The Bulletin

Number 11, Friday 24 July 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

Note: For upcoming professional learning at SVRC along with programs, registrations, visit the SVRC professional learning page.

SVRC helpline

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

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.

SVRC support still by remote!

From: Marion Blazé (Acting Manager, SVRC)

Welcome back for Term 3, 2020. I am pleased to announce that SVRC has returned to the SVRC building. The asbestos has been removed and we have a new ceiling, lighting, eaves and NEW CARPET!! When everything was moved out of the centre, we realised the old carpet was not going to recover, so Kim Foley and I sought some special funding to enable us to have a whole new look (much better than the 60s brown orange carpet we had).

The past weeks have been especially challenging for SVRC staff. The contractors did a lot of the hard work, but SVRC staff are still sorting through many boxes that have not been unpacked. Thank you to Heatherwood school for allowing us to use the house as our production centre, and thank you to all the amazing SVRC staff who helped set up, then pack up and move back into SVRC, and tolerated mammoth disruption over these past weeks.

Well, we did not get our wish for COVID 19 restriction being lifted this term. So it's back to working mostly from home. With most of our students staying home for remote learning, SVRC will continue to provide its service remotely. Please contact SVRC by email. We can't always answer the phone and SVRC may not be open every day, so make contact before you visit. Also, if you do visit we will ask you to sign in. We need to keep a record of anyone who is in for 15 minutes or more for "contact tracing" in case of a positive test. There is a sign-in book outside my office.

And if you do visit SVRC, please note – the sports centre carpark is inaccessible due to council works. Parking is in the lower carpark, then you can walk up the path to the back gate. This will be so for at least six weeks.

SVRC will continue to host fortnightly Community of Practice Zoom meetings for Visiting Teachers (Vision). Our next will be at 3pm on Thursday August 6, 2020. We welcome your input for topics that you would like to discuss in these meetings. Please email me – marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au.

The Support Skills crew have continued to provide amazing sessions for students with vision impairments based on areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum in their Zoom classrooms. I love the artwork that Michael Donnelly has inspired, all created with things you will find at home, even clothing.

In the midst of all the COVID restrictions, the SVRC team took a short break to have our Australia's Biggest Morning Tea to raise funds for the Cancer Council. Thank you to our transcriber, Eva, who organised for online donations and an online (Zoom) morning tea together with our pets! We raised $500+ so thank you to everyone for your generosity. Not too shabby for a relatively small staff group.

Charlie Roberts facilitated two PL days on Mathematics for secondary student who have vision impairments. He had the following message for participants: "Thanks for your work throughout these presentations. Your skill and passion for Maths and student learning is very evident and hopefully contagious. The collation of resources of this quality should be a lasting legacy and I hope we can really get into using these and supporting students and schools with them." Charlie has some great resources to share which we will do through this and future Bulletins.

PD Program

Educational Support for Students with Low Vision

Tuesday 11 August 2020 from 9.30am to 3.10pm Online - Free

For: Teachers, integration staff, therapists, family members and Visiting Teachers

This professional learning day is usually held at SVRC and is invariably full, so having the program online will be the perfect opportunity for parents, VTs and even interstate people to participate. And it's free! Participants register on our website and will be sent the Zoom link prior to August 11, 2020

PROGRAM

9.30 Seeing with low vision - simulations of a vision impairment – Staff of SVRC

10.20 Welcome, Overview – Marion Blazé

10:35 Vision and vision impairment – Marion Blazé

10.45 Morning Tea Break

11.00 Strategies to Support the Student with Low Vision – Sam Oxley

11.45 Technology for Success at School – Lea Nagel

12.40 Lunch Break

1.10 Orientation and Mobility – Staff of Guide Dogs Victoria

1.35 iPad with VoiceOver: – Elise Lonsdale

2.00 The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen

2.50 Let's Hear it from a Student

3.10 Close

Online registration is essential: please visit the SVRC website

For further details: phone 03 9841 0242 or email svrc.vic.edu.au

Calculator accessibility tidbits

From: Charlie Roberts, Support Skills Teachers, SVRC

A calculator survey was delivered by Pranitha Moodley (RIDBC) through the SPEVI website at the end of 2019. Responses from Teachers of the Vision Impaired revealed that:

- Prices for recommended accessible calculators were high.
- Parents did not have much knowledge on how to use these calculators, therefore, could not assist their child with homework.
- Difficulty in accessing the calculator disadvantages our students from pursuing STEM as a subject beyond high school.

Tidbit 1: ICT procurement for all states and territories. Encourage your state's/territory's curriculum authority to adopt Australia's EN 301:549 standard for incorporating accessibility requirements into their ICT procurement. EN 301:549 is an E.U. standard Australia has adopted.

New resource on FUSE

The Inclusion Branch wish to share that the new FUSE Inclusion Support page went live on July 12. Released in July, the new Inclusion Support page on FUSE is home to a range of teaching and learning resources and professional learning designed to support teachers of students with disability in mainstream and specialist setting. Including a short segment on support in remote learning for students with vision impairments.

