

Number 10, Friday 21 July, 2023

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PD events

The [2023 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available for download on our website. See below for links to the events in Term 2 2023.

On Demand PL

All of our professional learning workshops are now available on demand where participants can access all the videos and resources at a time that suits them. You can find links through the [On Demand](#) page, under Professional Learning, on our website.

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, SVRC

Welcome back to the start of term 3.

Space Camp update

Yesterday, SVRC hosted a Space Camp planning afternoon in readiness for travelling to NASA, Huntsville, Louisiana on 24 September. Alicia, GDV O & M instructor, supported the students on orientation and mobility to be able to effectively use their canes, luggage and packing skills, airport, and security measures, and how to instruct a person clearly on correct human guide. Hilary and Peter, Space Camp chaperones, facilitated sessions on creating a Code of Conduct, and planning their trips to Disneyland, Universal Studios and LA Farmer's Market. Each student recorded their thoughts on attending Space Camp and a follow up video will be recorded when they return. The recordings will be a wonderful opportunity to reflect on their experiences of attending Space Camp and a record of their personal growth. A meet and greet afternoon tea was organised at the end of the day for parents and students to meet each other.

VTs Community of Practice

A VTs Community of Practice meeting was held on Tuesday with a presentation by Billie Stewart, from Department of Education. (Knowledge, Privacy and Records Division). The presentation focused on General Privacy Awareness and the importance of how, when, and where confidential information is stored and shared. It was an informative session and a refresher course which is very relevant, considering our current policies and procedures. All SVRC policies can be accessed from our website.

Transcription Team

A message from the Transcription Team, the "freebies" bookshelf is overflowing with braille books looking for a good home. On your next visit to SVRC, please check the braille book collection.

SVRC Staffing update

Deb Davidson is going on extended leave from 29 July for a holiday and we want to wish her a safe and relaxing overseas trip. Jannine Cherry, will join the EVAC Team during Deb's absence. Jannine has just relocated from Perth and is a very experienced Vision Visiting Teacher. We look forward to welcoming Jannine to the EVAC to the team.

North East Victoria Region organised a 35 years recognition service ceremony for teaching staff on Wednesday which Deb Lewis and Kim Foley attended. It was wonderful opportunity to reflect on our years of service to students, colleagues, and families throughout our careers.

Accessible Maths Series

Source: Marion Blaze, SVRC

Sharing ideas for making maths accessible.

We are always open to more ideas and suggestions – please contact Marion at marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au if you want to comment or share your Maths ideas.

Accessible Maths Series Number 7 – Making maths real

These tips are for a booklet produced by the Department of Education to help parents with their children's understanding of maths. Although not specific to children who are blind or have low vision, they are great ideas for providing experiences in "real life maths". This can make maths more meaningful and fun. I have adapted some of the ideas to make them accessible for our students.

Playing shop

- Collect some food or grocery items and label with prices (braille label).
- Talk about how we can pay for items using notes and coins
- Identify coins and notes – might use "Banknote Measure" available from Blind Citizens Australia
- Put food items in order from smallest to biggest, shortest to tallest, lightest to heaviest
- Try matching coins and notes to price of items
- Choose a few items, add up the cost and match the money to pay for them

Making patterns

- Find some small items and arrange in repeating patterns – beads, blocks, cutlery, etc.
- Encourage child to make own patterns, describe patterns, mirror your patterns

Measuring things

- Measure the height of members of your family and use bold or tactile markers to chart them on the wall
- Cut a piece of string – any length will do. Use string to measure different objects. Find out what is longer or shorter than the string. Find something the same length as your string.

Turning maths into a story

By presenting maths as a story, children can make links to everyday life.

- Count fruit in a fruit bowl.
- Sort the fruit in the bowl: how many apples? How many bananas? How many oranges?
- Cut fruit into six pieces each. Count all the pieces.
- Count the toast you cooked at breakfast.
- Add up all the cutlery at the table. How many people are in the car on the way to school?

