

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 2**17th February 2006**

This issue was edited by Deb Lewis, Co-ordinator, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

PD Program for Term 1 & 2 2006

The SVRC PD program for 2006 (so far) appears below. For the complete list of activities for 2006 and where available downloadable programs, go to: www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/pd2006.htm

All activities are open to class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, careers teachers, therapists, parents VTs, students etc. Please register: tel (03) 9841 0242, fax (03) 9841 0878 or email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

Note: Assistive technology workshops will also be offered throughout the year!

SVRC Event	Date
O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community	Wed 22 Feb
Educational Support for Blind Students For class & subject teachers, integration teachers & aides, therapists, parents/care-givers & VTs who support students who utilize braille	Fri 3 March
Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – <u>Prep to Year 8</u> For class & subject teachers, integration teachers & aides, therapists, parents/care-givers & VTs who support students who have low vision (max 80)	Wed 5 April
Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – <u>Secondary Students</u> For class & subject teachers, integration teachers & aides, therapists, parents/care-givers & VTs who support secondary students who have low vision (max 60)	Fri 21 April
O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community	Thurs 4 May
Term 2 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day	Tues 9 May
Educational Support for VI Students with Additional Impairments For teachers, aides, therapists, parents/care-givers & VTs who support vision impaired students who have additional impairments (max 60)	Mon 5 June

Space Camp 2006 NOW OPEN!!!

Are you a Space Camp Wannabe???

Caroline (right) is, but she needs to grow heaps to join the team!

Students from Year 8 to 11 are encouraged to apply – Year 7 and 12 only in exceptional circumstances. Contact Deb Lewis (03) 9841 0242 or Jeni Blake 0428 134660 for an information kit!

Meanwhile you can check out these links ... just to whet your appetite:

Report from the 2003 trip: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/SpaceCamp2003.htm>

Links to other Space Camp trips and other activities offered by the SVRC:

<http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/camps.htm>



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VT PD Day – Brief Comment

We had a great day on Monday this week with the best turn-out to a VT day for a while. Spirited speakers enlightened us about Retinopathy of Prematurity, Disabilities in Middle Eastern cultures and the Disability Standards for Education. We were introduced to the useful features of Clicker and invited to a Goalball open day – see below!

We thank participants for their lively contributions and look forward to gathering again in term 2 (if not before!).

The Victorian Goalball Open Day

Goalball is a team sport for people with vision impairments and is played in over one hundred countries around the world. Goalball is played at the Paralympic Games every four years. There are tournaments held nationally every year and Victoria has a rapidly expanding local competition that gives people with vision impairments the opportunity to play sport and socialise with other people in a friendly environment.

Goalball is an indoor sport where two teams of three players try to throw an audible ball in to the opposing team's goal whilst trying to prevent the other team from doing the same. All players on court are blindfolded.

The Victorian Goalball Association invites anyone interested to attend the Victorian goalball open day. The day kicks off with a three team tournament featuring some of Australia and Victoria's best players. After a break for lunch, specialist coaches will help and coach any new players in the basic skills of the game. There will be games and chances to win giveaways!

When: Sunday 5th March 2006

Time: 10am to 3pm

Where: Wesley College, Cnr Punt Road and High Streets Prahran (enter from High Street)

Bring: Loose fitting clothing eg track pants and t-shirt

Cost: FREE!

Lunch is supplied and you'll even get a show bag of goodies!

For more info: ring Robyn 9830 1741 or Rob 9568 5485

Totally Wild Goalball!

Did anyone happen to video the story about Goalball on "Totally Wild" on Tuesday 14 February Channel 10 – if so, we'd love to see it!

Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton Relay

Visiting Teachers may remember Maurice Gleeson who joined us some time ago to speak about Blind Sports. Maurice, who has a vision impairment, has the honour of participating in the Queen's Baton Relay – part of the prelude to the Commonwealth Games.

This will take place at 8.00am on 15th March.

Starting in Fitzroy he will carry the baton for 400 metres along Nicholson Street from Albert Street, finishing at the Royal Exhibition Building Access Road.

His section will be signed 'Leg No. 7'.

S4E (Software for Education)

The S4E Program aims to make available software titles widely used in Victorian educational institutions at significantly reduced prices.

All Victorian Government, Catholic and Independent schools, TAFE Colleges, ACE providers and Universities are able to purchase from the S4E Program – though prices may vary.

