

The following article was published in
SEN Magazine
the UK's leading magazine for special educational needs



For a **FREE** trial copy of SEN Magazine,
[click here](#)

SEN Magazine Ltd. Chapel House, 5 Shawbridge Street, Clitheroe, BB7 1LY
Tel: 01200 409800 Fax: 01200 409809 Email: subscribe@senmagazine.co.uk
www.senmagazine.co.uk

Resonance: Elise and other Bal-A-Vis-X Stories

Bill Hubert

Bal-A-Vis-X, Wichita, Kansas, USA
402 pages
Paperback
\$30.00
ISBN: 978-0-9708085-5-4

Bill Hubert is the author of this programme which is short hand for Rhythmic Balance/Auditory/Vision eXercises for Brain and Brain-Body Integration. Hubert is, by background, a teacher of over 30 years' experience working with wide abilities in multiple settings. He also has training and experience in martial arts and, from 1975 onwards, has been fascinated by the relationship between movement/physical activity and academic and classroom performance.



This book is a record of his experiences, successes and journey towards the present, interspersed with anecdotes, research, case studies and links to others working in this field. Hubert is unique, as far as I know, in the ways in which he has developed a structure whereby some of his students graduate to become assistant instructors. These instructors often start out from very unpromising beginnings: they are not athletes, but students facing complex, but often undiagnosed auditory, visual or vestibular problems. Their progress and achievements are remarkable and Hubert has a deep empathy and confidence as he grows their confidence, independence and competence. Thousands have been trained internationally in this programme which uses balance boards, balls, bean bags and a dizzying level of coordination.

I think that this approach has much to offer and I recommend that teachers and other professionals explore the possibilities it offers.

Project X CODE

Series editors: Marilyn Joyce, Maureen Lewis, Di Hatchett

Oxford University Press

Project X CODE is a literacy intervention programme targeted at struggling readers, particularly in Years 2 to 4. It has been designed using systematic synthetic phonics and is also in line with the Phonics Screening Check in England.

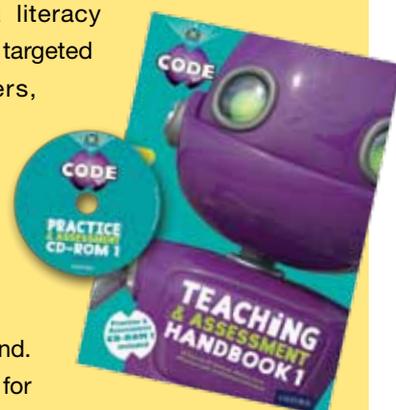
The books are suitable for older pupils with more severe learning difficulties and children who are experiencing anxiety, frustration and lack of motivation.

The programme is built around a set of levelled books, detailed daily session notes and guidance, so that the attractive and interactive programme can be delivered by a teaching assistant who has been trained in systematic synthetic phonics and small group interventions. The lesson plans are precise, comprehensive and explicit in terms of what needs to be done, with links to resources, vocabulary and "tricky" words.

There are two texts in each book, the first being 100 per cent decodable to build confidence, while the second is at least 80 per cent decodable to keep children motivated.

Team X is made up of four ordinary children with a range of amazing gadgets to assist them in their adventures. The programme is visually very attractive and I can see that it would appeal greatly to the reluctant reader, as it does not look like it is for struggling/failing pupils.

Oxford University Press has put together a free Project X CODE preview pack which includes a launch story with animation, a sample pupil book, a preview CD-ROM with assessment software, five free books and an interactive classroom poster.



Book reviews

by *Mary Mountstephen*

What Children Need to be Happy, Confident and Successful: Step by Step Positive Psychology to Help Children Flourish

Jeni Hooper

Jessica Kingsley Publishers
178 pages, paperback
£15.99
ISBN: 978-1-84905-239-9

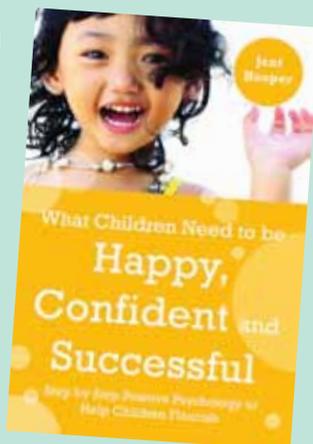
Jeni Hooper is a child psychologist and parent coach based in England. She specialises in positive psychology and in promoting children's psychological wellbeing.

This book is divided into two parts, with the first focusing on an introduction to the concepts of wellbeing and flourishing. Part 2 covers the flourishing programme and describes the factors which make up this approach, including positive communication, resilience and developing independence.

Hooper includes some useful questionnaires which are designed to gather information about a child's wellbeing profile and these are intended for use with children aged three and above. She identifies five learning success skills which together lead to happy, confident and successful learners. The importance of speech, language and listening skills is outlined, combined with, for example, creativity, imagination, executive functioning and focus.

