

SERUpdate

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Intellectual Disability

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Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

8:45am - 5:00pm

Tuesday

8:45am - 3:00pm



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

Introduction

The Term 2 edition of the SERUpdate brings together a diverse range of articles that provide information, strategies, and programs to support students with intellectual disability.

The first article, by Dr. Fiona Rillotta, discusses the issues faced by families of children with an intellectual disability, including finding appropriate schooling and how this impacts on their living situations, careers and finances. The next article by Sarah Humphreys ACARA, provides an update on the Australian Curriculum and how it will meet the learning needs of all students.

The following articles provide information on the DECD criteria for the verification of global development delay and intellectual disability, what intellectual disability means in the context of school and how teachers can support these students. This is followed by a fact sheet on dual disability, a term that refers to the coexistence of both intellectual disability and mental illness.

Educators from DECD schools write about: an inclusive preschool; transition to work and success stories from students who are now in open employment; a range of arts programs in Clare; the integration of students with severe multiple disabilities in mainstream high school classes; and managing challenging behaviours. Strategies/programs described include PODD communication, PECS, task boxes and Learning Stories. Articles on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Fragile X include practical strategies, and an article from SHine discusses sexual health along with a list of resources. Autism SA provides an update on a research project on a social development program for children with autism and intellectual disability.

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FAMILY QUALITY OF LIFE - KEY ISSUES REPORTED BY FAMILIES OF SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Family and Intellectual Disability

A family typically consists of people who consider themselves as part of the family and who are closely involved in the day-to-day affairs of the household (Brown, et al., FQOLS-2006; Poston et al., 2003). Family members may be related by blood, marriage, or by close personal relationship. (FQOLS-2006; Poston et al., 2003). Family members support each other regularly particularly throughout changes in life, such as birth of a child, disability, transition to or from school, or ageing (Australian Institute of Family Studies, Baxter, Gray, & Hayes, 2009).

Having a relative with an intellectual disability impacts on the family unit in many ways and the family is often responsible for primary care giving (Turnbull, Beegle, & Stowe, 2001; Zuna, Turnbull, & Summers, 2009). Service providers, including schools and educational facilities, are increasingly accountable for quality of life outcomes not only for the individual but also for the family (Brown, Davey, Shearer, & Kyrkou, 2004; Summers et al., 2005). Family Quality of Life is the degree to which the collective needs of the family are met, including the degree to which family members enjoy life together and are able to engage in things that the family consider to be important to lead a fulfilling life (Brown & Brown, 2004; Park et al., 2003; and Summers et al., 2005).

Students with Intellectual Disabilities

The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare (AIHW, 2008) reported that in 2003, of all students with an intellectual disability in Australia, 45% were attending ordinary (mainstream) classes, 38% were attending a special class, and 17% were attending a special school. In addition, nearly 30% of students with an intellectual disability did not receive extra educational support for their disability (AIHW, 2008). So, what does this mean for the quality of life of their families? And what are the key issues associated with education and Family Quality of Life?

Family Quality of Life Research

The research reported in this article is based on the perceptions of 52 main caregivers (mostly mothers) of people with an intellectual/ developmental disability in South Australia, and was conducted between 2005 and 2010. Data was collected by face to face interviews using an international Family Quality of Life Survey (Brown, et al., FQOLS-2006). The family members with an intellectual disability ranged from 2 to 46 years of age. For the purpose of this article, the qualitative data related to education and transitions has been drawn out of the larger study considering nine Family Quality of Life domains (health, finances, family relationships, leisure and recreation, careers, community involvement, influence of values, support from services, and support from other people). Refer

to Rillotta, Kirby, and Shearer, 2010; Rillotta, Kirby, Shearer, and Nettelbeck, 2012; and Samuel, Rillotta, and Brown, 2012.

Many families from the current research claimed that education appropriate to their family member with an intellectual disability's needs was not attained to the extent that they desired. This means that there is added pressure and responsibility on the family to manage their child's educational needs (e.g. academic development) along with everyday functional needs (e.g. personal care). Some of the education-related concerns that caregivers expressed are detailed below.

Appropriate Education Programs for People with Intellectual Disabilities

The most prominent issue reported by families was that they are uncertain about which school environment is best for their relative with an intellectual disability (e.g. inclusive mainstream education or special education classes, units and schools). This uncertainty and concern is escalated when appropriate educational services (or schooling specific to the support needs of the child) are not available. Caregivers reported that waiting lists prevented their child from accessing the most appropriate school: *"I had to fight for three terms to get him a place at that Special School [close to the family home]"*. In addition, many family members reported that they did not have much choice about their child's education: *"The worst thing about having a child with a disability is that you have no choice... the government chooses and the final decision does not rest on the mother."*

Mothers of children with 'mild' intellectual disabilities strongly advocated that their child does not belong at a special school, but their child's minor additional support requirements, such as social skills training or support to make friends, were not available in mainstream schools either. This was possibly because mainstream teachers did not have specialist knowledge specific to intellectual disability or they did not have the additional time to devote to the child. Similarly, if the child with an intellectual disability has more complex learning needs some mainstream schools have left caregivers with no option other than to find alternative education, as in the following example:

"When Mark [a child with an intellectual disability] was in year 10 and Sophie [a second child with an intellectual disability] in year 8, they [the mainstream school] told the family that they couldn't help Mark and Sophie anymore and they tried to send them to a special school."

continued

In this case, the caregiver felt that her children were functioning academically at a level beyond that which was provided by a special school, yet the teachers at the mainstream school did not agree. There were also no alternative appropriate schools in the vicinity of the family home of 22 years, meaning that the family may have had to relocate to meet the educational needs of the children. Relocating their home would also have meant being further away from the father's workplace and so they were also faced with the prospect that he may have had to change jobs, which may have generated additional financial losses for the family. This example demonstrates the relationship and interaction that was found between education, living situation, careers, and finances of the family. Service providers need to be aware of the anxiety imposed on the whole family in circumstances such as this, and Family Quality of Life needs to be considered in holistic terms.

Even for those families who have secured an appropriate special school there can still be some gaps in the support offered. Whilst some caregivers reported that their child's social skills had improved remarkably since attending school due to becoming aware of social norms and socially acceptable behaviours, others reported that they would like their children to have social skills training. This may be because different schools have different programs and philosophies or priorities for education.

"The school does a lot in terms of education programs like sex education, but she needs groups... to do activities... Even just for having people to talk with. Need to focus on friendship building – interacting with people with and without disabilities."

Transportation was reported as a concern and there are also added pressures on the family both financially and in balancing competing demands of family members; as demonstrated in the following cases:

"...transport can be a problem; one of the reasons is because they need 10 days notice to change anything for the transport to and from school if we use it... and the other thing is that you never quite know when they're going to arrive... the kids have to go to two separate schools... the issue I have is... how do I coordinate?"

"...she [member with disability] played up last week and the bus driver said 'nup she's not coming back at all'... they won't have her back on the bus [which was a free service]... she got booted off [the special school bus]... it's costing me 80 dollars a week in petrol at the moment"

'Person centred' approaches to service delivery would beg that in instances such as this, all school personnel should work with the child, rather than to

try to solve the problem by denying her access. Furthermore, socio-environmental circumstances should be taken into account. For example, it may have been the case that the bus driver required training in how to best support students with intellectual disabilities who also have behavioural concerns; or perhaps this child was exhibiting "challenging behaviour" as a result of the peers she shared the bus with.

Key Transitions

Planning for school is particularly important for families in the early childhood stages; however, in many cases families are uninformed about school-based services and the transition process. Consequently, when the child commences school there are additional pressures on the family and the family may be faced with unexpected problems. In the current study, early intervention programs were reported as a positive experience for most families. Participants explained that there were far more support services available when the member with a disability was in early childhood (e.g. home visits from medical professionals, therapists, and social workers), but when they went to school, these services were less specific and harder to come by. Therefore in order to ensure a smooth transition to school, services and community partners need to communicate effectively and work collaboratively with families prior to transition to school (Rosenkoetter, Hains, & Dogaru, 2007).

Notwithstanding this, parental stress (which affects Family Quality of Life) has been reported as lower for families with children who have commenced school (Janus, Kopechanski, Cameron, & Hughes, 2008). This could be because parents now have more opportunities for social interaction and to return to work because they have respite from their child with a disability while at school (Janus et al., 2008). Also, once suitable schooling has been found, parents are likely to feel that their child is securely supported throughout the upcoming 13 to 14 years.