For availability and pricing go to: <http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/ict/software/s4e/>

Two titles that were discussed at the recent VT PD day were TTAPS and Clicker:

TTAPS – Typing Program (Win and Mac)

TTAPS Touch Typing is specifically for school-aged students and uses an Australian voice and animated hands to explain fingering. Fifteen carefully paced lessons take students gently through the typing process. Keys are practiced in a wide variety of contexts to maintain student interest and promote reading and punctuation skills. The program emphasis is on accuracy and the games are provided at the end of each lesson to further reinforce keys taught.

TTAPS	Price inc GST Government Schools, ACE Organisations & TAFEs	Price inc GST Independent & Catholic Schools, Universities, other training organisations
Single User License	\$65.18	\$71.70
Additional 5 User License	\$164.18	\$180.60
Insurance, packaging and delivery	\$10.00	\$10.00

This product should be ordered directly from Dataworks Australia

34 Henderson Road, Rowville 3178

Tel 9764 8344 or 1800 651 914

Fax 9763 2089

Email: orders@dataworks.com.au

Website: <http://www.dataworks.com.au/>

Clicker 4 and 5 (Win & Mac)

This is a powerful yet easy to use writing and multimedia tool. Clicker enables students to write with whole words, phrases and pictures. It can also be used to create multimedia pages and talking books. It is a versatile tool that can be used with students of all levels (eg Early Years and Middle Years of Schooling), for reading, writing LOTE, ESL and multimedia. Designed for children of all abilities Clicker4 is supported with high quality speech, and is easy to customize for individual needs. It also has a wide range of accessibility options for users who cannot use a mouse or keyboard. There are ready-made materials available on the Clicker Grids for Learning website.

Clicker (4 or 5)	Price inc GST Government Schools, ACE Organisations & TAFEs	Price inc GST Independent & Catholic Schools, Universities, other training organisations
Clicker 4- Single User (Mac/Win)	\$164.18	\$180.60
Clicker 4- 5 User (Mac/Win)	\$246.68	\$271.35
Clicker 5- Single User (Mac/Win)	\$254.32	279.75
Clicker 5- 5 User (Mac/Win)	\$374.00	\$411.40
Insurance, packaging and delivery	\$8.80	\$8.80

This product should be ordered directly from Edsoft Pty Ltd by

Mail to Factory 5 Apollo Crt Blackburn 3130

Fax (03) 98942016

Phone (03) 9878 4899

On-line ordering: www.edsoft.com.au

McFood for Thought: Macs for Blind Users!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Information provided by Simon, a dad in NSW who felt that in the interests of fairness, it was worth mentioning that there is an alternative to Windows with JAWS, ZoomText etc for people with vision impairments... He writes:

I have a son who is visually impaired and can do all the things needed on a Macintosh computer. It enlarges everything on screen (for free, part of the OS) and can read text and menus off screen, also free and part of the OS. I recently installed the newest version of the Apple OS on a computer and it can be installed by a blind person with no assistance as it can talk a person through the installation, ie read all the install instructions as you go.

It is also not in need of any extra hardware or software (ie sound cards etc).

And Macs can run the Katie player, an open source Mac version of daisy player. It also appears the newish 'Bookport' device will be also cross-platform, so lots of work is being done to make information accessible to all vision impaired computer users.

We saved many hundreds of dollars by not needing to purchase ZoomText or JAWS, and OS can run Microsoft Office suite too!

Most parents might find that pretty interesting...

There are many visually impaired children who may indeed be able to follow this path if they knew it were available.

Here is what Apple have to say:

Apple's new accessibility solution for vision impaired users is called 'Spoken Interface for Mac OS X'. Spoken Interface provides a combination of speech, audible cues and keyboard navigation to help blind users navigate Mac OS X with the same ease of use as sighted users have.

Because Spoken Interface is built in to the operating system, it doesn't require users to install anything separately and it provides a single set of key-commands to use to provide a unified, consistent user interface.

For more information: <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/voiceover/>

New Book Featuring Albinism

Source: Press Release

‘Real Lives’ New Photographic Book on Albinism Captures Rare Genetic Condition

1 in 20,000 people in the UK live their lives with albinism, a misunderstood and rare genetic condition that causes a difference of appearance. People with the condition lack the pigment melanin in their skin, hair and eyes. They also have a significant visual impairment with many registered as blind or partially sighted people.

