instruction down.

57:10

I say this time and time again the best thing we can do for children with DLD is make languages tactile and visible as possible, and with that that comes through an electricity instruction. You know as soon as you. I mean I think I should have shares in post it notes, because I use many post it notes and whiteboard markers. I love that you can create anything, including letters and sounds, very, very immediately and quickly and make it something that you can touch, move and interact with, so that philosophy that I apply in my language intervention carries through so beautifully into you know literacy instruction, because all of a sudden, instead of having a little word on a page, I can actually make it a big word, that the sounds that we've identified and we can manipulate those, we can organize those, we can look for you know the components that make go together and make it a word and we can actually move them.

58:07

You know, all of a sudden, when we can't blend something that's something that I feel like some of my kids with DLD has been far longer on than other kids is actually just going sounding out and then blending it together. It's something to do with that sound organization that I can't quite, you know, work out. But you know making those adjustments is so much easier when all of a sudden you've got a manipulative in front of you and that's why I use sounds right as a part of my literacy instruction is it immediately becomes a multi sensory experience because we're utilizing and doing something that I can a create situations to make it more independent or I can scaffold it to lead them to success and it sucks when you're not successful at something over and over and over again, but to create something tangible you can interact with and create some immediate success. Gosh, it feels good. Feels good for me, feels good for them. You know you can within minutes have a successful, you know it's successful instruction, and then they want to keep coming back for more the motive becomes intrinsic.

59:10

Absolutely, and I think for those kids with BLD who they they will always have difficulties using language, we can't devoid any instruction in the classroom from language. It's one of those we talk about. You know, picking up by osmosis. Language is one of those skills that we, often our brains, are primed to pick up, but for this one in 14 children, they just don't

pick it up as quickly or as easily in the same way as their peers. So we want to make sure that we're adjusting for that and so I think that, probably harking back to an earlier point, is that we know it frequently co occurs.

59:45

So if you've got a kid with literacy difficulties or dyslexia diagnosis, they may actually also have DLD. Is that my co morbidity between the two? But as teachers are fabulous at identifying you know those literacy needs. But I'd say you're identifying these literacy needs but also think about their language. And you know I'm very fortunate to be a speech pathologist at works and schools and not everybody has a speech pathologist. So I know there are issues with that. But I love, you know, speech pathology and education I feel like it's a match made in heaven.

01:00:17 - Alison (Guest)

So you know and bringing in that perspective of you know how language can be supported. We think of spoken languages, auditory, oral and oral yes, so much more than that. And using the manipulatives and that multi sensory experience and I'd be doing a disservice to sounds right as a program if I didn't remind people that there's such a large component of the program that relies on gestural language to instruct. So in your lessons, every time you're providing an instruction or an explanation, what the children here is matched with what they see. So we point a lot, you with your finger, you point with a chopstick, and we precisely when an error is made and discuss it so that the student can then solve the problem. So, yeah, I think sometimes, because I've been doing this for so long, it's I forget automatic the intricacies.

01:01:14

Yeah, scaffolding with lines.

01:01:17 - Shaun (Host)

There's a lot of visual support alongside those verbal instructions to yeah, and it just as I said, it makes it more tactile, invisible. You take these words that just disappear into thin air once you've said them. They're gone and all of a sudden you start creating something that they can interact with. It makes it hands on in concrete, but also something they can look back to remember and engage with. You know there's so many benefits of those sorts, of those sorts of approaches to any instruction, but particularly for literacy.

01:01:51 - Alison (Guest)

And we talked through all of this on day one of our training. There, you go, I do remember things, alison. Yeah, and it's just the why behind what we do. When we can't explain why we do what we do, we really need to be considering what we're doing.

01:02:07 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, 100% Okay. We must be getting closer to the end now, so. So what do you think of your opinion? What do you hope to see in the future for phonics or the LD in Australia and around the world? Whether it's research, clinical work, service delivery, the world's your oyster. What would you love?

01:02:26 - Alison (Guest)

Such a big question. When I thought about the answer to this I at the risk of just seeming very simple, potentially a bit miss. I just want every individual to have the opportunity to learn, to become literate and for the understanding and awareness around literacy learning to be out in the open. You know you go to a restaurant and at the end of that meal with your friends, if you need to split the bill, people get their phones out and open up calculators and you know it's kind of a jerk on. Not very good at maths, I mean.

01:03:08

I don't know about this at the start of our podcast and yet turning up to that restaurant with your friends and being unable to read the menu and say, oh, I can't read. Could you read this out to me? You know that's an individual who's not going to go to the restaurant, it's. It's just quite a different perspective. I suppose stigma around it. So if we can get it right right from the very beginning and we can we've got the knowledge there. Things are slowly moving in the right direction across the world. Social media has had a wonderful part to play in that and even it's even one of the silver linings of the pandemic. It's got a view into what's happening in classrooms and seeing. You know one on one what their kids can and cannot do, what the expectations are. So, yeah, things are slowly moving in the right direction, but for them to, can we just fast forward and have it?

01:04:14 - Shaun (Host)

Can we get to that happy ending? That would be great.

01:04:17 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, that's, that's my big dream.

01:04:20 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, absolutely. I think that, as you said, I feel positive that we're on the right set. I actually had forgotten about this person until you just spoke, but one of my first interactions with literacy was actually as a speech pathology student, where I was on a, you know, attending a literacy clinic for high school students, and I was relatively young I was probably only about two or three years older than my clients that I was working with but this young person had been in speech pathology for their entire life. You know they tried everything, they'd done everything and were disengaged, and I was there eager to, you know, support them, and I remember, after approach using the approach that we were told to use for a number of weeks that was not as effective as that I thought it would be.

