

The Bulletin

Number 8, 28 May 2018

Inside This Issue

Here's what you'll find:

- **From SVRC:** Dates for Your Diary, Art4Kids Report, Dot Power Day Report, Braille in the Community: Accessible Japan, Upcoming Dot Power, Staff News
- **Technology:** Make Webpages Easier to Read or See, Podcasts for Kids
- **PD:** Inclusive Education Grants Initiative, 2018 Blind and Low Vision Conference, Maths Inclusion Workshop, Low Vision PD Day, Braille Mnemonics: Addressing Braille Reversals,
- **Recreation and Activities:** VA Youth Camp, Camp Mittagundi, Tumbalong Lights (Sydney), Melbourne Builds Australia's First Blind Soccer Pitch
- **From the Field:** JSPEVI, Understanding NDIS ILC Workshops

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

Dates for Your Diary – 2018

Here is a list of our planned PD and other activities:

- **Big Arts Day for students with VI:** 1 June
- **2018 Blind and Low Vision Education Conference:** 12 June [places filling fast]
- **Dot Power:** 19 June (for Year 1 to 3s)
- **Maths Inclusion Workshop for Supporting Students with VI:** 29 June 9am-12 noon
- **Circus Workshop and Audio Described Performance of Circus Oz:** 29 June 1.30-7.40pm
- **[Braille Music Camp:** 30 June to 7 July in NSW]

Term 3

- **Dot Power:** 7 August (for pre-school and Foundation/Prep)
- **Educational Support for Students who have Low Vision:** Tuesday 14 August
- **Dot Power:** 11 September (new date for Year 1 to 3s)
- **[Space Camp:** September-October in USA]

Term 4

- **Dot Power:** 30 October (for pre-school and Foundation/Prep)
- **Dot Power:** 13 November (new date for Year 1 to 3s)
- **Technology Expo:** Tuesday 27 November
- **Christmas Morning Tea:** Wednesday 5 December [no need to register – just come at 11am!]

Programs and registration are available on the SVRC website! Online payment is also available!

If you can't find the PD you need, please contact Lea Nagel or Marion Blazé to request a session.

One of our favourite quotes from the recent Round Table Conference:

"I know first-hand the importance of braille. I have five siblings with a vision impairment but I was the only one who was taught braille, and I was the only one who went on to higher education." – Maria Stevens (BANZAT Chair)

DET's 2018 Blind and Low Vision Conference – Places filling fast!

When: 12 June 2018 from 9.00am to 3.30pm

Where: Vision Australia Conference Centre, 454 Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong

Full details: [Download the full conference information pack](#)

The Department of Education and Training's 2018 Blind and Low Vision Education Conference will bring together Visiting Teachers and other professionals for a day of engaging, insightful and practical professional learning from leading state and national experts in blind and low vision education support. The conference is being generously hosted at Vision Australia's Centre in Kooyong and is being coordinated by the Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Attendance at this event is open to all professionals working in blind and low vision education (both within and outside DET). Registration is required and numbers are strictly limited. The registration cost is free for all participants, as it is fully covered by the Department of Education and Training.

All participants must register online by Tuesday 5th June at <http://svrc.vic.edu.au/pd/blind-and-low-vision-education-one-day-conference/>.

Last Chance to Apply for an Inclusive Education Postgraduate Scholarship

Applications for the first round of scholarships under the Inclusive Education Grants initiative close on **3 June 2018**.

The initiative provides support for teachers who wish to undertake postgraduate study in special needs education and access to grants for specialised equipment and assistive technology to support students with disabilities and additional learning needs.

Applicants are advised to read the application guidelines and frequently asked questions prior to applying, see: [Inclusive Education Grants: Guidelines – Scholarships \(Semester 2, 2018\) – WORD](#)

Applications should be made online via the Smarty Grants system before Sunday 3 June 2018, see: [Inclusive Education Grants – Scholarships – Semester 2, 2018](#)

For any enquiries, please email: inclusive.ed.grants@edumail.vic.gov.au

Journal of SPEVI

From Dr Bronwen Scott, Convening Editor, JSPEVI

This year, the SPEVI Management Committee made the decision to provide the Journal of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (JSPEVI) in digital format. I'm delighted to let you know that we now have a new JSPEVI page on the SPEVI website, where the 2017 edition is now available as a free download. Please spread the word amongst your colleagues so we can ensure our valuable research is spread far and wide!