The lives of 12 people with albinism are uniquely portrayed by Archie Roy, Robin Spinks and Rick Guidotti in ‘Real Lives’. Their book applies a very innovative combination of in-depth personal interviews and highly photographic lifestyle portrayals.

The personal, educational and wider social aspects of albinism are explored from the inside with each person telling their own individual life story of living with this condition. Each person describes their journey from early childhood to adulthood and from the experience of negativity and prejudice through to self acceptance and personal fulfilment.

This unique photographic book is likely to have a wide appeal across a variety of audiences: people with albinism, parents and family members, education professionals, social workers, sociologists, and health and eye care specialists. All will find an easy-to-read, illuminating and thought provoking resource which addresses the important issues pertaining to albinism. The publishers, Albinism Fellowship, are also keen for the book to reach as many of the general public as possible since they want to raise people’s awareness of genetic conditions.

‘Real Lives: Personal and Photographic Perspectives on Albinism’ available from Albinism Fellowship at <http://www.albinism.org.uk>

For further details please contact:

Robin Spinks
Media Relations Co-ordinator
Albinism Fellowship
rspinks@sightsavers.org
Tel UK 00 44 (07919) 543 518

Pocket Size Braille System

Source: RT Newsletter December 2005

Researchers in Japan have produced a 16 centimetre square prototype just one millimeter thick and weighing 5 grams. The pocket sized display can be rolled up like a newspaper and is designed to connect to mobile phones and laptops.

It incorporates 144 plastic ‘paddles’ beneath a thin rubber surface which bend upwards when an electric current is applied. On the tip of each ‘paddle’ is a sphere under a millimeter across that rises and produces a bump in the rubber. The bumps produce the Braille message.

Holiday Entertainment – with VI Students in Mind

Article by Tom Macmahon, Education Advisor – Assistive Technology, Disability Services Support Unit reprinted from the December 2005 issue of Online Magazine

Resources for audio- and e-readers

SoundsGood.com is a new source for audio books, newspapers and broadcasts. Buyers can purchase individual items or an annual subscription for \$19.95 which allows two downloads per month plus two free books, and some free titles are available.

Title categories include: Biography, Business & Money, Children, Classic Radio, Entertainment, Fiction, Humor, Mystery & Crime, Nonfiction, Parenting & Family, Religion, Science Fiction & Fantasy, Self-Improvement and Travel.

<http://www.soundsgood.com/>

You may also enjoy a visit to the Online Books Page which lists over 25,000 free books on the Web and which, among many other digital books, contains some which are only available for download in Australia.

<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/>

For those into the world of MP3 and podcasting, Librivox is a site where volunteers read public-domain books aloud with the resulting audio books being available for free download:

<http://librivox.org/>

For the computer and online gamers

Goalball One on One is a new game from the Audio Network which costs \$25 US, 21.55 Euros or 14.99 pounds. An audio demonstration is available at

<http://www.yrguk.com/disk/welcome.htm>

RealPlayer must be installed so that information and the demo can be heard. It sounds like a lot of fun, especially for those who may have played the real game of goalball. For more information write to Bill at: bill@yrguk.com

VIPgameszone.com Games for the blind and visually impaired is a ‘... site ... owned by Igor Khmelevtsov, who is blind and Alina Khmelevtsov. From our site you can download free games and demo versions of programs for blinds and visually impaired people. You can play our games without special software and hardware.’

Currently available are:

- three free learning games for children - Typer, ABC and Numbers stuff;
- five other free games- Dog and Cat, Keyboard crazy, Mortal maze (3d sound game), Sound puzzle (to train your brain!) and Crazy tennis;
- four more involved games for which demos can be downloaded - Super football version 1.1, Galaxy ranger ver. 1.1, Super tennis ver. 1.1 and X hour page; and
- the vipgameszone talk mailing list for anyone wanting to discuss the games, find out more, make suggestions etc.

<http://www.vipgameszone.com/>

Blindgamers is a page devoted to card-type games specifically designed for vision-impaired and blind players. Offerings include their latest, BG Hearts, BG Cribbage, Free Cell Solitaire, Klondike Solitaire, Scorpion Solitaire and Penguin Solitaire, with other games under development.

<http://www.omninet.net.au/~irhumph/blindgamers.htm#LIST>

Talking versions of Yahtzee, Blackjack, Solitaire and Connect 4 are also available from a UK developer either on separate CDs (£20/US\$35), as a package of four (£60/US\$105) or all on one CD (£50/US\$90). They run from CD, not requiring installation, and are self-voiced, so require no screen reader or speech engine.

