

Number 4, Friday 22 March, 2024

## Inside this issue

Here's what you'll find:

- **From SVRC:** [Message from the Managers](#), [Don't forget to register for the National Simultaneous Storytime and request your braille book from SVRC](#)
- **From the field:** [Explorers United Holiday Programs](#), [Upcoming Seminars with Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training \(ADCET\)](#), [National Braille Music Camp](#)

## PD events

We have responded to feedback that teachers are finding it increasingly difficult to set aside a day for professional learning and have made our usual Term 1 PL opportunities available **online** and **on demand**. This means that you can register and view recorded sessions in your own time. These will be available throughout 2024 on the following topics:

- Inclusion of students who are blind
- Inclusion of students who have low vision
- Inclusion of students who have vision impairments and additional disabilities
- Preparing your school for a student who reads braille

Register via the [SVRC website](#).

In Term 2 and 3, we will have our hands-on PL days **at SVRC in Donvale**:

- May 7 – Braille music with Jordie Howell and Sarah Kelly. [Register here](#).
- June 18 – Inclusion of students with VI in maths with Charlie Roberts. [Register here](#).
- TBA Term 3 – Inclusion of students with VI in PE – Emily White (registrations not yet open)

We are unable to provide an Art PL day, but have the 2023 Art4VIKids recordings available on demand.

## Message from the Managers

Source: SVRC, Kim Foley and Jane Barker

United Nations International Day of Happiness was on Wednesday March 20th this week. "In this time of uncertainty and conflict, this year's 'Happier Together' theme reminds us that lasting happiness comes from feeling connected to others and being part of something bigger".

SVRC's Support Skills Program provides exactly this for the students who attend. Overwhelmingly the feedback we receive from our students states how great it is to be with peers and teachers who are also vision impaired as they can just be themselves.

As we fly to the end of term 1, we reflect on all of the wonderful work done here at SVRC to support inclusion for all and we reach out to thank the visiting teachers who do the daily groundwork and keep us up to date with the needs and celebrations of our 535 students across the state of Victoria. We wish you all a very happy Easter and safe holiday.

## Explorers United Holiday Programs

Source: Explorers United

The Explorers United team are thrilled to announce our upcoming Explorers United group programs tailored for students during the April school holidays.

The exciting programs are designed to ignite curiosity and foster the ongoing development of O&M skills in students of all ages. As always, they will be offering two engaging programs: one for primary school-age children and another for secondary and post-secondary students.

Explorers United "Kids" promises an adventure-packed experience! On April 2nd and 3rd, students will embark on a journey to discover the ins and outs of Melbourne's iconic train network. From exploring a stationary train, Exploring Flinders Street Station to venturing to Lakeside Park in Emerald aboard Puffing Billy.

For our older students, Explorers United "Youth" presents an exhilarating dive into Travel Tech. Scheduled for April 9th and 10th, this program delves into the fascinating realms of GPS, artificial intelligence, and augmented reality technology. It's an opportunity for students to sharpen their skills and explore innovative tools that enhance orientation and mobility.

Feel free to check out the [Explorers United Facebook page](#) for more details about upcoming programs and recap and photos of our adventures.

The registration process is fast as parents can simply contact either Darren, Marnie or Paula by referring to the contact details below and they will promptly send easy to complete forms. Please also reach out if you have any questions about the programs or suggestions for future programs.

