

Australian Association of Irlen Consultants

Keynote Speakers @ 2013 Conference

Linking Communities

Helen L. Irlen, MA, LMFT

Founder & Executive Director: Irlen Institute International Headquarters

Helen L. Irlen is an internationally recognized educator, researcher, therapist, scholar, and expert in the area of visual-perceptual problems. Ms. Irlen worked in the field of education for the past 30 years. Her background includes 15 years as a School Psychologist, 30 years as a Child and Family Therapist, Educational Therapist, founder and Director of the Adult Learning Disabilities Program and Assistant Professor of Adult Learning Disabilities at California State University/Long Beach, instructor in psychology at Cornell University, and research assistant at Cornell. She has been recognized for her dedication to working with children and adults.



She is the author of “Reading by the Colours” and “The Irlen Revolution”. Her work has been reported in textbooks on learning disabilities in Australia and England, and the Irlen Method has received international exposure through National Geographic, newspaper articles, magazine articles, and television documentaries.

Presentations On:

- Headaches, Migraines, Head Injuries and Irlen Syndrome
- Irlen Success with Asperger’s and Autism

K. England, B.A. (UNSW), B.A. (ANU), Grad. Dip. Ed. (UCan)
Director ACT services for service and Dyslexia & ACT Literacy Tutoring

As a teacher, first teaching ESL, then later as a LOTE and English teacher, Karen became interested in the plight of children with learning difficulties. She started a tutoring agency twelve years ago specifically for these children, and together with her teachers, Karen now tutors children with disabilities (but no specific intellectual delay), such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Asperger's, and Complex Trauma. Originally having started in private practice, Karen has now formed a not for profit association called the ACT Time Out Learning Centre. Her other business, ACT Services for Learning & Dyslexia, provides Irlen screening and diagnosis, Academic testing, Parental help and advice, Neurofeedback, and qEEG brain scans.

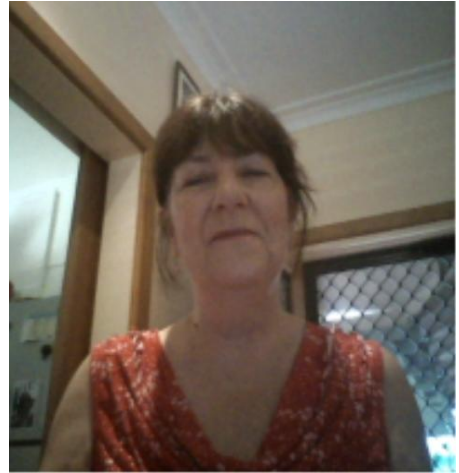


Presentations On:

- **Helping children with complex trauma.** Karen England, in collaboration with Victim Support, ACT, has been working with children with complex trauma for several years. This paper will look at the relationship between learning difficulties and trauma and how a child with complex trauma can learn; what is currently available for this cohort within educational practices and what is needed.
- **Neurofeedback and Irlen Syndrome.** Neurofeedback is a scientifically-based method of brain training to correct many learning deficits. Neurofeedback has been researched in the United States for 30 years. The main direction started by treating Epilepsy and then ADHD, followed by a focus on other psychological disorders such as Anxiety/Depression, Eating Disorders, OCD, Addiction, etc. The aim of this paper is to discuss neurofeedback and its efficacy for Irlen Syndrome.

Jan Male
Director Mildura Irlen Dyslexia Clinic

Jan's background is in teaching. She is a qualified Primary and Secondary teacher, a trained Reading Recovery teacher and has had a variety of roles in schools, including: Early Years Literacy Co-ordinator, Leading teacher, Acting Principal and Welfare Coordinator. She also mentors preservice teachers for La Trobe University and runs some playgroups for Mallee Family Care, a local Welfare Agency. Her passion is helping all students achieve their full potential.



