

Number 11, Friday August 4, 2022

Inside this issue

Here's what you'll find:

- **From SVRC:** Message from the Manager, Come Try Support Skills Program 2022
- **From the field:** National Braille Music Camp, Books From the Children's Book Council of Australia Shortlist 2022, Strengthen your knowledge of learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, with postgraduate study in 2023, Master of Inclusive Education Program 2023, Tomás and the Case of the Mysterious Missing Dog, The unexpected star of NASA's Webb images — the alt text descriptions, Everybody In! Inclusive Swim Teaching for Children with Vision Impairment

PD events

The [2022 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is available on the SVRC website. Most PL will continue to be held online, but some are planned to be onsite. Please encourage school staff to [register for PL through our website](#).

Tuesday October 18 [Preparing for a student who reads braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using braille.

On Demand PL

All of our professional learning workshops are now available on demand where participants can access all the videos and resources at a time that suits them. You can find links through the [On Demand page](#), under Professional Learning, on our website.

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, Manager, SVRC

Inclusive Swimming Professional Learning Workshop

SVRC, in partnership with Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria, are supporting an Inclusive Swimming Teaching for children with a vision impairment professional learning workshop on September 4 at Ruyton Girls School, Kew. If you are interested in attending there's more information later in this edition.

DET Masters Education Scholarships

The SVRC website now includes information from the Inclusive Education and Professional Practice Branch on DET education scholarships. The long-term vision is for all Victorian government schools to have a master-level qualified inclusive education teacher on staff, creating and leading a more inclusive school environment for all students, regardless of their abilities and backgrounds. You can find all the information on our website under Professional Learning Opportunities, Master of Inclusive Education Program 2023.

VTS-Vision Planning Days

SVRC, in partnership with SEVR, NWVR and NEVR Visiting Teacher Services, is hosting team planning days onsite so regional staff can have access to our staff expertise and resources. The team planning days have provided an opportunity to strengthen partnerships with regional health and wellbeing workforces and building competencies from the Expanded Core Curriculum. SVRC values the strong and supportive partnership with the visiting teacher service and the mutual benefits of working closely together to enhance the teaching and resourcing of student who are blind or have low vision.

Annual Technology Library Stocktake

The annual stocktake forms have gone out to all schools who have equipment on loan from the SVRC Blind and Low Vision Technology Library. 20% of the stocktakes have already been returned, a fantastic effort, and there are still three more weeks to get them back in by the due date. Many thanks to the classroom teachers, support staff and visiting teachers who work together to complete the stocktakes.

Come Try Support Skills Program 2022

Source: Support Skills Program, SVRC

Who: Students in years 4-10 in DET, Catholic and Independent schools

When: Friday September 9th

Time: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Where: SVRC @ 370 Springvale Road Donvale

Details: Information session for parents, students will participate in 4 sessions.

Register: Complete the form on our website and return to Di Bennett by August 31st at statewide.vision@education.vic.gov.au

An example of mixed media art project created by a student who has low vision.



National Braille Music Camp

A music camp for braille readers who wish to learn braille music.

Saturday 24th September to Saturday 1st October 2022, second week of Victorian school holidays, Frensham Girls School, Mittagong, NSW.

We are excited to say that this year, we will once again have a music camp for the first time since 2019!

If your child is interested in attending, please note that we will require the application form and separate medical form by Friday 19 August. You will also be sent a Covid Safety Statement.

Travel for Victorian campers will be by air this year, departing Tullamarine Airport on Saturday 24 September. Transport to the airport will be the responsibility of parents.

The camp fee is \$330. Travel is subsidised by Roma Dix, Braille Music Camp Coordinator.

Please contact Jordie Howell to obtain the forms and so that she can keep track of numbers and arrange travel. Don't hesitate to get in touch with her regarding any camp queries.

jordina.howell@gmail.com

Books From the Children's Book Council of Australia Shortlist 2022

Source: [CBCA website](#)

The Children's Book Council of Australia present awards annually to writers and illustrators of children's books in a number of categories including:

- CBCA Book of the Year: Older Readers
- CBCA Book of the Year: Younger Readers
- CBCA Book of the Year: Early Childhood
- CBCA Picture Book of the Year

Established with the first awards in 1946, the annual CBCA Book of the Year Awards aim to:

- promote quality literature for young Australians;
- support and encourage a wide range of Australian writers and illustrators of children's books and;
- celebrate contributions to Australian children's literature.

