

Number 11, Friday 4 August, 2023

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PD events

The [2023 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available for download on our website.

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.

Support Skills students mix up a "Friendship Cake"

Source: SVRC

Last Friday groups of students made "Friendship cakes" as part of their social skills session. They discussed what makes a good friend and how to make and keep friends. Here's a poem they composed and a photo of one of the friendship cakes:

Mix up kindness, respect and support,

Then add the fun, giggles and smiles.

Then mix in the listening and trust.

Fold in the empathy and a helping hand.

Finish with a splash of sass, a drop of peace and harmony and sprinkle with love to your liking.



Accessible Origami

Source: SPEVI List and wonderbaby.org

The "[Accessible Origami Project](#)" is a Blog about accessible origami, by a mother who is blind.

It offers text-based introductory tutorials on basic origami folds and how to get started folding for beginners.

Also provides basic text-only step-by-step instructions on how to fold popular origami figures, including a fox, a swan, an angel fish, and a bouncy bunny.

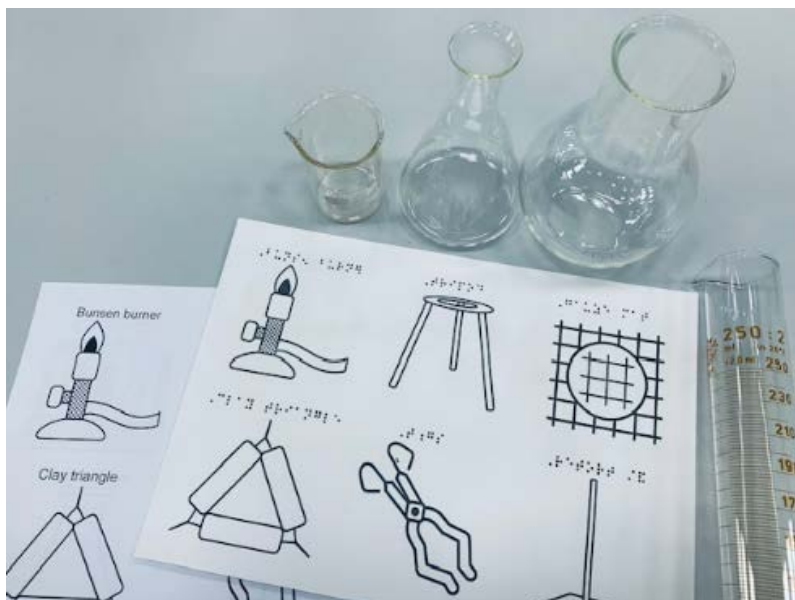
This link has been added to the "[Leisure](#)" resources on the SPEVI website.

Science at Support Skills

Source: SVRC

One of the joys of having teachers on SSP staff with Maths/Science backgrounds is that they share their knowledge and ideas about STEM. SVRC has been donated a collection of science laboratory equipment (with thanks to William Ruthven College and South Oakleigh College!) and are offering our students an introduction to laboratory equipment. This is especially important for our students moving into secondary schools. At Support Skills, the students are donning lab coats and safety goggles and exploring conical flasks, Bunsen burners and more. They can even take away a large print or braille handout with all the names of the equipment (as pictured).

Thank you to Lauren Devenish (SSP teacher) for setting up this initiative!



New Braille Music "Cheat Sheet" ... in Print and Braille

Source: SVRC, Transcription

Sarah Kelly has updated the SVRC Braille Music Cheat Sheet, adding some commonly used notation such as:

- slur, open and close phrase
- dynamic markings: piano, forte, crescendo, decrescendo
- staccato, accent, trill, triplet
- fingering, intervals
- right/left hand, down/up pedal, down/up bow

A print copy of the updated "cheat sheet" is available on the SVRC website; eligible students and their teachers can request copies via the [usual method](#).

Available as one double-sided printed sheet or as a combo print and braille interfaced, with the double-sided print sheet in a plastic sleeve at the back of the bound braille.

Adaptions in Science for students who are blind or have low vision

Source: SVRC

These ideas are drawn from a range of sources. Consideration must be given to the level of vision of the particular student in your classroom as well as their prior knowledge and experience with Science.

