

The Bulletin

Number 9, Friday 5 June 2020

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PD events at SVRC online: 2020

You can register online. Click on the links to read more information and to register online. If you have any questions, please [contact us](#).

Tuesday Aug 11 [Educational support of students who have low vision](#)

Tuesday Oct 20 [Preparing your school for inclusion of a student who uses braille](#)

Note: For upcoming professional learning at SVRC along with programs, registrations, visit the SVRC [professional learning page](#).

Remote Dot Power days in Term 2

Families were contacted and provided with the braille activities and instructions of how these should be implemented with new readers of braille. Braille was provided with "over-writing" so that families without braille skills can assist their children in these activities.

SVRC helpline

Please call SVRC if you have questions about our provisions or inclusion of students with vision impairments. (03 9841 0242)

SVRC support still by remote and removing asbestos!

From: Marion Blazé (Acting Manager, SVRC)

Many of our students have returned to school and the rest will next week. SVRC will continue to provide professional learning and student programs online until at least Term 3. With the current restrictions, schools are not to run "excursions", and programs such as Support Skills are considered as excursions.

SVRC is also undergoing asbestos removal as we speak. Most of the staff are continuing to work from home, only coming to SVRC occasionally. A few of our essential services have been moved to the back room of Heatherwood's "house" where we will stay until Term 3. SVRC staff, especially transcribers, will come in when there is embossing, diagrams or posting to be organized.

Again, a HUGE THANK YOU to Michael Kelly for "patching in" all our technology to keep us working – he's been just amazing!!!

SVRC YouTube Channel

Our YouTube channel has lots of online tutorials such as how to use a Victor Reader Stream, using iOS magnifiers, Seeing AI, and more. Have a look!

Go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/SVRCAus>

Support Skills One-Off day by remote

The Support Skills Program is currently running via Zoom, with students and teachers working and learning from home. Because students are not coming in to Statewide Vision Resource Centre in Donvale for this program, it is an ideal opportunity for remote students with vision impairments to experience it, without the need to travel. We have at least 9 students giving this a try on June 5, 2020.

Reminder – Applications for PSD extended

The following statement was in the "Message from the Secretary: Streamlining school requirements for Term 2" dated April 28, 2020. DET has extended the due date for applications for the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) to Term 4.

VCE critical dates announced

New dates have been announced for this year's VCE exams.

GAT: September 9, 2020

Written exams: November 9 to December 2, 2020

The examination timetable will be published by the end of Term 2.

Remote Art sessions at Support Skills

Michael Donnelly has been leading our students through some amazingly creative art sessions on Fridays using things students can find at home.

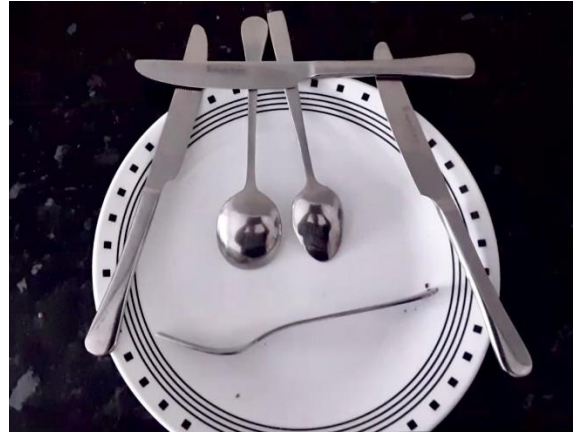
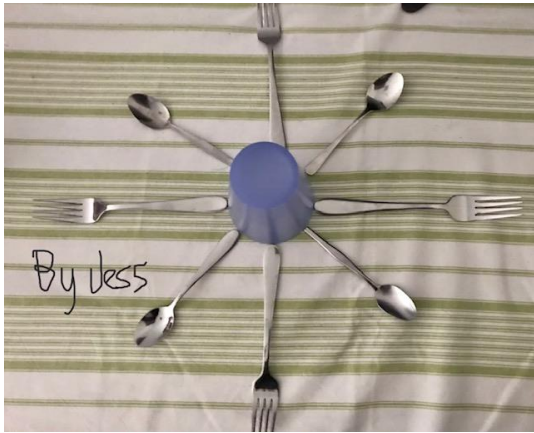


Photo 1: An upsidedown cup in the centre of a green and white striped table cloth. Forks are placed around the cup with the tines pointing outwards at N, E, S, W. Spoons are placed around the cup pointing outwards at NE, SE, SW, NW. "By Jess" has been written over the picture.