You will also see the Call for Papers for the 2018 edition so please consider submitting a paper or report. Many thanks to Phia Damsma for putting together this new page.

Download the 2017 edition of JSPEVI here: <http://www.spevi.net/jspevi/>

Maths Inclusion Workshop for Supporting Students with VI

Come join in a morning of Marvellous Mathematics!

When: Friday 29 June 2018 from 9am to 12 noon (registration and cuppa from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Intended audience: Visiting Teachers (Vision Impairment) & Integration Staff

Presenter: Charlie Roberts, Visiting Teacher and Support Skills Program Teacher

Focus: Supporting the student and Maths teacher, using solid materials & consistent terminology to reinforce Mathematical concepts.

Content:

- Maths Kit: useful equipment to have for Maths Students with VI.
- Inclusive strategies for Primary & Secondary Maths
- Braille code: recommended set out, overwriting & cheat sheets.
- Maths print resources for staff
- Participants invited to share useful tips

Registration essential: <http://svrc.vic.edu.au/pd/maths/>

No cost and morning tea will be provided

Low Vision PD Day (Term 3)

When: 14 August 2018 from 9.00 to 3.30pm (registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Intended audience: Class and subject teachers, ES and integration staff, Visiting Teachers and others who support students with low vision

Registration essential: <http://svrc.vic.edu.au/pd/ed-support-low-vision/>

Cost: \$88 (\$44 for family members ad VTs)

Braille Mnemonics: Addressing Braille Reversals

Tricia d'Apice is the recipient of the NSW Premier's Teachers' Scholarship, sponsored by the IOOF Centre for Educational and Medical Research for Itinerant Support Teacher (Vision). The Braille Literacy Research project was carried out using this scholarship funding. Tricia travelled Australia and New Zealand evaluating students' reading fluency and comprehension for her study, the Braille Literacy Research Project. Tricia presented at the recent Round Table Conference.

Following this research, Tricia has developed a series of YouTube videos to assist teachers address common braille reversals including f-d-h-j, i-e; r-w. She has plans for more videos focusing on and-you; the-z; people-this; and so on.

Right: a method Tricia suggests for i-e reversals involves a slide (slippery dip) with a ladder going up on the left and a slide going down on the right: "i" goes up to the sky; "e" goes down the slide wheeee.

Imagine a slippery dip with a ladder going up on the left and a slide going down on the right.



To view these videos, visit: [Braille Mnemonics](#)

Circus Oz: Skills Workshop and Performance of "Precarious"

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre invite you to a circus workshop and audio-described performance by Circus Oz!

The circus workshop is intended for: any school-aged student with a vision impairment

The performance of "Precarious" is open to: the school-aged student with a vision impairment who participates in the circus workshop AND their family members. Places are limited – get in quick!

Friday 29th June 2018 from 2.00 to 7.40pm

1.30	All meet in the foyer of Circus Oz, 35 Johnson Street Collingwood (parents welcome to stay)
2.00-4.00	Circus workshop for students with vision impairments (max 16) plus siblings (max 8); please wear comfortable clothes you might wear for playing sport, no jewellery, tie up hair, no shoes
4.00	Students dismissed to the care of family member
4.00-5.30	Families travel independently to the Big Top, Southern Cross Lawns, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Ave (bring a snack or early dinner)
5.30-6.30	Tactile tour of the Circus Oz performance space by Description Victoria for children & family members
6.30-7.40	Performance of "Precarious" by Circus Oz for children and family members (no intermission). Headphones for audio description will be available for students with vision impairments only.

Registration is essential

Phone Deb or Emma to register – 9841 0242. Pay over the phone by credit card (or in cash at SVRC). You will also need to fill in forms for SVRC and Circus Oz.