Laboratory Access

[Independent Science: How to Prepare a Student with Visual Impairments for Safe Access to the Science Laboratory](#) (Video)

1. Familiarise student with equipment and lab bench set up
2. Review Audible and Tactile indicators with student
3. Use hand from a distance to sense heat
4. Prepare detailed lab orientation before the start of classes
5. Communication between student, teacher and lab partner
6. Student provided with practical procedure before the class

[University of Washington - Equal Access: Science and Students with Sensory Impairments](#)

For student who has Low Vision

- Textbook, handouts and assignments are available in electronic format.
- Lab signs, and equipment labels are available in large print.
- Seating is available near the front of the class.
- TV monitor is connected to a microscope to enlarge images.

For student who uses braille

- Adaptive lab equipment is available (e.g., talking thermometers and calculators)
- Lab signs and equipment labels are posted in both large print and braille.
- Textbooks, handouts and assignments are available in electronic format.
- Raised-line drawings and tactile representations are available as an alternative to graphic images.
- Verbal descriptions of visual aids are provided.
- Warning signals are auditory as well as visual.

[University of Washington – examples of science lab accommodations for students who are blind](#)

- Make a syringe tactile by cutting notches in the plunger at 5-mL increments.
- Make graphs tactile by using glue guns or fabric paint.
- Add braille labels to lab equipment.
- Identify increments of temperature on a hot plate with fabric paint.
- Use different textures like sandpaper or yarn to identify drawers, cabinets, and equipment areas.
- Make models out of clay, plaster of paris, or papier-mâché.
- For geometric shapes, use 3D triangles or spheres.
- Use Styrofoam and toothpicks or molecular kits to show atoms and molecules.
- For a measurement tool, use staples on a meter stick to label centimeters.

[Science Technique: Lab Preparation \(video\)](#)

[Science Techniques: Lab Equipment \(video\)](#)

[SVRC: Using an iPad with a Microscope \(video\)](#)

Teaching strategies and resources

[Perkins School for the Blind - Accessible Science: Making Life Sciences Accessible to Students with Visual Impairments](#) (Video)

- Multi sensory learning is good for the whole class, and even more important for the student with a vision impairment. This includes using models and movement in lessons.
- Creating their own models can be a great way for students to learn.

[Perkins School for the Blind – Tactile Science Lesson: Using Play-Doh](#) (video)

[Paul Delaney – Star Man \(video interview\)](#) Paul has albinism and has gone on to become a professor of Astronomy.

[SVRC 3D Materials Catalogue](#) – filter by 'Science' to find all the models relating to the Science Curriculum.

[Tactile Universe](#) has lesson plans and models ready for use.

[The Universe of Sound](#) from NASA's Chandra X-Ray Observatory has many sonifications (data turned into sound) that match images and data from NASA.

Monash Sensory Science Exhibition and workshop @ SVRC

Thursday August 17th, Statewide Vision Resource Centre (2:00-5:00pm)

In celebration of National Science Week 2023, Monash Sensory Science, in partnership with Statewide Vision Resource Centre, Victoria's peak education body supporting blind, low vision and diverse needs students, teachers and families – is hosting a free afternoon [exhibition and workshop focused on biomedicine and immunity](#) for all Statewide Vision Resource Centre students, teachers, families and friends.

From handcrafted immune sculptures made of clay, food and paper to interactive multisensory science books to immersive audio works exploring autoimmune processes, cells and protein structures and interactions, audiences will learn about the immune system, autoimmunity, cancer and the gut biota, in an event designed specifically for people with sensory needs.

The exhibition also contains a multisensory science art-making workshop, where participants will work with exhibition artist Dr Erica Tandori exploring human immune cells. All art making materials are provided by the event organisers and artwork created in the workshop will form the basis of further exhibitions and new interactive science books.

This event is free and open to all.

Booking in advance is essential as workshop places are limited.

REGISTER here via [eventbrite](#).

