

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 7

Monday 20th May 2013

This issue was edited by Deb Lewis and Lyn Robinson, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Professional Development Activities for Term 2, 2013

Skill Power Workshops 9.30-11.00 BrailleNote, Lea Nagel and Garry Stinchcombe, SVRC 11.30-1.00 NVDA, Lea Nagel, SVRC 1.30-3.30 JAWS, Garry Stinchcombe, SVRC	Wednesday 22 May
Skill Power Workshops 9.30-11.00 GT Calc, Charlie Roberts VT/SVRC 11.30-1.00 Braille Maths including drawing kits, tactual graphics, PIAF, Lea Nagel 1.30-3.30 Request a session	Wednesday 5 June
Skill Power Workshops 9.30-11.00 Retinal Dystrophies, Marion Blazé, SVRC 11.30-1.00 Getting the Most from your EMU, Erik Dragonovik, Quantum 1.30-3.30 Pearl and OpenBook, Trevor Boyd, Quantum	Wednesday 12 June
Dot Power	Tuesday 18 June
26th National Braille Music Camp – see issue 2 of The Bulletin	22-29 June

The program for 2013 is available from this link: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml>

MSSD National Partnership News

The More Support for Students with Disabilities – National Partnership project is progressing well. We have turned our focus to EMUs (Electronic Magnification Units). The EMU working party researched options for hand-held, desktop, computer-compatible and Optical Character Recognition-style EMUs, with the kind and informative support of Trevor Boyd from Quantum and Darren Wall representing Humanware. We then contacted all Visiting Teachers to confirm the student requests before collating the requests and placing bulk orders.

Again, we'd like to thank the excellent team effort that has allowed this roll-out to occur. Visiting Teachers have been wonderful in following up with forms and picking up equipment, Principals and school staff have signed and sent in forms, and IT staff in schools have set up laptops and software. It turns out that Victoria is amazing!

We are providing workshops in the use of these pieces of equipment – please keep an eye on the SVRC professional learning webpage for PD updates: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml>

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Fantastic PD – “Would recommend it to all!”

Report by Marion Blazé

These were the parting words of one participant at the latest PD offering from SVRC. We held our annual PD day ‘Educational Support for Vision Impaired Students with Additional Impairments’ on Tuesday 30 April with 30 enthusiastic teachers from both regular and special schools attending.

The program included simulations from both the Guide Dogs team and SVRC staff, how to assess the vision of non-verbal children, Cortical VI, ideas for classroom strategies together with Helen Caldwell’s fabulous and practical ‘Show & Tell’, a taster of iPad apps, an introductory braille lesson, how to design tactile communication symbols and Geoff’s wonderful insights into dealing with challenging behaviours.

For the first time, through the National Partnership funding, we provided Braille Dymo labellers to some special schools who have blind students. Keep an eye out for some braille labels in your schools (and check that the braille gets stuck on the right-way-up!!).

A special thank you to Rachel Morgan and the Guide Dogs team for their sessions, to all presenters on the day (Annette, Helen, Lyn, Lea and Geoff), to Trevor Boyd from Quantum RLV who demonstrated ‘text-to-speech’ software at lunch time, and to the fabulous team at SVRC who took registrations, re-arranged furniture and technology, fed and watered everyone and generally kept it all happening!

Also, for the first time, Lyn put together a fabulous resource-filled CD which was provided for all participants. It included a list of relevant iPad apps, details about CVI, links to the Texas School for the Blind Tactile Inventory and more.

The photo (right) shows examples of items from the Blind Tactile Inventory – holidays, Saturday, milk and sandwich.



New SVRC page – Students with Vision and Additional Impairments

The SVRC website has a new page featuring educational strategies to support students with vision impairments and additional impairments.

- Visit: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/CUadditionalimpairments.shtml>
- To download Helen Caldwell’s PowerPoint from the day, visit: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PLadditional2013.ppt>

Updated SVRC page – For Parents and Carers

The SVRC Parent Page offers links to lots of information including DEECD’s Program for Students with Disabilities, study skills, sport and recreation, Dot Power, the Educational Vision Assessment Clinic and more!