<http://www.azabat.co.uk/>

Low Vision Awareness Activities in Gippsland

The Lions Eye Health Program, in association with the Centre for Eye Research Australia and Lions Clubs in the Gippsland area will be hosting a series of Low Vision Awareness Activities in Gippsland from Thursday April 20th to Tuesday April 25th 2006. These events will run in association with the Latrobe Health Lions Ride for Sight, a four day, 400 km bike ride which is conducted annually to promote eye health and raise funds for eye research.

The feature of this Low Vision Awareness program will be Low Vision Awareness Day, to be held in Sale on Thursday April 20th. This event will be similar to the Technology Information Days hosted by the Centre for Eye Research Australia over the last few years. The day will include both a seminar program and a comprehensive display of adaptive equipment, technology and services available to assist people with low vision.

A travelling display will include a sampling of the low vision equipment on display in Sale along with materials relating to the Lions Eye Health Program and the Ride for Sight.

The travelling display will visit:

- Maffra - Saturday April 22nd;
- Bairnsdale - Sunday April 23rd;
- Paynesville - Monday April 24th;
- Traralgon - Tuesday April 25th.

If you would like to participate in these community awareness events please contact John Simpson, National Program Manager, Lions Eye Health Program – Eye Research Australia

Tel: 03 9929 8328

Mobile: 0407 308 706

jsimpso@unimelb.edu.au

Vizhelp Events 2006

Hey Victorians (and others) ... if you find yourself in WA some time this year, maybe you can hook up with the Western Australia's parent network. They have been busy again organising a calendar of local events including:

- A mystery tour on Saturday May 20th – join them for a walking, sensory and eating adventure
- Joy in July! – yes Saturday 22nd July is the date for their Christmas in July event
- Another event (could be movies ... or ten pin bowling ... or horse riding for the disabled) on Saturday 19th August
- Good time November at Great Escape Hillarys – Saturday 26th November

For more information about these activities please contact Pam Barras (08) 9417 3082 or

pam@vizhelp.org

VITeachers.com

Here is a new website that promises to “end the isolation that many of those in the field experience while working with such a small population of students. It is a place where you can go and get support, answers, and ideas for teaching your students. Information may be useful to teachers of students with vision impairments, O&M Instructors, Low Vision Therapists and others who are interested in this area of expertise.

Information will be available under a number of headings including VI forum, ‘the writers’ corner’, calendar of events, employment, technology etc. Go to www.viteachers.com

Student News – Some More VCE Results

- Odette's student **Penny** was offered her first choice – Social Work at Latrobe University
- Joanna's student **Elizabeth** was offered her first choice – Bachelor of Applied Science at Ballarat University
- Betty's student **Andrew**, with a TER of 90.5 will study Science at Monash University in 2006
- Lynne's student **Chad** will be living away from home in the residences at Deakin University in Geelong and studying Marketing
- Former student and space camper **Glen** is now working as an accounts assistant at a Freight Management Company

Congratulations to these students!!! More student news will be printed as it comes to hand!

Circus Day 2005

Here is a pic from Circus Day last year where 12 students had the privilege of working with awesome trainers Luke and Sarah on acrobalance, hula hoops, trapeze and much much more!!! Below: Trainer Luke in a spectacular balance with student Georgia!!!



Finally

Thanks to Marion Blazé, Jill Keeffe, Pam Barras and John Simpson for contributing to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to my fabulous proof-readers, stuffers and mailers.

If you have something you would like included in 'The Bulletin', please contact:

Deb Lewis (who can be emailed at deblewis@svrc.vic.edu.au).

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Response to participants' questions from VT PD day on the 13th February 2006 regarding disclosure of a student's impairment by speaker Alyena Mohummadally (Aly M), Community Legal Education and Volunteer Coordinator

(1) EOA 1995:

***Students are responsible to comply with the standards of dress/appearance/behaviour

40.Exception—standards of dress and behaviour

An educational authority may set and enforce reasonable standards of dress, appearance and behaviour for students.

In relation to a school, without limiting the generality of what constitutes a reasonable standard of dress, appearance or behaviour, a standard must be taken to be reasonable if the educational authority administering the school has taken into account the views of the school community in setting the standard.