Coupled with this, however, is apprehension about future transitions which begins to develop when the child is nearing end of school age. Participants reported that quite often once the child with a disability finishes school (i.e. approx. 18 years old), they are left to their own devices and the services they received whilst at school (e.g. speech therapy) tend to drop off. For example,

Since she's left school it's been different... there's always problems all the whole way through...but it's different problems...often kids like Dana become withdrawn [after finishing school]...she doesn't have the stimulation of all the different people at school to talk to...now it's just mum and dad."

continued

Participants were also concerned about what the member with an intellectual disability would do after finishing school: "When member with disability leaves school] I've pretty well been told that she won't get anything - none of the workshops, because of her behaviour... Options [disability service] won't do anything until she's actually ready to leave school".

Typically developing students have at least some idea or plan for what they will do once they complete school, such as tertiary education or enter the workforce; however, for people with intellectual disabilities the options are not as readily available. For example, there is only one tertiary education program in South Australia, The Up the Hill Project at Flinders University, which supports adults with intellectual disabilities to audit university topics with the support of a student mentor (Up the Hill Project, 2012). Post-school vocational options may be limited to disability specific organisations such as Bedford or Minda. School teachers need to be aware of this challenge and support students with intellectual disabilities and their families to transition to post-school options by providing adequate information and supporting the planning process. Nonetheless, a few participants in the current study did report positive experiences with support and advice for post-school options, such as a post-school options expo run every year; and an assessment of the child in the last 6 months of school to determine post-school funding allocation.

Summary

In conclusion, ongoing open and honest communication between family members and school staff is absolutely vital. Holistic approaches to school support should be considered. For example, school programs need to address educational needs beyond academic performance, including social skills training and friendship building. Families also need to be better supported to plan for key transitions in the child's education (i.e. commencing and completing school). School service providers should always bear in mind the impact that the education of the child with an intellectual disability has on Family Quality of Life (particularly in relation to the domains of career and financial well being). Family members often make the final decisions about their child's support; therefore they need to be viewed and empowered as adequate advocates for the member with an intellectual disability. Special school teachers and personnel should work in partnership with families to achieve desired collective outcomes. ■

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THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM - INCLUSIVE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

Curriculum design

The Australian Curriculum is shaped by the propositions that all students can learn and that all students are entitled to knowledge, understanding and skills that provide a foundation for successful and lifelong learning and participation in the Australian community. Students with disability are entitled to rigorous, relevant and engaging learning opportunities drawn from the Australian Curriculum F-10 and set in age-appropriate learning contexts *on the same basis* as students without disability (Disability Standards for Education 2005).

The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum comprising learning areas, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities provides teachers with a flexible curriculum to meet the diverse needs of 21st century learners. The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum provides the flexibility required to personalise learning and to plan appropriate content in relation to individual learning needs.

Planning for individual learning needs

In using the Australian Curriculum to meet the learning needs of all students, teachers locate students' current level of knowledge, understanding and skills by referring to the Australian Curriculum F-10. The starting point for this is students' year of schooling. However, teachers can take account of the range of current levels of learning for their students and make adjustments to personalise learning by drawing earlier or later from the Australian Curriculum content description sequences, or they can employ the general capability learning continua and/or cross-curriculum priorities to differentiate what a student(s) will learn.

For some students, these adjustments will reflect priority goals developed collaboratively with the student and parent as part of the individual planning process. Again, teachers may adjust the level of demand expected in relation to the learning area content and they may refer to the general capability learning continua (e.g. literacy, numeracy and

personal and social capability) to give greater attention to essential skills, knowledge and understanding.

It is important to emphasise how the learning areas will continue to provide the rich age-appropriate contexts for learning for all students even when a stronger emphasis is required of the general capabilities. Using the flexibility of the Australian Curriculum to plan for individual learning needs in this way ensures that all students have the same opportunities and choices in their education.

Assessment

Teachers assess all students' progress through the Australian Curriculum F-10 in relation to achievement standards. For some students, the measure of their progress is aligned with their individual learning goals. Approaches to assessment and reporting will differ across states and territories as per current arrangements.

Ongoing curriculum development

To increase the capacity of the Australian Curriculum to assist teachers to identify and respond to individual student learning needs the general capability learning continua will be further developed. This work will begin with Literacy, Numeracy and Personal and social capability to better account for the range of learning of all students in schools and to support teachers in planning for the learning needs of students with disability.

ACARA is also developing examples that illustrate application of the Australian Curriculum materials in planning age-appropriate learning opportunities in each learning area for students with disability.

These materials will be available for consultation from July 2012. ■

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INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY: DIAGNOSIS AND SUPPORT IN DECD

The DECD Disability Support Program provides schools with additional support to address the needs of students with a verified disability. These disabilities are:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (autism or Asperger syndrome)
- Global Developmental Delay (children under 7 years of age) and Intellectual Disability (children over 7 years of age)
- Physical disability
- Sensory disability (Hearing or Vision)
- Speech and/or Language disability

Verification of a disability is the role of psychologists and speech pathologists employed by DECD. There is a set of eligibility criteria for each category. These criteria are matched against assessment and other information gathered by DECD psychologists and speech pathologists.

Verification of Global Developmental Delay or Intellectual Disability is the role of the DECD psychologist. They may use information provided by reports from other agencies or private psychologists, but they may also have to complete additional assessments themselves.

continued

Children with very significant disabilities may not be able to complete a standardised intellectual assessment. In this case information will be gathered in different ways using the child's developmental history and various checklists.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY

Students with GDD display cognitive skills and adaptive behaviour skills significantly behind those of their age peers. They require significant additional support and curriculum accommodations to meet their individual learning needs. GDD may arise from a number of different causes (such as prenatal or perinatal complications, chromosomal abnormalities, or environmental factors) and may be associated with other impairments. In many cases the cause of the impairment may not be known.

The level of cognitive (intellectual) impairment can be mild, moderate or severe. Many mildly intellectually impaired students have the potential to learn within the regular classroom given appropriate curriculum modifications and/or accommodations. Some students will require greater support or referral for special options placement. Students with intellectual impairment, like all students, can demonstrate individual strengths and weaknesses in their skills.

Verification requires documented evidence of results and interpretations of standardised cognitive and adaptive behaviour assessments, in addition to evidence of the ways in which the impairment impacts on progress in the curriculum and participation in learning activities and other aspects of school life.

Children over the age of 7 years who have previously been verified as having GDD will be reviewed by the DECD psychologist to determine whether they continue to have cognitive skills and adaptive behaviour functioning that is significantly below age peers. If so they can be diagnosed with Intellectual Disability and continue to access additional support under the Disability Support Program.

ASSESSMENT/CRITERIA

The criteria for verification of GDD and ID are the same, the only difference is that the GDD verification is only used for children up to the age of 7 years. The reason for this is that some children who demonstrate early developmental delay will, with targeted early intervention, "catch up" to their peers to the extent that they no longer meet the criteria for diagnosis of Intellectual Disability. However they may still continue to have significant learning or language impairments.

There are accepted world-wide criteria for diagnosis

of intellectual disability. The revised Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM V) proposes the following criteria, which is consistent with the eligibility criteria for the DECD Disability Support Program:

Intellectual Developmental Disorder is a disorder that includes both a current intellectual deficit and a deficit in adaptive functioning with onset during the developmental period. All three of the following criteria must be met.

A Deficits in general mental abilities such as reasoning, problem-solving, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning and learning from experience. A current intellectual deficit of approximately 2 or more standard deviations in Intelligence Quotient (IQ) below the population mean for a person's age and cultural group is required, measured on an individualized, standardized, culturally appropriate, psychometrically sound test.

AND

B The deficits in general mental abilities impair functioning in comparison to a person's age and cultural group by limiting and restricting participation and performance in one or more aspects of daily life activities, such as communication, social participation, functioning at school or at work, or personal independence at home or in community settings. The limitations result in the need for ongoing support at school, work, or independent life. Thus, diagnosis also requires a significant impairment in adaptive functioning. Typically, adaptive behaviour is measured using individualized, standardized, culturally appropriate, psychometrically sound tests.