Books in the Collection About Blindness, Braille and Service Dogs

Source: SVRC, Transcription

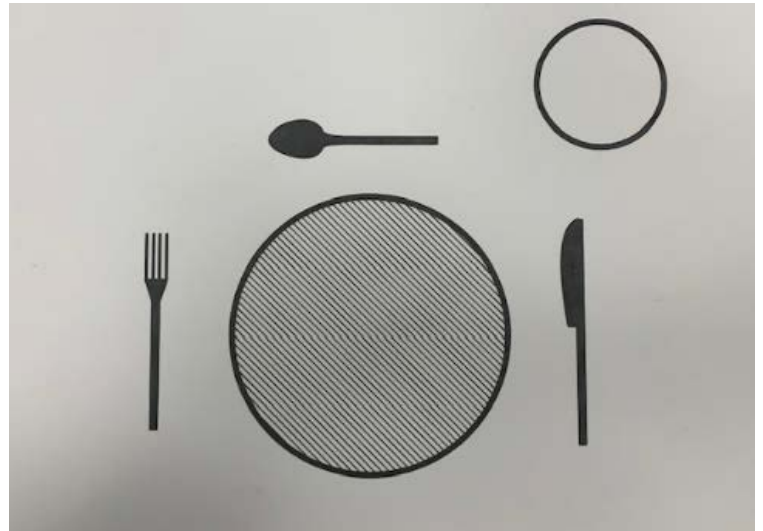
Would you like to read about characters with vision impairment, Louis Braille, Helen Keller, service dogs etc? We have a small collection of titles that you may like to consider. Most are available as a docx file, but other formats can also be requested.

Title	Author	Note
Afghanistan Pup, The	Wilson, Mark	Service dogs
All the Light We Cannot See	Dorr, Anthony	Novel has character with VI
August & Jones	Harry, Pip	Novel has character with VI
Because of Winn-Dixie	DiCamillo, Kate	Novel has character with VI
Footsteps Through the Fog	Mahy, Margaret	Novel has character with VI
Friend in the Dark, A	Ruter, Pascal	Novel has character with VI
Gus the Guide Dog	Dawson, Gina	Service dogs
Guide Dogs from Puppies to Partners	Lawrenson, Diana	Service dogs
Helen Keller	Castor, Harriet	Helen Keller
Helen Keller: A World at Her Fingertips	Albee, Sarah	Helen Keller
I am Helen Keller	Meltzer, Brad	Helen Keller
Kid Who Named Pluto, The	McCutcheon, Marc	Louis Braille and others
Louis Braille	Keeler, Stephen	Louis Braille
Louis Braille	Potter, Tessa	Louis Braille
Louis Braille	Unknown	Louis Braille
Louis Braille	Donaldson, Madeline	Louis Braille
Louis Braille 200	Unknown	Louis Braille
Louis Braille and the Secret Alphabet	McPherson, Jan	Louis Braille
New Method: The Story of Louis Braille, A	Meyer, Carolyn	Louis Braille
Next Door's Dog Goes To School	Dawson, Gina	Service dogs
Next Door's Dog Has a Job	Dawson, Gina	Service dogs
Not if I See You First	Lindstrom, Eric	Novel has character with VI
Rise Up: Ordinary Kids With Extraordinary Stories	Li, Amanda	Louis Braille, Helen Keller and others
Secret Code, The	Rau, Dana Meachen	PSB with VI character
Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille	Bryant, Jen	Louis Braille
Story of My Life	Keller, Helen	Helen Keller
Tales of Amazing Animal Heroes	Unwin, Mike	Service dogs and others
Who Was Louis Braille?	Frith, Margaret	Louis Braille
YouthQuake: 50 Children and Young People Who Shook the World	Adams, Tom	Louis Braille and others

Dot Power on July 25 was all about the cane and maps

Source: SVRC

Last Tuesday, SVRC hosted eight children (Prep to year 3) for Dot Power Day. Our theme for the day was the cane and braille reading and was based on a lovely book written by Guide Dogs Victoria Physiotherapist, Alex Di Palma. Alex had approached SVRC about having the book produced in braille with tactile illustrations, and we thought it was such a lovely book, we made it the theme for Dot Power. Of course, we already have a wonderful cane song – "Tap, tappity, tap ..." If you've ever been to Dot Power it's a real ear worm!



