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Check [The Bulletin archive](#) for back issues!

Dates for Your Diary

Here's what's coming up:

- **Braille Day:** 14 February
- **New VT Day:** 20 February – IF YOU ARE A NEW VT, PLEASE CONTACT MARION BLAZÉ
- **Low Vision Days:** 28 February **OR** 2 March **OR** 15 August
- **PE for Students with Vision Impairments:** 8 March
- **Art for Students with Vision Impairments:** 15 March
- **VI Students with Additional Impairments Day:** 21 March
- **Including Children who are Blind in Mainstream Music Programs:** 2 May
- **VT Day:** 6 June 2017 (see below for more information)

Fliers attached or see the SVRC website for more information and online registration.

Skill Power sessions are planned for terms 2 and 3. Contact Lea Nagel with your suggestions.

2017 PD Day for Visiting Teachers Vision – NDIS and Assessment

On Tuesday 6 June 2017 SVRC invites all Visiting Teachers supporting students with vision impairments to a PD day. We intend to look at two topics – Assessment and the NDIS.

Assessment of students with vision impairments

We'll take a fresh look at "learning media assessment". How do we work out the best medium or media through which our students can develop independent and efficient literacy skills. We'll also look at the current methods and adjustments to NAPLAN, PAT (ACER) and VCE testing.

Navigating the NDIS for school-aged children with vision impairments

We're all beginning to get more and more questions from parents, schools, other agencies about the NDIS – how it will work, who do I contact, will my child be eligible? Where do teachers fit in this scheme? What role do we play in advising, supporting, recommending as families negotiate plans? We will be inviting advocates, service providers and families with knowledge and experience in all things NDIS to share their expertise in this changing landscape.

Do You Want to Learn Braille?

Approximately 80 of the 530 students supported by SVRC, use braille as their reading and writing medium. In 2016 SVRC produced 800 braille books, 40,000 braille pages and 5,000 tactile diagrams for braille-reading students in Victoria.

In 2016, SVRC had 18 teachers/aides enrol for our correspondence course in Unified English Braille. We also conducted several professional development days about teaching braille and supporting braille-reading students.

SVRC offers a 15-lesson correspondence course. You complete lessons and receive feedback from our braille transcription and education staff. Or you can learn braille for free through **the UEB online course**. Go to UEBOnline.org.

If you want to learn braille, or brush up your skills, please contact SVRC.



Summer & Sunscreen

From Marion Blazé

Did you know that Sunscreen should be applied 20 minutes before going into the sun?

I didn't until I heard a spokesperson from the Cancer Council on radio this week. If the sunscreen hasn't had time to react with your skin, it will not protect you and/or will not be water resistant (i.e. it will wash off immediately in water). We often hear about sunscreens "not working" - maybe we're not using them correctly.

Here are the recommendations from the Cancer Council:

Sunscreen is one of the most common methods of sun protection. **SunSmart recommends SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.**

In laboratory conditions, when used as directed, SPF30 sunscreen filters 96.7% of UV radiation and SPF 50 filters 98%. Both provide excellent protection as long as they are applied properly. "Broad-spectrum" means that the sunscreen filters both UVA and UVB radiation.

When using sunscreen, remember:

- No sunscreen provides full protection so never rely on sunscreen alone for sun protection. During the daily sun protection times (when the UV Index is 3 and above), combine sunscreen with sun-protective clothing, a broad-brimmed hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears, shade and sunglasses.
- Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before you go outside and again every two hours (whether or not the label tells you to do this).
- Use a generous amount of sunscreen. The average-sized adult should apply more than half a teaspoon of sunscreen (about 3 ml) to each arm and the face/neck (including ears), and just over one teaspoon (6 ml) to each leg, the front of the body and the back of the body. That is, approximately 35 ml of sunscreen for one full body application.
- Check and follow the "use by" date stated on the packaging and store sunscreen below 30°C.
- If you have an allergic reaction to a sunscreen, try another brand or look for a fragrance-free product such as a toddler or sensitive sunscreen. A doctor or chemist could also offer advice about choosing another product.

Stay safe in the sun!

Equipment Grants

Information is now in schools about the upcoming Equipment Grants for students in government schools who are not funded through PSD and are partially sighted.

