

New Zealand Tutoring Association (NZTA) Newsletter

Welcome to the 2015 Newsletter for the New Zealand Tutoring Association.

The tutoring industry in New Zealand has shown steady growth over the years with the numbers of participants offering tutoring services increasing steadily. In recent times various Western governments have made moves to regulate the tutoring industry, particularly when new businesses set up without good business practice in place regarding professionalism of tutors and child safety in particular. Indeed, it was the spectre of government intervention in the New Zealand tutoring industry that led to the formation of the New Zealand Tutoring Association (NZTA), a professional body that would set standards for best practice and become a voice in New Zealand for the industry at large.

The NZTA is very aware of the scale of work needed to raise public awareness of the Association's existence and work. Advertising in National publications has been done over the past few years, but it is the Association's members themselves that can do the best work in this regard by raising the awareness amongst their clients of the Association and its aims. This is an important point as the Association enhances the credibility of the Tutoring service on offer, whilst supportive membership helps the NZTA gain traction in the marketplace.

In this regard, a couple of practical ideas may be helpful. Displaying your NZTA certificate clearly in or near your waiting area as well as putting the NZTA Logo sticker on your shopfront windows would be beneficial. Handing out an NZTA information pamphlet with your Assessment and promotional material would also be useful as well as displaying the logo on all newsletters that parents receive would also be good ways to promote the Association. The credibility and value of belonging would progressively improve if all members took some or all of these steps. The potential benefit to all members is worthwhile.

1. Children Who Learn Differently

Many children and adults go through their schooling feeling as though they are doomed to fail, when in fact many of these students are intelligent and capable high achievers.

Learning differently can be for a range of reasons but a common trait found in many students is dyslexia. Dyslexia is best thought of as a continuum of abilities and difficulties rather than a distinct area. The reason being, is that it is evident across a large range of intellectual abilities.

Dyslexia is widespread in New Zealand, affecting at least 10% of the population. It is often misunderstood as a problem with reading and writing only. In reality, it can affect a spectrum of skills from auditory and visual perception, planning and organising, and motor skills, through to short



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term memory and concentration. Dyslexia is caused by a neurological issue and is not a character flaw as many people in the past perceived it as.

Dyslexia can also bring creative gifts – like innovation, big picture thinking, enhanced spatial understanding and out of the box problem solving. Many dyslexic individuals excel in engineering, design, building, arts, mathematics, science and entrepreneurship.

Often, dyslexia's greatest difficulty is self-esteem! Recognising dyslexia and accommodating it by making small changes is paramount for the dyslexic student.

Some common dyslexic signs are:

- Reversal of letters or numbers after the age of 9 years
- Being slower to process and needing repeated exposure to retain learning
- Learns something one moment and then it is gone the next
- A big gap between oral and written capabilities
- Poor spelling level along with the mixing up of letters i.e., 'freind' and speical'
- Poor handwriting, punctuation and grammar

2. Upgrading to Windows 10

Unless you have been living under a rock you will know that Microsoft recently released the latest version of their Operating System, Windows 10. Microsoft has taken the best of Windows 7 and the lessons learned from Windows 8/8.1 to make a great new OS. If you are buying a new PC then insist on Windows 10.

However, what about those existing PCs running Windows 7 and Windows 8? Should you take up Microsoft's offer to upgrade for free? The easiest answer to this questions is, "if it ain't broke don't fix". If you are using computers in your business and having the latest version of Windows is not a factor then my advice is to leave it alone. Even though it is for free you will need to spend considerable amount of time doing the update and if you encounter any snags you may end up with even more work to rectify. I have personally updated three PCs from Windows 7 to Windows 10, one of them failed completely. While no data was lost, during the failed upgrade, it was a frustrating experience and a waste of time.

Before you take the plunge consider the current state of your PC, how old is it? Does it have niggling annoyances? If your computer was designed for Windows 7 and you have been using it for a number of years then you will end up dragging all that baggage to the new operating system. Perhaps a better solution is to wait and completely replace the PC. You don't want to upgrade and suddenly find you can't do your normal work on your PC. The same holds true for peripherals such as printers and scanners, which may require the downloading of new drivers to ensure they work properly on the new platform.

If you are certain you wish to continue then firstly ensure you have a backup of your important documents, browser bookmarks and email. The actual update is smooth and almost hands free. Each computer will be downloading 3GB of data so make sure your broadband data plan can cope with the increased downloads.