Because we were talking about mobility, we also explored maps. How does one explain the concept of a map to a child who is blind and has never experienced a map? What is a "birds' eye view" if you are blind? We started with tactile placemats and moved our plates and cutlery around to match the "maps". Then we explored a map of SVRC. Students used Wiki Stix to plot and move around a route.

AND thank you Kmart! In the last two years, Kmart has had a range of inclusive dolls, including some with guide dogs or canes. A generous donation from Kmart meant that each child went home with their own doll with a cane.

Thank you to the wonderful transcription team for all their braille and tactile illustrations, to Alex for the lovely book, to Sarah Hayman for 3D printing name tags for the children's canes, for Jordie Howell who came to sing and read with the children, for all the families who brought their children and the school support staff who assisted on the day.

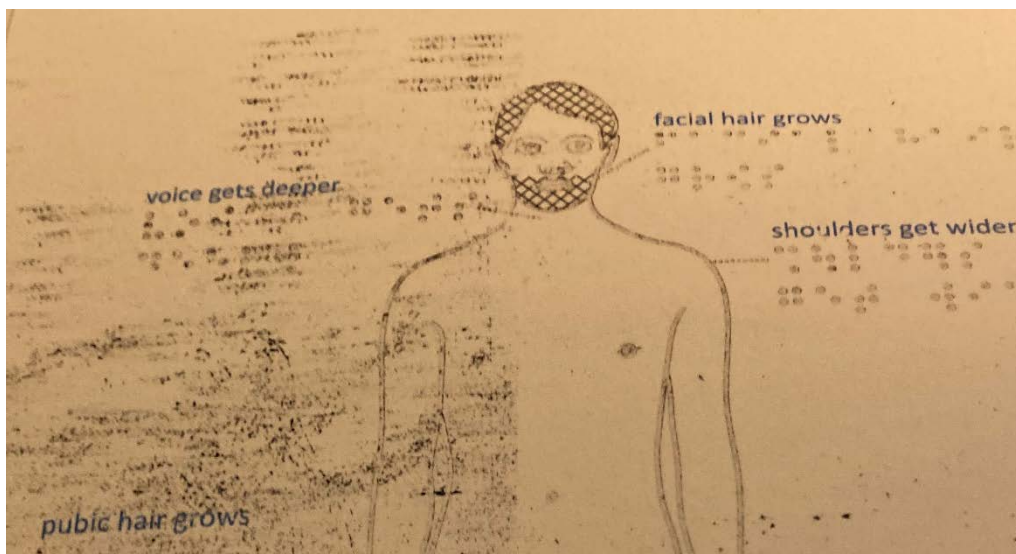
Next Dot Power Day is on October 10 – can't wait!!



Q&A: Creating Tactile Diagrams in Schools

Source: SVRC

Question: We tried to produce tactile sexuality diagrams using the school photocopier and stereo/capsule/PIAF paper, but the diagrams come out with all kinds of black marks and shadowing and looking terrible. Is there something wrong with the PDF from the SVRC website or is something else going on?



Answer: We agree ... that image (above) does look awful. It is unlikely to be a problem with the PDF on the SVRC website and more likely to be related to the photocopier and/or batch of stereo/capsule/PIAF paper that you are using.

Perhaps the printer/photocopier is dirty? Stereo paper is very "sticky" and will pick up any mess as it goes through the photocopier or printer. You could try to print on plain paper to test if it happens to that stock. Once you have ruled out a problem with the PDF, try printing from the plain paper copy to the stereo/capsule/PIAF paper.

When we do this, we put the stereo paper in the **by-pass tray** on our machine. This means that the stereo paper takes a more direct route through the machine (less bendy bits, so hopefully less likely to pick up mess) and problems with dirty photocopier rollers etc can be overcome. Then when you pass the diagram through the PIAF or SwellForm Heater, you should get a clear tactile diagram.

If you are still having trouble, try a different printer/photocopier in the school ... and good luck!

Q&A: Etext on Braille Sense Polaris

Source: SVRC

Question: How does my daughter read etext on her device without accidentally editing the file?

Answer: The docx files can be emailed to you and the files then downloaded. Save the files to a USB key or SD card so that they can be transferred to the Braille Sense. When opening the files, she would press space and ING (dots 3,4,6) at the same time; this will put the file into "read only" mode so that the text can be enjoyed, but not altered.