For further information about Equipment Grants and other funding for students in government schools, please visit:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/programsupp.aspx>

The closing date for Equipment Grants applications is 28 February 2017.

VCE Special Provision

For information about Special Provision for VCE and VCAL, please visit:

<http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/exams/specialprovision/specialprovisionwithinvceandvcal.aspx>

Please contact SVRC's **Lee Clark** to arrange a VCE visit for your Year 10, 11 or 12 student.

Upcoming Round Table Conference in Perth

When: Saturday, 6 May to Tuesday, 9 May 2017

Where: Mercure Perth, 10 Irwin Street Perth

Conference Theme: Information Access - new modes, technologies and opportunities

The 2017 Round Table Conference provides three full days of presentations, panel sessions, and workshops on technical, research, and practical issues related to accessibility in education, employment and community contexts. There will be ample opportunities for networking with key speakers, panel members and attendees. Around the conference theme "Information Access - new modes, technologies and opportunities", presenters will explore and share information on existing and new opportunities for people with print disabilities to access information and communication technologies.

Albinism Fellowship of Australia Conference

When: Friday 18 August to Sunday 20 August 2017

Where: Melbourne

Visit: <http://albinismaustralia.org/melbourne-conference-2017/>

The Friday will be a day that will be aimed at educators and other professionals, while the Saturday and Sunday is aimed at people with albinism and their families.

Support Skills News

From Garry Stinchcombe

Re-enrolment reminder: For those who will be returning to the program in 2017 and have not yet re-enrolled please do so as soon as possible. Groups have been finalised with information posted to families and also available on the website.

SSP Family Survey: We have left the online survey open for students and families to leave their comments and observations. You can find it on the SVRC webpage. It only takes 5 minutes and it helps us to know how you feel about the program, areas we could improve on and those aspects of the program you really value. Please enter the code: ssp2016.

The Importance of Braille Music

Source: ABA Facebook page

Great video promoting braille music and featuring local braille musicians and the Braille Music Camp was launched at the recent SPEVI Conference. If you are wondering why to teach the braille music code to your student, please see <https://vimeo.com/197986048/3a5f466be8>.

“Snap Send Solve” - an App for reporting local hazards to authorities

From Marion Blazé

You can download a free app to your phone so that next time you notice an uneven footpath, pothole or damaged play equipment, you simply snap a photo and it is automatically sent to the relevant authority anywhere in Australia or New Zealand. When I noticed some broken and lifting tactile pavers at a road crossing near SVRC, I hopped on the council website to find out who I should notify. The website told me about this app. I've “snapped and sent” so I'll let you know how long it takes for the problem to be “solved”.

Ballyland Magic and Ballyland Rotor, as presented at the SPEVI 2017 Conference

Source: Phia Damsma via the SPEVI List

With fun apps like Ballyland Magic and Ballyland Rotor, your students and you can learn how to use iOS mobile touch devices by way of VoiceOver, Apple’s built-in screen reader for iOS devices.

Ballyland Rotor is Sonokids' new iPad game app, teaching children who are blind or have low vision the concept and touch gestures for the "Rotor" in VoiceOver. With a variety of stories, sounds and songs, it is both highly entertaining and educational. The app not only supports children’s understanding of the concept of selecting options and settings by way of the Rotor: it also offers them a safe platform to explore and practice the different ways the Rotor gesture can be performed. This learning process can be further enhanced with a 3D print model of Ballicopter, Ballyland’s little red helicopter, with a propeller on his head. The file to 3D print Ballicopter yourself is a [FREE download](#).

The Rotor is used to change how VoiceOver works, for instance, to increase the speech rate. As the Rotor is a relatively advanced concept and gesture, it is recommended to first play **Ballyland Magic**. This game app has demonstrated great value in supporting the development of blind children’s general touch gesture skills and conceptual understanding of VoiceOver.

All information can be found on the [Ballyland website](#) and you can get the apps from the App Store. Price: 4.49 AUD / 2.99 USD. Recommended age: 6+

Tech Q&A: Lost Passcode

Question: My student has forgotten their passcode to their iPad.

Answer: Well, that’s a nuisance ... and worse! Basically, if you lose your passcode, you have to erase your device, and say goodbye to all the content and settings.