Moving with maths

- How many throws can you do before you drop the ball?
- How many jumps does it take to get to ...?
- How long does it take you to walk to ...?

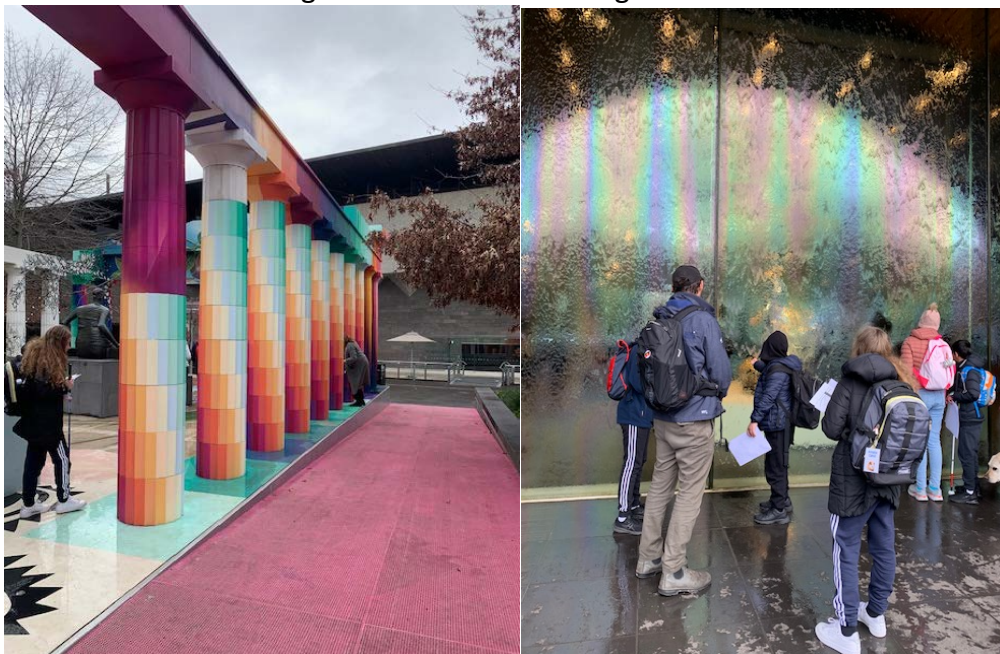
Support Skills goes to the opera and more! – Friday June 23, 2023

Source: SVRC

Support Skills Group C was treated to a day in the city to see the opera and participate in an "artsy" scavenger hunt. Several of us hopped on a bus at SVRC while several more met us at the Playhouse, Arts Centre in the city. We were treated to the opera, "The Grumpiest Boy in the World" with audio description and then a tactile tour of the props and costumes on stage. We even met the star of the show, Zachary.



Then after a crowded lift ride, we had lunch in the art centre foyer before being joined by Alicia and Lachlan from Guide Dogs Victoria. The students were armed with bold and tactile maps of the arts centre precinct and a set of instructions which included counting the columns of the Colosseum in the NGV gardens and ascertaining how cold the water is on the NGV water wall.



Our sincere thanks to the many people and organisations who made this fabulous experience possible: Nilgun Guven of Vitae Veritas who made the initial invitation and then guided us through the day including being in our headphones providing audio description! Also thanks to the Arts Centre's "First Call Fund" for the opera tickets, Jane Barker for driving the bus, Heatherwood School for providing the bus, and all the parents for getting their children to meeting points on time!!

Digital Music for Video Games

Source: Di Bennett, SVRC

Are you interested in producing digital music for video games?

Whilst at the National Braille Music Camp in Mittagong over the first week of the holidays, students were fortunate to have a discussion with Dom Parker from Vision Australia who has a music background and she loves gaming. She has combined both loves into a creative outlet which also gives her a little additional income!

