

# Making sense of learning

By Karen Kotze

Dyslexia has been brought on to the stage in a whole new way at the launch of a book that may open new avenues of learning for many.

Frances Adlam is a highly experienced teacher and lecturer in the arts, a therapist and an expert on multiple intelligences.

She was one of the key figures behind the implementation of the New Zealand Arts curriculum, and has worked as an adviser for Team Solutions and the Education Ministry.

Frances is also the writer of nine resources for teachers of poetry, dance, drama and music from a multiple intelligence perspective.

Her children's books feature a dyslexic hero.

She's also the mum of a dyslexic son.

Her latest work, *Out of the Box*, is her creative response to dyslexia – and many other learning difficulties.

It is the culmination of experience in all her different fields, and most importantly as a mother, that have led her to develop her own system specially for right brained students.

"Most children who are referred to as having dyslexia, ADD or who just struggle to read are right-brained thinkers," she says.

She says their world view is only "a problem" because it requires a shift in the way they require being taught –

a shift which is not comfortable or convenient for the many left-brained teachers in school.

She says this with a grin, but her work is in-depth and based on sound knowledge. It's also immense fun.

"My course recognises the way creative children's brains operate, and works with their particular learning styles.

It is, ostensibly, a right-brained approach. Dancing the alphabet, or dramatising a poem – the kids laugh – and learn. Sometimes literally in leaps in bounds.

The theory of multiple intelligences, where each child has a preferred sense that they learn with, is key. "Children who are kinaes-

thetic learners and therefore need to 'do' things to learn a lesson will find it difficult to focus on sitting still and using just their hearing senses to absorb the lesson information," she explains.

These children are actually under-stimulated in classroom learning situations.

*Out of the Box* is being launched at the Performing Arts School of New Zealand on May 8.

Parents and teachers keen on learning more about multiple intelligences are invited to a presentation and book launch of the Right Brained Reading Programme tonight at 7.30pm at The Auckland Performing Arts Centre, in Western Springs.



**Learning avenues:** Multiple intelligences expert Frances Adlam writes books about a dyslexic hero.

Photo: FIONA GOODALL