

# REED Institute

Tucked backed on Sukhumvit Soi 38 is REED Institute. A small establishment making big changes for the students it serves.



MR. ALI KHAKPOOR, A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST AND REED INSTITUTE FOUNDER

For nearly 10 years, REED Institute has served the diverse educational, psychological, and emotional needs of children and adolescents. The institute was established by Ali Khakpoor; a clinical psychologist, and Sherry Payne; a special education specialist. Together the two have over 40 years of combined experience in the field of special education and child psychology. *Education Living* interviewed Mr. Khakpoor and spoke with him about REED Institute’s philosophy and their special niche in the educational institutes industry.

“When my partner, Sherry, and I started, we realized there was a need. A gap that we saw needed to be filled. In Thailand there seemed to be two extremes traditional schools, and institutions for children with severe disabilities and handicaps. The goal for Sherry and I was to create a place for those kids who didn’t necessarily fit into either system,” stated Mr. Khakpoor.

Mr. Khakpoor says REED Institute works to find sustainable solutions for each child’s unique learning needs. Unlike some after-school or supplementary instructional programs that utilize one teaching method for all students, REED conducts comprehensive assessments before it recommends the appropriate learning program based on each child’s individual needs.

Mr. Khakpoor admits that while he and his partner saw a need for their services, it’s been an ongoing challenge.

“For starters, says Khakpoor, if we’re doing our job right, we don’t keep students here year-after-year. REED is not a substitute for a traditional education. For school-age kids, our program primarily functions on an after school basis. Another challenge for us at REED is the confidentiality issue. REED, operates under strict codes of confidentiality as set forth by such organizations like the American Psychological Association. We do not readily share information about our clients therefore; we tend to exist under the radar.”

Many of the students that come to REED have average to above average IQ’s. According to Mr. Khakpoor, this is the hardest population to identify for learning disabilities. “Many of the pupils we see function well in some disciplines, and this is what can throw parents and teachers off,” says Mr. Khakpoor. “Unless they are identified, these are the kids that are most at risk of falling through the system. The kids who are bright enough to stay in the game, but year-after-year are they are at the bottom of the class –these are the kids who are secretly suffering and it is taking a toll on their self-esteem.” To Mr. Khakpoor, the most disheartening aspect of this situation is that too often, there is a ‘wait and see’ attitude. “With an accurate assessment followed by an appropriate learning program, these children could soar.” Early detection could make a big difference to a child’s academic success, say’s Mr. Khakpoor.

REED institute works in concert with a number of international schools. By collaborating with school counselors and providing support to teachers, REED pupils are coached by a single team working towards a single goal.

Mr. Khakpoor explained the process to *Education Living*.

## RESEARCH

In order to offer their clients the best diagnostic tools and services, REED institute has an overseas, U.S. facility, which Sherry Payne operates. Through their U.S. affiliation, REED can benefit from seminars abroad and stay up-to-date regarding information and the most current studies and measures being utilized. “Research is an important function to our operation,” says Mr. Khakpoor, “everything we do is evidence-based.”

## INTAKE

Depending on the presenting problem, school counselors or learning support teachers may initiate a referral to REED. Mr. Khakpoor says that additionally, half of his clients come as a result of parents seeking out services from REED on their own.

## ASSESSMENT

The multidisciplinary team at REED conducts comprehensive assessments using the best diagnostic tools available for the presenting problem. Once an assessment has been conducted, only then can an informed recommendation be made to parents and schools.

## INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Every program that REED recommends has been researched and is based on published



results. Facilitators at REED Institute have access to and training in utilizing intervention programs that are efficient, cost effective, and most importantly, evidence-based. Recommended programs are recognized by respected learning facilities worldwide, and are peer-reviewed by researchers in their corresponding disciplines.

## COLLABORATION

In order to best serve its pupils, REED works most efficiently when it is part of a team, along with parents and the child’s home school. Depending on the issues being addressed, information can be shared and goals can be set out on a monthly or quarterly basis. For students who have special emotional requirements, the faculty at REED may work more frequently and closely with the necessary parties involved.

The philosophy driving REED Institute is simple – “Finding a star in every child.” For us at *Education Living*, we also found a little star shining through the services that REED Institute provides to its students.