Payment must be received before 13 June to secure your workshop place(s) and seats for Precarious.

The cost of \$25 (children) and \$30 (adults) is inclusive of the student workshop, tactile tour and performance. No concessions available.

Art4Kids: Inclusive Teaching Practice in Art for Students with Vision Impairment

Michael Donnelly, Visiting Teacher (VI), NWVR and Art Teacher Support Skills Program, SVRC

Michael Donnelly's Professional Development Day focusing on inclusive teaching practices in Art is growing in popularity each year. This year 28 intrepid Art and Class Teachers from around Victoria assembled at Donvale for this absorbing and unique experience.

Again, Michael offered participants the opportunity to produce art under low vision simulators and blindfolds, working with wire boards and crayon, slit tape, Wikki Stix, drawing kits and a range of other Art materials. Participants' responses to the day were resoundingly positive as shown by the selections of feedback below.

How did you today's program?

- So useful, really appreciated the opportunity to be "in" the moment.
- Under blindfold activities were interesting but challenging, really helped me realise the challenge my low-vision kids face.
- Art under blindfold activities really helped me get an appreciation of how things must feel for my student. It really shows how the emphasis must be on other senses.
- Fantastic to have hands – on activities that give a real insight.

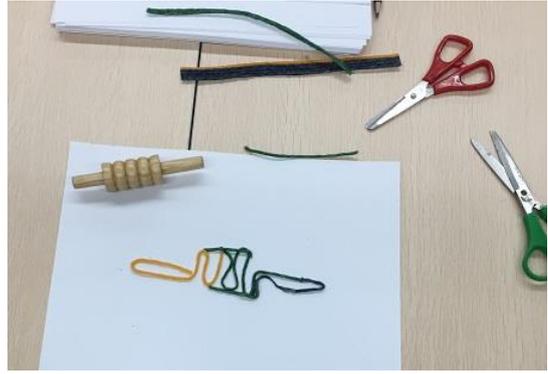
How did you find the PowerPoints and handouts?

- The most helpful PowerPoint was the suggestions for art making. Such valuable resources and suggestions for activities that I'm able to use at my school!
- The power point on art galleries and different tactile gallery possibilities to visit was very helpful. Also really like the students art work PowerPoint.
- The PowerPoint with art lesson ideas was very inspiring. Very practical, hands-on ideas to.
The art lesson ideas are ones I can take back to the classroom straight away.
- The PPT with a list of places to take groups for "hands on" experiences with art was very helpful.



What is one important thing you'll take away from the day?

- I was able to take away with me the realisation of how hard the students must work because of their vision impairment, and how I need to think about the art lesson and how to make it more accessible.
- I got some great tips about classroom management, example – contrast between the desk and paper being used for artwork for my low vision student.
- I will take immediately back to the classroom the idea of investigating sculpture, definitely the different art activities that we discussed including construction. The tactileness of activities was very helpful and the need to simplify images when creating tactile images.
- There were a lot of ideas I could immediately take back to the classroom. The tactile activities will be great for not only my foundation students with limited sight, but for ALL students.
- What I take back to the classroom immediately with contrast of surface colours for my low vision student. Nonslip mats. The energy that students use in creating art but the positives of clay work. I really enjoyed this PD!
- I will take back to the classroom the need for explicit instructions, a tactile table is a great idea, more 3-D objects in the art room.
- What I take back immediately to my classroom are the little tips that will assist in organisation of the program and the using of the art space. I could see how some of the things I do can be easily adapted. Also the variety of ways to create lines. A very valuable day, thank you!



Any final comments?

- Great to get USB, certificate and hand outs.
- Thank you! It was brilliant. :-)

Photos above and previous page show participants wearing simulation masks creating images using slit tape, spur wheel, Wikki Stix, drawing kit and wire frame.