Get ready for audio description on the ABC and SBS

The ABC and SBS are launching audio description services, providing greater access to their programming for Australians who are blind or vision-impaired.

From 28 June, both broadcasters will each be providing around 14 hours per week of audio described programming across SBS and SBS VICELAND TV channels on the SBS network, and ABC, ABC ME, ABC Comedy and ABC Kids channels on the ABC network. This means that some of the best documentaries, dramas, movies, lifestyle and children's programming on free-to-air TV in Australia will now be available with audio description.

To help ensure their audio description services meet the needs of the people and households who use it, you are invited to complete an online survey. A link to complete the survey is provided below.

The ABC and SBS want to hear from you – please complete a short online survey
Both networks have been undertaking trials of audio description and are continuing to seek feedback to inform how they deliver their audio description services. As a part of this, they are seeking further insight into TV and video viewing habits and preferences, to better understand how they can meet the needs of audiences. If audio description is relevant for you or your household, please take 10 minutes to complete the following online survey **(click here).**

How can I get more information?
For more information about the services SBS and the ABC are providing, please visit the audio description sections of their websites where you can access a range of information to assist in enabling audio description on your device, be aware of what programming is available, and how you can contact them with feedback or for further support:

SBS: sbs.com.au/audiodescription

ABC: ABC audio description service

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Touch typing program comparison

From: Odette Budge and Lisa Zarb, CEO

This table is a comparison of various touch typing programs complied by Odette and Lisa. They said it was just their "jottings" but I think it will be a very handy comparison for all. Thanks ladies!

Program	Doorwayonline (Text type 3-phase 2)	Typing Club	Accessibyte (Typio)	Talking Typer	Typing Tournament
VI Specific	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
Location	UK based Online, can use US keyboard	US Online	US? Online/ cloud based	USA (APH) For windows and ipads	AUS based company Ed Alive For windows and Mac
Lessons	56 lessons for letters through to sentences and numbers. Good customisable large print. Target audience – print, voice in recent add on. Mostly voiced. Options for contrast, on screen keyboard, line skip, type of keyboard and hands	Simple, small stepped program. 684 lessons, including numbers and some grammar etc	Has Typio as part of a package – online web based suite of programs Typio – 45 lessons, customisable. Mostly accessible to blind/some non voiced areas – see review on youtube	Speaks and displays lessons on screen. Has drills, practice, and typing games. Adjustable to the student's level of skill and sight impairment. Can create own lessons.	16 levels with 3 drills per level Test of skill at each level Can change speed levels for outcome A: 22 wpm, B: 28 wpm, C: 32 wpm, D:37 wpm, E: 48 wpm
Accuracy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
WPM	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - Need to pass level before you can proceed
Comments	Good contrast, plain. No games. Longer sessions with letters and words.	Placement test if wanted, small lessons. Can customise for blind and	Simple bold colors and self voiced	Plain and can be boring	Print can be small. 3 games per lesson. Colour-coded keyboard,

		low vision in settings			visual prompts
Manual				Yes - online	
Cost	Free- donation requested	Free – Google partner app. Has ads or ad free with under $50 for single license.	Single user- all access to the site $95 (US$?) IOS. Windows – $100	$435 from VA. Ipad - apps store $4.99	$99 home use (single licence). School online version available
Review		Overview	Review on Youtube Review from Perkins		
Progress monitoring		Students like the stars and badges. Can save progress with an email account or log in online.	Can monitor a group of students from a teacher log in and personalise learning.		School version can monitor group of students

Other Programs:

BBC Dance Mat – very UK, free, 4 staged lessons for groups of letters.

Nessy Fingers Touch Typing - Aimed at Dyslexic students, 5 main lessons- including punctuation, $56 UK dollars annually

Using QR Codes

From: Michael Kelly, Information Technology Officer (SVRC)

Over the last 10 years or so, we have noticed more and more QR codes popping up around us on things like billboards, travel/event tickets, and more recently in online education.