Suggestion: If your students are going to use passcodes, it is important that they keep regular backups.

For more information, see the Apple Support website: <https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT204306>

2017 Focus on Ability Film Festival

To share in the over \$140,000 in cash and prizes, simply make a short film or documentary (less than 5 minutes) with an ability/disability theme and submit by 30 June 2017.

If you'd like to see the 2016 finalists or see further information about the competition this year, visit on the Focus on Ability website: <http://www.focusonability.com.au/>

Student News

Sabre, one of our former Dot Power students who will be attending Support Skills this year, has been working on his martial arts skills. The photo (right) shows Sabre competing in a recent Judo competition. We look forward to seeing him in the Paralympics!



Staff News

The **transcription staff** were busy over the holidays preparing texts in alternative format for your students. I wish to thank our hard-working team, who beaver away for the 600+ students around Victoria. So far this year we have had over 600 requests for items in alternative format – ranging from a page of music to full text books – it keeps us all quite busy!!!

At the end of last year, **Deb Davidson** was Awarded Master of Special Education (Blindness and Low Vision). Deb works with the Statewide Vision Resource Centre as part of the Educational Vision Assessment Clinic, and in South-Western Victoria Region as a VT (Vision). Congratulations Deb!

Lyn Robinson will retire from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre in March. Lyn has been a long-standing member of the team and will long be remembered, in particular, for her keen interest in beginning braille literacy, the use of iPads for information access and VCE Special Provision. We will miss her and her contribution to the community.

Toni Chilton, who returned last year to the Statewide Vision Resource Centre after a 7-year hiatus, has taken leave without pay for 12 months to pursue her interests in tactile graphics and early literacy for braille children. We wish her the very best!

There are a number of new VTs out there – **Darren, Letitia, Caroline** ... – we look forward to meeting them and to working together in support of students with vision impairments. Further information to follow.

SVRC Returns for 2016 & Requests for 2017

Please review your students' use of their **access technology** which is on loan from the SVRC. If the student is no longer using equipment, please return along with **braille, LP and audio** resources during the last few months of the year.

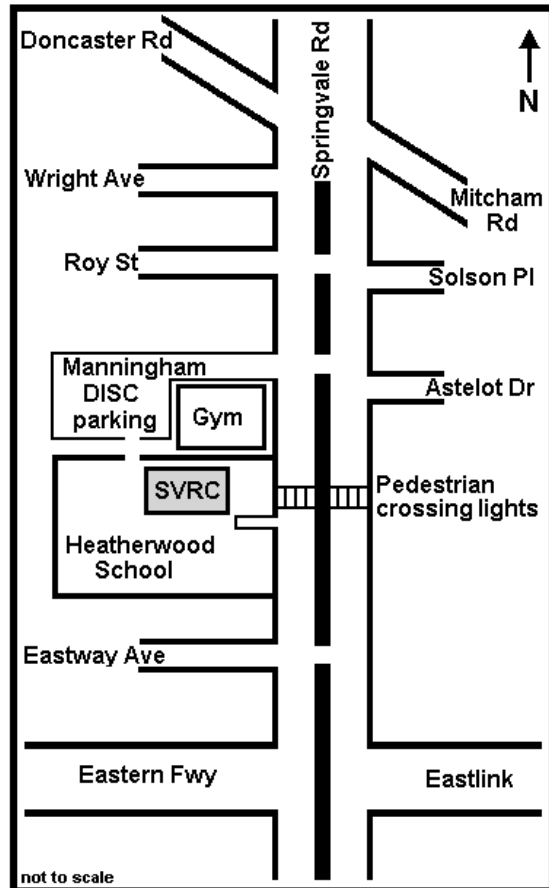
How to Find Us & Where to Park

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is located in the grounds of Heatherwood School at

370 Springvale Rd Donvale.

Please park **IN THE LOWER CARPARK** next door to Heatherwood School in the carpark behind the Manningham DISC (Donvale Sports Centre).

There are also buses and/or trains which come past regularly – for up-to-date information, visit the Public Transport Victoria website or see the Contact Us page on the SVRC website.



Finally

The staff of the Statewide Vision Resource Centre wish you all an excellent 2017 filled with adventures, learning and joy!

Editor Deb Lewis would like to thank everyone for their contributions to this issue of The Bulletin!