Photo 2: A round white plate with a black pattern around the edge is on a dark background. Three knives are placed on the edge of the plate like hair. One each, vertically, on the left and right edge of the plate. One horizontally on the top edge of the plate. A fork is placed on it's side, horizontally on the plate a third of the way up from the bottom, like a mouth. Two spoons are placed upsidedown with the handles hanging off the top of the plate, like eyes.

Photo 3: Two spoons are placed upside down. A person is reflected in both spoons, taking the photo of the spoons.

How to read a medical report about vision

From Marion Blazé, SVRC

Reports from ophthalmologists can be tricky to decipher. They should include a diagnosis and where relevant, a prognosis. It is likely the patient has been tested for distance and near acuity, visual fields, stereopsis (depth perception), refractive error, nystagmus and perhaps colour perception.

When reading the acuity numbers, note whether this was tested with or without correction (wearing glasses). If the acuity is quoted as 6/..., the child was *probably* tested at 6 metres. If 3/..., they were tested at half distance. To find the equivalent 6/.. acuity, treat as a fraction when converting. If there is a +1 or +2. This means that the patient could read 1 or 2 letters on the smaller line. If there is a -1 or -2, this just means that for the acuity quoted, the patient missed one or two letters on that line.

Near visual acuity will usually be quoted as a print size – e.g. N24, N36.

A spectacle correction might be included in a report. It will look something like this: -9.00/ +4.00 X 60°.

The doctor might use abbreviations. Here are some we have come across:

DV – distance vision

NV – near vision

OD – oculus dexter – right eye

OS – oculus sinister – left eye

OU – oculus uterque – both eyes

PD – pupillary distance

IPD – interpupillary distance

BVD – back vertex distance

VA – visual acuity

BEO – both eyes open

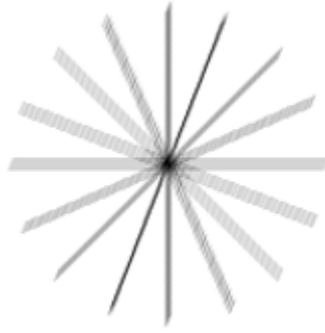
ERG – electro-retinogram

ODC – ocular diagnostic clinic

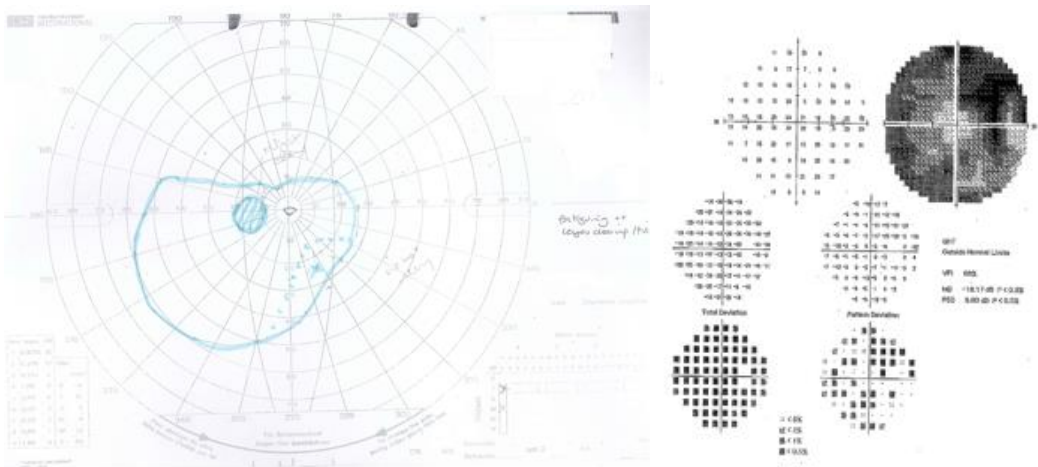
CUCV – City University Colour Vision test

Glasses are weaker than magnifiers because they don't work by magnifying, they work by correcting the focus of the eye. Myopia (short sightedness) is corrected using negative diopters. Hyperopia (long sightedness) is corrected with positive diopters. If there are degrees in the glasses prescription, then the patient has an astigmatism. "Plano" means that one lens has no correction, because one eye needs no correction.

Astigmatism can be tested by seeing which line in a grid such as the one below, is more blurred than another. Picture shows a series of lines rotating around a central point, like a compass. Some lines are more blurry than others.