She first became aware of Irlen fifteen years ago when students in her class came to school wearing "coloured lenses." Their parents were thrilled with their progress and increased confidence. Gloria Thomas came to Mildura regularly at this time and she heard her speak to a group of teachers. So began her learning journey with Irlen, which is still continuing.

She has been a screener for many years. Five years ago she retired from teaching to set up a clinic in Mildura. Luckily for her, the ground work had been done by Gloria and the many great screeners in her district. The clinic is growing and it receives referrals from many sources (schools, optometrists, speech and occupational therapists).

Presentation On:

Irlen and Indigenous Students. For this presentation Jan is concentrating on Indigenous clients in her community. With the help of her screeners, they have assessed and collected data from Indigenous students of different ages, from three schools in the area that have a high indigenous population.

Mildura Central Primary School, who are supportive of Irlen, but have no screeners in the school, Robinvale Prep-Year 12 College who screen many of their students and use overlays and who use supportive Irlen teaching strategies all the time. Coomealla Secondary College, who had not heard of Irlen Syndrome.

They are in the process of collecting data on the needs of these students and the difference that using Irlen overlays and /or lenses have made.

Alan & Valerie Wilks Alva Optical

Alan is an Optical Dispenser, Optical Technician and an Optical Mechanic. He is also a lecturer in Optical Technology for Optical Dispensers and Optical Technicians. Alan is a consultant to ARC Optical - an independent optical laboratory in Western Australia.

Valerie is a registered Optical Dispenser and an Optical Technician. She is a Managing Director of Alva Optical. Alva optical is a registered Optical Dispensing manufacturing business specialising in the supply of Irlen lenses exclusively to Irlen Clinics.

They supply plano and prescription lenses in both stock and grind, including multifocals. Alva Optical has been in business for 17 years and have supplied Irlen lenses in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Belgium, Israel, Hong Kong and Singapore.

They carry out research and development on suitability of new materials for use in Irlen lenses. They also carry out fitting of lenses to all types of frames suitable for Irlen Lenses.

Presentations On:

- The 4 main eyesight problems
- Prescription Lenses
- Understanding and interpreting optical prescriptions



Professor Tony Attwood
Clinical psychologist

Tony is a clinical psychologist who has specialised in autism spectrum disorders since he qualified as a clinical psychologist in England in 1975. He works in private practice in Brisbane, but is also adjunct professor at Griffith University, Queensland. His book *Asperger's Syndrome – A Guide for Parents and Professionals* has sold over 350,000 copies and has been translated into over twenty languages. He has worked with over 6,000 individuals of all ages with Asperger's syndrome or an Autism Spectrum Disorder.



Tony presents workshops and runs training courses for parents, professionals and individuals with Asperger's syndrome all over the world and is a prolific author of scientific papers and books on the subject. His latest book *The Complete Guide to Asperger's Syndrome* was published in October 2006.

Presentations On:

- What is Asperger's syndrome?
- Cognitive Abilities
- Managing Feelings
- Ways to assess Asperger's clients'

Melinda Hall B.Teach.ECE
Director Irlen Dyslexia Centre Sydney

Melinda is a diagnostician at the Irlen Dyslexia Centre Burwood who has worked in this capacity since July 2010. She trained as a Diagnostician after her children were diagnosed with Irlen Syndrome. Melinda was amazed at what a difference wearing Irlen Spectral Filters made to their lives and wanted to be able to help change other people's lives.

Prior to working at the clinic she worked as a Teacher/Director of an Early Childhood Learning Centre (Preschool) for 17 years. She implemented individual learning programs and the transition to school program for many individual children including many with additional needs. Melinda is a trained Multilit tutor and assists with reading programs at her child's primary school. In the past couple of years. She recently became further aware of the lack of knowledge about dyslexia and Irlen among teachers in our community and within the Department of Education. Melinda is now more determined to facilitate change in our Education system.



Presentation On:

- Irlen Case Studies
- Optical tests with Irlen overlays (in partnership with Susan Thompson)