Education
and Training



Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Blind Students

Tuesday 14 February 2017 from 9.00am to 3.30pm
(Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower car park – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

For: Class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, family members and Visiting Teachers

PROGRAM

8.30	Registration
9.00	Seeing With Our Fingers – Staff of SVRC
10.00	Welcome – Marion Blazé
10.30	Living with Braille – Garry Stinchcombe
11.00	Morning Tea
11.20	Success at School – Lea Nagel
12.00	Been There, Done That – Avril Nunn (Principal) and Leanne Schouw (Class Teacher), Southern Cross Primary School
12.30	Lunch
1.15	Concurrent Sessions: Braille Under the Microscope – Staff of the SVRC Getting Around – Staff of Guide Dogs Victoria Voice (iOS and JAWS) – Staff of SVRC
2.45	The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen
3.15	Let's Hear it from a Student – Alex Douros (Class of 2015)
3.30	Close

Cost (GST incl.): \$88.00 per participant (onsite and offsite)

Visiting Teachers or family members: \$44.00

Payment for onsite participants includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

Online registration is essential: please visit the SVRC website

For further details: phone 9841 0242

For parking and public transport information, please see the SVRC website: svrc.vic.edu.au



Education
and Training



Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Students with Low Vision

Tuesday 28 February OR Thursday 2 March OR Tuesday 15 August 2017

9.00am to 3.30pm (Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower car park – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

For: Class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, family members and Visiting Teachers

PROGRAM

8.30	Registration
9.00	Low Vision: What's it like? – Staff of SVRC
10.30	Vision Impairment – What is it & how do we assess it? – Marion Blazé
10:40	SVRC Website – Glen Morrow
10:45	Morning Tea
11.05	Strategies to Support the Student with Low Vision in the Classroom – Deb Davidson
11:50	Technology for Success at School – Lea Nagel
12:40	Lunch
1:20	Concurrent Sessions: Orientation & Mobility – Staff of Guide Dogs Victoria iPad Accessibility for Low Vision Users – Glen Morrow
2.20	The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen
3.10	Let's Hear It from the Students Themselves
3.30	Close

Cost (GST incl.): \$88.00 per participant (onsite and offsite)

Visiting Teachers or family members: \$44.00

Payment for onsite participants includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

Online registration is essential: please visit the SVRC website

For further details: phone 9841 0242

For parking and public transport information, please see the SVRC website: svrc.vic.edu.au



Education
and Training



Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Students with Vision and Additional Impairments

Tuesday 21 March 2017

9.00am to 3.30pm (Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower car park – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

For: Class & subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, family members & VTs

PROGRAM

8.30	Registration
9.00	Simulation of a Vision Impairment – Staff of SVRC and Guide Dogs Victoria
10.15	Vision Impairment – What is it? How do we assess it? – Marion Blazé
10.45	Morning Tea
11.10	Cortical, Optical, Total Vision Impairment: What do they mean for Educators? – Annette Godfrey-Magee
11.50	Tactual PECs for Communication – Geoff Bowen
12.30	Lunch – A light lunch will be provided
1.00	Strategies to Support Students in the Classroom – Helen Caldow
1.40	Concurrent Sessions: Tactile Literacy iPad as a Learning Tool Orientation and Mobility
3.00	Challenging Behaviours – Geoff Bowen
3.30	Close

Cost (GST incl.): \$88.00 per participant

Visiting Teachers or family members: \$44.00

Payment for onsite participants includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

Online registration is essential: please visit the SVRC website

For further details: phone 9841 0242

For parking and public transport information, please see the SVRC website: svrc.vic.edu.au



Including Students with Vision Impairments in Physical Education, Recreation and Sport