Q&A: Braille Music Octaves

Source: SVRC

Question: How does the braille reader know what octave a particular note is in?

Answer: In braille music notation, a note is preceded with an octave mark, for example, dot 5 preceding the C means 4th octave or middle C; dots 4,6 preceding the C means 5th octave C (the C above middle C) – see diagram below.

There are rules about when you need to precede the note with an octave mark and when you don't need to because you know you are still in that octave. If you'd like more information, make a time to see Sarah Kelly.

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Octaves

When referring to braille music octave markings, start at C

Middle C

C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B C D E F G A B

3rd 4th 5th 6th

Braille notation for octaves: 3rd (purple), 4th (blue), 5th (yellow), 6th (green)

Come and Try Support Skills Program For 2024

Source: SVRC

Are you curious about SVRC's Support Skills Program? On September 8th, eligible students are able to come and try it out!

About Support Skills

Students attend the program once or twice a term. The focus of the program is on the Expanded Core Curriculum, those subject areas specifically related to their requirements as a learner with a vision impairment. These include Assistive Technology, Braille, Vision Issues, Careers, Social and Communication Skills, Braille and large Print Music, Physical Education, Creative Art, Braille Maths and Tactual Graphics, Orientation and Mobility, Independent Living Skills, Library and Research Skills, and Study Skills. These subjects will be taught by SVRC staff and our partner organisations, such as Guide Dogs Victoria and Vision Australia.

Many students who are blind or have low vision benefit from additional opportunities to build on these skill areas and meet with other students who have similar needs. This opportunity for positive association is of great assistance for many students.

We are currently taking enrolments for 2024. The Come and Try Program allows students and their families to participate in the program for half a day, meet with the staff teaching in the program and have an opportunity to assess its suitability and ask questions. We would encourage families to speak to their child's Visiting Teacher and school to discuss the appropriateness of this program in context of their child's overall education plan

Who: Students in years 4-10 in DE, Catholic and Independent schools and have been assessed by EVAC

When: Friday September 8th

Time: 9:00 – 1:00 pm

Where: SVRC @ 370 Springvale Road Donvale

Details: Information session for parents, students will participate in 4 sessions.

Register: Complete the form on the [SVRC website](#) and return to Di Bennett by August 31st at statewide.vision@education.vic.gov.au

Audio Descriptions now on ABC iView

Source: Vision 2020 Australia Sector News Alert on SPEVI List

Vision 2020 Australia was proud to have been involved with the development and launch of Audio Described (AD) content on ABC iView. We were proud to join other members at the official launch, including Blind Citizens Australia, Guide Dogs, Macular Disease Foundation Australia, and Vision Australia, as well as the ABC's AD ambassador, Nas Campanella.

In 2020 the government provided \$3 million to the ABC over three years to ensure the continuation and expansion of audio description. With this year's budget, the funding for ongoing audio-description services was rolled into the ABC's base funding, which represents a very real and substantial commitment to greater participation for blind and low vision Australians.

With AD now available on iView, it enables Australians who are blind or have low vision to enjoy accessible content, when it suits them.

Learn about enabling AD on the [iView website](#).

DeafBlind Communication

Source: SPEVI List

The Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) featured an article about Vanessa Vljakovic, a member of their staff. Vanessa is deafblind and she explains how she communicates in the video link in the news item. The story can be found on the [ABC News website](#).

Hawthorn Football Club AFL Blind Clinic on the MCG! – This Saturday, August 5th

Source: Hawthorn Football Club

This Saturday the 5th of August, Hawthorn Football Club is running an AFL Blind clinic for kids and teens. The clinic will take place on the MCG before the AFL Hawthorn and Collingwood game.

Attendees and their families will also receive tickets to the game that starts at 4:35 pm.

When: Saturday 5 August, 2pm (arrive at 1:45pm)

Where: MCG Gate 3

[Register here](#). Or contact Ned Brewer Maiga on nedb@hawthornfc.com.au or 0413816490.

And Finally ...

Did you know that only one sixth of your eyeball is exposed to the outside world?