If you are upgrading from Windows 7 then I am sure you will be happy with Windows 10, it is clean, familiar, and easy to understand, plus it has a wealth of new, helpful features that you'll actually

want to use. The fact that it's free for the majority of existing Windows users, and can be rolled back quickly to the previous version if you don't like it, really makes it very, very easy to recommend.

3. Financial Information

At the end of 2015 the NZTA has \$12000 in the bank. The costs to the organisation are minimal, which of course means we can keep the costs down for the membership. With new memberships due in the New Year the community has decided to spend a large portion of the money collected so far promoting the NZTA locally. In the past we have promoted this organisation to the schools and principals using the Education Gazette, with the funds not being available to get out to a wider audience. We have been working with Fairfax to get an article out in as many papers as we can and covering the main areas for the NZTA members. This will cost approximately \$10000, which is a great way to spend the money for 2016 and move forward with the membership.

Please make sure you check that your registration is up to date and we have the website showing you as a member. Email us at ralph@nztutoring.com

4. New Zealand's results in the OECD PISA test in 2012

It is interesting to note that education experts blamed everything from poverty to student loans for New Zealand's poor performance in the 2012 OECD's international test of 15-year-olds in reading, maths and science.

More than 500,000 15-year-olds, including 4000 New Zealanders, sat two-hour pen and paper tests. Thirty-four OECD countries participated, as did 31 other places, including Shanghai and Hong Kong. The tests aim to find out if students can apply their knowledge of reading, maths and science and include multi-choice questions and open questions.

New Zealand's scores in reading, maths and science tested by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2012 have fallen since the previous test in 2009.

Formerly among the top-performing OECD nations, New Zealand is now outside the top 10 countries in reading and science, and barely above the average in maths. New Zealand moved from seventh to 13th in reading, seventh to 18th in science and from 13th to 23rd in maths.

Experts have said that behaviour problems have had an impact and that the curriculum teaches too many subjects and schools need to focus on the basics.

It will be interesting to see the results from the testing that is being taken again this year!

5. Membership

The NZTA will be looking at promoting the membership through the local papers towards the start of Term 2. We will be letting our customers know that even though the industry is not controlled by a body, that our customers should be looking for the NZTA Logo.

The *New Zealand Tutoring Association* (NZTA) is an association that was formed in 2009 to unify the tutoring industry nationally by representing tutors and tutoring organisations and to ensure that tutoring in New Zealand is kept at a high standard. All members must abide by the Code of Conduct.

By choosing to receive tuition from a member of the NZTA parents can be rest assured that they are dealing with a professional and ethical tuition provider.

More information about the NZTA can be found at www.nztutoring.com

Make sure you have your NZTA member ship displayed and ensure that you have a few NZTA handouts available in your waiting room for your customers to take away.

6. The Board Members of the NZTA

All five of the Board positions are voluntary and the meetings run on Saturday afternoons at no cost to members. All NZTA members are invited to attend the AGM in September and have a say in how the association promotes itself. For your information the board members are:

Jonathon Anderson	Chairperson, Kip McGrath
Dr. Ralph Wesseling	Secretary, NumberWorks'nWords
Sarah Simons	NumberWorks'nWords
Sally Clarke	Straight A's Education Centre
Kathy Redwood	mathZwise

6. Help Us Help You

All members need to make a concerted effort to use the logo in their print advertising and also make explicit reference on their websites. Better still would be to include a link to our website.

(www.nztutoring.com)

Overt reference to the NZTA has numerous benefits to members:

- The logo gives assurance to consumers who may be tempted to look up the NZTA and see what membership requires of members. In this way it distinguishes members from non-members.
- The logo makes a public statement of accountability to the market. This is crucial in raising industry standards.
- The use of the logo symbolises pride in the application of the Code of Conduct.
- The logo can be a source of protection and provides members and consumers an industry-based mechanism for the resolution of conflicts.

Using the logo in your promotional material will begin to associate the NZTA with quality tuition.

7. NZTA Logo Stickers and Flyers

This year we are again including a sheet of NZTA stickers to all our members. The NZTA logo can be applied to material that you wish the parents to see.

The NZTA will also continue to provide “waiting room” flyers that explain to parents what the NZTA is and how that is important when deciding on a tuition provider. We hope you have these displayed in a prominent place so they are available for parents to take.