AND

C Onset during the developmental period

A score of two standard deviations below the mean is one that is very low. It is well below the average performance and in the bottom 2 % for the whole population. Results of assessment must be "current" for verification purposes: that is within 12 months of application for students aged 6 to 11 years, or within 2 years of application for students aged 12 years or more. ■

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Giving students the power and then watching them strive for excellence is an incredible teaching experience.

CATHERINE DOANNE

WHAT DOES INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY MEAN IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL

Children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways. However, some children will learn at a much slower rate than other children of the same age. This may be due to an intellectual disability. The important thing to remember is that how well children and students learn is related, in part, to how well they are taught. A child with a mild intellectual disability will be behind their same age peers, when they start school. They may be 2-4 years behind academically and this gap will increase with age often despite their hard work. When planning the child's negotiated education plan (NEP) we need to consider the age of the child and what are the agreed priorities or learning goals for that child. If the student is in a mainstream setting following the curriculum of the class will be the basis for their program. If the student is in the final year of school the focus may be on the transition to the world of work, social and coping skills. Intellectual ability and learning outcomes are linked but knowing the exact level of ability does not correlate exactly with achievement. Other factors that influence schooling outcomes include; how well the child is taught, their temperament, social relationships, personal strengths and weaknesses, interests, experiences, health and emotional well being and motivation.

In this article I am going to concentrate on students with mild intellectual disability and what this means and the strategies that teachers can use. Many of these strategies will overlap with the strategies that are used for students with learning difficulties or those with borderline cognitive ability.

What is an intellectual disability?

When a child is identified as having an intellectual disability they would have a history of slow development, have been assessed using an individual test of intelligence and have adaptive, or daily living skills, that are significantly below the level expected for a child of their age. The aspects of intelligence that are measured on a test of cognitive ability, impact on academic learning in the following ways:

- *Verbal skills*: these include verbal concept development, reasoning skills, general knowledge, ability to process language, attention, short and long term memory and the ability to think in words and apply information in new situations and to solve problems.
- *Perceptual reasoning skills*: the ability to organise, analyse and problem solve using visual information, practical reasoning and spatial ability, perceptual reasoning, spatial processing, visual motor integration, sequencing, higher order thinking and abstract reasoning.
- *Working memory*: the ability to retain information in memory, perform some operation or manipulation with the information and produce a product. Attention to verbal and visual information, concentration, mental control and recall.

- *Processing speed*: the ability to process non verbal information, ability to quickly and accurately scan visual information, short-term visual memory, attention, motivation, concentration, visual motor coordination and visual processing.

Strategies to use when teaching.

What this means for class room teachers will depend on what you are teaching, the age of the student and the student's learning experiences. Following are some general strategies for working with learners with an intellectual disability.

Verbal strategies:

- Use simple, short, uncomplicated sentences to ensure maximum understanding.
- Repeat instructions or directions frequently and ask the student if further clarification is necessary.
- Use concrete and visual material.
- Check that the student has the required prior knowledge- if not teach this.
- Systematically and explicitly teach literacy skills.
- Explicit instruction in vocabulary of the topic/ subject.
- Build in revision and recap strategies.
- Provide and teach scaffolding skills.
- Provide the links from prior learning to new learning.
- Link to real life situations.
- Regularly review material.
- Teach to areas of interests and strengths.
- Give the student time to process and consolidate new learning.

Perceptual strategies

- Talk the student through the problem; show them how to do the task more than once if required.
- Explicitly teach problem solving strategies.
- Teach organisational skills.

Processing strategies:

- Limit tasks such as copying from the board.
- Explicitly teach and practice handwriting skills.
- Give students thinking time.

Working memory strategies:

- Provide short clear instructions.
- Use visual prompts.
- Minimise distractions in the classroom.
- Use demonstration, hands on materials.
- Have visual material and routines displayed in the classroom.
- Explicitly teach skills such as note taking and other strategies to aid memory.

continued

Differentiation

Through differentiating the curriculum classroom teachers, both mainstream and special education, can ensure the improved learning outcomes of all students within their classroom.

Differentiation allows you to plan and carry out varied approaches to content (what a student learns); process (how the student learns and how you teach); and product (how the student demonstrates what they've learned) in anticipation of and in response to student differences in readiness (prior mastery of knowledge, understandings, and skills); interest (the student's curiosity and passion); and learning profile (how the student learns best).

Content- When we discuss content we tend to use the following terms, modifications and accommodations/adjustments. Modifications refer to a different curriculum to that of peers or the class. With the Australian curriculum this may mean selecting learning outcomes that come from an early year level. Adjustments/accommodations are changes to support access to the curriculum for example, the use of Braille for visually impaired students. The teacher needs to have a clear understanding of the curriculum in terms of the prior learning that is required and the purpose of the learning. Given that students learn more slowly, and need to apply what they have been taught to ensure that they learn it, teachers will need to prioritise the content of what they teach. This can be referred to as the essential core or the big ideas. An example could be learning to tell the time. The purpose of telling the time is so that students know when things will happen, this can reduce anxiety, help them understand that their day at school has a sequence of activities and help with behaviour management. Required prior learning is that students know that the day is broken up into morning and afternoon and these periods are divided into hours, and that time can be expressed physically. Students need to know that a clock represents time and numbers represent hours. They would also need to understand the sequence of numbers. The teacher may need to start with a concrete example eg linking activities that happen in the school day to the different times. The outcome could be that some of the students understand the sequence of events during the day and know what is coming next; others may be able to tell you at what time something will happen, and others how long it is to home time. Some may be able to read the time but have no idea what it means! Using the outcomes you can plan the next learning activity.

Process - *how the student will learn and how you teach.* When the teaching and learning processes are modified some of the following strategies may be used;

- the teacher may give more assistance to individual students
- they may re-teach concepts or information using simpler language or more examples

- questioning may be pitched at different levels of difficulty for different individuals
- more feedback and monitoring may be varied
- extension work may be set for more able students.

It is important that through the learning process both teachers and students understand, accept and value the differences amongst their peers, as this will help in their acceptance that peers may be doing different work, and that assessment, grades may vary.

Product- *how the student demonstrates what they have learned.* Differentiated output is another aspect of differentiation. Teachers can facilitate student learning by detailing the learning outputs required, as exemplified through the use of marking rubrics and the setting personalised learning goals with individual or groups of students. Students can demonstrate learning using a variety of formats other than written, for example oral presentation, power point, dramatic or visual presentations.

How do teachers differentiate a learning experience?

A basic lesson structure would;

- have a clear objective, that accommodates scaffolded learning to achieve task outcomes
- incorporate a good understanding of the learners to make sure instruction is targeted at the appropriate level of difficulty and student learning profile
- gain the learner's attention by providing focussing activities
- review relevant past learning with the aim of connecting to new learning
- provide an overview as well as objective and purpose of the lesson
- provide information in small steps with modeling and checking for understanding
- use reflective feedback and collaborative teacher-student feedback
- plan for independent practice and re-teaching
- provide final review of the lesson.

Research suggests that the following five conditions are needed for teachers to introduce differentiation into their classrooms.

- They need to believe that the investment in time will produce better results.
- Have adequate time to plan lessons.
- Know the individuals in their class extremely well.
- Have access to a varied range of resource materials.
- Have support from within the school for a differentiated approach to teaching.

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continued

FRAGILE X SYNDROME - THE MOST COMMON CAUSE OF INHERITED INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Fragile X syndrome is the most common cause of inherited intellectual disability and the most common known genetic cause of autism. It is a condition which can have impact on individuals and families in various ways and degrees of severity. Fragile X is found in all races and at all socio-economic levels. Latest statistics indicate 1 in 3600 males and 1 in 4000 - 6000 females are affected and that approximately 1 in 260 females are carriers. There is currently Australian research going on as to the characteristics of carriers and the impact that it has on them. Every week in Australia one child is born who is fully affected and twelve children are born who are carriers.*

Those with Fragile X will have a range of physical characteristics, developmental delay and a range of behavioural and emotional issues. In the school or preschool you will notice developmental delay (or intellectual disability), some may also present with attention and hyperactivity issues, hypersensitivity to stimuli, hyper arousal, anxiety, aggression, semantic pragmatic disorder, social difficulties and autism (30%). Vision and hearing will need to be checked and monitored. However within this syndrome, as with many syndromes, there are considerable individual variations in skills. Strengths may be with social skills, sense of humor, functional skills and a preference for visual modes of learning. A medical label doesn't describe the individual or how to teach them.

