

Dyslexia Association of Ireland
Suffolk Chambers
1 Suffolk Street
Dublin 2

Tel. 01 6790276

Website: www.dyslexia.ie



annual report + accounts 2007

Annual Report and Accounts 2007

Introduction

The Dyslexia Association of Ireland is a company limited by guarantee, which has charity status. It aims to promote the study of and improve the understanding of dyslexia.

The association has provided essential services for people with dyslexia since 1972.

These include:

- * Information – telephone help line, information booklet and website.
- * Psycho-educational assessment for children and adults.
- * Group or individual tuition for children.
- * Individual tuition for adults.
- * Summer schools for children.
- * A full-time course for adults, run in conjunction with FAS.
- * In-service courses for qualified teachers.
- * Short information courses for parents.
- * Seminars and Conferences.
- * Speakers for Teachers' and Parents Groups.

The association has 31 affiliated branches around the country, each serving the needs of its own community. Branches organize group tuition for children in their own areas and act as parent support and awareness-raising groups.

The DAI is a founder member of the European Dyslexia Association. It is a supporting corporate member of the British Dyslexia Association, a member of the Disability Federation of Ireland, the National Adult Literacy Agency, and Spectrum (an umbrella group for associations dealing with hidden learning difficulties). DAI maintains close links with FAS, the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD), and other relevant bodies.

The Dyslexia Association represents more than 3,000 families and schools. Membership is open to any interested person. Associate membership is available to schools and other organisations.

Rosie Bissett

Director (as of 10.4.2008)

Directors and Other Information 2007

National Executive Committee:

National President: Mary Byrne
Vice President: Madge Daly
Hon. Secretary: Caroline Dooley Martyn
Hon. Treasurer: Eadaoin Briody

Committee Members:

Matthew (Gerry) Byrne, Mary Cosgrave, Olive Connolly, Alison Doyle, Jo Gannon, Maureen Kelly, Paddy Lockhart, June Maher, Pauline Moran, Wyn McCormack, Antoinette O'Reilly, Treasa Ni Seoighe

Staff

Director: Anne Hughes
Psychologists: Mary Ball, Martina Colleran, Crid Rawlings, Jill Pollard
Administrator: Rosie Bissett
Branch Liaison Officer: Deirdre McGuinness

Company Information

Company Secretary: Anne Hughes

Company Directors: Mary Byrne
Madge Daly
Paddy Lockhart
Mary Mahon

Registered Office: 1 Suffolk Street, Dublin 2.
Registered Co. No. 185795

Bank: Allied Irish Bank, 9 Terenure Rd. East, Rathgar, Dublin 6.

Auditors: JPA Brenson Lawlor & Co.
Argyle Square, Morehampton Rd., Dublin 4.

Solicitors: James Connolly & Co.
13 St. Andrew Street, D2.

Registered Charity No. 10044

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

A review of the past year reveals a period of great activity with some new and welcome developments. However, in other areas it was business as usual with a vast number of professionals and volunteers working together to deliver a useful and necessary service to children and adults with dyslexia.

Conference- DYSLEXIA: Challenge and Achievement

A major focus for the past year and the culmination of a lot of work by a great number of people was the conference held at the Helix, Dublin City University on October 20th. The 6th European Conference on dyslexia to be hosted by the Dyslexia Association was the first to have a major emphasis on dyslexia in adulthood, with particular reference to dyslexia in the workplace.

This topic was long overdue for attention and we assembled a very impressive list of speakers. We were very fortunate to have the opening address delivered by Mr. Turlough O'Sullivan, Director General of the Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC). Mr. O'Sullivan made a most positive and encouraging speech. He encouraged employers to hire people with dyslexia, saying "Employing people who learn differently or who have different abilities is actually an advantage and can result in positive business gain."

Three speakers came from the U.K.: Professor David McLoughlin, a Chartered Psychologist who has written extensively on adult dyslexia, Ms. Jo Todd, a specialist in the area of workplace adaptation for employees with dyslexia, and Ms. Katherine Kindersley, an educational consultant who runs regular training courses on Dyslexia. Mr. Hans-Pauli Christiansen, from Copenhagen, reported on a course for adults, which has many similarities to our own Career Paths Course. A presentation was made on this course by Emma Matthews and Mary Wafaie who have worked so successfully in this area for nearly ten years now. A demonstration of useful software for teaching adults was given by Sheila Kavanagh and Margaret Doyle, Tutors on the Career Paths Course.

