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

Dates for Your Diary

Here's what's coming up:

- **SVRC Swimming Carnival:** 4 August – see below for more information
- **Low Vision Day PD:** 15 August
- **SSP Cricket Day:** 22 September
- **SVRC Expo:** 28 November
- **SVRC Christmas Morning Tea:** 6 December

See the SVRC website for more information and online registration.

Dialogue in the Dark – 1000 Teachers to Attend!

Dialogue in the Dark is now open and the Department of Education and Training is providing funding for 1000 teachers to attend. This is being implemented in three tiers:

1. Visiting Teachers (Vision, Hearing or Health)
2. Teachers of students who are blind or have low vision (in State, Catholic or Independent schools)
3. Teachers from State funded schools and kindergartens

If you're a VT who hasn't been yet, get in touch with SVRC to find out how it works.

If you're a teacher of a student who is blind or has low vision, you simply register for a one-hour learning package on the SVRC website (do it in your own time) and after that you will receive a code to book your free entry to DiD at a time that suits you. The third tier will hear from us soon. This professional learning experience can be used as PD hours for your VIT requirements.



Art PD in Bendigo

Art Teacher, Michael Donnelly, will be conducting his "Art for Students with Vision Impairments Professional Development" seminar and hands-on workshop in regional Victoria.

Explore information on setting up or adjusting your art or classroom to better accommodate your students, issues of access to the visual arts, specialist techniques, budget options and opportunities for "hands-on" art making.

Participants will explore works of art under blindfold, investigating the use of visual

description, tactile diagrams and touch access. Learn about how Bendigo Art Gallery is making art more accessible to all visitors, including students with vision impairments.



When: Thursday 17 August from 9.30am to 4.00pm

Registration essential:

[http://www.bendigoartgallery.com.au/Education/Teachers/Art for students with Vision Impairment Professional Development](http://www.bendigoartgallery.com.au/Education/Teachers/Art%20for%20students%20with%20Vision%20Impairment%20Professional%20Development)

Albinism and Low Vision

PD for Teachers

Source: Sandra George Albinism Fellowship of Australia Conference Convenor

The Albinism Fellowship of Australia is offering PD for teachers as part of their conference in Melbourne on Friday 18th August 2017, from 12.30 to 4.00pm.

This will be a unique opportunity to hear **Dr Karen Wolffe** (Austin, Texas) present on a series of projects, introducing some of the latest developments in the education of students with vision impairments.

The program will be relevant to Visiting Teachers, class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides at both primary and secondary levels. It will provide an opportunity to learn about Albinism and low vision, including educational implications and teaching strategies.

A certificate of attendance will be provided as evidence that you have completed a PD activity that will build your capacity to teach learners with disability (to meet the VIT registration requirement).

For Parents of Children with Albinism

You and your family are invited to attend all sessions of the AFA Conference, Friday 18th (afternoon) to Sunday 20th August. Creche, Junior and Youth programs will run parallel to the main program, with exciting options for the children run by Vision Australia and RMIT staff.

Further Information

Registration forms and program information are available on the AFA website at www.albinismaustralia.org.

NDIS Noticeboard

From Marion Blazé

Did you know that the NDIA is running free information sessions in lots of locations around Victoria? Go to <https://ndis.gov.au/news/events/vic.html> for their listing of events including getting NDIS ready, community information and provider information sessions.

You can also sign up for the NDIS newsletter at <https://ndis.gov.au/news/subscribe.html>.

There's also a regular Q & A page where anyone can post a question to be answered. Here's an interesting one:

Question: Are iPads approved in a plan in special circumstances, and if so, can we buy it first and then get reimbursed?

Answer: Generally, the NDIS won't fund the purchase of an iPad. If there are certain apps that relate directly to your goals and support needs, and are beneficial to reaching those goals, the cost of those apps can be funded by your NDIS plan.

All approved supports need to meet the criteria of [Section 34 of the NDIS Act \(2013\) \(external\)](#), which is about [Reasonable and Necessary Supports](#).

In order to be considered reasonable and necessary, a support must:

- be related to the participant's disability
- not include day-to-day living costs that are not related to a participant's disability support needs
- represent value for money
- be likely to be effective and beneficial to the participant, and
- take into account informal supports given to participants by families, carers, networks, and the community.

An iPad can be a great educational and communicative tool for a lot of people. Some people use certain iPad applications to help them overcome barriers they face in society because of their disability. The device is not what helps people reach their NDIS goals but rather the applications specific to the disability.

The device itself is something widely used in society. The latest data from the [Australian Bureau of Statistics \(2014-15\) \(external\)](#) reports that 86% of all households have access to the internet at home, with 62% of households accessing the internet via tablets. This is why they are considered everyday items.