- Visit: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/AP.shtml>

Getting Started: Some Practical Tips when Using VoiceOver:

Jodie Hoger, New South Wales Vision Consultant TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute and SPEVI Counsellor prepared the following handout:

Aps to get you started

VO Starter by Michael Doise

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/vo-starter/id586844936?mt=8>

ViA - by Braille Institute

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/via-by-braille-institute/id528499232?mt=8>

Braillist by Surabhi Gupta

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/braillist/id586162823?mt=8>

TapTapSee - Blind & Visually Impaired Camera by Net Ideas, LLC

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/taptapsee-blind-visually-impaired/id567635020?mt=8>

BraillePad (EN) by Claudio Guida

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/braillepad-en/id566864250?mt=8>

BrailleTouch by BrailleTech, LLC

Go to: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/brailletouch/id579725651?mt=8>

Podcasts

VA has produced some excellent podcasts around VoiceOver and Zoom with the “I” devices.

Go to: <http://www.visionaustralia.org/living-with-low-vision/learning-to-live-independently/using-technology-and-computers/help-yourself!-technology-podcasts-and-resources/smartphones-tablets-and-apple-ios-devices>

Applevis is one of the “go to” sites for anything related to accessing the “I” devices with blindness or vision impairment. It contains app reviews gauging accessibility, pod casts, “how to” guides etc.

Go to: <http://applevis.com/>

Apple and other access technology

A podcast page by David Woodbridge

Comment: David has an International following. His podcasts are excellent and very informative.

Go to: <http://davidwoodbr.podbean.com/>

The Tech Doctor Blog and Podcast

Comment: Another terrific blog with heaps of information and podcasts.

Go to: <http://www.dr-carter.com/>

iBlindTech

Comment: Another great site full of information and podcasts.

Go to: <http://www.iblindtech.com/>

Useful email lists

Viphone google group: This is a busy list of all users of “I” devices who are blind or vision impaired.

Comment: There always seems to be someone who can answer your question about using the “I” device with voiceover or magnification.

Go to: <https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en&fromgroups#!forum/viphone>

Vision: An open forum for discussion of issues regarding education and rehabilitation of persons with blindness and visual impairments.

Comment: This list is a wonderful resource consisting mainly of educators of students who are vision impaired, some parents and other professionals working in the field of education and rehabilitation.

Go to: <https://www.lists.pdx.edu/lists/listinfo/vision>

Useful Websites

The TechVision Difference

Education, instruction, and keystroke based lessons for blind/visually impaired/sighted people, teachers, parents and adults working with them.

Go to: <http://www.yourtechvision.com/>

Fedora Outlier LLC – A consulting, teaching and support firm for the blind by the blind.

This is a great site with loads of information including podcasts and a blog.

Go to: <http://www.fedoraoutlier.com/>

Illinois Assistive Technology Program Independent Living Through Technology

Another useful website. This link will take you straight to the information on voiceover gestures.

Go to: <http://www.iltech.org/trainingipadvoiceovergestures.html>

Don't forget the Apple support site on vision impairment:

Go to: <http://www.apple.com/support/accessibility/vision/>

Science Techniques for Students who are Blind

There are some great YouTube resources which may assist in working with students who are blind or have low vision in the Science Lab. Two great resources are narrated by Dr Greg Williams, IndependenceScience

- **Setting up the science lab for students who are blind:**
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfXLxtqXJ0g&list=PLF126DB019FC5C859>
- **Safely conducting and analysing science experiments for students who are blind or have low vision:** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ok-2l2myqzw&list=PLF126DB019FC5C859&feature=player_embedded#!