Parents were not neglected and a variety of topics included a lovely presentation on "The Adventure of Reading" by Ms. Mary Ball, Education Director of DAL.

Support for students at second level was presented by Ms. Wyn McCormack, Guidance Counsellor and Learning Support Teacher, while Ms. Madeline O'Rourke, Director of the Writing and Research Support Service at the National College of Art and Design and the Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, covered the provision at third level.

Vital information on equality legislation, the rights of employees with disabilities and the role of employers of people with dyslexia was provided by Mr. Niall Crowley, Chief Executive Officer of the Equality Authority and by Mr. Ercus Stewart, Senior Counsel.

Content of these presentations can be found on the website of the association, www.dyslexia.ie.

Many thanks are due to the organising committee, the volunteers who helped out on the day and to our sponsors, IFG Financial Services, Grattan Property Company Ltd., Meath Metal Products, Easypen, Aseco, and Musgraves. Very welcome support was received from the Special Education Support Service in recognition of the contribution the conference made to the knowledge and expertise of the many teachers and trainers who attended.

Publication of Revised Information Booklet

2007 also saw the publication of a revised and updated edition of our information booklet "All Children Learn Differently – A Parent's Guide to Dyslexia." This booklet provides practical information for parents and fills a great need. Since its re-issue over 2,000 copies have been sold or distributed. We acknowledge generous funding from the Vodafone Ireland Foundation which contributed to the printing and compilation costs. Consequently this booklet is available for a very reduced cost, just €5.00, or €7.00 to include post and packing. Copies are available from the national office and it is hoped in the future that they may be carried in all good bookshops.

Courses for Parents

This was a very fruitful year for courses for parents. Funding received from Vodafone Foundation Ireland allowed us to put these courses on at a greatly reduced cost to parents. Starting with a course held on the same day as the AGM in Liffey Valley, courses were

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

held in Swords on September 15, Sligo on September 22, Kells on September 29 and finally in Enniscorthy on November 10. These one day courses were very well attended, and were booked out at a number of venues. Feedback was very positive and showed the need for such opportunities for parents to meet and exchange information. We plan to develop these courses in the present year and also to offer one day courses for second level students.

Teachers' Courses

In the past year courses for teachers were held in Donegal Town, Ballinteer Community School and at D.C.U. Our Educational Director, Mary Ball, will tell you in more detail about this but I want to thank Mary and her team of presenters who deliver this course several times a year.

New Staff Members

This past year has seen some welcome additions to our staff. Crid Rawlings, who has provided consultancy hours to the association in the past finally came on board as a full staff member in 2007. Jill Pollard also joined us during the year, providing maternity leave cover for Martina Colleran, who we hope will rejoin us shortly.

Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Funding

For the past four years the association has benefited greatly from funding from the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. This funding of €40,500 per annum has allowed us to provide support, advice and direction to workshops and branch committees. It has also enabled us to respond to requests for information and talks from parents' groups, teachers and members of the public. It has funded our Branch Liaison Officer post and you will all be familiar with the visits of Deirdre McGuinness to every branch of the association and to all parts of the country. It has also allowed our Education Director, Mary Ball, the flexibility to develop educational policy and oversee the services provided by the DAL.

It was with great relief, therefore, that we learned that this funding is to be renewed for the next three years. Funding of €93,000 per annum will be made available for 2008, 2009 and 2010.

The programme of work which will be undertaken for that period is considerable and will result in some new services, as well as a continuation of those already in progress. These include:

- * Courses for parents
- * Training days for branch committees
- * Training for telephone help line volunteers
- * Courses for second level students
- * Information leaflets for adults with dyslexia
- * An information CD for adults
- * Information for employers
- * Revised website

In addition, we will continue the programme of support visits to branches and local communities, and respond to requests for information and in-service from schools and parents' groups.