Dot Power Day Report

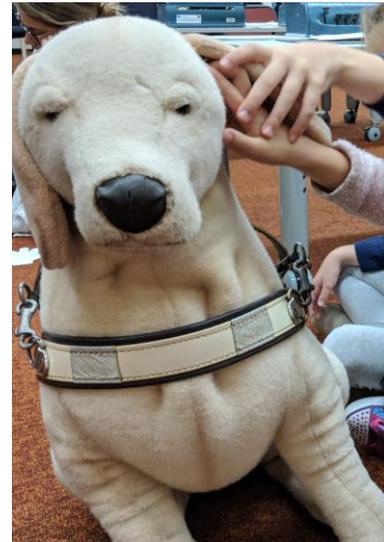
By Lea Nagel, 8 May 2018

We welcomed 9 children between the ages of 4 and 6 years to our first Dot Power Day this year. Our learning focus for the day as usual was the enjoyment of braille as a communication tool. Another learning focus was tactual graphicacy: reading and understanding tactual pictures and diagrams. This skill is important as it adds enjoyment to reading illustrated stories, but it also helps children understand science, maths, mapping and geography-style diagrams as they move further through their schooling. Families and school staff had their own learning focus as well, which was to collect more ideas on how to present learning experiences to children who read braille. Families also appreciated the opportunity to touch base with each other and SVRC staff.

5 little ducks

Concrete (real) to abstract (pictures)

The children sang the 5 Little Ducks song, learning about how we hold our hands to demonstrate a number to someone. Which fingers do we hold up? Which way around does our hand go? They used cut-out hands to compare their own hands with a flat cut-out of a hand and the pictures of a hand in the book. They were introduced to words that would be found in the 5 little ducks book by singing from a "Do braille" sheet, then sang the song while following the words in the book. They enjoyed the simplicity of the sheet, and the confidence that they built by singing together as a group.



Slob the dog

The main theme of the day was around Slob the Dog, a favourite character in the Ozzie Dots braille reading series. The children investigated a real ambassador dog from Guide Dogs Victoria, a full-sized toy guide dog, a jointed wooden Slob the dog and images of Slob in a story book. We asked the children to discover how many ears, legs and tails a dog has, and why we sometimes see one or two legs or ears in a picture of a dog instead of 4 legs and 2 ears.



The children sang the "Do braille" sheet, which introduced them to some words and braille contractions that they would find in the book, This is Slob.

The children looked at the images of Slob in different positions and arranged their wooden, jointed cut-out of Slob to match the images. How many legs can we see when he is sitting? Standing? Running? The children read the Slob the dog book together.



The children were asked to write and illustrate a short story or sentence about Slob. Some of the children

wrote with a little help. Others used "hand-over-hand" to watch with their fingers how an adult brailled the story that the child dictated. They read out their story to the group and enjoyed the appreciation that was shown for their efforts.

The stories and illustrations were collected to be reproduced and bound into a group book which will be sent home to each child in the next few days.



Photos above and previous page:

Top: 2 children looking at the ears of the life-sized toy dog together

2. matching the wooden dog with the same-sized tactile illustration of Slob the dog – Slob was drawn using PictureBraille in several positions including standing, running, sitting etc
3. drawing Slob the dog using a drawing kit
4. looking at the ears of the wooden dog

Dot Power Follow-up Activities

5 little ducks

- Re-read the Do-Braille sheet. Practise until the child can read with confidence. Read to family members, friends, teachers, the class. Re-reading helps develop confidence, flow and speed.
- Re-read the book. Practise until the child can read with confidence, even if they are just remembering the story.
- Can the child find Lea's favourite braille contraction – little?
- Use the 5 little ducks book to practise counting and reading numbers.
- Match the child's hand to the cut-out hand, folding the thumb and fingers in both to show how we hold our hand to demonstrate numbers to someone.
- Play a guessing game. The child folds the cut-out hand to show a number of fingers, then hides the hand. Someone has to guess how many fingers are showing.
- The guessing game could be done using the 5 little ducks book. Put a book mark on the page showing a number of fingers. Close the book and ask someone to guess.