Here are some of Dr Williams' tips:

- confine Science materials and spills within a metal lab tray
- consistently position Lab equipment in the workspace
- tinfoil under the workspace so that the student can hear if ingredients are spilled (and to assist with clean-up)
- use of notched syringes to measure liquids
- use of wide mouthed containers or funnels for the pouring of liquids and powders
- connecting electronic laboratory devices to a computer with JAWS or WindowEyes for audio announcement of results and measurements or using talking devices eg Talking LabQuest

There are two examples of experiments conducted by students who are blind including

Measuring the pH of different solutions:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h47dK66qflo&list=PLF126DB019FC5C859>

Measuring temperature:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9CuOXneQ_s&list=PLF126DB019FC5C859

For more videos, follow the links to "videos" from the IndependenceScience website:

<http://www.independencescience.com>

Accessible App: Early Literacy for Children with Vision Impairments

Source: <http://www.sensorysun.com/2013/04/explore-the-braille-alphabet-with-madilyn-and-ruff-accessible-app-launching-may-2013/>

Scheduled for release on 31 May 2013, Exploring Braille with Madilyn and Ruff aims to teach sighted, low vision and blind children about the braille alphabet.

Designed by Sensory Sun's founder, Hillary Kleck, it is comprised of a storybook like teaching activity where youngsters can learn along with a little girl, Madilyn, and her dog, Ruff. There is also a game activity to practice what the user has learned. The child can browse through a story of the letters and their sounds, then play a game using the iPad with or without Apple's VoiceOver feature. For braille readers, a bluetooth refreshable braille device can be connected for the child to practice learning the braille alphabet by touch!

Accessible Maths Books Coming Soon

Source: Tim Connell via SPEVI Listserv

Rick Clinton, Accessibility Advocate and Leader at Pearson Higher Education, recently blogged in Accessible Mathematics: HTML eBooks about Pearson's work to create "screen-readable" eBook versions of their mathematics and statistics textbooks which are formatted in HTML and MathML. They have been gradually adding to this collection for a while, which now numbers 70 titles. That's a nice-sized library of accessible math textbooks in its own right. But what is really notable in his post is the statement that, "...beginning in 2014, every Pearson college math and stats text will have an HTML eBook version."

You can read the whole blog post at:

<http://accessiblemath.dessci.com/2013/04/pearson-higher-education-commits-to-100-accessible-math-by-2014.html>

Transcription for Accessibility – Free Service

Transcriptions for Accessibility is a free transcription service inspired by www.fixtheweb.net and the [Web Accessibility Initiative](#).

The following (unprotected) file formats may be transcribed:

- **Audio:** AAC, ACT, AIFC (Compressed AIFF), AIFF, AMR, APE, AU, CAF (Apple Core Audio Format), DCT, DS2 (DSS Pro), DSS (Grundig, Olympus, Philips recorder), DSP TrueSpeech, DVF (Sony recorder), DVS (Royal recorder), FLAC, OGG, M4A, MP2, MP3, MPC, MSV (Sony recorder), QCP, RA / RM (RealAudio), SHN, SPX, VOC, VOX, WAV (Including ADPCM, aLaw, GSM 6.10, PCM, and uLaw codecs), WMA
- **Video:** 3G2, 3GP, ASF, AVI, DivX, DV, FLV, M4V, MKV, MOV, MP4, MPEG, VOB, WMV

How to access this service:

1. Choose the audios, videos or podcasts from your website which you would like to have transcribed
2. Make a request for a transcription/transcriptions to be made.
3. Add the transcript to your website and improve accessibility!

For further information or to make a request, email: c.gunn@my.westminster.ac.uk

Activities of Daily Living

By KickStart participant and blogger, Cassie

Cassie is spending the year in New Zealand attending the Kickstart Program conducted by BLENNZ. Cassie's aims include becoming proficient in cooking and house cleaning.