Following are some suggestions for teachers. A good assessment of the individual's strengths and skills is crucial as with any student. If students are particularly hyperactive and inattentive, the strategies that you would use are the same strategies that you would use for students diagnosed with ADD/ADHD, if the child also has autism these relevant educational strategies will also be appropriate. Planning and sharing information between parents and teachers will improve learning outcomes.

Teaching Recommendations:

- Pre-school and school teachers should be encouraged to work with the particular strengths of those with Fragile X.
- Establishing structured routines, using a visual timetable may help.
- Making careful preparation for changes.
- The use of calming techniques and the elimination of distractions.
- Being able to see 'the whole picture' of what is going to happen, for example knowing in advance the full schedule for the day's schooling, or seeing how the current lesson or piece of work fits with the topic and future lessons.
- Placing them with good role models in the

classroom, wherever possible, as they are excellent imitators.

Strengths:

- Students with Fragile X generally have very good long-term memories.
- They tend to learn visually. Use of pictures can be very helpful, and illustrated social stories can assist with behaviour.
- A particular strength of many students with Fragile X is their computer skills. There is a wide range of software available which can assist in all aspects of learning.

Communication skills are another key area for schools to intervene for students with Fragile X. Students may present with difficulty using and understanding language and using language in a social context. Students may also present with difficulties in comprehension, abstract reasoning skills and sequencing difficulties. In social situations issues may occur with topic maintenance, impulsive responses, perseveration and with non-verbal communication. Speech Pathologists will be able to help with programming suggestions. Explicitly teaching social skills may be needed.

Given that many students will have an intellectual disability the strategies discussed in the previous article '*What does intellectual disability mean in the context of school and how can teachers support students*' will be relevant for students with Fragile X syndrome.

Medication has been found to be useful in some circumstances to manage issues such as anxiety, attention issues, and epilepsy and sleep disorders. The use of assistive technology may also be worth considering.

Adolescence is not an easy time for students with Fragile X; they have similar issues to students with learning difficulties, ADD/ADHD, language difficulties and autism. In planning the student's NEP it is crucial to prioritize current needs, to plan for future pathways and to include what the student and their family want. The student's abilities, strengths and interests all need to be taken into account when planning transition from school to post school options or work. It is important to remember that students are eligible for learning support to continue education at both TAFE and University.

Working with families

Currently The Australian Research Council has funded a 3 year study to help families, health professionals and educators understand how being a carrier of Fragile X impacts on Australian families.

continued

For many years, individuals who carried the Fragile X gene (carriers) were assumed to be completely unaffected by any challenges facing individuals who had Fragile X Syndrome. In recent years a number of overseas studies of families suggest that the carriers may have subtle profiles of strengths and challenges that include very good visual and verbal skills but difficulties in decision making and short term memory skills. However, these studies were only conducted in male carriers and we do not know whether women who carry the Fragile X gene display a similar profile. When working with families it is important to understand the impact that the syndrome may have and to connect them to the relevant support agencies.

If a child has been diagnosed with Fragile X the family is eligible for the government Better Start funding. For more information on Fragile X go to www.fragilex.org.au ■

**Information about the research project - Reference: Professor Kim Cornish, Head of School of Psychology and Psychiatry, Monash University, is leading this new Australian study.*

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FETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER: THE IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS

The harms of alcohol use can impact across the lifespan from the pre-birth period to the senior years. The prevention of fetal alcohol exposure and the outcome known as Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a serious and pressing issue in Australia. For educators, the management of children at risk of fetal alcohol exposure is an area of developing interest.

Alcohol freely crosses the placenta and there is a dose/time relationship and risk throughout pregnancy. There is no known minimum 'safe' amount of alcohol in pregnancy and so the message must be precautionary: **no alcohol equals no risk.**

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder is a commonly used generic term but is not a diagnosis. Although Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is most commonly recognised - abnormal facial features; growth delays; and central nervous system (brain) damage and/or physical impairments with confirmed maternal alcohol use during the pregnancy - it is estimated to affect 1-2:1000 live births. For the majority of individuals a diagnosis of Neurodevelopmental Disorder – Alcohol Exposed (may be referenced in FASD literature as partial FAS; Alcohol Related Neurodevelopmental Disorder) – the estimate is between 2-5% of live births. ND-AE is a physical brain based neurobehavioral condition, is largely undiagnosed and therefore 'invisible' with no visible signs of brain difference. ND-AE will typically be revealed in learning, development and behaviour but not always indicated by IQ. Every individual living with ND-AE is unique and the adverse effects may not present in a consistent pattern from individual to individual. However, in general terms the following primary disabilities or primary neurobehavioural conditions may apply.

- Impaired executive functioning can affect the ability to plan.
- There is often poor judgment; no ability to delay gratification; little impulse control and a reduced capacity to predict outcomes.
- There is often poor memory. There may be

disorganisation; problems with sequencing; initiating; and following through; and poor focus and concentration may be noticed.

- There is often emotional intensity and urgency with little ability to recognise feelings or articulate feelings.
- There is often an inability to read social cues; sometimes an inability to express or feel empathy. There might be poor bonding; an inability to separate truth from fiction; blaming others; and/or an excessive demand for attention. There is a very often a limited capacity to make and keep friends.
- There can be poor balance and coordination; eating/sleeping problems; allergies, asthma, ear infections; heart/kidney problems; and hyperactivity.
- There is often difficulty with abstract concepts which impacts on the ability to tell time, be successful at maths, or understand the value of money.
- Impaired judgment is a problem, combined with the inability to make the best decisions, an inability to recognise danger or distinguish danger from safety; friend from stranger (everyone is my friend); or fantasy from reality. Individuals living with FA have difficulty generalising information. They cannot easily form links and associations (in translating learning from one setting to apply in another). The sheer volume of words used may create the impression of competence and speaking and thinking do not equate. Expressive language is often better than receptive skills (may seem to understand instruction and give agreement but are unable to comprehend); there may be agreement or the confabulation of stories but inevitably there will be a general delay in communication and a vulnerability to mental illness. Coupled with inability to abstract (judgment and consequences) and to predict outcomes, the individual will invariably act first.

continued

- There may be a noticeable tendency to be rigid and stuck on an idea or thought; and there could be problems switching thoughts, stopping activities or transforming to new task. There may be over-react to external stimuli – textures, smells, tastes, lighting, noise and the individual may be unable to filter out extraneous stimuli which can lead to increased agitation, irritability, aggression.

For educators, behaviours are not always consistent or predictable. Performance may shift from day to day; there may be clusters of problems (ADHD, a learning disability, trauma or mental health issues). In fact, often both organic and environmental factors contribute to presenting behaviour.

Implementing appropriate support for students who live with an FASD means first knowing the child. In addition to areas of difficulty it is equally important to know their areas of strengths for the most successful interventions build on strengths. This requires a paradigm shift from thinking of the student as being a problem to thinking of the student as living with a problem – this is one of the most important keys if not the most important key towards promoting classroom success for students living with FASD. This means accepting that this group of students have brain differences and a mismatch between developmental and chronological age. Such a ‘shift’ in our thinking can lead to a change in our thinking and having more reasonable expectations. It can enhance our acceptance of the fact that students living with an FASD ‘can’t do rather than ‘won’t do’.²

Establish child’s strengths and interests and then build on them - building on the strengths will give them the best chance possible to grow to their full potential.⁴

Liase with families – mutual sharing of information between school and care family is inclusive of respectful listening, the care family experience on what works best for the child. This aids consistency and reduces anxiety for all.⁴

Support cognitive and communication development – students living with an FASD characteristically experience developmental delays which impact on both engagement in the classroom, wider school environment and progress within the learning curriculum. Learning is critically impacted by inattention, hyperactivity and distractibility often influenced by sensory processing difficulties. The physical learning environment may require careful consideration to enhance concentration.⁴

Many children living with FASD have attachment difficulties – schools can offer adequate supervision; predictable and reliable routine; role modeling positive relationships between adults, and familiar long term relationships so that children feel “known”⁴ and are able to develop a healthy self-identity.

Set tasks that can be accomplished.

