

Fact Sheet: How to Choose the Right Support for Children with Literacy Difficulties

As a parent, choosing the right support for your child with reading difficulties is essential. Follow these steps to ensure you're investing in effective, genuine help.

Pitfalls to Watch Out For

1. Vague Claims with No Real Evidence

Be cautious of vendors promising “guaranteed results” or “100% success rates.” Instead of relying on testimonials, **contact the vendor directly** and ask for evidence that they can support children who are 12+ months behind in reading or have poor spelling or writing skills.

2. Confusing or Overly Complicated Websites

If the website is hard to navigate or filled with jargon, it's a red flag. Ensure the website clearly explains the support they offer and how they'll help your child catch up.

3. No Clear Qualifications or Credentials

Ask the vendor about the qualifications and training of their instructors. Ask which programs or methods they use for a child with reading difficulties, particularly dyslexia, spelling difficulties or difficulties with writing.

4. Pressure to Commit Quickly

Be wary of pressure tactics like "limited-time offers" or "special discounts." You should have time to ask questions and make an informed decision.

5. Hidden Fees or Unclear Pricing

Ensure **fees are fully transparent** from the outset. The pricing structure should be clear, with no hidden or additional costs.

6. Establish Where the Vendor is Based

Confirm where the vendor is based and understands the specific educational needs of children in Australia.

Questions to Ask Vendors

1. **How do you support children who are 12+ months behind in reading?**
Ask how the provider supports children who are significantly behind in reading.
2. **Can you provide evidence of your success in supporting children with reading difficulties?**
Ask for case studies, data, or independent reviews to support their claims.
3. **What qualifications do your instructors have?**
Ensure the instructors have relevant qualifications and experience in supporting children with Specific Learning Difficulties.
4. **Do you offer a trial or sample session?**
A reputable vendor will offer a trial or sample session to assess if their approach suits your child.
5. **How do you track and measure progress?**
Ask how they monitor and measure your child's improvement over time. Do they produce reports for parents, if not, insist on regular reporting.
6. **What is your cancellation or refund policy?**
Make sure you understand your rights regarding cancellations or refunds.
7. **Do you offer a cooling-off period?**
A cooling-off period allows you to assess whether the support is working for your child before fully committing.

Things to Check on the Website

1. **Accreditations or Memberships**
Look for affiliations with trusted organisations.
2. **Clear, Transparent Information**
The website should provide clear details about their approach, methodology, and how they support children with reading difficulties.
3. **Contact Information and Customer Support**
Ensure clear, accessible contact details are available, including a phone number and physical address.
4. **Independent Reviews or Feedback**
Look for independent feedback from other parents or trusted sources, not just testimonials on the website.

Contact Dyslexia Victoria Support

If you are unsure about a vendor, reach out to **Dyslexia Victoria Support** (DVSAustralia@gmail.com) or SPELD Victoria ((03) 9480 4422) for expert guidance. They can help you make informed decisions and ensure your child gets the support they need.

Choosing the right support is critical. Don't be swayed by flashy promises. Ask the right questions, ensure the vendor has the proper qualifications, and make sure they offer a **cooling-off period** to evaluate the effectiveness of their services. Always seek advice from **Dyslexia Victoria Support** to make the best decision for your child's future.