(2) Disability Standards for Education 2005 Guidance notes:

***Students are responsible to disclose all information during consultation to allow for the education provider to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The need for an adjustment and the nature of an adjustment should be determined in consultation with the student or their associate (sections 4.2(3)(a), 5.2(2)(a), 6.2(2)(a), and 7.2(5)(a), (6)(a), and 3.5). This might include consultation on whether there is any other adjustment that would be no less beneficial for the student but less disruptive and intrusive for others.

In assessing whether a particular adjustment is reasonable for the student with a disability, the education provider should take into account:

- the nature of the student's disability;
- **the information provided by, or on behalf of, the student about how the disability affects the student's ability to participate;**
- **views of the student, or an associate of the student, about whether a proposed adjustment is reasonable** and will enable the student with a disability to access and participate in education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without disabilities;
- **information provided by, or on behalf of, the student about his or her preferred adjustments;**
- the effect of the proposed adjustment on the student, including the student's ability to participate in courses or programmes and achieve learning outcomes;
- the effect of the proposed adjustment on anyone else affected, including the education provider, staff and other students; and
- the costs and benefits of making the adjustment (sections 3.4(2), 4.2(3)(a), 5.2(2)(a), 6.2(2)(a), 7.2(5)(a), and 7.2(6)(a)).

***Students are responsible to ensure that their interests are made known, they must show that are NOT better off in another available school.

Clause 3.4.2 of the Standards makes it clear that the interests of the student are a very significant consideration in identifying an appropriate and reasonable adjustment. This is made explicit by the requirement to have regard to the student's disability and the effect of the adjustment on the student, and the costs and benefits including those accruing to the student. If in a particular situation the school could show that a student would be better off in another available school which had the adjustments required by the student, then this would clearly be a factor in determining whether any significant adjustment at the school would be reasonable.

***Students are responsible for providing information about their disability and requirements to the provider if it is related to the adjustment – not required to disclose confidential info.

4.3 Obtaining disability information (Standards, section 3.7)

When considering an adjustment for a student with a disability, a provider is entitled to information about the student's disability and individual requirements if that information is directed towards:

- providing the adjustment, including assessing the nature and extent of the adjustment needed and assessing the provider's capacity to provide the adjustment; and
- an assessment that is intended to clarify the student's ability to comply with any non-discriminatory requirements of a course or training program.

Any confidential information provided to education providers for the purposes of making adjustments should not be disclosed except for the purposes of the adjustment or in accordance with a lawful requirement.

***If student believes that provider has failed to comply with standards, they are responsible to file a complaint to the HREOC

A new procedure for handling complaints of unlawful discrimination under the DDA and the HREOC Act was implemented in April 2000. It aims to resolve complaints quickly and inexpensively by way of conciliation in the first instance. If a student with a disability or a student's associate (the complainant) believes that a provider is failing to comply with the Standards, a complaint about unlawful discrimination can be made to HREOC. Complaints may also be made to HREOC on a representative basis. The President of HREOC is responsible for inquiring into the complaint.

A complainant can apply to the Federal Court or the Federal Magistrates Court seeking an interim injunction to maintain the status quo that existed immediately before a complaint was lodged or to maintain the rights of any affected person. Such an application can be made at anytime after a complaint is lodged with the Commission and allows for fast access to a binding process in order to maintain the status quo or the rights of the complainant or respondent while conciliation is attempted.

***If conciliation does not solve the problem, student is reasonable to apply to the Federal Court to have the complaint determined.

On receiving a termination notice, the complainant can apply to the Federal Court or the Federal Magistrates Court to have the complaint heard and determined. Both courts encourage parties to resolve their disputes in appropriate cases through counselling, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution methods. Both courts are able to make a wide range of orders if they are satisfied that there has been unlawful discrimination (including an order requiring the payment of damages or an order requiring the performance of a reasonable act). A respondent to a complaint is required to comply with any order of the court.

***Students WITHOUT disabilities have an obligation to ensure that students WITH a disability are not victimised or harassed.

The Standards require education providers to have strategies and programs to prevent harassment and victimisation of persons with a disability (section 8.3). Harassment means an action taken in relation to a person's disability that is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person (section 8.1). The strategies and program must extend to students with an associate who has a disability (such as a relative or carer). An education provider is required to ensure that staff and students are aware of the obligation not to harass or victimise students with disabilities or students who have associates with disabilities. The Standards require the education provider to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff and students are aware of appropriate actions to be taken if harassment or victimisation occurs.