

Novel way to keep in touch

KATRINA ADAMSKI

A NORTH Shore inventor has come up with a novel way to teach people to touch-type within weeks.

Janet Littlehales does not know exactly what proportion of Australian households now have computers but she said it was not far off saturation point – and she suspected the majority could not type properly.

Put together, these two estimates add up to a very healthy market for her new invention, the Keyboard Genius, which she said can quickly teach people to touch-type.

After a frustratingly long push to get it into retail outlets it is now available throughout Australia in Officeworks stores for \$14.95.

A handful of North Shore schools were also shown Keyboard Genius and they will start using it in classes this year.

Pymble Primary School, Greenwich Primary School and North Shore Demonstration School at Waverton will use the program to teach children typing skills as they learn how to use a computer.

Ms Littlehales, of Frenchs Forest, said her system was simple and easy to use, based on a system of colour coding and numbering each key to guide the fingers.

The mother-of-two came up with the idea almost by accident after her son asked her to teach him to type.

“He knew I was a very fast typist and he was always asking me to type up his school work, which I wouldn’t do,” she said.

“One day he asked me to show him what I do, so I drew out a very rough sketch of a keyboard and I colour-coded and number-coded it.

“To my amazement within a week he was typing – not very quickly but with his fingers in the correct position.”

Only weeks later he was an efficient touch typist and she was starting to see the commercial potential of her simple system.

She said the Keyboard Genius had since been trialled with a range of non-typists of different ages who were encouraged to practise using it for 15 minutes a day for a month.

» Details, visit the website at www.keyboardgenius.com.au



Janet Littlehales has invented a keypad device to teach people to touch-type.

Picture: SIMON DEAN

Brush on a coat for a good cause

KATRINA ADAMSKI

LOCAL firefighters are calling on North Shore residents to help raise funds for volunteer training.

Throughout January, Dulux and Bunnings Warehouse at Artarmon will donate \$5 from every four litre can of Wash and Wear 101 or Weathershield paint purchased from Bunnings to the training scheme.

Bunnings manager Sharon Green said the state was currently facing one of the worst bushfire seasons.

“Our customers are well aware of the extremely long hours and hard work that volunteer firefighters put in to protect local communities,” she said.

The funds raised allow firefighters and emergency service volunteers from across Australia to attend the Volunteer Leaders Program, a five-day intensive training course aimed to develop leadership potential.

» Bunnings Warehouse is at 71 Reserve Rd, Artarmon.

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