Hooper advises the first time reader to find a buddy who is also new to the approach and to work together to compare notes and share ideas.

This is a practical book which has the high aspiration of helping children to flourish and achieve their personal potential in every area of their lives. It is well-written and includes a number of practical activities which makes it a useful resource for counsellors, social workers, teachers and parents.



Little Volcanoes: Helping Young Children and Their Parents to Deal with Anger

Warwick Pudney and Eliane Whitehouse. Foreword by Tina Rae

Jessica Kingsley Publishers
221 pages, paperback
£15.99
ISBN: 978-1-84905-217-7

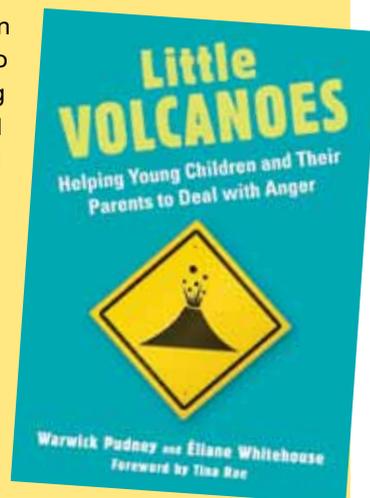
Little Volcanoes has been written as a guide to techniques for helping professional workers and families to understand and manage the behaviour of young children. The authors have many years' experience of working with children and families and they are the authors of several books in this field.

In her introduction, Tina Rae is very complimentary about the authors' approaches in terms of working with young people in what she calls an "empathetic, non-judgemental and solution-focused way". She draws attention to the importance of the management of anger and how to recognise, manage and embrace anger as an essential part of being human.

The book is divided into eleven chapters, with an attractive layout and the use of cartoons and other illustrations. It will appeal to many parents as it covers issues such as calming angry children, ideas for safe anger expression, skills for caring for the angry child and responding well to expressed anger.

There is also a very useful section devoted to stories and poems about anger. The book closes with a round-up of further reading, key concepts and references.

This is a very useful, sensible and helpful book which provides much information for dealing with anger, tantrums and other emotional outbursts.



Learning Through Movement and Music

Debbie Mitchell

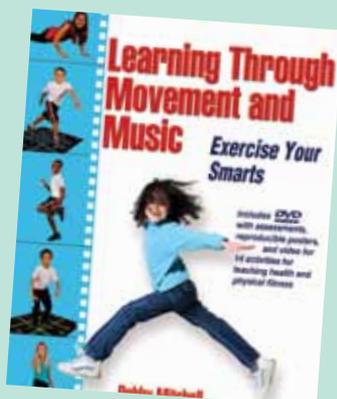
**GeoMotion Group Inc.
Human Kinetics
82 pages plus CD-ROM
£27.99
ISBN: 978-1-4504-1299-5**

This book is aimed at those working with pupils in the upper levels of primary schools and for older pupils as appropriate. It is designed to be used as a tool for classroom teachers who are teaching about body, fitness and health. A multi-sensory approach is adopted, using 14 songs to educate pupils on how and why to exercise. The course also uses a very interesting resource called GeoMats, which are mats that fit together and provide a numbering system to describe space and direction. The DVD includes background information and song lyrics as well as posters, activity assessments and video clips.

Clear links are made between exercise and learning. The message is that healthy, active students make better learners; when we exercise our bodies, we also take care of our brains.

The workout itself follows a standard outline including stretches, muscle work and cardio work. It also explains clearly why each exercise is relevant and important and provides simple written assessments for checking how well the students have understood the work.

While this book is designed more with the US market in mind, the principles are sound and the information would be of interest and value to anyone tasked with providing simple exercise programmes in an informative and engaging manner.



Teaching Play to Children with Autism: Practical Interventions Using Identiplay (Second Edition)

Nicky Phillips and Liz Beavan

**Sage Publishing
115 pages plus CD-ROM
Paperback
£27.99
ISBN: 978-1-446-207-666**

The new edition of this popular book uses an intervention called identiplay to help children develop social skills, understanding, imagination and exploration. At its core, it is an adult-led teaching strategy focusing on enabling children with autism to use toys in ways common to other children, such as enabling them to hear and join in stories, and to learn and apply play skills.

The CD-ROM provides resources which can be printed out for training purposes, such as play scripts, video clips and PowerPoint files. The authors include procedures for determining the child's current level of play and what they are currently able to do, so that appropriate toys can be chosen. The activities take place at a table with a clearly designated child's side and adult side. The resource pack for the activity contains two identical sets of toys and a script for what the adult will say.

The book places great emphasis on case studies linked to video-clips, specific kits and scripts. Examples of scripts include, "The Sea", "Making a Sandwich" and "Farmyard". Each script includes a description of resources needed and some include extension activities.

This is a useful and practical resource which is based on the authors' experience as an educational psychologist and a retired headteacher.