- Look for any opportunity to praise good behaviour.
- Rather than focus on what is wrong, describe what’s right and what still needs to be done.
- Teach and model positive self-talk.
- Use correction or re-direction in preference to punishment.
- Use concrete and specific language.
- Consequences usually don’t work so should always be immediate. It is often more effective to add chore rather than take away a privilege.
- Develop visual signals to alert a student that their behaviour is not OK.

A successful classroom environment for students living with FASD is one that is calm, ordered and organised with minimal auditory and visual distraction. Smaller class sizes are optimal but when not possible, provide a work which is screened off but not isolated from the class group. Provide opportunities to learn through visual and kinesthetic mediums.

Remember: be creative, be consistent and re-teach. When supports don’t appear to be working: (1) stop, observe and reassess; (2) try differently not harder; and (3) focus on strengths.² ■

Vicki Russell

National Project Co-ordinator for NOFASARD

The National Organisation for Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Related Disorder (NOFASARD) can be contacted for further information or to arrange training in your school community or organization:

Telephone: NOFASARD on 1300 306 238.

Website: www.nofasard.org.au

Email: admin@nofasard.org.au

Information is also available from the UK Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities Research Project : <http://complexld.ssatrust.org.uk/project-resources/cldd-briefing-packs.html>

Resources:

Lawryk, L; *Finding Perspective...Raising Successful Children Affected by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder*. OBD Triage Institute Inc. Canada

Making a Difference: Working with Students who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/pdf/fasd_manual_2007.pdf

Education of Students with FASD (2008) Kym Crawford - Churchill Fellowship Report

Towards Inclusion: Tapping Hidden Strengths <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/specedu/fas/>

1. Streissguth & Kanter, (1997)

2. Malbin, D (2002) *Trying Differently, Not Harder* <http://www.fascets.org/>

3. Alberta Learning; www.education.alberta.ca

4. Blackburn, C; Carpenter, B; & Egerton, J; *Educating Children and Young People with Fetal alcohol Spectrum Disorders*. (2012) Routledge:London

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AND MENTAL ILLNESS (DUAL DISABILITY)

Disability Services provides a range of information sheets related to intellectual disability, for example, promoting daily living skills, depression, child development, behaviour and safety for school age students. These are available at www.sa.gov.au/disability. Within the field of intellectual disability 'dual disability' is a term that refers to the coexistence of both intellectual disability and mental illness.

What is intellectual disability?

Intellectual disability is a developmental disorder. People with intellectual disability have significantly more difficulty than others in learning new things, understanding concepts, solving problems, concentrating and remembering. Consequently, they require extra support to learn and achieve their full potential. Intellectual disability is often present from a person's early years. **It is not a mental illness.**

The international definition for intellectual disability has three criteria:

- Significant limitations in intelligence—that is an intelligence quotient (IQ) of about 70 or less as measured on a standardised intellectual assessment.
- Significant limitations in the skills needed to live and work in the community including difficulties with communication, self-care, social skills, safety and self-direction.
- Limitations in intelligence and living skills that are evident before the person is 18 years old.

All three criteria must be present for a person to be considered as having intellectual disability.

What is mental illness?

Mental illness is a general term, referring to a group of illnesses which disrupt the person's ability to work and carry out normal daily living activities and engage in meaningful personal relationships. They can come and go in a person's life lasting from a few weeks or months to years. It is not intellectual disability.

Mental health is seen along a continuum ranging from good mental health to having a diagnosed and treated mental illness. Individuals will vary in their position along this continuum at different points in their life. A person with good mental health will feel in control of their emotions have a good ability to think and reason and have positive relationships with the people around them.

The exact causes of mental illness are unclear but there are several contributing factors that have been identified as predisposing people towards developing a mental illness.

Contributing factors can include the following:

- chemical imbalances in the brain
- family history of mental illness
- stress
- drug and alcohol abuse
- psychosocial factors such as poor physical health, trauma and abuses.

Mental health aspects of intellectual disability

Mental illness can and does affect people with intellectual disability, irrespective of their level of functioning. People with intellectual disability experience the same types of mental health problems as those without disability. Between 20 and 35 per cent of people with intellectual disability will experience mental illness at some point in their life. This is a higher rate than the general population.

The presence of intellectual disability does pose particular difficulties when it comes to assessing and diagnosing mental illness. Several reasons for this include:

- the person may not be able to express symptoms or identify feelings during an assessment
- the tendency by others to attribute all forms of behaviour to the person's intellectual disability
- unusual or infrequent presentation of signs and symptoms
- the possible masking affect of medications prescribed to manage physical and/or behavioural issues
- inconsistent or missing historical information making it difficult to identify patterns of illness.

For people with intellectual disability, mental illness can seriously affect their daily functioning, jeopardise educational, vocational or housing opportunities and disrupt family, friend and community relations. The high prevalence rate of mental illness in people with intellectual disability can be attributed to a number of factors:

- fewer support networks and friendships
- increased experiences of loss, rejection, isolation
- increased likelihood of social disruptions and segregation
- low self-esteem
- lack of control over one's life
- poorer coping skills and abilities to manage stress
- poorer problem-solving and conflict resolution skills
- biological vulnerabilities including sensory impairments
- poor self-image and self-worth.
- living in inappropriate environments
- exposure to abuse, trauma exploitation, bullying.

continued

The Assessment Process

A mental health professional can assess the presence of mental illness in a person with intellectual disability. Consideration will be given to many factors, including:

- Is the person behaving in ways that are different to their usual behaviour for example changes to eating and/or sleeping patterns?
- Is the behaviour occurring across the majority of settings?
- Is the nature of the behaviour causing concern, including any available data current living, social, educational and vocational arrangements, medical background, including any family history of mental illness
- Is the person thought to be experiencing emotional reactions that are out of keeping with the situation?
- Is there an increase or reduction in the person's motivation levels and abilities to join in usual activities such as personal care, work and leisure activities?
- The person's communication abilities
- Is the person acting in a way that is dangerous to themselves or others?

Any data that has been gathered regarding any of the above is extremely valuable and should be included in the consultation and assessment process. Any change from usual patterns is significant.

Intervention and support options

There are many different types of interventions and support options available and there is no "one size fits all" approach. Different types of treatment are used for different forms of mental illness and are tailored to the individual circumstances.

Some of the current treatments include:

Psychological approaches

Psychological approaches include having the opportunity to explore problems and find some practical solutions. Traditionally these forms of therapy were thought inappropriate for work with people with intellectual disability but recent work has shown very successful outcomes using;

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT)
- Support groups

Education and Training

Social skills, anger management, relaxation,

desensitisation, stress management, self regulation and/or assertiveness training.

Positive Behaviour Support

Positive Behaviour Support incorporating learning principles and environmental interventions.

Medication

Medication prescribed under close medical supervision, particularly to monitor possible side-effects. Medication has a role to play but is most beneficial when used in conjunction with other interventions that provide opportunities for the person to manage their mental health issue.

Other Helpful Resources

- Disability Services - Centre for Disability Health
Call: 8397 8100
- SA Health Mental Health Triage Service.
Call: 13 14 65 (statewide) 24 hours, seven days a week. This service provides advice in emergencies and is the main point of access into mental health services.
- SANE Australia
SANE conducts programs, educational campaigns and research to improve the lives of people living with mental illness, their family and friends.
www.sane.org or freecall 1800 18 7263* (*mobile phone calls incur a charge)

National Association for the Dually Diagnosed (NADD) (USA)
www.thenadd.org

Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (UK)
<http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/>

University of Birmingham Learning Disabilities Medication Guideline (UK)
<http://www.ld-medication.bham.ac.uk>

Intellectual Disability Mental Health First Aid Manual
By Kitchener BA, Jorm AF, Kelly CM, Pappas, R, Frize, M. 2nd ed. Melbourne:
Orygen Youth Health Research Centre; 2010 [online]
Accessed 28/06/2011

This is a supplement to the 2nd Edition Standard Mental Health First Aid Manual. It is a resource for people supporting adults with intellectual disability who are experiencing an emerging mental health problem or mental health crisis.
www.mhfa.com.au/cms/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/2nd_edition_id_manual_dec10.pdf ■

Let's stop "tolerating" or "accepting" difference, as if we're so much better for not being different in the first place. Instead, let's celebrate difference, because in this world it takes a lot of guts to be different.

