

## **Dyslexia Challenge Leads To New Career** By Christopher Clark

Helping her nephew with his reading problems resulted in Mary Ann Kettlewell becoming an educator.

Mary Ann Kettlewell watched as her nephew Jake became increasingly frustrated with his inability to read.

He was nine years old and simply unable to read at a Grade 4 level.

"My sister got him help. The teachers at his school were terrific, but he just couldn't get it, and I could see how he was losing his self-esteem." Kettlewell recalls.

Then her own grown daughter came home one day with a book she had found at Chapters, *The Gift of Dyslexia* by Ronald Davis.

It's no exaggeration to say the chance discovery of that book two years ago changed the lives of both Jake and his aunt, helping him to conquer reading and leading her to a new career.

"When I was reading with Jake I noticed he seemed to have trouble with small words like 'and' and 'the'," Kettlewell recalls.

"When my daughter came home with the Davis book, it talked about 217 trigger words. Teachers call them sight words because you basically have to memorize them. You can't figure them out like you can other words."

Having tried a couple of formal help programs the family was more than willing to spend a week in Waterloo working with a certified Davis® facilitator to see if the intensive one week program helped Jake.

When the week was over, the family had to make sure they did the follow-up work. To help out Kettlewell decided to take some of the Davis training.

The process helped Jake, now 11, improve his reading. His success spurred Kettlewell to complete the training, a process that took about 14 months because she was working as a nurse at the university campus of The London Health Sciences Centre.

I would go to Waterloo for a couple of weeks at a time and then do work at home."

She completed the courses in February of this year and started seriously considering whether she could open a practice in London.

There had been a London Davis® Facilitator a few years ago but he had retired.

"I really thought there should be someone in this area doing this. It's needed."

About the time Kettlewell was wondering if and how she could start such a practice, she stumbled upon Educational Help Centres Inc., the Lambeth based tutoring organization.

It employs more than 200 retired and younger teachers and offers one-on-one tutoring from junior kindergarten to university.

"They knew about the Davis Dyslexia Correction® Program because they had discussed it with the previous London facilitator. He had approached them because he wanted someone to carry on with the program in London."

Encouraged that she could team up with EHC and work from its Lambeth office, Kettlewell decided to plunge ahead without a safety net. She quit her nursing job.

"That was a big step, but this is something that I felt I wanted to do. My main concern is the self esteem of children who are having trouble reading."

Her program consists of a two-hour consultation, at which time she determines whether the child might be helped by the Davis program and whether the child and parents are committed to do the follow-up work required.

If so, she books the child for a week of one-on-one work, 9a.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

"I'm really happy with how things are going so far. Seeing the change in a child is wonderful."