

Case Study



NORTH EAST METROPOLITAN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, WA

Enhancing language skills through evidence-based intervention

According to internal data, students' word-reading skills improved, with the percentage of Year 1 children classified as 'high risk' falling from 43% to 26% between 2021 and 2023.



Meanwhile, the proportion of students at the expected level has increased from 51% to 69%.



The context

The North East Language Development Centre (LDC), based in Perth, is highly regarded for providing evidence-based programs for students up to Year 2 who have been identified as having Developmental Language Disorder (DLD).

Many of the school's 300-plus students come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, adding another layer of complexity when it comes to providing targeted support.

With a motto of 'Developing language – building futures', North East's primary focus is the development of oral language skills that are a crucial foundation for literacy, social and academic skills.

Its ultimate aim is to support students to return to mainstream education as effective communicators who can achieve their full potential.

Why MultiLit?

North East LDC is guided by current research from speech pathology and educational disciplines when it selects programs and pedagogies, and sets targets for improved student success in language and literacy.

Since 2020, the school has been using MultiLit's Tier 1 classroom program, InitialLit, to ensure the explicit and systematic teaching of phonics and other core literacy skills across the school. Coupled with intensive intervention sessions delivered by a student support team, which includes senior educators and speech pathologists, the approach has lifted student outcomes across the board.

“We wanted a Tier 2 intervention program for oral language that would be appropriate for our education assistants to deliver. LanguageLift looked like a great, evidence-based program for providing additional support to new students and possibly even our students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.”

– Lead Education Assistant,
Amanda Simpson



In 2023, North East LDC introduced MultiLit’s LanguageLift program to ensure that intervention for students requiring additional support was both responsive and targeted.

The program was initially rolled out in Term 1 for Year 1 students – targeting vocabulary and spoken grammar – and Year 2 students – targeting narrative skills.

By Term 3, Foundation students were also participating in LanguageLift.

The impact

In the first year of implementation, 48 students from Pre-primary to Year 2 took part in the program, which was delivered in small groups of up to four students.

According to Ms Simpson, students’ confidence in using language has blossomed.

“We’re seeing an improvement in the students’ use of language in class and their results on narrative retell assessments have all improved greatly,” she said.

“We have also noticed a difference in the use of appropriate personal pronouns and the ability to form three-part sentences.”

Ms Simpson said the LanguageLift students demonstrated an expanded vocabulary and were better able to use words in the appropriate context, resulting in improvements in learning and socialising.

“Their ability to pay attention appears to have developed and they are starting to follow the ‘good listening rules’ in the classroom as well as in their small group sessions,” she said.

“It’s been great to watch their confidence grow.”

Who is Bessie?

One of the main stars of LanguageLift is a soft toy called Bessie the bilby, who engages participating children in activities throughout the course of the program.

Because Bessie is just learning to talk and listen to stories, sometimes she needs the children's help to get things right.

Bessie's visits are lots of fun.

She also features in one of the LanguageLift storybooks, *Bessie the Bilby Needs a Friend*, which is a sweet story about loneliness and our need for friendship.



Key insights

Part of LanguageLift's success comes down to the fact that it has been designed to be an intervention program that children enjoy, featuring fun activities and games, and relatable topics.

"The children feel like they are playing, but they are learning at the same time," said Ms Simpson.

"The activities allow the students to move about which helps them to stay engaged. And they absolutely love Bessie and respond so well when Bessie the bilby is looking for students who are following the 'good listening rules' or when she asks them a question."

Teachers also find it enjoyable to deliver. While some struggled with the scripted nature of the lessons at the start, they soon adjusted and came to appreciate the benefits.

"I like the ease of use and how each lesson reinforces and then builds knowledge and skill, which helps our students assimilate the content better," Ms Simpson said.

"Access to useful, tailored and ready-made resources is also a great plus."