KATE BORNSTEIN

REFLECTIONS ON THE COMPLEXITY OF DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS IN STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

As I sat with my speech pathology students and the teachers from the Junior Primary classes of the Christie Downs Special Unit discussing the children in their classes I was again struck by the diversity and complexity of their children and therefore the challenging nature of the teachers' role in teaching them. We were sharing our knowledge of these children, the speech pathology students from the perspective of working individually with these children twice a week, the teachers from the perspective of working with these children in their classes' everyday and me from observing the students working with the children and observing the children at other times during the week. What a rich picture we were able to compile of the children's communication skills and their links to behaviour, literacy and maths. This compilation will be shared with the parents as part of the teachers' reporting processes, in NEP review meetings and directly as opportunities arise. The children's communication skills ranged from those listed below and included many other permutations:

- non-verbal with limited social interaction and initiation
- non-verbal with extensive social interaction and communication using other communication strategies
- verbal with severe speech impairment
- functional and effective verbal communication ("I hate brown bear it makes me angry").

The challenge for teachers and speech pathologists working with these children is in "managing" this complexity and not getting lost in the myriad of ways and approaches for assessing, planning, and teaching these children. To this end and after working in special units and schools for many years, I have developed a framework which I have shared with several sites to try and make sense of where children's communication skills are and how they can link to literacy. It is not exhaustive and could be accused of being somewhat simplistic but it does suggest a way forward in developing communication and literacy skills in children with intellectual impairments. It also allows us to gather data at key intervals which informs our planning and teaching processes.

Stage one of the framework deals with the establishment of key foundation skills for communication and literacy ie listening, looking (attention, focus, concentration, engagement), establishing/progressing an effective communication system and social interaction. At Elizabeth Special School the staff and I have developed/compiled and are trialing a range of data collection tools to map the students communication and literacy skills beginning at this stage to inform our planning and reporting processes. Methodologies/programmes which may

be required to establish and develop students' skills at this stage include:

- explicit language programming (see your speech pathologist)
- book based programming/Supported literacy approaches (see your speech pathologist)
- Picture Exchange Communication System (see SERUpdate Vol. 16 No. 2)
- TEACCH/Shoe box tasks (see <http://www.autismweb.com/teacch.htm>)
- DIR Floortime (see SERUpdate Vol 19 No 2)
- Intensive interaction (see SERUpdate Vol 19 No 2)
- AAC (see SERUpdate Vol 19 No 2)
- manual signing
- MEville to WEville see SERUpdate Vol 19 No. 4
- visual strategies (see your speech pathologist, disability coordinator or SERUpdate Vol 19 No 3)
- play (see your speech pathologist, disability coordinator or SERUpdate Vol 16 No 2)
- others (e.g. Developing independent work/play skills in students with Down Syndrome SERUpdate Vol 19 No 3).

Working with children with intellectual disability requires the use of multiple approaches and the matching of approaches and methodologies to the children's requirements not the other way around (the children having to fit the approaches that are favoured in a setting). I am yet to be convinced that any one approach will provide all the answers to developing communication and literacy skills in children with intellectual disability.

Stage two of the framework deals with the further development of the communication and literacy skills of students who have now established some of the foundational skills from Stage 1 and can be considered to have emerging communication and literacy skills. Oral language skills considered important for emergent literacy development are represented in the diagram below.



continued

Considerable skills and flexibility of approach are required to adapt programming for each of these areas for students with intellectual disabilities who may use other modes of communication but it can be done. This creativity and flexibility must also be applied to teaching the other more literacy related skills in this stage including phonological awareness, letter/sound knowledge, sight words and print awareness. Again some of the methodologies/programmes listed above need to be employed at this stage and at Stage 3 which progresses to more complex levels of communication and literacy development. This framework is a “work in progress” and is continuing to evolve through my interactions with teachers and students.

But ...you say what if a child is “stuck” at a stage and the reality is that some children with intellectual disability progress very slowly, that is the nature of their disability. There are many buts and we need to ‘chip away’ at these by continuing to

- use a range of strategies, matching them to a student’s skills, age and interests
- work from a student’s strengths rather than always on what they can’t do
- ensure our programming is interesting
- give our children a wide range of experiences at their level and beyond
- allow for plenty of repetition and practice
- ensure that our data collection tools are flexible enough to capture even small changes in students’ abilities and that we refer back to these results and reapply the tools at appropriate intervals to track progress
- programme for breadth rather than always looking at the next vertical step
- allow for transfer of training of particular skills between situations as often students with intellectual disabilities learn in very situation specific ways and do not easily make the

connections outside of these situations

- remember that it is not about us...we might be bored with a particular task or story but if the students are engaged, interacting, comfortable and motivated then learning is more likely to occur.
- remember...if the students are bored because we are inflexible and uninteresting then learning is not likely to occur.
- try new tasks and strategies and integrate these carefully into our programmes so as to build on prior knowledge and enhance the probability of success.
- persist
- look for opportunities to further our skill development and add another strategy, methodology or resource to our repertoire
- review information that has gone before e.g past SERUpdates which are available online and “select the good bits”
- contact and use SERU and other DECD personnel.

We need to remember that teamwork is critical to working with students with intellectual disability; someone once said “two heads are better than one” or “a problem shared is a problem halved”. Teamwork or partnerships between teachers and parents, teachers and SSOs, teachers and speech pathologists and teachers etc allow us to share and access a greater pool of resources and ideas to keep us motivated and enthusiastic and prevent us from feeling isolated and frustrated. Above all celebrate the successes, acknowledge the “buts” and enjoy the challenge that working with this fascinating cohort of students represents. ■

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BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND CHILDREN WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Even the most dynamic, dedicated teacher can feel lost when faced with persistent behaviour challenges in their classroom.

Many theories behind behaviour problems and strategies designed to try to ‘manage’ behaviour (e.g. talking about ‘rights’ within a classroom) seem to depend on a level of cognition that is often out of reach for children with intellectual disability. So where can teachers start when addressing behaviour issues for children with intellectual disability?

I am no expert. I still find myself genuinely challenged by managing behaviour issues. The ideas and strategies outlined in this article have been gleaned from the people that I work with, professional-development opportunities, textbooks and by trying things out in mainstream and Special Education

classrooms.

As a teacher, I have been fortunate to work with skilled school principals, DECD disability coordinators, DECD behaviour specialists, colleagues within the Special Education Teachers’ Network and inclusion specialists from outside agencies (e.g. Autism SA). All of these people have suggested and provided a wide range of ideas and resources regarding behaviour and behaviour management. The expertise of the professionals connected to a school is one of the most valuable starting points for teachers – one that can be easily forgotten amid the demands of a Special Education classroom. It’s difficult to know how to manage behaviour issues unless they have been clearly identified.

continued

Observations, along with clear feedback to parents about behaviour issues that teachers and SSOs are seeing in the classroom, are vital. For me as a teacher, documenting behaviour issues in a plan also backs this up. This might be a behaviour-management plan, drawn up using input from the teacher, parent, school principal and relevant outside agency (e.g. Autism SA). The plan might explore the child's triggers, the varying degrees of the behaviour and how the child can best be supported between the classroom and their home.

Behaviour issues and possible management strategies should also be included in the child's Negotiated Education Plan e.g. filling in a separate Learning Support Plan for behaviour, just as teachers might for spelling or reading.

Next, let's look at the classroom and what goes into running it each day. I have found that creating a flexible learning environment is a key part of balancing the demands of behaviour management for children with intellectual disability; engagement in a learning task goes at least some of the way to helping regulate behaviour. Keeping a teaching environment flexible also allows the time and 'head space' to respond to behaviour needs.

One of the strategies that I have used to help try to achieve flexibility is using a task-box system to help children access the curriculum.

For teachers unfamiliar with task-box systems, they are task-oriented approaches to helping children follow a work schedule and complete learning activities independently. Tasks might include sorting objects according to shape or colour, putting together the letters of words to match certain pictures or counting out blocks to match written numbers. The boxes are numbered and children follow a picture-cue system to work out how many boxes they need to work through to achieve a reward (e.g. free time on the computer after completing three task boxes).

The complexity of a box's contents is not necessarily the point. The aim is for a child to be able to follow a schedule and work independently. The boxes do take time to put together, and it takes practice and staff time to help children understand how a task-box system works. But when it's successful, the combination of a child being able to work without adult help (creating flexibility in the way the teacher and SSOs can use their time) and the engagement for the child of knowing they can do tasks and then enjoy a reward at the end, can help reduce behaviour problems that arise when students feel they can't do what's being asked of them academically – even if that might have been a seemingly simple pencil-paper activity.