Adult Services

We have not been able to proceed as quickly as we had hoped with extending our services for adults but it is still very much on the agenda. However, we have been able to do quite a number of assessments for adults free of charge, thanks to the funding received from the Further Education Section of the Dept. of Education and Science., and we have been able to offer tuition free of charge to those most in need.

We are very pleased that the Career Paths course for adults with dyslexia goes from strength to strength. Our numbers are larger than ever before and our waiting list grows longer. The course was highlighted in an edition of "Outside the Box" on Radio One last autumn and featured in two RTE programmes on adult literacy. Following each burst of publicity interest is aroused in the course and we have had a number of enquiries from other parts of the country about the possibility of extending the course outside of Dublin. This should be possible but the expense involved is considerable. Indeed this course would not be feasible at all were it not for the tremendous input of FAS, which pays the participants fees, rent and most of the administration costs, and the grant from the Further Education Section of the DES which provides for the psycho-educational assessments, salaries of literacy tutors and educational materials and management support.

President's Report to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

Thanks, as always must go to the FAS and to Margaret Byrne, who has worked with us from the start on the Career Paths Programme. Many thanks also to the dedicated management team, Emma Matthews and Mary Wafaie, and to the Literacy Tutors Sheila Kavanagh, Margaret Doyle and Antoinette O'Reilly who achieve such wonderful results.

Notation on Certificates of Students who received Reasonable Accommodation

In last year's report it was recorded that a landmark ruling by the Equality Tribunal deemed that annotation of certificates when the candidate had received special accommodation in state exams was discriminatory. The Dept. of Education and Science challenged this ruling and appealed to the Circuit Court. The case was heard in August and after much deliberation a verdict was given in the autumn. Unfortunately, the judge decided that while the girls who took the case to the Equality Tribunal had been treated differently, they had not been discriminated against. The judge's view was that as the girls were aware that their certificates would be endorsed they had the choice not to apply for reasonable accommodation.

It has recently been reported that the Equality Authority, in turn, will appeal the Circuit Court ruling. The case will be heard in the High Court but no date has yet been set.

Revised Edition of Lost for Words

Members will be pleased to know that a revised version of "Lost for Words" by Wyn McCormack was published in 2007. This book is invaluable. It contains the most up to date information about all aspects of second level schooling for students with dyslexia. It is available from all good book shops and from the national office in Suffolk Street, Dublin 2. The price is €16.00 or €18.00 by post.

Fundraising

In addition to our usual D-Days and Mini-marathon events in 2007 we also had a very successful Fun Walk in Glendalough. This event has the potential to grow into a significant awareness raising day for DAL, as well as a fund raiser. The co-operation of several second level schools and Transition Year Leaders has

been very welcome. Whole classes of students have been introduced to the concept of dyslexia through a very positive format and the response from the students who have taken part in the walks so far has been great.

Many thanks are due to all the members of the Fund Raising Sub-Committee: to Jo Gannon and Madge Daly who organised the mini-marathon, to everyone who collected for D-Days and to Caroline Dooley Martyn and Mary Cosgrave who worked with me on the Fun Walk.

Disbursal of Hasbro Funding

During the year 2007, the sum of €43,625.00 was paid out to workshops around the country to subsidise the fees for students whose families experienced financial hardship. This funding was a boon to many families and great thanks are due to the Hasbro Company for making the Dyslexia Association the beneficiary of its Game Playing Week in 2006.

Acknowledgements

In closing I want to thank: the members of the national executive committee who have been so supportive over the past year, indeed over the past three years while I have been National President. A special word of thanks to the steering and fund-raising sub-committees. Many thanks to Noel Muldowney who prepares our accounts for audit and keeps a watchful eye on us. Many, many thanks to those dedicated people who make up the voluntary committees of the branches. We all know how difficult it is for busy people to give up time for this work. Heartfelt thanks to the Programme Co-ordinators, Assistant Co-ordinators, teachers and tutors in our workshops. Without their expertise and commitment our children would not get the help they need and deserve. Sincere thanks to the staff of the national office – our psychologists Mary Ball, Crid Rawlings and Jill Pollard, Administrator, Rosie Bissett, Branch Liaison Officer, Deirdre McGuinness, and our Director, Anne Hughes. I want to extend a welcome to our newest member of staff, Niav Keating who has just joined us.