The iPad may be more appropriately funded by other systems such as education (many schools provide computers or tablets to students, or even set iPads as required purchases on students' school material lists) and employment (many employees are provided with electronic devices such as computers, tablets and mobile phones).

Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in Unified English Braille

The Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in Unified English Braille is held in the first two weeks of October each year. You can choose to sit the test from 1-7 October or 8-14 October.

Registrations will open in early August and close in mid-September. More information is available at <http://brailleaustralia.org/unified-english-braille/trans-tasman-certificate-of-proficiency-in-unified-english-braille/>

JSPEVI: Call for Papers

The Guest Convening editor of the Journal of SPEVI, Bronwen Scott, has sent a reminder encouraging contributions for the next journal of our professional organisation, the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment. The journal's Editorial Committee intends JSPEVI to be a vehicle for informing researchers, administrators and educators working in government and non-government education organisations, as well as specialist and general teachers, O&M specialists, allied health professionals, parents and others in our communities about research, issues and policies, and their implications for practice in the South Pacific Region.

Bronwen writes, "in the changing landscape of the NDIS, it is increasingly important that we continue to publish quality specialist research and implications for practice in our varied roles as educators in vision impairment." Contact Bronwen at bronscott@iinet.net.au if you would like further information or check the SPEVI website.

Dots for Families – Now in UEB (and Free)

Dots for Families is a free series of braille lessons for sighted people which aims to encourage family and friends to learn braille so they can write notes and support children's braille literacy. Visit: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/dots-families-braille-lessons>



Simulate Vision Using Your Smartphone

From Marion Blazé

Did you know there are several free apps that enable you to simulate vision impairments? Recently I've used "VisionSim" from the Braille Institute. This app allows you to choose an eye disease and it will then tell you the associated symptoms and give a description for each. When you launch the simulator you can "dial up" the severity and move your phone around to see what the world looks like with that impairment. Just go to your App Store and search for "vision simulators".

New Victor Reader Training Video from SVRC

Glen Morrow has uploaded the sixth training video featuring Garry Stinchcombe. These videos have a page on the SVRC website with introductory paragraph and links. Visit:

<http://svrc.vic.edu.au/tutorials/handheld-devices/victor-reader-stream/basics-videos/>

ICEB Survey Reminder

From Leona Holloway, Correspondence Secretary, ABA

As you will recall, ICEB is conducting a survey on the representation of the apostrophe and quotation marks in UEB. Background information and a link to the survey are provided at <http://iceb.org>.

Thank you to those of you have already completed the survey. For those of us who like to leave these things until the last minute, your time has come! The survey will close this coming Monday 31 July.

SVRC Swimming Carnival, 4 August 2017

When: Friday, 4 August 2017 from 9:30am to 1pm

Where: Genazzano FCJ College Pool, Cotham Road Kew (25m indoor heated pool with change facilities)

Who: all eligible Victorian school-aged students with vision impairments (not just students enrolled in the Support Skills Program)

Events: catering for all participants including 12.5m kickboard events through to 50m events and novelty relays

Please contact: Garry Stinchcombe if your child is interested in participating ASAP

Sport and Recreation

Source: Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria Newsletter, June 2017

Cycling: Captains and Tandem Bikes available

Are you blind or have low vision and do you enjoy exercising through bike riding? If so, we are ready to take you cycling on a tandem bike. We are a group of people with Tandem Bicycles and authorised by Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria to offer tandem bike riding, including touring the sights, sounds and smells of not only Melbourne and suburbs, but also regional Victoria. We have the skills and equipment to provide a friendly and safe cycling experience to anyone wanting to ride on a tandem bike. Along the way there will be rest stops, coffee/tea stops and stops at other interesting places.

If you would like to participate in our tandem bike riding group, please contact Andrew Evans on email: andrewrichardevans@hotmail.com

Swimming & Aquatics

BSRV offer multiple swimming and aquatic programs for those who wish to gain confidence in the water, learn to swim or just have some fun.

Children can learn to swim in a safe and nurturing environment on Sundays at the Ruyton Girls School in Kew.

North Lodge Swimming Academy in Dandenong provides swimming lessons for adults and children with vision impairments every Saturday.

For more information: <http://blindsports.org.au/sports-2/aquaticsandswimming/>

Soccer

Blind Soccer, or Blind Football, is an internationally recognised sport played at the Paralympics. It is played outdoors by athletes with vision impairments on a 42m x 22m pitch with side kickboards. There are two teams of five; four outfield players and a goalkeeper.

Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria is proud to run a league for blind football with the support of Football Federation Victoria and Social Goal, kicking off again from April until July.

NEW in 2017 is the Junior Soccer Program. Throughout May, June and July, children with vision impairments have the opportunity to learn new soccer skills, participate in some games and make some new friends. It is not too late to join.

