

The Bulletin

Issue 19, Friday 17 December, 2021

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PD events

The [2022 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most PL will continue to be held online, but some are planned to be onsite. Please encourage school staff to [register for PD through our website](#).

Tuesday Feb 8 [Inclusion of students who are blind](#)

Providing practical strategies for classroom teachers and ES staff to promote inclusion and achievement for their students who are blind.

Tuesday Feb 15 [Inclusion of students who have low vision](#)

Practical strategies for classroom teachers and ES staff to promote inclusion and achievement for their students who have low vision.

Tuesday Feb 22 [Inclusion of students with vision impairments and additional disabilities](#)

Providing practical strategies that teachers and ES staff can use to support students with a vision impairment and additional disabilities.

From the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, SVRC

I can only marvel and be humbled by the resilience, commitment and sheer determination shown by SVRC staff to continue to deliver on all educational and professional learning programs, EVAC Clinics, materials in alternative formats and technology. Their continued dedication and preparedness to achieve high standards and increase skills while working remotely has been amazing. We have managed to ensure students, schools and regional staff were supported regardless of the learning environment.

Some of our experienced braille transcriber's are leaving the SVRC nest to move overseas, interstate and taking extended leave to support family members. We are now seeking proficient braille transcribers or a person interested in training to be a braille transcriber to join the fabulous Transcription team. Please contact SVRC if you are interested in finding out more about the role of a braille transcriber.

Once again, we were unable to organise the Thank you Morning Tea for the many people who work with the team at SVRC. The SVRC staff would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support as we look forward to continuing the positive partnerships in 2022.

Wishing you and your families a wonderful Christmas celebration and a relaxing New Year!

SVRC Writing Competition 2021 Winners

Judges: Deb Lewis, Marion Blaze

The theme for the annual SVRC writing competition was: 'Old worlds, new worlds, other worlds'. This was the same theme for the Children's Book Council book of the year awards. Students were encouraged to write in their own format, taking inspiration from this theme. And the results were super imaginative! Here is a taste from our seven winners.

Zac in year 2 wrote about koalas. This passionate piece of writing even told the reader how we can best support the survival of this unique Australian creature.

Sienna in year 2 wrote an imaginative story called 'Rainbow land' where her travel dreams were interrupted by COVID.

Mlak in year 4 wrote about the aliens and the queen. With UFOs, teleporting, aliens and magic, this story is an exciting adventure!

Patrick in year 4 wrote 'The scientist saves the world' - a fast-moving adventure with a happy ending!

Anita in year 6 wrote 'Sapphire' - a great story and lovely descriptions such as "... a scowl plastered on her ratty face."

The overall winner in the primary school section, was Kaitlyn in year 2 who sent in a story called 'COVID dinners' in excellent braille. This was a beautifully written and sad account of family life in the pandemic and how much she missed dinners with her grandparents.

The overall winner in the secondary school section was Jake in year 8 who wrote "The story of a crazy scientist". With "chloroplast smoothies and ribosome cakes", this was a story with a surprise on every line!

Congratulations to all our budding writers!!!

A special thank you to Bolinda Audio who donated wonderful audio books as prizes for every winner and Michael Kelly, SVRC's tech whizz, who crafted a wonderful trophy for every winner. The trophy depicts SVRC's logo of an open book. How appropriate for a literary prize!! And it can be "flat-packed" for postage.

Free to a good home

Source: Sarah Hayman, Technology Library, SVRC

There are some items at SVRC that aren't of use to us, but could be useful to you or your students. They are listed below, and photos are included too. Contact svrc@education.vic.gov.au to arrange a time to collect them.

- Letter and number formation whiteboards
- Wooden slantboard
- Whiteboard slantboard
- Franklin Language master
- A4 Tracker feed Embosser paper
- PIAF paper



My Work Experience at SVRC

Who am I?

Hello. My name is Zeynep Kocas, I am a year ten student and I came to Statewide Vision Resource Centre from Gleneagles Secondary College for work experience (November 29 to December 3, 2021).

Why am I here/what have I done during my time here?

During my week here at SVRC I have contributed to and participated in a heap of activities and I have also learnt a lot from my time here. During my week here I have helped with lots of cleaning up because the students have all been online this year, but are expected back in next year. I watched a very informative presentation given by an ex-student of Support Skills, I created mathematical diagrams for students, I attended two Dot Power meetings (once with a young 7-year-old student and once with a student's aid) to demonstrate how to read Braille books more efficiently, I participated in staff, I conducted some research about International Day Of People With A Disability, I interviewed several of the staff around SVRC and I contributed to the Support Skills session, which occurred online, on Friday the 3rd of December.

What have I learnt?