Changes are afoot in the present year as our Director, Anne Hughes, retires shortly. She will be replaced as

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Director by Rosie Bissett who has worked with the association for over ten years now. Niav Keating will move into Rosie Bissett's role and we anticipate a very smooth change over.

Finally, but very importantly, thanks to you the members of the Association. It is so important that we have a strong and united network of branches, and a committed and supportive membership in the association. Your National Executive Committee can make the policies and set the goals. Our professional staff can carry out their work, but for the Association to have a real voice, and for that voice to be heard, we do rely on our members. That is why I appeal to you all to be active members of the Association. Don't

leave it to someone else to write that letter, to tackle that politician, to pass on a piece of information, to talk to friends, neighbours and family about dyslexia and what it means. Become involved in your local branch, and support the national Association. The services of the Dyslexia Association are still very necessary. We need you and you need us. Thank you for your support over the past few years and every good wish to all of you in the future.

Mary Byrne, National President
April 5th, 2008

Report of the Director of Education to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

This report comes hot on the heels of my return from Harrogate where Crid Rawlings and I attended the British Dyslexia Association Three-Day Conference on Dyslexia. This event takes place every three or four years and brings together a great deal of the research that is being done world-wide on dyslexia. It gives us the opportunity to forge valuable links with professionals working in the same areas as we do and to keep up to date with the very latest research findings from the foremost scholars in the field. This year's theme was 'Making Links' a title that included studies on the universality of core deficits across different languages and the relevance of non-reading interventions to dyslexia. In particular, there were a number of keynote addresses and workshops which looked at the co-occurrence of dyslexia with other developmental disorders such as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder, Attention Deficit and Specific Language Impairment.

I came away with much food for thought. Two points, in particular, I would offer for your consideration:

Firstly, the link between oral language and success

at reading and writing is very strong i.e. the strength of the children's developing language is a good predictor of reading and writing ability. I cannot stress enough how important it is that children engage in conversation, play language games and that parents make deliberate, conscious efforts to develop vocabulary and language usage.

Secondly, the links between non-reading interventions and the actual process of reading are not yet proven i.e. there is no scientific evidence to show that developing better co-ordination, for example, leads to an improvement in reading ability. Parents were advised:

- * to check out the scientific theory that underpins the intervention i.e. is the definition of dyslexia consistent with what is known from science?
- * The evidence of improvement must be more than 'what people say they observe'; it must be scientifically proven.
- * Are the gains in reading due to other factors e.g. natural development and reading intervention?
- * Lastly, do the gains claimed justify the cost of the programme?

Report of the Director of Education to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

With scientific research as backdrop, the Association has continued to be involved in offering services to children and adults throughout the country. I visited a number of workshops during the year, with Deirdre McGuinness. They continue to offer good professional tuition to children according to the sound principles of structured, multisensory and cumulative programmes. We are fortunate that so many dedicated teachers make themselves available to teach in the workshops.

Children with dyslexia need more practice - and more frequent practice in the fundamental phonics and morphology than the average child. Even after progress is made they need reinforcement and on-going monitoring to sustain growth. The workshop gives an added opportunity for this to happen. At second level it is important to note that the emphasis of the workshop is on developing skills not subject content.

To continue to provide this service we need teachers and money. Neither is easily come by.

I must acknowledge the hard and persistent work that is required of Branch committees to fund the workshops. The financial running of the workshop continues to be the most stressful aspect for Workshop co-ordinators and committees. In the end it is the economics that determine whether or not the workshop can survive.

One source of new teachers is the DAI Teachers' Course. This year we ran the 20-hour course in Donegal, DCU and Ballinteer. There are a further two planned for later this year, Trim, starting next Saturday and Clonmel, in July. I also delivered two 20-hour courses on Dyslexia to Special Needs Assistants in the Education Centre in Drumcondra.