01:05:12

I remember saying to him you know, what do you actually want? And he's like all I really want to be able to do is read the Maccas menu for those of you overseas, that's McDonald's menu and I want to be able to text with my girlfriend and this was well before emojis. This would be a 30 something year old, you know, man, nowadays and just to switch. Our focus was actually let's not focus necessarily on, you know these skills that you've practiced, practice, practice over and over again, but actually practice them within the context that you want to learn. It was really big difference for me of that really big aha moment, but also fresh reminder that you know, at nearly 18 years of age this young person still couldn't read

a menu and that really inhibited him on everyday life. So let's not do that, you know. Let's actually support them from the very beginning. Wouldn't that be nice?

01:06:09 - Alison (Guest)

When it's preventable. Yeah yeah, we've got the knowledge. This is not up for debate any further. We just need to get on and do it.

01:06:17 - Shaun (Host)

Yeah, 100%. So, Alison, we're drawing to a close. I have one more question for you. At the DLD project, we are trying to very, if possible, focus on self care and finding time to breathe in our busy, busy days. As a trainer and a clinician, what do you do to look after yourself?

01:06:36 - Alison (Guest)

Yeah, it's a big one and there's always a pain of ooh, not enough. But you know we don't want to perpetuate the guilt cycle. So I've been learning a lot as a working mother with an eight year old, beautiful eight year old, very busy, active eight year old and a very busy, active toddler who has not yet learned to sleep long chunks at night time. So I'm trying that in a positive way. I'm beautiful.

01:07:01

I've in terms of self care. A lot of it has been around self compassion, lowering expectations, making apologies to people when I mess up because it happens, and asking for help, which is awfully difficult. So, yeah, just really trying to dispel the perfect mother myth. I suppose more practical ways would be. I say yoga, but it's been a long time, but I do love yoga and I love nourishing myself and my family with really good food, so that's probably something that I can achieve on a more daily basis at the moment.

01:07:45 - Shaun (Host)

Yes, it's within your, within your proximity of control or something you can do something about, but I like the compassion that. I actually think that maybe the only time somebody has said that on this podcast, when asked that same question, and I think that it's probably the one we could all do a little bit more of. I have a. I'm trying to acknowledge that I may not always get back to everybody. I try to, but I will. But I will always do my best to you know, respond to emails or let people know, but gosh, I'm not fast anymore. So some of these you know amazing people that have probably 20 times the emails I do get back to everybody in the way that they do, because they're phenomenal. It's not me.

01:08:31 - Alison (Guest)

I cannot provide any help around how that happens. I think some people know how to pause time. I think that would be my superpower just time so I can get the stuff done. I'll press play. I think I probably would never press play again.

01:08:46 - Shaun (Host)

Just relish the moment to do that, when the perfect moment, when the children are both simultaneously behaving themselves and you can really relish in that moment, because sometimes they're very fleeting.

01:08:59 - Alison (Guest)

The joy of children. They're wonderful.

01:09:01 - Shaun (Host)

Exactly, exactly. So for those people you know who've just listened to us talk, my goodness going for quite some time now, and this is what I said to you at the very beginning I've never done a short podcast with a speech pathologist and we just proved ourselves right. We'll prove my theory. What would be your key points you'd love listeners to take away from our chat today?

01:09:24 - Alison (Guest)

I think I'll make it to.

01:09:29

If it's people listening who have been in a educated position where they've been teaching reading and spelling in a particular way and maybe have listened to this and think, okay, maybe you know, maybe I need to look into how I can shift things.

01:09:46

And, talking about self compassion, be kind and be gentle, understand. There are many people in that boat who have been doing the best with what they know at the time and, you know, now seeking more information. There are so many networks out there that are people traveling in the same direction. So please do, please do consider what to do, and if it's not, training in sounds right, there are some other great approaches out there. There are lots of good, good people out there doing some really fantastic things, so, so it is well worth investing the time to do that. And parents, I suppose, listening, yeah, I suppose that I'm hopeful that you do find a way to empower yourself with knowledge, whether that is through something like the free online course with you to me or, you know, investigating some of those websites. It can be a long road to be in that advocacy position for your family, but, yeah, even if progress is slow, progress is there and it matters and chip away, because it will be worthwhile at the end.

01:11:01 - Shaun (Host)

Well, alison, thank you so much for joining me on the talking DLD podcast. I was so excited that you said yes, and look, we got here. We made the time in busy schedules and I think it'll be a great start to the year. So thank you so much.

01:11:15 - Alison (Guest)

Thanks so much for having me, Shaun.

01:11:19 - Nat (Host)

Thanks so much to Alison for joining us on the talking DLD podcast today. What an amazing chat about DLD and reading. I think this quote. So when we consider our written system is featured down, plus so much more, it's no surprise that individuals with DLD will find learning to read even more challenging. We need to get the word out there and we definitely need to embrace phonics. We put all the links discussed in today's episode in the podcast listing and on our blog. Make sure you check them out. And also you might not

know that we've launched the International DLD Research Conference Keynote Series. You can catch up with Professor Dorothy Bishop, professor Elizabeth Penner and also Associate Professor Matt Munn-Rowe's amazing keynotes From the conference for only 15 Australian dollars, and those funds will go back to the DLD research grant, which is very exciting. Thanks for joining us on the Talking DLD podcast. Be sure to check out thedldproject.com. We've always got new, exciting information up there and thanks for your support.