Dom is happy to connect with any students wishing to pursue a career or explore composing digital music for video gaming. She can be contacted at dominique.parker@visionaustralia.org

Ways to connect with others in the field of video games creation and music composition:

The [Itch.io website](#) – a great website for joining in on various jams and projects that people are working on.

The [Bandcamp website](#) – a great way to get your own work out there as well as discover other musicians working on similar projects to you. These profiles will often link to other social medias where you can look at their work and contact them. There is also a free app for Android or IOS Instagram and Twitter – many musicians and other creators use this as their main platform for sharing and engaging others.

Finding and joining groups on Facebook and Discord is a great way to start networking with others already in the industry and those starting out like you.

Software:

Reaper is currently one of the best in terms of compatibility with JAWS. It also is industry standard for many creating music for video games.

It costs \$60 USD for an individual license (this is a one-off fee)

Cubase, Logic Pro, Pro Tools and Ableton are also other industry standard DAW programs (Digital Audio Workstation)

There are some programs that offer education discount pricing, so this is always worth looking into.

VST (Virtual Studio Technology) are digital instruments and synthesizers that can be downloaded and added into any DAW program to be used for composition. You can also create your own VSTs to use and share online.

[Spitfire Labs](#) is a great resources for this with thousands of free sounds available for download including some provided by the [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#)

Middleware:

Middleware is software that is use to communicate between you and the video game coding software to insert music and sound effects into the project.

Two recommended software are [F mod](#) and [Wwise](#).

Game Creation Software

If you are interested in looking at the Game coding software itself, the two main free ones that are used are [Unity](#) and [Unreal Engine](#).

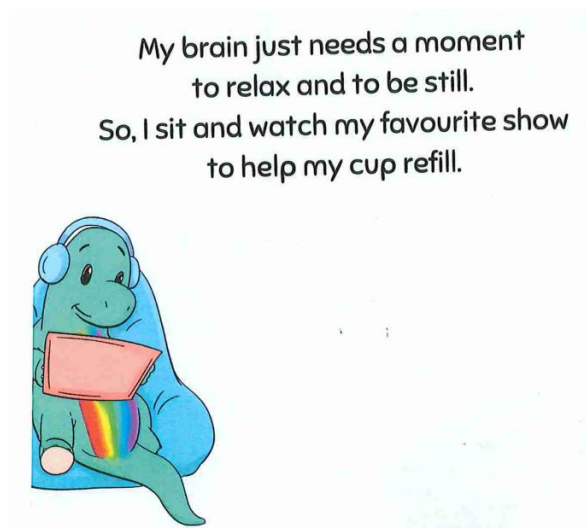
When my brain gets messy

Source: Di Bennett, SVRC

I recently came across a book written by a local parent of a child who has autism which helps explain to others what autism might look like for them. The little picture book is called *When My Brain is Mess* by Tania Wieclaw. Tania is a resident in Seaford Victoria and offered the book for free to residents of Seaford as a way to promote the launch of her self published book.

It will soon be available in alternative format for request. Here is a little excerpt from the story:

My brain just needs a moment
To relax and to be still.
So, I sit and watch my favourite show
To help my cup refill.



Get your children into sport!! There are plenty of opportunities through Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria

Source: VBSA

Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria offer a variety of sport and recreational programs created and adapted for a range of interests, experience and abilities for those who are blind or have low vision. If there's an activity you are interested in which is not listed, please get in touch with us.

VBSA have volunteers, organisers and trained instructors on hand to help you gain skills and confidence. Whether you, your child, parent or friend are blind or vision impaired please get involved by contacting us.

Go to the [Blind Sports website](#) for information about sporting activities on offer.

They include Australian rules football, swimming, boxing, cricket, goalball, golf, fitness sessions, gymnastics, judo, tennis and more.

2023 Premiers' Reading Challenge ... Reminder!!!

Source: [Victorian Government, Premiers' Reading Challenge](#)

The Premiers' Reading Challenge 2023 is open until 8 September 2023 ... so there is still time to register and/or take part ... reading books in alternative format – braille, audio, large print, ebook etc.

