The Bulletin
Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 6	**Thursday 24th April 2014**

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263 days till the SPEVI Conference in Melbourne

Monday 12th to Thursday 15th January 2015

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Professional Development & Activities for Term 2, 2014

Fliers for the SVRC Professional Learning programs are available can be downloaded from the SVRC website: www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml.

Please note: the SVRC encourages attendance in person or via video link – please be in touch if you'd like to "virtually" attend any of these sessions – the cost of attendance via video conference is the same as the "in person" cost.

Event	Date
Educational Support for Vision Impaired Students with Additional Impairments (max participants: 60) See flier attached.	Tuesday 6 May
Skill Power Workshops 1. 9.30-11.00 NVDA – staff from SVRC 2. 11.30-1.00 Victor Reader – Garry Stinchcombe, SVRC 3. 1.30-3.30 BrailleNote – Ramona Mandy, Humanware	Wednesday 7 May
Visiting Teacher MasterClass presented by Penny Rosenblum See flier attached – please RSVP ASAP.	Mon 12 & Tues 13 May
Skill Power Workshops 1. 9.30-11.00 Combining SmartView 360 with iPad and ZoomText – Tony Wu, Humanware 2. 11.30-1.00 MAGic – Pacific Vision 3. 1.30-3.30 iPad & BrailleNote – Emily White, SVRC	Wednesday 21 May
Skill Power Workshops 1. 9.30-11.00 BrailleSense – Caz McGowan, Pacific Vision 2. 11.30-1.00 Braille Maths for Primary – Emily White, SVRC 3. 1.30-3.30 Please request a session	Wednesday 4 June
Dot Power Day	Tuesday 17 June
National Braille Music Camp – email romad@westnet.com.au	21-28 June

Inside This Issue

Conference: Vision2014

Including International Visitors to SVRC!

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre was asked to contribute to the international conference, Vision 2014, which was held recently at the Melbourne Convention Centre.

Emily White, who is currently working at the SVRC, was able to successfully contribute to this international conference as follows:

- **Paediatric symposium** – Emily described services to children with vision impairments in Victorian schools as part of a panel of experts
- **Technology for children with low vision** – Emily ran a workshop which offered participants an overview of the technology options available and gave them a chance to try a range of options for themselves – thanks to Trevor Boyd from Quantum and Tony Wu from Humanware for their input!
- **Site visit** – thirty visitors from Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Norway, Singapore and Sweden … amongst other far-flung nations arrived in a bus to take a look at the services

provided by the SVRC. It was all hands on deck (thanks everyone)! A short presentation was followed by a tour of the Centre. Participants had the opportunity to see braille and tactile resources, technology options, PE and sport equipment, the Support Skills Program – and cameras were snapping wildly! Finally, Emily organised a rousing game of Swish for interested visitors. I'd have to say that everyone had a wide smile on their faces! It was a very fun and hopefully informative and inspiring afternoon!

Feedback from the conference organisers regarding these sessions included:

"Just a quick note to say thanks so much for your contribution to our symposium Services for Children with Low Vision – not to mention the workshop and then organizing the visit to Statewide, think you deserved a medal! It was great to meet you and could not help but be impressed with your tremendous enthusiasm for what you do."

Go Em!!!

LearningField: Digital Educational Resources

By Lyn Robinson

I was at a school recently when the Tech Support person asked if I had heard of a website called LearingField. My ears pricked up when he said it houses electronic copies of many of the Australia Secondary School textbooks which can be download through an app onto the student's iPad or computer for a small subscription equivalent to the cost of a few hardcopy textbooks per year.

LearningField is an initiative of the Copyright Agency and provides access to electronic copies of Textbooks from various Australian Educational Publishers. It could be a game changer if it lives up to its promise… here is some more information from the LearningField website:

The website and application provide an industry solution for the distribution of digital textbooks to secondary school students. LearningField provides a resource-rich digital platform which allows teachers to select the best material to support the differing needs of Years 7–10 students across all subject areas.

Initially content is provided by publishers Cambridge University Press, Jacaranda, Oxford University Press and Pearson. We are currently in discussions with other publishers and at launch expect to have a wide range of content available from Australian publishers.

For a single subscription fee per student, schools can enable teachers to access the combined resources of publishers, both by chapter or whole text and with advanced search functions. The content is mapped to the Australian curriculum, State curriculums and the NSW syllabus. It also provides single sign-on with anywhere, anytime access including iPad, Android and PC reading applications.

If you would like more information, have any queries or would like to trial LearningField, go to: http://about.learningfield.com.au/

Supported by leading Australian educational publishers.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS   jacaranda   OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND   PEARSON

NELSON CENGAGE Learning   p.c.s. publications   HELLEMAN BOOKS www.helleman.com.au

Upcoming Diary Date: PE PD

Emily White will be offering a PE Professional Development Day specifically for Visiting Teachers as well as for PE and Class Teachers. VTs, this would be a great opportunity to come and enhance your skills and understanding of the implications of vision impairments in the PE/Sport/Outdoor Education/ Recreation context which will enable you to better support your schools.