We have a number of books from the 2022 CBCA shortlist available in one or more alternative formats for eligible students including the following books for "older readers" and for "younger readers" including:

- Book of Curious Birds by Jennifer Cossins
- Huda and Me by H. Hayek
- The Boy from the Mish by Gary Lonesborough

Books for "early childhood" and "picture story books":

- What Do You Call Your Grandma? by Ashleigh Barton, illustrated by Martina Heiduczek
- Walk of the Whales by Nick Bland
- Winston and the Indoor Cat by Leila Rudge
- Jetty Jumping by Andrea Rowe, illustrated by Hannah Sommerville
- Amira's Suitcase by Vikki Conley, illustrated by Nicky Johnston
- Blue Flower by Sonya Hartnett, illustrated by Gabriel Evans
- Stellarphant by James Foley
- Just One Bee by Margrete Lamond & Anthony Bertini, illustrated by Christopher Nielsen
- Iceberg by Claire Saxby, illustrated by Jess Racklyeft



The CBCA Book Week 2022 will be held from 20 to 26 August.

Strengthen your knowledge of learning difficulties, including dyslexia and dyscalculia, with postgraduate study in 2023

Source: Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit, DET

The Department is offering 75 fully funded places for learning specialists, leading teachers, and classroom teachers working in mainstream Victorian government primary or secondary schools to undertake the **Graduate Certificate in Education (Learning Difficulties) program**, commencing study in Semester 2 2023.

A bespoke program designed for the Victorian context, the course will be delivered by the Melbourne Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne.

Start planning your study now! Application Round 2 opens on **Monday 30 January 2023 (9:00am)** and closes on **Tuesday 28 March (11:59pm)**. Visit the [Graduate Certificate webpage](#) for more information about eligibility and how to apply.

Master of Inclusive Education Program 2023

Source: Inclusive Education Scholarships Unit, DET

Are you interested in gaining a department-funded master's level qualification specialising in vision impairment or inclusive education? Apply for a master's course at one of our partner universities for Round 9 (R9), opening 9:00am Monday 30 January and closing 11:59pm Tuesday 28 March 2023.

The long-term vision is for all Victorian government schools to have a master-level qualified inclusive education teacher on staff, creating and leading a more inclusive school environment for all students regardless of their abilities and backgrounds.

There are 75 places available, and the program will consider providing schools with an additional masters if teachers are interested in specialising in **vision impairment**, through the following course:

- **NextSense - Macquarie University:** [Master of Disability Studies](#)- Blindness/Low Vision

For all other Inclusive Education courses, please see course details below:

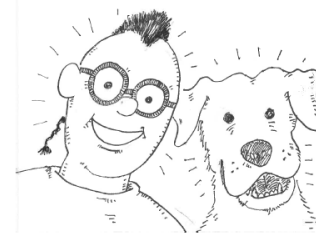
- **Australian Catholic University:** [Master of Education \(Inclusive Practice\)](#)
- **Deakin University:** [Master of Specialist Inclusive Education](#)
- **La Trobe University:** [Master of Education \(Inclusion and Diversity\)](#)
- **Monash University:** [Master of Applied Behaviour Analysis](#)
- **Monash University:** [Master of Inclusive Education](#)
- **University of Melbourne:** [Master of Learning Intervention Stream A](#)
- **University of Newcastle:** [Master of Special and Inclusive Education](#)

Please see the [Master of Inclusive Education website](#) for further information, including testimonials from graduates of the program. To find out more or to check whether your school is eligible, please contact the IESU at: inclusive.ed.scholarships@education.vic.gov.au or call 9084 8496.