Pre-schoolers and students from Prep to Year 10 can still register and take part in the Premiers' Reading Challenge! If your early childhood service or school isn't participating (check with your teacher or school librarian), you can [register as a home-based reader](#).

To meet the Challenge, students need to read (or for students to Year 2, have read to them) a certain number of books, then record the titles on the Challenge website:

- **Pre-school:** 40 books
- **Prep to Year 2:** 30 books (20 or more from the Challenge list)
- **Year 3 to Year 9:** 15 books (10 or more from the Challenge list)
- **Year 10:** 15 books (5 or more from the Challenge list)

For eligible students with vision impairments

Select your books in alternative format from the recently [updated SVRC Library Catalogue](#) and send your completed [request form](#) to the SVRC. The updated SVRC Library Catalogue has a column that indicates if the title is on the Challenge list. If so, the suggested year levels are indicated.

Key Dates

- Now: PRC 2023 is open!!! Make sure you are registered! Read books! Enter them online!
- 21-25 August: [Book Week](#)
- 8 September: Premiers' Reading Challenge ends
- October: certificates are issued to early childhood service managers, school principals and home-based settings for distribution – please contact us if you'd like your certificate in braille.



Teacher Education Day about Acquired Brain Injury – August 2, 2023 (9am to 1.30pm)

Source: Monash Children's Hospital School

Monash Children's Hospital School, The Victorian Paediatric Rehabilitation Service and Heads Together are very pleased to once again present their education session for teachers and educators of students with Acquired Brain Injury 2023. In 2023, we are launching a new format – based on participant feedback! This exciting half day event will be an ONLINE opportunity to learn from experienced clinicians and those with lived experience about how an ABI can impact students' cognition and learning, behaviour and emotions whilst developing practical strategies to support a child with an ABI in the classroom and school. This is a teacher only FREE ONLINE event and not open to parents but we would love you to help us promote the event by sharing this link or the attached flyer with schools. Teachers [register here](#).

July 2023 onward Upcoming audio described shows and events in Melbourne

Source: Vitae Veritas

Ballads from the Brink at La Mama HQ, Carlton

18-20 August, 7.30pm at La Mama HQ 205 Faraday St, Carlton. 50 minutes. \$15, plus companion card holders free. [Ballad Bookings](#).

Access info: Audio Description embedded into performance. Tactile tour available 45 minutes before any show upon request. [More about La Mama Accessibility](#).

About: Musical musings from the darkest of nights, to take you out of the abyss and pull you back from the brink. Uncover those truths kept secret for years, hold those scars to the sun, let the ache fade away.

Shake it up, shake it off and lighten up even your darkest day. Ballads from the Brink is part of La Mama's Explorations Program and is performed and co-created by Rachel Edward and Myf Powell.

The Visitors at the Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne

Saturday 21 October, 2pm at the Playhouse, Arts Centre Melbourne 100 St. Kilda Road, Southbank. 75 minutes, no interval. Tickets \$30-\$135. [Visitors Bookings](#).

Access info: Tactile tour at 1pm.

About: Join seven Aboriginal Elders in 1788 as they meet "The Visitors". Imbued with Aboriginal customs, melody and humour from composer Christopher Sainsbury and libretto by original playwright and Muruwari woman, Jane Harrison, it tells the story of the early days of colonialism and its impacts on the First Peoples. Through metaphors of birds falling from the sky and changes to the weather, we watch as the Elders question how to respond to "the visitors".

Joining us for the first time Queensland Theatre Associate Artist and Noongar man, Isaac Drandic, will work alongside Victorian Opera's Head of Music, Phoebe Briggs, as conductor, with a cast assembled from across Australia.

A list of all upcoming accessible events can be found on [VV's website](#) and [VV's AD Facebook page](#) or feel free to send any enquiries to Nilgun at nilgun@vitaeveritas.com.au

And finally ...

Green is the rarest eye colour and is found in only about 2% of the population.