Field tests are difficult to perform with children, especially if they have nystagmus. Some ophthalmologists say these tests are unreliable on anyone under eight years of age. The Goldman field test results look like the picture below left, with the blue line indicating the extent of the field in one eye:



The Humphreys field test looks like the picture above right, with the black areas indicating where the patient cannot see.

If the patient has nystagmus, the ophthalmologist might provide information about the shape of the movement (jerk, rotary, horizontal, etc), the rapidity, and whether there is a null position and head posture. If it is described as a "latent" nystagmus, this means it is present only when one eye is occluded.

Maths Chat – new Facebook page

Pranitha Moodley Teacher/Consultant, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC), conducted a SPEVI calculator survey with Teachers of students with VI late in 2019. Based on a recommendation from her survey, Pranitha launched the "Maths chat" Facebook group at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre (SVRC) Maths workshop on Wednesday.

Group moderators Pranitha, Charlie Roberts & Melissa Fanshawe invite you to join this group for educators, support staff and parents to connect, collaborate and learn from each other. Let's discuss access to Maths, post questions and offer ideas of support for students with vision impairment. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/249692019429833>

The Facebook page will be piloted until the end of Term 3.

99th Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition 2020



Braille House is a library for children and adults who are blind or have low vision and we send books to readers right across Australia.

We love stories and we would love to read stories written by you, so we encourage you to enter the 99th **Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition 2020** for your chance to win cash prizes.

Braille House is proud to announce that the **Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition 2020** is now open for entries from all Australian residents and the theme is **MOVEMENT**.

The Dickinson Memorial Literary Competition is a National literary competition and is for children and adults who are blind or have low vision. There is also special "People's Choice" award that will be open to anyone (even if you are sighted) and all entries in this category will be published on the Braille House website and the audience will get to choose the winner.

Entry forms and conditions of entry are attached to this email:

There are categories for all ages to enter and prize money is awarded in every category: \$350 first prize per category and \$150 second prize per category (judge's decision is final).

Prizes awarded in 6 Categories:

Adult Short Story,

Adult Poem/Song Lyrics/Limerick, Adult Article/Opinion eg: self-reflection, blog,

Senior Student Creative Category, eg: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog,

Junior Student Creative Category, eg: story, poem, song lyrics, limerick, blog,

People's Choice Category – Short Story. (All People's Choice entries will be published online for the public to vote)

Manuscripts must be an unpublished work, not on offer for publication before the announcement of awards and not have been recognised in any other competition.

Entries close Monday August 31. Entries should be submitted in hard copy Braille, Simbraille or Duxbury-readable file or in a Word document

Andrew Backhouse, Marketing, PR, and Community Engagement , Email:
andrewbackhouse@qbwa.org.au

<https://www.braillehouse.org.au/dickinson-2020/>

Webex accessibility

With lots of schools and students using Webex, Here is some information about its accessibility:

The Webex Meetings applications are tested to work with the latest version of the Freedom Scientific JAWS screen reader.

- All Webex keyboard shortcuts work with screen readers. You can find a list of keyboard shortcuts for PC and Mac OS by going to <https://help.webex.com/en-us/84har3/Cisco-Webex-Meetings-and-Cisco-Webex-Events-Accessibility-Features>
- We will not be using the shared screen presentation function in Webex.
- Screen readers are unable to read content from shared presentations, shared applications, and shared desktops.

Index Embosser Donation Program 2020

From Trevor Boyd, Quantum RLV

The purpose of this program is to donate **one Everest-D V5 and one Acoustic Hood Everest** to an organization or an individual/group of individuals. They must have a need to produce braille with the purpose of promoting braille literacy, whilst having limited financial resources.

Organizations/individuals can apply for the program January through November each calendar year. One donee will be chosen by Index and announced on Index website on the World Braille day, January 4th, the following year.

For more information – info@indexbraille.com

<https://www.indexbraille.com/en-us/braille-embossers/index-donation-program>

Ex-student has technology for sale

Ben Pettingill has some equipment that he wishes to sell. Contact Ben if interested:

ben@benpettingill.com

Pearl Camera with Open Book: \$1600

Plex Talk: \$400

Braille Labeller: \$100

SVRC News

SVRC has moved! The removalists came in on Tuesday and started boxing up our production area. Look at all those empty shelves!

And finally...

Stay safe and well as our students start returning to school.