In our classroom, we have put together task boxes

suggested in the book *How Do I Teach This Kid?*, designed some ourselves using dot-to-dots, puzzles and matching activities that we know particular children can do without adult help and have also borrowed SERU's task boxes.

We also use a 'learning board' to help create a flexible environment. The board lists the children's names and shows a picture of the learning activity that they will do for the lesson (e.g. John, spelling, Jane, maths). Each time we use the board, the majority of the activities we put up involve tasks we know certain children can do independently and also enjoy (e.g. puzzles, make-a-word, matching letters to picture cards). There would be only one or two activities that would require a teacher or SSO working closely with a child. Again, this system encourages independence (the children learn to come to the board, find their name and work out what they are doing, and then practice a task without adult help). It promotes activities designed to engage through enjoyment. Different activities can be rotated each week and the teacher can respond to who is most in need of teacher/SSO time for that lesson based on ongoing individual needs.

Once a teacher feels they have progressed some of the way to identifying potential behaviour needs and setting up a flexible, responsive classroom, it might then be time to try to look at potential resources. Here are some that I have found particularly useful in the area of behaviour:

- *The Way to A*: this book is perhaps the clearest way that I have seen behaviour choices explained to children. Rather than simply asking children to 'make a choice', *The Way to A* shows them *how* to choose between A (positive choices) and B (negative choices). To choose A, and earn rewards, a child is reminded that they could ask for help, take a break or use words to express their feelings. The book also reminds them that B choices, yelling, kicking, hitting, refusing, will ultimately see them missing out, rather than earning rewards. The A and B cards that go with this book can be stuck on children's desks as reminders to 'choose A' – and how to get there.
- *When My Worries Get Too Big* and *The Incredible 5-Point Scale*: Both of these books contain visuals to help children see where to 'place' themselves when they feel their behaviour escalating. The concept of the five-point scale can also be used to help a child regulate unhelpful behaviour (e.g. constantly asking a teacher the same question, asking them once or twice might be a 'one' on the scale, but asking them 10 times is heading towards a 'five' and shows them that they are 'losing control' of recognising how many times it's reasonable to ask a question).

continued

- *Making it a Success*, by Sue Larkey: A great overview to helping create a learning environment designed to set up children on the autism spectrum for success. Contains ideas and resources that can easily be transferred into the classroom.

Finally, it's no secret that rewards are often the backbone of behaviour management, particularly for children with intellectual disability. Frequent use of tangible rewards (e.g. stickers) is often the incentive that keeps children in Special Education classes on task.

Starting small, noticing everything and 'reward overload' are often the keys. In our class, we often use a timer-reward incentive system. For example, using visual reinforcement schedules (e.g. photos or other picture cues), we have indicated to individual children that sitting independently for, say, two minutes in a non-preferred environment or doing a non-preferred activity will earn them a reward (e.g. 10 minutes of iPad time).

Yes, behaviour issues can be among a teacher's most demanding work. But helping a child learn new and more constructive ways of engaging in the world, demonstrating positive behavior to those around them, can also be among a teacher's most rewarding work.

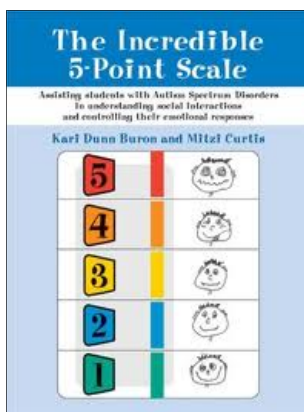
Resources:

- Hunter Manasco: *The Way to A: Empowering Children with Autism Spectrum and Other Neurological Disorders to Monitor and Replace Aggression and Tantrum Behavior.*
- Kari Dunn Buron: *When My Worries Get Too Big! A Relaxation Book for Children Who Live with Anxiety.*
- Kari Dunn Buron and Mitzi Curtis: *The Incredible 5-Point Scale. Assisting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in Understanding Social Interactions and Controlling Their Emotional Responses*
- Sue Larkey: *Making it a Success.*
- Kimberly A. Henry *How Do I Teach This Kid? Visual Work Tasks for Beginning Learners on the Autism Spectrum.* ■

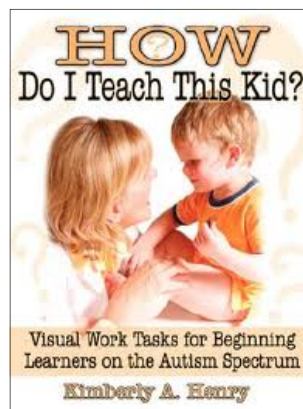
Rachel Palmer

Teacher, Special Options Class (Junior Primary), Colonel Light Gardens Primary School
Ph. 82761523

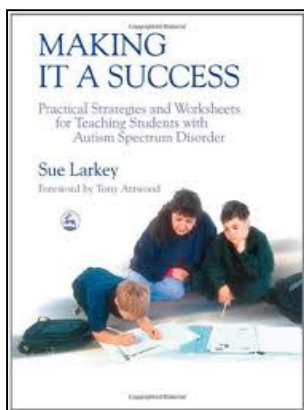
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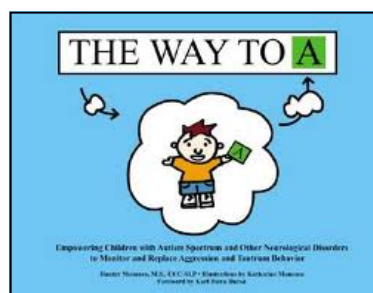
The Incredible 5 Point Scale,
Dunn, B & Curtis, M. 2003.
66.1376.01



How Do I Teach This Kid? Henry, K. 2005
19.0204.01



Making It A Success
Larkey, S. 2005
19.0088.02



The Way To A
Manasco, H. 2006
66.1403.01

continued



Painted screens by Superstars for the **Welcome 2 My World** performance outside Clare Town Hall, May 2011

I've come to understand that in a world where so much is unequal- creativity is the great equaliser.

(CLARK, 2009, P.186)

Two Arts Groups in Clare

Located in South Australia's mid-north, the Clare Valley may not be expected to be a hub of activity for young people with an intellectual disability. Yet, over the last nine years, many students from the Clare High School special class have been engaged in two Disability and Inclusive Arts groups in the community that have provided some exciting opportunities to extend and enhance their learning. Some experiences, particularly major productions such as **Welcome 2 My World** (2011) have been transformative on a personal, group and community level.

The **Superstars** program began in 2003 and the **Impromptu** choir in 2004 (originally as the Big Country Choir with other *Tutti Outreach* groups). Through these groups students have produced some stunning artwork, participated in International film festivals and operatic productions with the Tutti ensemble, accessed arts grants and produced their own dance, musical and theatrical productions. Students have developed friendships, learned new art, work and social skills and challenged perceptions of 'disability' in the community by producing high quality work. A local disability friendly community has developed around these groups. A wider disability community has been accessed through collaborations with the Tutti Ensemble, the Somersault Festival and visits to High Beam, a disability arts festival in Adelaide. Open to all young people with a disability, Superstars and the Impromptu choir also serve as post school day options, smoothing the path of transition for those already involved.

'anything is possible!'

TUTTI ENSEMBLE SONG BY PAT RIX

By being actively engaged in positive activities in the community, students have developed social networks in a relatively safe and supportive local community. This is the 'bridge building' referred to in the title of this article. Working on art projects with professional artists that engage and inspire young people to express themselves is what 'lighting fires' refers to. It is about 'sparking up' young spirits.

Superstars

The **Superstars** program has been imbedded in the **Clare HS** special class weekly program on Wednesdays and Fridays since 2006. It runs out of the Domain Internet Café, a youth centre in the middle of Clare. The Superstars brochure describes the program as 'a social club for young people living with a disability aged 13 and over. Superstars assist members in developing a sense of personal achievement and wellbeing through engaging in creative projects and social activities that provide opportunities to increase participation in the community. Superstars provides a positive, safe environment that respects the individual and recognises and develops talents, skills and friendships.' Students also attain SACE points in Arts assessments towards their Modified SACE.



