

Dyslexia support group formed

By SALLY KIDSON

A Nelson mother is setting up a new support group for parents and caregivers of children with dyslexia.

Jemima Busch says she decided to set up the group after attending a public lecture on dyslexia by a visiting international expert on dyslexia, Dr Gavin Reid, earlier this month.

Jemima, who has a 9-year-old son with dyslexia, says Dr Reid's lecture was interesting and inspiring.

However, what struck her the most was hearing parents in the audience speak up in the Question and Answer section after the lecture.

"It seemed to me that they just wanted to share their stories. They wanted reassurance that they are not alone, but most of all they just wanted to be heard." Jemima said she could really relate to the "troubled parents" and after the lecture she was left with a powerful realisation that "there were so many people in the same proverbial boat, but sadly with no solidarity."

She decided she could not ignore the fact a support group was needed in the region and decided to set one up herself.

"Despite having no expertise or professional experience, I figured, I could do that."

Jemima has set up a group called Dyslexia Network Nelson and it will meet on the last Thursday of every month – supporting Late Nights on

Hardy.

The new group aims to offer a friendly ear to anyone who wants to share their stories, experiences, ideas, resources and frustrations. She says the emphasis is on support.

Dr Reid was the keynote speaker for a learning disabilities conference. Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) brought Dr Reid to Nelson.

He held a public lecture before the conference where he talked about strategies and ideas for dealing with dyslexia in the home.

The new group has the backing and encouragement of SLD Nelson, which provides help for those with difficulty in reading, writing, spelling or with maths.

SLD says that though Dyslexia Network Nelson is completely separate from it, it has recognised for a long time that there was a huge need for a support group for parents. They say to be successful the group had to be driven by parents, not teachers, and they are thrilled that Jemima has taken the initiative to set it up.

Dr Reid has also written on the Facebook page in support of the group, saying he knows parents will really appreciate it.

■ Dyslexia Network Nelson will hold its first meeting 6pm on Thursday, July 31, at Lambretta's Bar and Cafe on Hardy St. For more information like the group on Facebook or email dyslexianetworknelson@gmail.com.



Support group: Specific Learning Disabilities Nelson (SLD) co-ordinator Susie Cowper, front left, mother Jemima Busch, and SLD chairwoman Gill Knight and teacher Elizabeth O'Connor. Jemima is setting up a support group for parents of children with dyslexia.