When: Monday 11 August 2014 from 9.30am
Where: SVRC, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale
Cost: TBA – includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

Virtual attendance at this program is possible, but will not allow full participation.

Network for Parents of Vision Impaired Children

Information provided by Sandra George

This is a self-supporting group for families, providing an opportunity to meet, create new networks, share hints and strategies and most of all celebrate the achievements of our beautiful children. It provides a safe and friendly environment where we can share things that our other friends may not understand. We are not a formal organisation and do not have direct links to other groups, but we are very appreciative of the support of Statewide Vision Resource Centre, Vision Australia, Guide Dogs Victoria (and their Child Mobility Services) and Vision Impaired Sports.

The first meeting of this group was held on Sunday 2nd March at the Vision Australia Cricket Ground (behind VA in Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong). After a brief introduction to each family (where we could say as much or as little as we felt comfortable with) 23 mums and dads were free to chat or watch the 19 children and babies (VI and siblings) as they played.

Thanks to Rod and Daniel Pritchard (Cricket) and Michelle Baird (Goalball) who provided equipment to keep the children occupied with fun for all.

Next meeting:

Date / Time: Sunday 25th May, 10:30 to 11:30 (with ability to stay later if you wish)
Venue: Vision Australia Cricket Ground, Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong.
Who: Parents, VI babies, toddlers, children, teenagers and siblings.
Convenor: Sandra George (Grandparent of 3 year old Jasper who is vision impaired)

If you are interested in joining our network or just being added to the contact list, email sandrageorge47@gmail.com (or phone 0421 058882 and leave a message). Let us know:
- the area where you live and the age of your child/children
- whether you are able to meet during the week, at weekends or both

At present we have 28 families from all over Melbourne, the Peninsula and a couple from the country. The first two meetings have been on a Sunday in Melbourne by majority request, but if demand arises there could be other groups, especially in country areas.

TumbleBook Library

Deb Davidson has been doing some Audio-Supported Reading with some of her students with low vision and is using a great internet resource: the TumbleBook Library.

From the website: www.tumblebooks.com/
TumbleBooks are animated, talking picture books which teach kids the joy of reading in a format

they'll love. TumbleBooks are created by taking existing picture books, adding animation, sound, music and narration to produce an electronic picture book which you can read, or have read to you. TBL also includes National Geographic videos and games. With a school licence, teachers and students have access to the Common Core Portal, quizzes and teacher materials/lesson plans!

Deb says, "Books can be read online for free (trial 30 days), or alternatively users can 'join' for free through most community libraries (definitely Maribyrnong) and then download the books. TumbleBooks is American and has a fairly extensive catalogue of junior readers and chapter books for older children."

Accessible Science

Here is a great resource from Perkins eLearning for Science teachers and for those supporting the science-minded! Activities and resources are organised under the headings:

- Life Science eg modelling a plant cell, the function of villi in the small intestine
- Earth and Space Science eg plate tectonics
- Engineering and Technology eg safety crash testing
- Physical Science eg volume, mass and density

Most activities are set out with:

- Purpose
- Background information
- Suggested time
- Materials
- Procedure
- Resources

There is a terrific range of activities that have been posted via a User Login – but the activities can be viewed without logging in! Have a shot – write one up – add one of your own!

Visit: www.perkinselearning.org/accessible-science

Teaching Resources

Internet4Classrooms

A mainstream source identified as "helping you use the internet effectively…", this US-based website was established as a "free web portal designed to assist anyone who wants to find high-quality, free internet resources to use in classroom instruction, developing project ideas, reinforcing specific subject matter areas both in the class and at home and even for online technology tutorials. It features links to free worksheets, technology tutorials, assessment and teaching resources graded from 1st Grade to High School and Advanced. Visit: www.internet4classrooms.com
Some of the resources are specifically for students with vision impairments (eg Braille Alphabet Cards). Visit:
www.internet4classrooms.com/exceptional_children/vision_impaired_disability_assistive_technology.htm

Braille Shop: Braille, Tactile and Accessible Graphics

This site features an array of braille-related resources for home and school use, for example:

The SENSEsational Alphabet Book
Learning the alphabet has never been more exciting and stimulating! This fun and engaging book lets your child feel the different textures of the Horse and Lizard, smell the distinctive aromas of Apples and Roses, move the hands of the Watch and pull the Zipper, and much, much more! Learn the entire alphabet and many beginning words in Sign language and Braille! On top of all this, touch the corresponding key pad and recite the letters and words along with the book! US$30

Blind Bargains

This site aims to scour "the net to bring you the latest sales, deals, and news on computers, screen readers, notetakers, braille printers, hard drives, accessible cell phones, memory cards, talking products, household items, and much more." You'll find "articles, news, and resources of general interest to the blind community and friends". Visit: www.blindbargains.com

How to Select iPad Apps for Students with Vision Impairments

Source: www.pathstoliteracy.org/how-select-ipad-apps-students-visual-impairments

Perkins School has posted some great information on their "Paths to Literacy" website about how to select iPad Apps for students with vision impairments.

