

Rocking Dan Teaching Man scores 2.1 million YouTube hits

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With an international following for his successful musical lessons, it may come as a surprise that YouTube star Rocking Dan Teaching Man had a learning difficulty as a child and struggled in the classroom.

Dan Colquhoun is a primary school teacher at St Declan's Catholic Primary School in Penshurst, Sydney. He says that he wants to help all children to succeed with learning and this was one of his motivations for writing songs to help the children in his classes learn numeracy, social and literacy skills.

"I struggled at school because I'm dyslexic, which meant I had trouble blending, segmenting and manipulating individual sounds, which results in difficulties with reading and writing," he said.

Writing songs to provide a different approach to learning seemed an obvious way to find an alternative for children who are challenged when learning the building blocks.

"Music and movement help with oral language development,

vocabulary, coordination, gross motor skills, maths, rhythm, rhyme and self-regulation," Colquhoun says.

"Music and movement can help children learn and retain concepts more readily as it opens up multiple pathways to the brain. I struggled to learn in a conventional way so I tried to find a way to help all children learn concepts they might have difficulty understanding."

Most of the hits for the 47 songs he has written and recorded come from Australia, Britain and the United States. The YouTube channel has had more than 2.1 million hits, and his first animation was seen in more than 100 countries.

"It's amazing to hear children from Delaware, Nashville, Missouri or somewhere else in the world singing every word of one of my songs live via video link up."

Dan Colquhoun studied postgraduate education at ACU.

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