The DAI continues to receive requests to give talks on dyslexia and the attendant issues for people with dyslexia. Anne Hughes and Rosie Bissett have given

a number of talks around the country on Disability Awareness.

Deirdre McGuinness and I have spoken in schools to staffs and parents in Dublin, Kenmare and Leitrim. I delivered a paper at our own conference in DCU and to the Cneasta conference in Kilkenny in October. DAI provided an information stand at the AHEAD Conference in UCD.

More recently, we have been approached by Prometrix, the company responsible for the Driving Test Theory exam, to speak to trainers; and also to hold a session in DCU for students on the Masters in Education and Training Course. We have also been invited to and have participated in the open forum in Dublin Castle in consultation for the provision of reasonable accommodations in certificate examinations.

As we go forward into a new year I look forward to continuing to work for the educational development of all who seek our help. The Association has a unique contribution to make to developing awareness and providing sound educational support in the area of dyslexia.

I want to pay tribute to our co-ordinators, directors, tutors and parents who do so much for the children in the workshops. To each of you, on behalf of DAI 'Thank You'.

Mary Ball
Director of Education

5.4.2008

Report of the Auditors to the members of Dyslexia Association of Ireland

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act 1990. Our audit work has been undertaken so we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

We have audited the financial statements of Dyslexia Association of Ireland for the year ended 31 December 2007 which comprises of the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Cashflow Statement and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein and the requirements of the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

Respective responsibilities of committee members and auditors. As described on Page 2 the Association's committee members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland).

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Practice in Ireland applicable to Smaller Entities, and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act, 1963 to 2006. We also report to you our opinion: proper books of account have been kept by the company and whether the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purpose of our audit, and whether the financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

We report to shareholders if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding the directors' remuneration and transactions is not given and where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read the directors' report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements with it.

Basis of audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Auditing Standards issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit

includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statement.

Going concern:

In forming our opinion, we have considered the adequacy of the disclosures made in note 1 of the financial statements concerning the uncertainty as to the continuation of the charity's government grant income in the future. In view of the significance of this uncertainty we consider that it should be drawn to your attention but our opinion is not qualified in this respect.

Opinion

In our opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Association's affairs in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland applicable to Smaller Entities, of the state of the organisation's affairs as at 31 December 2007 and of its surplus for the year then ended; and have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963 - 2006.

We have obtained all the information and explanations that we considered necessary for the purpose of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the Association.

The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion the information given in the Report of the Directors on pages 2 and 3 is consistent with the financial statements.

JPA BRENSON LAWLOR

Chartered Accountants, Registered Auditors,
Argyle Square, Morehampton Road,
Donnybrook, Dublin 4.

Date: 19th April 2008

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Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital) **BALANCE SHEET** as at 31st December 2007

	2007 Euro	2006 Euro
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Assets	9,376	12,126
Current Assets		
Stocks	11,280	4,110
Prepayments	56,265	77,228
Cash at Bank and in Hand	<u>412,094</u>	<u>377,638</u>
	479,639	458,976
Creditors (amounts falling due within one year)	<u>73,244</u>	<u>82,128</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>406,395</u>	<u>376,848</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	<u>415,773</u>	<u>388,976</u>
Financed by		
Reserves	2007 Euro	2006 Euro
Income & Expenditure Surplus	<u>415,773</u>	<u>388,976</u>

On behalf of the Board

Madge Daly – Director
Mary Byrne – Director

Date: 19th April 2008

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Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital) **INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT** for year ended 31st Dec. 2007

	2007 Euro	2006 Euro
Total Income	727,496	729,464
	—————	—————
Administration Expenses	696,223	699,612
Financial Expenses	559	1,533
Depreciation	3,917	4,371
	—————	—————
	700,699	705,516
	—————	—————
Surplus on ordinary activities before taxation	26,797	23,948
Tax on ordinary activities	nil	nil
	—————	—————
Surplus on ordinary activities after taxation	26,797	23,948
Surplus retained at beginning of year	388,976	365,028
	—————	—————
Surplus retained at end of year	415,773	388,976
	—————	—————

The Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet have been prepared on the going concern basis.

There are no recognised gains or losses other than those passing through the Income and Expenditure account.