Consideration for iPad App Selection

When selecting apps for the iPad, there are a number of important factors that should be considered:

1. What is the student's visual impairment? If the student has functional vision, describe it.
2. What is the student's hearing level? If the student has functional hearing, describe it.
3. What is the adult's (eg VT, aide, parent/carer) current comfort level with the iDevice?
4. What is the student's current level of use / comfort level with the iPad?
5. Does your child use any adaptations with the iPad – (VoiceOver, Zoom, Bluetooth, contrast selection / inverting colours)?
6. What apps does the student use? Be specific as you can (type, colour, movement, auditory component, activation needs etc)
7. Are there similar characteristics within those apps? (eg colour, clarity, auditory component)
8. What is your child's favourite thing to do with the iPad?
9. What is your favourite thing to do with the iPad?
10. How does your child learn something new on the iPad?

When you find a good App (clear, easy to see, etc) look for additional Apps by the same developer.

How to Choose an Appropriate Storybook App

Along with cost, consider the following – once you point out these areas, people have much greater success in matching the electronic book to the child.

- Visual clarity (a lack of visual "busyness")
- Placement of print (in same place on each page?)
- Print clarity / background (contrast) – the space behind the print should not have any drawings or pictures or movement
- Brightness of image
- Font – size (is it changeable?) / type of font (not too busy)
- Upper case and lower case letters used properly
- Can the text, when read by the iPad, be highlighted (if needed at the child's current level)
- Potential skills that could be developed eg vocabulary development, spelling, concept building, imagination, life skills discussion, social skills development, prediction, fine motor skills, visual skills, repetition of current areas of development

The Case of the Disappearing Camera App

Visiting Teacher Denise Probert wrote recently that one of her students had "lost" the camera app from their iPad. Apparently you can't lose an app which is native to the iOS platform but still the camera was nowhere to be found.

The mystery was solved when talking to the parent it was revealed that the parent had turned off the camera in the restrictions setting. The VT simply got the password from the parent and with their permission turned the camera back on. Resetting or backing up the iPad through iTunes will also reinstall the app. For further information visit the Apple forum:
https://discussions.apple.com/thread/5247540?tstart=0

Technology Reviews and "How To's"

- Former VT student **Sadam** has established a website which he says is "all about empowering blind people through mainstream technology as well as the traditional assistive tech". Sadam reviews a wide range of technology options including refreshable braille displays, iOS products, screen readers and even headphones! Visit: http://sadamahmed.com/
- "**Top Tech Tips – 2013**" has links to a student entries show-casing some of their favourite technology ideas: http://svrc.vic.edu.au/ttt.shtml

Braille Directory

The Australian Braille Authority recently announced the launch of a new Braille Directory, a listing of braille service providers in Australia. Use this site to find out where you can access
- braille library collections
- braille transcription services
- braille training
- braille equipment sales and servicing

New listings are welcome; complete and submit the directory collection form from the website.

Visit: http://brailleaustralia.org/finding-braille/directory/

Guide Dogs Referrals

Just a reminder that Laura Hunt is now the Manager of the Children's Mobility Services at Guide Dogs Victoria. Laura will be contacting the Visiting Teachers soon with new referral forms for the Children's Mobility Services or you can go to the SVRC website to download the forms at: http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Arefcms.pdf

Vacancy in SWVR

- **South Western Victoria Region** has a 0.6 or 0.8 vacancy for a VT-Vision at present. For further information please contact Jane Jensen on 0477 390 419.

SVRC Braille Course

- Congratulations to Lindah McKeahnie and Sally McPhie, both from Melba College, for successfully completing the Braille Course by Correspondence.
- Meanwhile, 11 people have begun the course this year and 30 people are currently working through the program! A lot of work for Zhi, who corrects and sends feedback – but she seems to enjoy it!

Finally

Editors Deb Lewis and Lyn Robinson would like to thank everyone for their contribution to this issue of The Bulletin, and in particular Frances Gentle, Leona Holloway, Garry Stinchcombe, Julie Thorndyke and Emily White.