Presenters

Charlie Roberts, Emily White, Lea Nagel, Garry Stinchcombe

Wednesday 8th March 2017, 8:45am- 3:30pm

8.45	Registration
9.00	Welcome & Introduction followed by Open Forum: -Share current PE/Rec/Sport practices for inclusion, understanding of vision impairment and reasons for attending/ goals for the day.
9.20	Program overview and course materials
9.30	Simulation activities and effective instruction: -Experience navigation & physical activity under vision impairment simulation, to better understand the implications of vision loss -Explore equipment through activity -Develop teaching strategies and methods for instruction and feedback
10.30	Inclusion & pre-assessment techniques: -What inclusion does and doesn't mean -Role of the Visiting Teacher and ES staff to support the PE/Sport program -Initial PE-based assessment for appropriate supports -Suggestions for modifying other assessments
11.05	Morning Tea (provided) -Equipment and resources on display for browsing
11.30	Childhood vision impairment & physical activity: Implications for teaching & learning: -Common eye conditions and their effect on physical activity, motor skills, learning and independence -Safety considerations
11.50	Equipment demonstration: -Modified and specialist equipment for students with vision impairment
12.10	Primary and Secondary PE/Sport: -Program planning & participation: determining appropriate support, equipment needs, activity modifications, alternate activities
1.00	Lunch (provided) and Network with other teachers and professionals -Equipment on display for browsing
1.45	Competition & Blind Sports: -Interschool Sport for Athletes with a Disability (AWD) and School Sports Victoria -Classifications -Paralympic Sports; Blind Sports
2.00	Come n' Try Blind Sports: -Participate in two blind sports, your choice of: Cricket, Swish & Goalball.
3:30	Q&A session & end of program

Please wear suitable clothes and shoes for participation in physical activities.

See website for further information and cost

Online registration is essential: www.svrc.vic.edu.au



Art4KidswithVI?



Education
and Training

What to do with the student who is blind or has low vision in my art room?

When: 9:00am – 3:30pm Wednesday 15th March 2017

Registration: 8:45am meet at **Statewide Vision Resource Centre.**

A one day seminar and workshop at SVRC

The seminar will investigate options, strategies and issues related to working with and teaching a student who is blind or has low vision in your art room or classroom art-making session.

The day will include:

Morning: - information on setting up or adjusting the room to better accommodate your student; issues of access to the visual arts; specialist techniques; budget options; and opportunities for “hands-on” art making; many examples of art work and strategies will be on display.

Afternoon: exploration of works of art under blindfold: investigating the use of visual description, tactile diagrams and touch access.

8:45	Registration and Meet in SVRC. Collect participant folders. Tea/coffee. Check out displays in “Big Space” & Art Room.
9.00	Art under Blindfold Activity No.1 and debrief: What does your student see? Blindfolds & simulation goggles.
9.20	Brief intro to Blindness, Low Vision, and Art. PPT. How this affects your student.
9.30	Meaningful Art for All Children – PPT Plus: Art4KidswithVI in SSP PPT. Suggestions of Art4KidsWithVI in your classroom
10.30	Morning Tea and Chat, investigate displays, Art Room.
11.00	Art under Blindfold Activity No.2 and debrief: Drawing under blindfold using adaptive tools and materials.
11.40	Do Touch the Art – Access to Art in Vic & Beyond - PPT plus. . .
12.00	Designing a tactile image activity: for a Mystery Art Work
12:30	Catered Lunch/tea/coffee. Check out displays in “Big Space” & Art Room.
1:30	Art under Blindfold Activity No.3: Encountering artworks, visual-describing, modelling with plasticine.
3.00	Summary and Final Q & A

About the Presenter:

From 1999 to 2009 Michael Donnelly taught students who are blind or have low vision at the RVIB / Vision Australia School in Burwood, Victoria. He previously taught Art & Design in Catholic Secondary Colleges for many years. Michael currently teaches art in the Support Skills Program of the DET Statewide Vision Resource Centre in Donvale and is part of the Visiting Teacher Service – Vision Impairment in North Western Region (Metro).

Michael has presented papers at the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment Conferences in 2003, 2005, 2015, & 2017, and has produced “Meaningful Art for All Children”, 2008, revised 2014, an illustrated manual for creating art with school students who are blind or have low vision; “Do Touch the Sculptures”: A walking tour of the public sculptures along Swanston Street and the Bourke Street Mall, Melbourne. 2005, revised 2015, a Tactile / Braille Tour Guide; and “All My Own Work!” Independent Artist or Coactive Collaborator: The fine line Art Teachers to the Blind and Vision Impaired tread. Australian Art Education Journal, Special Education Edition, 2003.

See website for further information and cost

Online registration is essential: www.svrc.vic.edu.au