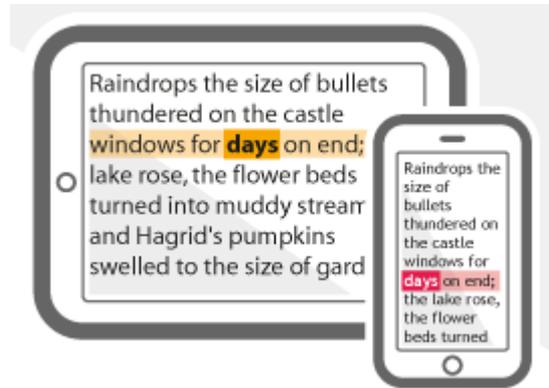
For more information: <http://blindsports.org.au/sports-2/blind-soccer/>

Reading Resource: Dolphin Easy Reader for iOS

Source: <https://yourdolphin.com/product?id=23>

Dolphin Easy Reader for iOS has been developed as a free accessible reading app for dyslexia, low vision and blindness:

- Designed for readers with dyslexia and vision impairments
- Direct access to browse and download from your libraries including Bookshare, Legimus, Vision Australia, RNIB Bookshare & more
- Copy text from anywhere on your phone and hear EasyReader announce it
- Read with your ears and eyes with perfectly synchronised text and audio
- Choose colours, text size and highlights to suit your visual needs
- Fully compatible with Voiceover



See the website above for more information.

Braille Maths Resource for Primary Students

The SVRC Maths Cheat Sheet prepared by Lea Nagel for teachers is also available as a braille flip-book for students. It is presented with a different topic on each page and shows the relevant braille notation for that topic.

Students can independently review the relevant page in their flip-book at the beginning of a new Maths topic – for example time, money – to remember the relevant braille code, layout etc.

It's another handy resource from the Production Department of the SVRC! Request yours!

Calculator Access for Blind Secondary Students

Source: https://epsstore.ti.com/OA_HTML/csksxvm.jsp?nSetId=107851 (September 2015)

What calculator options are available for the visually impaired?

One option is the TI-SmartView Software. The TI-SmartView Computer Software presents an interactive representation of the TI family of calculators display. The TI-SmartView Software is available for the following calculators:

- TI SmartView Emulator Software for the TI-30X/TI-34 MultiView
- TI-SmartView CE Emulator Software for the TI-84 Plus Family
- TI-Nspire CX Student Software and TI-Nspire CX CAS Student Software

The TI-Nspire family of handhelds has student software available that has the same functionality as the handhelds. The TI-Nspire family of Student Software may be included in the handheld retail package, but can be purchased separately.

Inclusion, Diversity and Leadership Resources

Emily White recently attended a seminar presented by Carly Findlay on inclusion, diversity and leadership, with a particular focus on facial difference. Carly recommends the following resources:

Below are some excellent resources from the presentation I attended by Carly Findlay.

- Guide to inspiration objectification classroom resource (\$5 download)
<http://carlyfindlay.com.au/product/inspiration-as-objectification-of-disability-a-resource-for-teachers-and-parents-by-carly-findlay/>
- Language and disability slurs <http://www.smh.com.au/comment/disability-slurs-are-a-damaging-as-racism-and-homophobia-20170501-gvw8v3.html>
- Facial difference books <http://carlyfindlay.com.au/2016/11/20/seven-books-to-help-kids-with-ichthyosis-and-help-kids-learn-about-ichthyosis/>
- Preparing children for meeting people with visible differences
<http://carlyfindlay.com.au/2013/06/16/preparing-children-for-meeting-people-with-visible-differences/>

Carly has the rare, severe skin condition called Ichthyosis and describes herself as a blogger, writer, speaker and appearance activist.

Braille in the Community: Sydney Street Signs

Many of the street signs in Sydney include braille labels (see right) – we look forward to seeing this accessibility option in Melbourne streets in the near future.



For Sale: BN Touch

BrailleNote Touch 32-cell note taker. Asking price \$4000.
Contact: Sadam 0435 892 944

National Support Staff Week: 14-18 August 2017 – please thank your ES!

During ES week, I am sure many of you will be thinking of special ways to acknowledge and thank the ES workers in your schools. Please remember that most of the production team, here at SVRC, are also ES folk.

We'd love you to think of ways to make this week special for them and acknowledge the vast amount of work and skill they put in to keeping your students resourced with all their individual alternative format requirements.

SVRC News

Who will make the 2000th request in alternative format for the year? We'll let you know in an upcoming issue – we are over 1800 to date!

Finally

Thanks to all the wonderful Education Support Staff who support students with vision impairments including transcribers, learning assistants, teacher aides!!! YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!!

Deb Lewis (Ed)