

**SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATION
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED**

Clever Schools and Clever Homes create clever kids- best practice for supporting all students particularly those with learning difficulties

Our tips are posted daily and include strategies for teachers and parents. They are not mutually exclusive.

Clever Byte #9: Keyboard skills and familiarisation

Just as handwriting skills are very important for students as they start school, keyboard skills and key board familiarisation are also important skills for students to practise from the age of 6.

Some benefits of teaching typing skills

- The development of typing skills helps build fine motor control and hand /finger co-ordination
- A keyboard uses capital letters that can help students, who confuse 'b' and 'd', to recognise the correct letter as they type
- Some students write illegibly and a word processor allows them to create text that is easy to read

Benefits of touch typing

- In an age where word processing is often used as an alternative for hand written text, students benefit from not having to look at the keyboard as they type. This helps them concentrate on what is being written on the screen
- Increased speed and efficiency
- It helps those who need assistive technology programs to write e.g. Word prediction

In the classroom or at home

Simple keyboard exercises can be created for students from Year 1 upwards using their spelling words (best if the spelling words are from the same word family, and just choose one and then two of the words etc. as competency increases), or by following the keyboard exercises of a typing program.

It is important that the keyboard lessons are short, but regular.

3-4 mins a day is all it takes to start improving your typing skills and you are never too old.

A free typing program

The following program is a free online program. It allows you to follow lessons, or insert your own text, which makes it easy to use for spelling activities. If you use the lessons you may find it useful to reduce the number of letters to successfully complete the lesson in 3-4 minutes.

<http://www.sense-lang.org/typing/tutor/keyboarding.php>