Hanging out the clothes

I fold the clothes over the line just a little bit and peg them so that they aren't blown away. I peg the bottom of t-shirts and jumpers so that they hang upside down. Dresses I usually peg the straps but if there was a dress I particularly wanted to take extra care of, I would hang it on a clothes hanger and peg the hanger to the line. Pants, shorts and skirts I just put a peg at either side of the waistband. Socks I tend to put two together and peg the insides of the socks with the one peg. Given that they're such small items of clothing I figure they will dry quickly and there's no point using heaps of pegs if I don't need to. Underwear I usually put one peg on the back of the waistband and again I usually put two or three pairs together. Bras for all you girls out there I hang them over the line and put a peg in the middle bit between the cups.

Cleaning product

Over the years the staff of Kickstart have tried lots of different cleaning products but they have settled on using Spray and Wipe for just about everything. Unlike a lot of other products it doesn't leave a film or anything behind after you have cleaned so you don't have to worry about cleaning that off as well. So sounds like Spray and Wipe is the winner when it comes to cleaning, especially for blindies.

Cleaning the shower

Spray and Wipe the entire outside of the shower including the door and the rest, then again, wet a rag and wipe it all down. The inside is a little different. It is probably easiest to clean the inside of a shower just after you take a shower, with the steam and what not. Again spray every surface including the pipe, soap holder thing and the tap. Then just run the scraper down all the surfaces to scrape all the grime off. Then get a scrubbing brush and Spray and Wipe the bottom of the shower before attacking it with the brush. To finish off just wash down all the surfaces with the shower hose assuming it's one of those detachable ones you can just spray at all the walls easily.

Cleaning the toilet

Firstly, wear gloves. That is an absolute must. Flush the toilet first just as a precaution. Spray and Wipe the entire outside of the toilet. Then use the toilet brush to scrub the entire outside. Then you lift up the lid of the toilet and Spray and Wipe inside there, including the inside of the lid and the seat. Scrub that with the brush. Then you lift up the seat and once again, spray and wipe the bottom of the seat, the top of the bowl and inside the bowl too. Then scrub all of that being careful not to scrub too vigorously inside the bowl to prevent any ... um. ... splashing. Then shut the lid again. Get an old rag, run it under water and wipe over the entire outside of the toilet, lifting up the lid and then the seat and wiping all of those surfaces as well. There's no need to wipe inside the bowl.

Cleaning the sink

Basins are easy. Just Spray and Wipe the entire basin, including outside, inside and the tap, and wipe over it with a rag. And then, just like the toilet, wet a rag and wipe over all those surfaces once again. (REMEMBER NOT TO USE THE SAME RAG FOR THE TOILET AS YOU USE FOR THE BASIN, PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!!)

To follow Cassie's adventures, visit: <http://cassieembling.wordpress.com/>

Online Journals

Visiting Teacher, Sam Oxley, has been scouring the internet for online journals and magazines as sources of information regarding vision impairment. Here is her list of online journals which don't need a password to access:

- **Access World:** <http://www.afb.org/aw/main.asp> (AFB's technology newsletter)
- **ADBC Beacon:** <http://www.deafblind.org.au/newsletter.asp>
- **Blind Citizens News:**
http://www.bca.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=87&Itemid=58
- **Braille Monitor:** <https://nfb.org/braille-monitor>
- **Future Reflections:** <https://nfb.org/future-reflections>
- **Insight: Supporting blind and partially sighted young people** (Subscription but has some content available online):
http://www.mib.org.uk/professionals/education/insightmagazine/Pages/insight_magazine.aspx
- **NB Magazine** (eye health and sight loss magazine for professionals):
http://www.mib.org.uk/professionals/health/services/nbmagazine/Pages/nb-magazine.aspx?utm_source=short_url&utm_medium=direct&utm_campaign=nbmagazine
- **The Bulletin:** SVRC newsletter <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Abulletin.shtml>
- **The Educator:** (magazine produced by ICEVI) - <http://www.icevi.org/publications/index.htm>

Report: Bendigo April Holiday Program

From Steve Monigatti, Vision Australia

Vision Australia Bendigo launched its 2-day school holiday program for 2013 during the April holidays. Eleven school aged children attended the program held in the Day Centre at Bendigo. Aged between five and seventeen years of age, this program welcomed three new little faces and their families. Participants came from cities including Gisborne, Echuca, Ballarat as well as Bendigo.

