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**Media Release from the Dyslexia Foundation of New Zealand
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Leading dyslexia expert to deliver workshop in Queenstown

One of the world's foremost thinkers on dyslexia is coming to Queenstown to deliver an exciting new workshop for parents and teachers.

UK-based Neil MacKay will be introducing his advanced insights into dyslexia and how to improve the learning environment for Kiwi schoolchildren at a seminar on Saturday June 6 at Millbrook Resort.

Mr MacKay is the creator of Britain's Dyslexia Friendly Schools concept and author of the acclaimed resource book 'Removing Dyslexia as a Barrier to Achievement'.

He has 26 years' experience in mainstream schools and successfully initiated a national campaign to encourage multi-sensory teaching in British schools.

Sponsored by Millbrook Resort and the Queenstown Cookie Time store, which supports the Dyslexia Foundation through the Cookie Time Charitable Trust, the seminar will be held at Millbrook's conference centre from 9am to 12.30pm.

Twelve local schools are each sending three parents and a teacher and there are a further 30 places available for parents of children who show signs of dyslexia. Approximately one in ten New Zealanders have dyslexia, including 70,000 schoolchildren.

Those interested can register and pay the \$20 donation to the Dyslexia Foundation by popping into the new Cookie Time store in Camp Street, Queenstown. Bookings are essential.

Dyslexia Foundation trustee Guy Pope-Mayell said the trust was passionate about making New Zealand schools 'dyslexia friendly'.

"The \$1750 collected from registrations will be doubled by the Cookie Time Queenstown store to give one local primary and one secondary school \$1750 each to further their efforts towards becoming dyslexia friendly," he said.

“We’re absolutely thrilled to have Neil here to help parents ‘make the connection’ and provide breakthrough information that’s based on understanding dyslexia as a learning preference rather than a disability, as many assume it is.

“Staying connected to your child and their learning can be difficult when the challenges of dyslexia or other differences arise, especially when it comes to homework and learning for tests.

“Ensuring your child knows that you understand and are willing to support them is critical for their self esteem and future opportunities, as is actually knowing how and what to do.”

Mr Pope-Mayell, a father of four who has his own family experience of dyslexia, said the workshop would teach parents and teachers some ‘tricks of the trade’.

“The workshop will be very interactive, relaxed, and fun. We’ll even have some hot cookies for everyone there,” he said.

Millbrook is sponsoring the event by providing the conference centre free of charge and supplying hot drinks.

Further information on dyslexia is available from the Dyslexia Foundation’s website www.dfnz.org.nz and details about Neil MacKay, his workshops, and the foundation’s 4D programme is available from www.4d.org.nz.

More about Neil MacKay

Mr MacKay is a teaching fellow at Trinity College Carmarthen (University of Wales), and runs interactive workshops on dyslexia, Masters-level courses for teachers at several higher education centres, and courses on revision and study techniques for students. He also consults to Education Authorities and departments in the UK, Hong Kong and Malta. His recent work has included dyslexia-aware training for modern foreign language teachers in Hong Kong, working with teachers, students and parents on the Orkney Islands, and delivering a range of consultancy, conference and training services throughout the UK.

Picture caption: Neil MacKay

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