During my time here, I have learnt so much. Through all the cleaning and tidying, I have learnt efficiency, time management, responsibility and organisation. I have also learnt about how the staff here at Statewide Vision Resource Centre manage, organise and how they help to provide students around Melbourne with access to their education. By watching one of Support Skills ex-students presentation I learnt about what it's like transitioning from high school to university. I learnt from his presentation that I will to master catching public transportation independently, using certain websites, having to be confident, direct and able to self-advocate to about the support I will need from them, because the staff at the university will not be very knowledgeable about my requirements. While assisting Marion to demonstrate how to read Braille books efficiently with the young girl, I learnt patience and consideration. During the staff meetings, I learnt about organisation, critical thinking, responsibility and how hard the staff here at SVRC work and all the effort they put into helping all of their dear students. Learning that the last day I would be working at SVRC was also **International Day Of People With A Disability**, I did some research and produced and presented a mini article for the students. After finalising my document I re-read it all a few times to memorise some of the information, so that I could give some back-ground of the day on Friday's Support Skills assembly which was happening online

During my week here at Statewide Vision Resource Centre, I have learnt so much, which included very important life skills that I will utilise in my future. I enjoyed my experience here very much and so I would like to thank everyone here at SVRC for giving me the opportunity to learn about what it'll be like in a work place.

New resources on the SVRC website

Source: Support Skills Program Staff

There are a number of new resources on the SVRC website, many of them created by the fantastic Support Skills Staff. Here are some excerpts of the resources to whet your appetite.

[iOS and iPadOS Gestures:](#)

- Three finger single tap; read item summary
- Three finger double tap; toggle mute, Note: this mutes speech but doesn't turn off Apple VoiceOver
- Three finger triple tap; toggles the screen curtain on and off
- Three finger quadruple tap; copies speech to clipboard.

[Polaris Gmail Setup:](#) For the Polaris to have access to the Gmail account security setting in the Gmail account need to be changed to allow less secure apps. This can be done on a PC, iPad or Phone by going into the web version of Gmail.

[File Explorer Shortcuts:](#)

- Space – select an item
- Enter – open a file or folder
- Backspace – go back a page e.g If you want to leave the folder you're currently in and go back to the previous list of folders
- Ctrl + Shift + N – create a new folder
- F2 – to rename an item

All these and more can be found on our [Technology Support](#) page.

True Crime at SVRC!?

During lockdown, while students were working under very different circumstances, the Support Skills staff and students decided to put together a Time Capsule so they could remember the year 2020. However, the Time Capsule went missing. So this year, some creative students made a Wanted Poster:

WANTED! MARION BLAZE - Support Skills Coordinator

A hidden threat to valuable artifacts! May appear sweet and kind, but in truth is a CRIMINAL!

THE CRIME: BLAZE has allegedly stolen a treasure trove of ancient artifacts from the year 2020. This crime was not just a robbery, but a double kidnapping. Teddy and Ms Spoon were taken hostage and are still missing. This project was called the Time Capsule and is a sacred artifact that MUST be retrieved. If you think you see the Time Capsule or BLAZE or know anything about the crime, immediately report it to Kim Foley the SVRC Manager or the SVRC police department.

\$45,000 Reward

(PS The Time Capsule and its contents was at SVRC all along. BLAZE is innocent. Where can I claim my \$45,000???)

Using LEGO Braille Bricks in Education

Did you know there is a Facebook page where educators are sharing ideas about LEGO Braille Bricks? It's called "LEGO Braille Bricks Community". Teachers are sharing the ways they have used Lego Bricks in teaching music, maths, literacy and more.



11th National Deafblind Conference 2022

Source: Conference Website

In 2022 the National conference “Deafblind Keeping Connected through COVID and beyond” will support connection and reconnecting people with deafblindness and those who support them across Australia. The National Deafblind Conference is the only forum in Australia with capacity to educate, connect, and support across sectors: deafblind individuals, families, service providers, educators, allied health and community organisations.

Pre-Conference Wednesday 29th June, 2022

Main Conference Thursday 30th of June to Friday 1st of July

Esplanade Hotel Fremantle by Rydges, Western Australia

See the [Conference Website](#) for more information

Bolinda

Source: Joseph Camilleri, Client Relationship Manager, Bolinda | BorrowBox

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Online text extractor

Source: Heidi, Visiting Teacher

This [Text Extractor Tool](#) can be really handy for teachers/aides to modify materials by extracting text from images.

World First Accessible Bedding Initiative

Source: Braille House Media Release

The Lad Collective, work with Braille House to launch world-first accessible bedding set to help 4.4 million Aussies make the bed more easily.

Brisbane-based start up [The Lad Collective](#) has designed a world first bedding set to help 4.4 million Australians living with physical and intellectual disabilities to make their bed.

Bill Ovenden who helms the start up with his brother Edward, said the everyday task of making the bed could be a struggle - or impossible - for those living with disabilities, particularly the blind or visually impaired. "Since our sheets hit the market, some of the most rewarding feedback we've received has been from people living with disabilities Australia-wide telling us how the corner straps on the fitted sheet make it easier for them to tuck the sheet under the mattress," Bill said. "We realised our product was helping people typically overlooked by the home bedding space. "This is what gave us the idea of creating a NDIS and Aged Care-approved bedding set which was even more inclusive than our previous products."

And finally ...

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing you in 2022.