If you would like to contribute to The Bulletin please email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

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

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

MASTERCLASS SERIES

Dr. L. Penny Rosenblum
Associate Professor of Practice, The University of Arizona

Monday 12 May 2014 AND Tuesday 13 May 2014, 9.30am to 3.45pm

About the Presenter

Dr. Rosenblum is an Associate Professor of Practice in the Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies at The University of Arizona where she joined the faculty in August 1999. She prepares teachers to work with students with visual impairments (TVIs) and has previously coordinated teacher preparation programs in Arizona and Nevada. In March 2012 she became the Project Director for a United States Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (IES) federal project, *AnimalWatch-VI Suite: A comprehensive program to increase access to math for students with visual impairments.*

As a person with low vision, Dr. Rosenblum is able to share first-hand information with future teachers about the impact of a visual impairment on the lives of children and adults. Dr. Rosenblum has been a teacher of students with visual impairments and multiple disabilities and is especially interested in the social aspects of having a disability and in how best to prepare teachers to meet both the academic and social needs of children.

Day 1: Monday 12 May 2014, 9.30am to 3.45pm

Developing Braille Literacy Skills for Young Children, Dual Readers, and Children with Additional Disabilities

Developing a braille-rich environment and providing multiple opportunities to develop literacy skills for beginning braille readers of all ages, including those with multiple disabilities, is a comprehensive process.

Day 2: Tuesday 13 May 2014, morning session

We're All Social: Ideas for Facilitating Social Development of Students with Visual impairments

From the time a child is born social development is beginning with the first interactions the child has with family members. The focus of this session will be on an overview of how a visual impairment impacts the social development of children with visual impairment, methods of assessing social skills, and how to use information gained from assessment to facilitate a child's development of social skills.

Day 2: Tuesday 13 May 2014, afternoon session

When You Don't Drive Due to Vision Loss: Strategies for Succeeding in a Car-Oriented Society

We live in a society in which the majority of adults drive their own vehicles to get from place to place for employment, recreation, and meeting their basic needs. When one cannot drive due to a visual impairment, there are a wide range of skills that must be mastered to be a successful nondriver. These skills not only include orientation and mobility skills, but also skills that encompass social skills, visual efficiency, use of technology, and self-advocacy.

Participants: This presentation is intended for Visiting Teachers VI.

Cost:
Visiting Teachers and family members: $35 per day or $60 for both days
Video conference: $30 per day or $50 for both days
Staff from other organisations: $100 per day or $170 for both days

Registration: Registration is essential. A light lunch will be provided (BYO fruit).

For further information: Phone 9841 0242, fax 9841 0878 or email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Vision Impaired Students with Additional Impairments

When: Tuesday 6 May 2014 from 9.00am to 3.30pm (Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower carpark – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

For: Teachers, aides/assistants, therapists, family members and Visiting Teachers

8.30	**Registration**
9.00	**Simulation of a Vision Impairment** – Staff of SVRC and Guide Dogs Victoria
10.15	**Vision Impairment – What is it? How do we assess it?** – Marion Blazé, SVRC
10.45	**Morning Tea**
11.10	**Cortical Vision Impairment** – Annette Godfrey-Magee and Geoff Bowen, SVRC
12.00	**Encouraging Movement, Independent Travel and Participation in PE** – Emily White, SVRC
12.30	**Lunch – A light lunch will be provided**
1.00	**Strategies to Support Students in the Classroom** – Helen Caldow, Visiting Teacher, North-Eastern Victoria Region
1.40	**iPad for Students with Vision and Additional Impairments** – Lyn Robinson, SVRC
2.10	**The SVRC – How Can We Help?** – Staff of the SVRC
2.30	**Challenging Behaviours** – Geoff Bowen, Psychologist, SVRC
3.30	**Close**

Maximum participants: 60 onsite
Cost: includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)
$66.00 (incl. GST) with lunch provided
$55.00 (incl. GST) with no lunch provided
$55.00 for participation via video conference
$22.00 for VTs or family members with lunch provided
$5.00 for VTs or family members with no lunch provided

Registration is essential – by Friday 3 May
For further details or for an invoice: phone 9841 0242 or email pd@svrc.vic.edu.au

State Government **Victoria**
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Parking

There is no parking available at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre or Heatherwood School. Please park **in the lower carpark** behind the Donvale Sports Centre - the building beside (to the north) of the SVRC. You can then walk through the double gates and the Statewide Vision Resource Centre is to the left.

Public Transport: Bus and train

The nearest and most accessible train station is Nunawading. Trains on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines run through this station. A bus also runs from Box Hill Central which also has good train access.

The Statewide Vision Resource Center is serviced by **3 bus routes**.
- 902 Smart Bus, Chelsea to Airport West
- 271 Box Hill to Ringwood
- 273 Nunawading to The Pines

The 902 and 273 both leave from the Nunawading station. It is only an 8 minute trip to the SVRC.