QR or "Quick Response" codes were originally developed in 1994 for use by the Japanese automotive industry. The Quick Response system became popular outside the automotive industry due to its fast readability and greater storage capacity compared to standard UPC barcodes. Applications include product tracking, item identification, time tracking and document management.
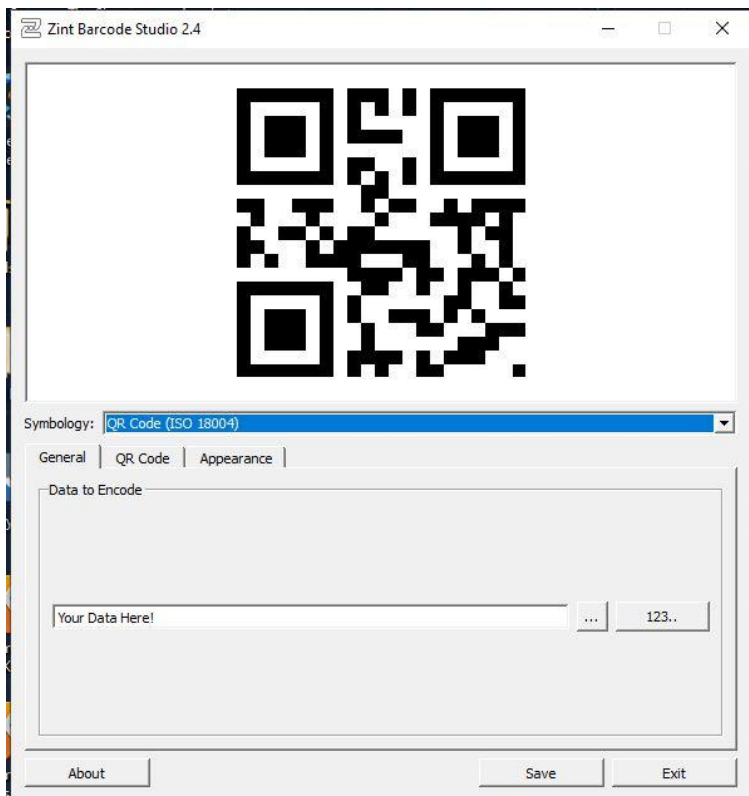
A few weeks ago I was asked for some advice to help a student who was having difficulty accessing online platforms like Cisco WebEx and Zoom. The goal was to find a way for the student to be able to attend online meetings with out assistance and also in a way that required a minimal amount of steps to get there I.e. Not needing to remember ID numbers and passwords or navigate to links in emails. At SVRC we had played around with the idea of using QR codes for use in the Vision Technology Library, so I thought this would make a good solution for the problem at hand.

In most online platforms when you create a meeting, you get an invitation link that has both the meeting ID and an encrypted password embedded into it. This link can be put into a QR code generator and then scanned by a device.

The codes are especially good when you have recurring meetings where the link does not change.

IOS devices running version 11 or later can read QR codes using the camera app and Android devices at this time still need a third party app. In most cases, the device will ask you if you want to open the link in the platform's native application if it is installed.

The process to make QR codes is very simple and requires a little initial set up. Once you have an invite link, you can either use an online QR code generator like QR code Monkey or you can use the Zint Barcode Generator software which is open source and great for generating bulk barcodes of any type. Below is a picture of the menu in the Zint software.

How to produce QR codes using the Zint Barcode Generator Software.

1. Download Zint Barcode Generator. You will need to download the .exe file

2. Install the file. If you don't have admin rights this needs to be done by your network administrator.

3. Open the Zint program and select "QR Code (ISO 18004)" from the Symbology drop down box.

4. Copy and paste the information you want into the "Data to Encode" text box (the character limit appears to be 2886).

5. You can adjust the QR code size by going to the Appearance tab and changing the value of the Printing scale.

6. Click the save button to save the image file of the QR code.

The images can be copied and pasted into any documents and then printed or put in to emails and can be scanned by any iOS device running IOS 11 or later.

Ushers kids online conference

After making the difficult decision to postpone our *UsherKids Australia Transitions Sydney Conference* until September 2021 due to the current public health advice, we are pleased to announce our online webinar series will take place from 14th-18th September 2020 in conjunction with celebrations for International Usher Syndrome Awareness Day on September 19th.

The webinars will include the latest updates on global clinical research efforts, clinical guidelines, how to support your Usher syndrome student in the classroom and more. You will have the option to join us live and participate in Q&A sessions, or access the recordings to watch in your own time.

With a range of Australian and International leaders in support for children with Usher syndrome joining us to present, we believe this will be a must for families and health care professionals caring for children with Usher syndrome in Australia.

The final program will be available at the end of July, and online registrations will then be open to parents, carers, Audiologists, Speech Pathologists, Genetic Counsellors, Orthoptists, Orientation & Mobility Specialists, education staff including Teachers of the Deaf and Teachers of the Vision Impaired, and anyone with an interest in improving the support for children with Usher syndrome in Australia.

In the meantime, if you have any questions please email us at info@usherkidsaustralia.com

Hear and Say Usher Syndrome Webinar

The Hear and Say Sunset Series brings together professionals from across the medical and allied health sectors, together with families and the community, to network and share knowledge.

Usher Syndrome: Types, Treatment and Talking with Clients

Join a live webinar with experts from DeafBlind Australila and UsherKids Australia to learn about supporting adults and children who have Usher Syndrome.

Topics include:
- Prevalence in Australia
- Types and causes
- The needs of adults and children
- Living with Usher Syndrome
- The importance of early identification
- Communication tips and techniques
- Support for people who have Usher Syndrome

Date: Tuesday, August 18, 2020

Time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm (AEST). Includes presentation and Q&A.

Cost: Professionals: $65 | Families using NDIS funding: $118 | Students and/or families not using NDIS funding: $45

CPD points: Audiology Australia and AG Bell Academy endorsement currently pending.

SVRC News

We are excited to welcome Sam Oxley back to the SVRC team. Sam will work on the EVAC team with Deb Davidson and Geoff Bowen as she did in 2019. Welcome back, Sam!!

And finally …

Stay safe and well in this increasingly online world.