This is Slob

- Re-read the Do-Braille sheet. Practise until the child can read with confidence. Read to family members, friends, teachers, the class. Re-reading helps develop confidence, flow and speed.
- Re-read the book. Practise until the child can read with confidence, even if they are just remembering the story.
- Can the child find the contracted braille words?
- Ask the child to show their families, teachers or friends how the Slob jointed cut-out dog can be arranged so that he looks like he is running, sitting, walking or lying down. How many legs can we see? Compare our Slob model with the images in today's Dot Power book and the Ozzie Dots books about Slob.
- Trace Slob the Dog in different positions using the Draftsman Drawing Kit or other tactual drawing tools.
- Write some more stories about the funny, messy, gross things that Slob the dog does. Send them in to SVRC to be included in any more stories that we might write for our Ozzie Dots reading series.

Vision Australia's Youth Camp – Camp Gecko

Source: Vision Australia's For Your Info

Vision Australia, in conjunction with disability recreation support organisation Flying Fox, is planning to hold a youth camp. Camp Gecko is all about unlocking your child's potential and developing independence in a fun safe environment.

Camp Gecko will be held from 8-12 July at Grantville Lodge in Grantville, near Phillip Island. It will be split into two groups – one for kids aged 12 to 15, and another for older children and young adults aged 16 to 21.

Through this camp, Vision Australia will offer 40 younger clients (20 in each age group) a choice of fun and challenging activities to foster independence and to explore new environments in a safe and supported way.

These activities underpin our mission to support our clients in the areas of employment, education, independence and social inclusion, enabling them to live the life they choose.

Activities will include (but are not limited to) rock-climbing, kayaking, a peer program, building campfires, crafts, trampolining, bushwalking, beach visits, swimming and sports.

No payment is required to attend the camp, which is fully funded by the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People.

For further information about the upcoming camp phone Vision Australia on 1300 84 74 66.

Camp Mittagundi 2018

Source: <http://www.mittagundi.org.au/10-day-programs/>

The 10-day program sees groups of up to 24 young people, accompanied by two clydesdale horses, walk away from electricity and modern comforts, through the Victorian High Country and into the 400 acre pioneer-style property, that is Mittagundi. They spend time working together on the farm, fencing, growing food, milking cows, working with wood, steel and wool. Then embark on adventures rafting the Mitta Mitta River and abseiling off a local cliff face before walking back through the mountains and returning to civilisation.



School-aged students from the age of 14 are invited to attend one of the 10-day programs. **Camp Mittagundi is keen for students with vision impairments to be involved.**

Trail-blazer **Danielle** from the Geelong area is planning to attend the Girls #463 program from Friday 2nd November to Sunday 11th November (Cup Weekend Victoria). She would like to extend an invitation to other students with VI to join her!

Tumbalong Lights – Vivid Sydney's Magical Inclusive Playground

This year Vivid Sydney will feature an inclusive playground – [Tumbalong Lights](#) and organisers invite you to experience this magical inclusive playground.

When: 25th May – 16 June 2018

Where & Who For: Tumbalong Lights, located in Darling Harbour, will be home to four interactive play installations that form an inclusive and accessible experience for all children, no matter their level of ability. The area has been created based on inclusive design principles that enable not only access, but the participation of all children, their families and carers.

More information: <https://www.cwtumbalonglights.com/>

Make Webpages Easier to Read or See

Vision Tech Guru, Dr Denise M Robinson (Specialist-Technology/Blind Skills and Teacher of the Blind and Visually Impaired), has produced many, many short videos demonstrating tips and tricks to help you get the most out of your PC as a blind or low vision user:

1. Windows Edge is a lightweight web browser developed Microsoft and included in Windows 10, Windows 10 Mobile and Xbox One. [Get rid of webpage distractions in reader view mode for EDGE](#)
2. [Put webpages into text and get rid of Ads with Chrome Reader View Mode](#)
3. [Turn distracting pages into Text only-Reader Mode for FireFox](#)
4. "Yes, blind students can drag and drop items just like sighted kids with keyboard commands," says Dr Robinson. [Drag and Drop with Jaws talking software and keyboard commands](#)
5. How to find files fast – no matter who you are. [Secrets to finding files and folders and then sending them quickly](#)
6. Computer running slowly – this fixes almost all speed issues [Speed up computer, find missing files and increase startup of computer](#)
7. Have a student with finger-hand issues – filter keys will control those key presses [Filter keys so keys stick to help typing repeat issues on keyboard](#)
8. Need privacy so no one sees what you are doing on your computer? [Turn screen to black and mute while still using talking software](#)