Tomás and the Case of the Mysterious Missing Dog

Source: Paths to Literacy Newsletter

"Tomás and the Case of the Mysterious Missing Dog" (Scott Baltisberger and Chrissy Cowan) is an illustrated story intended to inspire students with low vision to explore the many possibilities in which their optical devices and strategies can be helpful not only in the classroom but in real life situations as well. It is intended for elementary readers and the tale relates the adventures of Tomás, a young man with low vision, and his friends as they search for his beloved dog Luna who has mysteriously disappeared.



Tomás and the Case
of the
Mysterious Missing Dog

The book is published by the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and is available in a variety of formats for free [download in digital format on the TSBVI Publications page](#) (in English and Spanish), as well as in video format. It's also accessible for students who use screen readers.

More information and expansion activities can be found on [this page on the Paths to Literacy website](#).

The unexpected star of NASA's Webb images — the alt text descriptions

Source: The Washington Post via Sonification World Chat

In the days since NASA publicly shared stunning images captured by the James Webb Space Telescope, people have oohed and aahed. They have marveled at the breathtaking beauty of those photos and the significant lessons about the universe that might exist in those crisp cosmic details.

But it's not only the photos that have wowed people.

Many have also been struck by the thoughtful descriptions that have accompanied them.

"If anyone ever tells you alt text isn't important, show them @NASA's alt text for the #WebbSpaceTelescope images," Kate Meyers Emery tweeted. "They are able to convey the wonders and beauty of these in words, making these breathtaking views accessible."

"The image is divided horizontally by an undulating line between a cloudscape forming a nebula along the bottom portion and a comparatively clear upper portion," reads one. "Speckled across both portions is a starfield, showing innumerable stars of many sizes. The smallest of these are small, distant, and faint points of light. The largest of these appear larger, closer, brighter, and more fully resolved with 8-point diffraction spikes. The upper portion of the image is bluish, and has wispy translucent cloudlike streaks rising from the nebula below."

Read more of the article on the [Washington Post website](#)

Everybody In! Inclusive Swim Teaching for Children with Vision Impairment

Source: Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria

Professional Development Workshop

AUSTSWIM Recognised In House Recognition Workshop

Program Accreditation Number IHR 327254

Professional Development: 3.5 points

It's important that all children learn to swim. For children with vision impairment in particular, the pool can be a place to excel as it presents few, if any barriers. Many families of these children, however, have struggled to find swim teachers who understand how to teach and include their child, as most teachers do not have experience, training, or confidence in supporting learners with vision impairment.

Come join us and change that story by building your professional knowledge and skills at this unique half-day workshop to help improve how you teach children with vision impairment, and their sighted peers, to become confident swimmers for life.

Learn about:

- Vision impairment terms and information about childhood vision loss and development
- The needs and experiences of parents/guardians
- What it might be like to have vision impairment in an aquatic environment
- Sighted guide
- The philosophy of inclusion: what it does and does not mean
- Modifications: what, when, why, how?
- Teaching methods, strategies, equipment and resources
- Teaching children who have vision impairment and additional disabilities or learning needs

Presenter - Dr Emily White

Emily has been working as a qualified specialist vision impairment teacher for students with vision impairment for over 15 years, specialising in technology, physical, and aquatic education. She is the former head coach of Vision Impaired Swim Victoria, having previously taught swimming publicly and privately. She is also a research fellow at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) and a sessional lecturer, with interests including supporting inclusive teaching and learning for students with vision impairment and assessment for students with disability. She completed her PhD in 2019 at the MGSE in digital literacy for students with disability.

Date: Sunday, 4 September 2022

Time: 11:30am for a 12.00pm start – 3:30 pm

Venue: Ruyton Girls School Aquatic Centre, Fitzwilliam St, Kew VIC (Entrance to Aquatic Centre is between Selbourne and Coleridge St, Kew)

Cost \$50.00

Places are limited. Program has a wet/dry component, so bathers are required.

For bookings, contact Susan Marshall at Blind Sports & Recreation Victoria on (03) 9822 8876 or email info@blindsports.org.au.

For course content information, contact Emily White on emilyhwhite123@gmail.com or Catherine Hill on 0401 033 990

And finally ...

Did you know that a letter or a parcel that contains documents or items intended for visually impaired persons is called a Cecogram (SEE-koh-gram). Thanks to Wikipedia for teaching us a new word in the office this week!