



ESS Parent Fact Sheet

The PLD (Promoting Literacy Development) Structured Synthetic Phonics (SSP) program is an evidence-based, systematic approach to teaching reading and spelling. It is designed to help children understand the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and their written symbols (graphemes), enabling them to "crack the code" of reading and writing.

What Is Structured Synthetic Phonics?

Structured Synthetic Phonics focuses on teaching children to decode words by blending individual sounds together. For example, the word "cat" is broken down into its sounds: /k/ /æ/ /t/, which are then blended to read the whole word. This method emphasises the importance of understanding the relationship between letters and sounds, rather than relying on context or pictures to guess words.

How Does PLD's SSP Program Work?

PLD's SSP program is structured into six stages, each building upon the previous one. The program begins with teaching the most common letter-sound correspondences and progresses to more complex patterns. Instruction is explicit and systematic, ensuring that children receive clear guidance on how to blend sounds and spell words.

In addition to phonics instruction, the program incorporates activities to develop high-frequency word recognition, writing skills, and phonological awareness. This comprehensive approach supports children in becoming fluent readers and writers.

Why Is It Beneficial for Children?

Research has shown that structured synthetic phonics is an effective method for teaching reading and spelling. It provides a clear and logical framework for children to follow, reducing confusion and building confidence in their literacy skills.

PLD's SSP program is particularly beneficial for children who may struggle with reading, as it offers a structured and supportive environment to develop their skills. The program's systematic approach ensures that all children, regardless of their starting point, can make progress and achieve literacy success.

How Can Parents Support Their Child?

Parents can play a crucial role in reinforcing the skills taught through the PLD SSP program. Here are some ways to support your child's learning:

- **Practice Blending Sounds:** Encourage your child to blend sounds together to read words. For example, say the sounds /d/ /o/ /g/ and have them blend them to say "dog."
- **Reinforce High-Frequency Words:** Help your child recognise and read high-frequency words that may not follow regular phonetic patterns (known as 'heart words' in PLD). Examples: one, was, want, have, more.
- **Engage in Writing Activities:** Encourage your child to write simple words and sentences, applying their phonics knowledge.
- **Read Together Regularly:** Spend time reading with your child daily, discussing the story and pointing out words and sounds.

By actively participating in your child's literacy development, you can help reinforce the skills taught in the PLD SSP program and support their journey to becoming confident readers and writers.