And for more exciting tips and tricks from Dr Robinson, visit: [TechVision Video Lessons](#) and www.yourtechvision.com

Melbourne Builds Australia's First Blind Soccer Pitch

Source: For Your Info, May 2018 (or read the full article: [City of Melbourne website here](#))

The City of Melbourne has unveiled Australia's first blind soccer pitch. The new facility will be capable of holding B1 international level soccer competitions, an internationally recognised Paralympic sport.

Acting Lord Mayor Arron Wood said a heartfelt letter from the President of Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria, Maurice Gleeson OAM, convinced the City of Melbourne to fund the blind soccer pitch.

"Mr Gleeson wrote to Council in July last year to articulate his case for a blind soccer facility to better cater for the city's blind and vision impaired community," the Acting Lord Mayor said.

"We want our city to be accessible, inclusive and engaging while promoting health and participation for people of all ages and abilities so this proposal struck a chord with us and led to this exciting announcement.

"Blind soccer is played outdoors with two vision impaired teams of five players. An audible ball is used, which makes a rattling noise to allow players to locate it by sound. Outfield players wear eye-shades to equal their sight, but the goalkeeper can be fully or partially sighted."

Mr Gleeson said he was delighted blind soccer will soon get underway in North Melbourne.

"On behalf of Blind Sport and Recreation Victoria we would like to thank Melbourne City Council for recognising the importance of providing a facility for the visually impaired," Mr Gleeson said. "We are making real progress, and I hope this pitch will provide a template for other Councils to follow."

Braille in the Community: Accessible Japan

Deb Davidson recently travelled to Japan and found braille and tactile markings to be commonplace. Below are some examples.



Photos show examples of Japanese braille signage and maps.



Understanding the NDIS ILC Workshops

From Ramona Mandy, Disability Loop

Understanding the ILC workshop is specifically designed for small user-led community organisations. These NDIS workshops are about the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) part of the NDIS.

ILC workshops: for user-led and small community organisations

Melbourne ILC workshop: [Wednesday 6th June, 1:30pm - 4:30pm](#)

Doncaster ILC workshop: [Wednesday 13th June, 1:30pm - 4:30pm](#)

For further information please email disabilityloop@afdo.org or phone (03) 9662 3324.

Podcasts For Kids

From Terri, parent of a primary-aged student:

We have been exploring podcasts recently and I would like to recommend two podcasts for their interesting range of stories and interviews which are obviously accessible due to their podcasting nature, they are aimed at primary school children.

1. "Brains On! Science Podcast for Kids" by American Public Media
Listen to From 8-bit to orchestras: How does video game music affect you?
<https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/brains-on-science-podcast-for-kids/id703720228?mt=2&i=1000409849564>
2. "Dream Big – Family-Friendly Show Inspiring Kids To Take Action & Live Their Dreams"
This podcast features a young 8-9 year old girl (and her mum) interviewing all sorts of people. Listen to Dr. Kate Stafford On The Ocean's Magical Underwater Soundscape.
<https://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/dream-big-podcast-family-friendly-show-inspiring-kids/id1168126157?mt=2&i=1000403886616>. Another episode features an interview with the blind teacher and mountaineer Eric Weihenmayer

Staff News

Emily White and her wife Kirsten now have a beautiful baby boy. Theo Christopher Saunders White, born 3 May 2018, is keeping his mothers rather busy!!! Emily is in the final months of her PhD, so life is sure to be both a joy and a challenge from all directions! We send our love and congratulations to Em and Kirsten – we are all looking forward to meeting baby Theo.



Finally

Rug up folks – it's almost Winter!

Deb Lewis (Ed and in her final days as Acting SVRC Manager)