

PHONICS THE *R-igh-t* WAY

For Children and Adults with Down Syndrome

FOREWORD

We at GiGi's Playhouse Down Syndrome Achievement Centers have instructed thousands of individuals with Down syndrome in our 1:1 Literacy Program. We find the components of the Raising Robust Readers™ phonics program, developed by the authors of *Phonics the R-igh-t Way*, to be absolutely invaluable.

Our free 1:1 Literacy Tutoring program was designed specifically to match the learning needs of individuals with Down syndrome. We first focused on teaching whole words—through rote memorization and sight words—but our students soon grew beyond this level and needed more to become functional readers.

In an effort to expand our program, our Educational Excellence Committee set out to find the very best phonics instruction for people with Down syndrome. After extensive vetting, we recognized right away that Raising Robust Readers™ presents the same teaching principles we value such as focus on the individual, respect for the child, and high expectations, and could bring our students' reading to the next level. It provides a code to phonics that is broken down into steps, is easy to understand, and uses a multi-sensory, fun, and engaging teaching approach.

We worked closely with Marilee and Judy to weave their experience and expertise into our existing curriculum. The result was a unique and personalized program that effectively teaches reading *and* reflects GiGi's mission and values.

We have incorporated the Raising Robust Readers™ program into our 1:1 Literacy Program, and we have also added the jingles to our Language, Music, 'N' Our Peeps (LMNOP) program to introduce phonemic awareness at a very early stage.

Now, with the publication of *Phonics the R-igh-t Way*, Marilee and Judy have developed yet another avenue to give parents and professionals a proven system. This book will help those with Down syndrome, of every age, move toward independent reading. We have seen it work at GiGi's Playhouse locations across the US. Now you can see it work, too.

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