

Research Directions

Office of Research Services

Reading for Life

UWS researcher Professor Rhonda Craven from the Centre for Educational Research, Associate Professor Andrew Martin, Professor Tony Vinson (University of Sydney) and industry partners (Learning Links & Unilever) have been awarded an ARC Linkage grant to test the impact of a new reading intervention to help young children experiencing reading difficulties reach their full potential.



'Reading difficulties in early school years are a pervasive problem and have long-term academic and psychosocial consequences that limit life potential' says Professor Craven. 'This project is unique in that it relies upon the goodwill of the charity Learning Links and volunteers from our industry partner Unilever and UWS students to work with young children experiencing reading difficulties early in schooling. Volunteers and parents will administer a newly developed suite of interventions called *Reading for Life*. We will develop age-appropriate reading interventions based on the best available research in the field and evaluate the impact of this intervention on students' reading achievement, academic functioning, self-concept, and motivation.'

In a climate of globalisation and a need for Australia to compete in an international arena, the *Reading for Life* project is expected to improve the individual, social and national potential of Australian students and enable them to reach their full potential not just at school but at home, in later work life, and in society as a whole. This will be done through enhancing literacy, self-concept, motivation, engagement, parent relations, home-life, and well-being.

Using a longitudinal experimental design and state-of-the-art multi-method analyses, the team will work with primary school students, parents, UWS students and Unilever employees, to conduct a controlled trial of the new *Reading for Life* intervention run by Learning Links.

Results of the study will be published in leading International education and psychology journals and form the basis of material released to the general public through the web. This is expected to provide a 'how to' presentation that can be copied and used by interested organisations and individuals.

Project Title: *Positive Pathways to Reading for Disadvantaged Children: Identifying Psychosocial Antecedents and Implementing Effective Intervention to Enhance Literacy, Self-concept, and Motivation*

Industry Partners: *Unilever Australia Foundation and Learning Links*

Funding has been set at: \$445,000

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