On behalf of the Board

Madge Daly – Director
Mary Byrne – Director

Date: 19th April 2008

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Dyslexia Association of Ireland (limited by guarantee not having a share capital) DETAILED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for year ended 31st Dec. 2007

	2007 Euro	2006 Euro
Schedule 1:		
TOTAL INCOME		
Fundraising & Donations	51,746	51,974
Rental Income	10,180	16,550
Seminars & Courses	275,341	251,674
Psychologists Fees	46,280	46,360
Deposit Interest	9,394	6,366
Membership Fees	88,827	86,544
Conference 2007	14,058	-
Hasbro Schools Project	-	72,496
Grants Received:		
Dept. of Education and Science	183,500	156,500
Dept. of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs	34,170	41,000
Vodafone Foundation Ireland	14,000	-
	<u>727,496</u>	<u>729,464</u>
Schedule 2		
ADMINISTRATION EXPENSES		
Wages	396,343	385,370
Advertising	352	-
Refuse Collection	313	-
Grants paid to Branches	30,614	66,871
Rent, Light & Heat	24,000	24,000
Audit & Accountancy	2,115	1,800
Insurance	3,378	6,309
Repairs & Maintenance	1,410	1,380
Printing, Postage & Stationery	35,358	37,499
Telephone	4,351	4,217
Fundraising Expenses	3,146	16,947
Educational Materials	3,366	6,006
Teachers Courses & Seminars	167,272	128,222
Sundry Expenses	10,508	8,580
Travelling Expenses	13,697	12,411
	<u>696,223</u>	<u>699,612</u>
Schedule 3:		
FINANCIAL EXPENSES		
Bank Interest & Charges	559	1,533
	<u>559</u>	<u>1,533</u>
Schedule 4:		
DEPRECIATION		
Office Equipment	3,917	4,371
	<u>3,917</u>	<u>4,371</u>

Branch Liaison Officer's Report to Annual General Meeting 5.4.2008.

This has been a busy year again for the DAI branches. Many of those with Workshops are encountering many more enquiries from Parents for places due to the difficulty in getting extra help in school that is so important for the Dyslexic child. This has resulted in some workshops having waiting lists for places. The Branches are always looking for teachers who have completed the Dyslexia Training Course to teach in the workshops; despite the fact that we provide at least five DAI Teachers' Courses per year with on average 50 Teachers attending each one, unfortunately few commit to work in the workshops or become private tutors. At the same time, all the children in the classroom will benefit from the tuition these teachers will have gleaned from attendance on the course.

All parents still continue to say that their children benefit hugely from their participation in the workshops. Sense of self-esteem is raised almost immediately when they see that they can learn and be very successful in school, and that there are other children who struggle as they do.

Here, I take this opportunity, on behalf of parents and children who attend DAI Workshops to sincerely thank all the teachers who, after a days work, return to teach these children with dyslexia and who have, over the last thirty years, provided a safe fun atmosphere in which these children learn to cope with their dyslexia and become proficient learners.

Some of the Branch Committees have expressed deep concern about the lack, at Committee level, of support from Parents whose children are in the Workshops. Without parent participation in fund-raising and attendance at information evenings, Workshops will close and children will suffer as a consequence. Above all, these children need constant extra tuition to enable them to achieve their full potential. Due to the upcoming charities legislation we will be issuing all the Branch Committees with an updated set of Guidelines, and Rules and Regulations of the Dyslexia Association of Ireland. It is necessary that all Committees read these documents and pass the Information on if there is any change of personnel.

I include here a reminder that all families using the services of DAI, whether through workshops or private tuition, must pay the Annual Membership Fee which allows the Association to continue to provide as much valuable support as it can for all who have dyslexia. We do express our thanks to all the members of the hardworking Committees throughout the country for their dedication in organising and running the workshops efficiently and ensuring the much needed support for these children continues.

I try to visit as many workshops as I can throughout the country to talk to parents and offer as much information and support to the committees. My mobile number is available to all Branches.

In conclusion I wish all Branches success in the coming Year.

Deirdre McGuinness
Branch Liaison Officer
5.4.2008