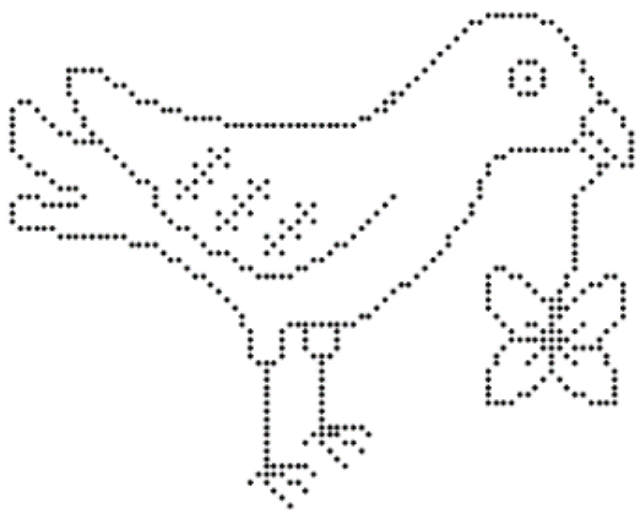
Email [explorersunitedgroups@gmail.com](mailto:explorersunitedgroups@gmail.com) or call Darren Moyle: 0424860836, Marnie Roth: 0423783760 or Paula Foote: 0417366843.

## Don't forget to register for the National Simultaneous Storytime and request your braille book from SVRC

Source: SVRC

Registration for NSS 2024 is free and open to all. Register your school, school library, public library, childcare centre, community group, or even your family home. All registrations receive an electronic version of the book on Monday, 20 May 2024, along with a range of exclusive resources. Also including the link to the Live Stream event with Bowerbird Blues author Aura Parker, video recordings from our VIP Guest Readers, and the AUSLAN Interpretation Video.

And you can request a braille copy of the book, Bowerbird Blues by Aura Parker from SVRC!



## Upcoming Seminars with Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET)

Source: ADCET

Introducing the latest lineup of ADCET Webinars, your gateway to cutting-edge insights and transformative tools in education. From unveiling upcoming software innovations to exploring the forefront of inclusive learning, each session promises to ignite your passion for creating accessible and engaging educational experiences.

We welcome Andrew Balzer from Microsoft for [Accessibility in Office 365 Inclusive isn't elusive](#). Explore the built-in tools within Office 365 designed to create an inclusive environment for all users. From the Accessibility Checker to Ease of Access settings, discover how to make your digital workspace accessible to everyone. Don't miss our webinar on April 9, where we delve into [Autistic students' experiences of university in Australia](#) Gain valuable insights into the challenges autistic students face in higher education and explore recommendations for fostering a neuro-affirming environment on campus.

April 17, join Dr. Thomas Tobin for [What Universal Design for Learning Looks Like](#). Witness UDL principles come to life as we examine real-world examples across various disciplines, equipping you with practical techniques to lower access barriers and enhance learning outcomes. With a diverse range of topics and expert speakers, these ADCET Webinars are not to be missed. Register now to secure your spot and embark on a journey towards inclusive education excellence.

## National Braille Music Camp

Source: Ashleigh Malone, Secretary on behalf NBMC committee

The 37th National Braille Music Camp will take place as usual at Frensham School in Mittagong, NSW.

**Date:** Saturday June 29 – Saturday July 6, 2024.

Camp provides blind students from Australia and New Zealand who read Braille an opportunity to develop their music skills. Our camp caters to school students who are 8-18 years of age, or who are in their final year at high school. Students can be involved in small and large choirs, bands, as well as performing in small groups or solo at our nightly concerts if they wish. Each student also has access to daily Braille music tuition.

The week also provides a wonderful opportunity for social connection, to make friends and meet other young blind students, as well as learning from adult blind mentors.

**Friday, May 3, 2024:** deadline for forms for interstate campers to be returned if you wish Music Camp to cover the cost of your child's return airfares from Sydney.

NB: depending on numbers Music Camp may accept forms for interstate campers after this date, however, may not be able to cover the cost of your child's airfares to and from Sydney.

**Friday, May, 31 2024:** final deadline for return of forms for NSW-based campers and any self-funded interstate students.

Register via the [student application form](#) or email [nebmc.aus@gmail.com](mailto:nebmc.aus@gmail.com) to find out more information.

### And Finally ...

Thanks to all those who responded to the braille fail in the last edition. Unanimously it was agreed that the braille is correct and says "up" however it has been installed upside down!