Over the two days, children explored various household appliances, some basic and some unusual, to prepare a lunch banquet of tomato soup, toasted sandwiches, chicken pesto pasta and chocolate mousse. Cooking preparations also included providing morning tea for some of the parents who participated in a presentation on favourite assistive technology aids. This provided an opportunity for the children to showcase their favourite aids and learn from each other. Parents were then welcomed to a separate 'parent-to-parent' catch up facilitated by Bev Devidas, Orthoptist. Topics discussed included frequency of meetings with teaching staff at schools and sleep patterns in blind and low vision children and teenagers.

Calories were then burned at the Tom Flood Sports Centre where the children trialled tandem bike riding. Not all could reach the bike pedals, however all enjoyed many trips around the track.

Bendigo staff would like to give special acknowledgement to the volunteers whom assisted with the food preparation and bike riding during the program.

Bendigo staff are now busily planning July's program. As participant numbers are growing, we are planning to divide some of the activities into primary and secondary age groups. We would like to ask you (parents, VTs, external service providers) of any recreational (and domestic) activities that you believe our participants may benefit from engaging. Please contact staff on 5445 5700 or email Steve.Monigatti@visionaustralia.org with suggestions.

Wilderness Experience Camp: I Survivor

From Di Hayward (Recreation Development Worker) and Andy Tester (Occupational Therapist)

If you are interested in exploring our unique natural environment, are in year 10, 11 or 12 and enjoy the company of like-minded people, please read on.

Vision Australia is running a camp for 2 nights at the Wilsons Promontory National Park for young people. The camp will run on Wednesday 2, Thursday 3 and Friday 4th of October. This is intended as a short break during the school holidays.

We will be staying in cabins and cooking our own food. Hiking and exploring during the day and the park rangers will give us some time so we can get up close and personal with the unique flora and fauna of this beautiful part of the world.

The group will be of 6 so whether you are the Bear Grills type or lean more to the more cultured David Attenborough style come and join us for this first time Vision Australia venture into the wilderness.

For more information phone: (03) 9760 0000.

News

- Christine Casey**, sometime Visiting Teacher and Music Teacher for the SVRC Support Skills Program recently emailed an update of her adventures:

As of today, I have been living in Fiji for 17 weeks. My placement is at the Fiji school for the blind. The school is located in Vatuwaqa which is a suburb of the capital Suva. There are around 50 students who attend the school, 25 of whom board in the school hostel. I teach in the school and live in the hostel with the boarders. The boarders are aged from 6 to 15.

There is so much I could tell you about Fiji but for now, I will focus on food. Food is one of the most important parts of Fijian culture. An event is only as good as the food served. Fijian food is influenced by what is available locally, what is affordable and by the indigenous traditions of both the indigenous Fijian population as well as the large Indian population.

I eat the same food as the boarders. We usually have bread and tea for breakfast. For lunch, we usually eat rice and dahl or rice and curry. Dinner is usually curry with rice or roti. We also often eat Fijian vegetables such as cassava, dalo, roro, breadfruit, ota (fern) eggplant and bele. We usually stick to a vegetarian diet but we have fish once or twice a week (usually cooked in lolo aka coconut milk). We sometimes eat chicken or sausages and once we had goat. We do not eat beef or pork in the hostel as we have Hindu and Muslim students for whom it is taboo to eat these meats.

Foods we can't get in Fiji or which are extremely expensive (a block of Cadbury costs 18 dollars) include: chocolate, lollies, real milk, cheese, yoghurt, olives, tomatoes, vegemite, strawberries, honey and ham. For treats, the kids enjoy dried peas, icecream and various Indian sweets.

Finally

And finally thanks to everyone for their contributions to this Bulletin, especially Phia Damsma, Lea Nagel and Garry Stinchcombe.

If you have something you would like included in "The Bulletin" please email Lyn Robinson

To read The Bulletin online: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Abulletin.shtml>