Superstars photo shoot for the **Welcome 2 My World** poster

'it is about people building on opportunity, passion and belief.'

KATE JENKINS, FOUNDER OF SUPERSTARS AND IMPROMPTU CHOIR

Superstars have produced work in all of the Arts soon to be mandated by the Australian Curriculum ie Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music and Visual Arts. Both the current coordinator and the assistant coordinator are experienced professional artists.

Impromptu

The Impromptu choir meets once a fortnight, but more regularly when there are big performances coming up. Formerly known as the **Big Country Choir**, **Impromptu** describes itself as: *the choir for every country chorister...all inclusive, unique and friendly...come for to sing and make friends!!*

The Impromptu choir is inclusive of people with and without disabilities and anyone with mental health issues (ie everyone!!). Many outstanding performances have included everything from **Evolve** (2004) with the Tutti Ensemble and a 5 star review in the Adelaide Advertiser for the Shouting Fence (2009) with Tutti and SA State Opera to small venues, retirement homes, Christmas pageants, openings, Australia Day ceremonies etc. Impromptu choristers just love to sing!! In 2011, they even learned how to rap!

'The process [of building the choir] has allowed people to develop an active network not in spite of their difference but because of it. It is a fertile ground for building relationships. It goes beyond inclusiveness and I feel that we have left that behind as a group...we're creating more respectful norms'

JUDITH DAWSON,
IMPROMPTU CHORISTER AND PARENT OF TWO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES, 2012



Impromptu –an inclusive choir from Clare at their Halloween Party 2011

*When Kelsey was a baby she loved her melody,
She learned her rhythm and her giggling on her mother's knee*

*Her baby face so sweet
she spat out rhymes and beat*

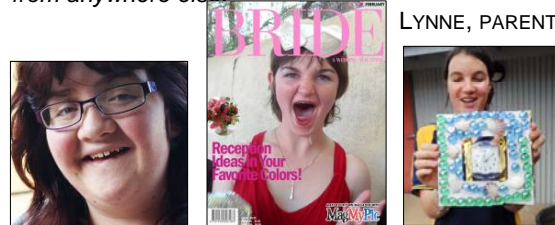
KELSEY'S SONG, *WELCOME TO MY WORLD*, 2011

One String Productions

Superstars and Impromptu have joined forces with a local drumming group, Tumbadrum, on four occasions and all groups work together under the banner of **One String Productions**. Clare HS, in partnership with Superstars, has contributed to these productions. What follows is a brief description of

each work. What is notable about all of these works is that each was conceived and developed by the three local groups. Two productions, *Travelling Light* and *Welcome 2 My World* brought in visiting directors who provided intensive workshops as part of the development process.

The biggest plus [about Superstars and Impromptu Choir] has been giving Lily a place of belonging, a place of meaning...meaning in her life. Two friends that she made through the choir, Rennie and Luci, are very important people in Lily's life...and it's hard to envisage that coming from anywhere else.'



LYNNE, PARENT OF LILY

Kelsey, Stacey and Lily- all three continue in both Superstars and Impromptu after many years.
Stacey's photo is from the 'Mag My Pic' app- a Superstar activity. Lily is holding her original clock sculpture

'The best thing about working with these groups over the years, has been watching the growth in individuals, seeing young people developing independence and confidence... seeing that growth makes it all worthwhile'

KATE JENKINS

'Sometimes there is a gestalt effect... like when we were making 'shoe sculptures'. They've all got their own eye about it. You see a young person who is making a sculpture play with some colourful pieces of plastic...all of sudden they throw a feather in and there it is...you've got an artwork that transcends the totality of its parts and [the work] reflects a unique individual'

MARCUS POSSINGHAM, SUPERSTARS
COORDINATOR AND SCULPTOR

'I'm the Ice Coffee King!!'

NICOLAS, SUPERSTAR

Original collaborative works by Superstars, Impromptu Choir/ The Big Country Choir, Clare High School + Tumbadrum aka **ONE STRING PRODUCTIONS**

• **2011 Welcome 2 My World / W2MW**

Directed by Morganics: Venue: Clare Town Hall and Adelaide Zoo. Funded by Country Arts SA

Superstars Coordinator Marcus Possingham and Artistic Director Impromptu, Paul Macleod sought the services of renowned Sydney-based Hip hop theatre director Morganics and Country Arts SA funding to produce a community beat-box, rap and break-dance workshop, a Samba workshop, 15 songs, a four song CD produced by Mikki Ross, three performances of this all original new work and a film resulted from the W2MW project.

continued

- **2009 The Rain Song**

Directed by Paul Macleod, produced by Robert Petchell; Clare Town Hall and Somersault Festival Finale at Port Adelaide. Funded by the Australia Council for the Arts

The Rain Song was conceived in response to the idea of the Umbrella Festival. Its narrative spanned the drought, the coming of rain, After Rain (song by Pat Rix) with a celebratory 'I can see clearly now...' at the end. *The Coming of Rain* was performed with body percussion and African drums by guest artist Bortier Okoe and Tumbadrum and was described by Tony Doyle as the 'best community work in the history of the festival'.

- **2008 Travelling Light**

Directed by Kat Worth. Venue: Clare Town Hall. Films by Pieter Honhoff. Funded by Richard Llewellyn Arts and Disability Trust

'Regardless of shape, ability or intellect, movement is a language that can be seen, felt, heard and interacted with.'

KAT WORTH, GUEST DIRECTOR OF TRAVELLING LIGHT- AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, RESTLESS DANCE THEATRE, 2001-2006

I do not write my own movement onto the dancers' bodies. I collate phrases and structure from the movement presented by the dancers. Their unique selves, influenced by who they are, how they think and engage with the material and how their bodies deliver the movement, determines the aesthetic look and feel of each dance.

KAT WORTH, NECESSARY GAMES
[HTTP://WWW.METROMAGAZINE.COM.AU/PDFs/STUDYGUIDES/SGNECESSARYGAMES.PDF](http://www.metromagazine.com.au/PDFs/STUDYGUIDES/SGNECESSARYGAMES.PDF)



Master Drummer Bortier with the Superstars rehearsing for *The Rain Song*-A One String Production for the Somersault Festival photo-Northern Argus 2009

- **2007 Time to Dream**

Directed by Roxanne Gallegos. Featuring the Superstars. Venue: Domain Internet Café, Clare Funded by Superstars and Clare High School Performances by The Big Country Choir and Tumbadrum

Story from Time To Dream

A girl sits on a chair centre-stage.
 She is seventeen.
 Her name is Stacey.
 Peers and adults sit in a semi-circle around her.
 The audience, completing the circle, is asked to 'mirror' whatever Stacey does.
 Many in the Clare Valley community have known Stacey for much of her life. She has Angelman's Syndrome and does not speak much more than a repeated 'Mum-mum-mum' and signing a few words. A fence has been built at home to prevent her from running into the dam. She always has a carer with her, wherever she goes.

But now, Stacey raises her hands.
 The audience raise their hands.
 Stacey claps...the audience claps.
 Stacey raises a leg...the audience raises a leg.
 At each repeated action, Stacey chortles with mirth more and more until she is literally in tears of laughter. She is clearly finding this game very funny!
 The game continues for about 10 minutes, 10 minutes of wordless dialogue.
 After the show, *Time To Dream*, audience members report feeling as if they have communicated with Stacey for the first time. This has been a very moving experience for many involved.

Time to Dream, Superstars, The Domain Internet Café 2007

*Like the hip hop, the hip hop beat
 Say what? Say what I hit the street
 I'm the good dancer
 Premier rap
 I'm the super star...that's all + that's that
 I've got the rhythm, rhythm babe
 (and I'm AWESOME!!!)*



CAMERON ERREY, SUPERSTAR OF CLARE, WELCOME 2 MY WORLD, 2011

Photo of Cameron by Sarah Cheesmur from the Tri-Leisure games 2010

Sit down, shut-up and watch!



the steering committee of a new Disability-led Film festival, with Clare Superstars Matt (far left) and Liam(far right)

Superstars are involved in a new film festival being developed by Tutti Arts et al. The aim is that people with disabilities will take the lead. It has come out of the *Oska Bright* model from England. A team from *Oska Bright* were brought out last year by Tutti and they visited Clare as part of the tour. Superstars have a history of working with film and new media independently and have participated in a local youth film festival for several years, even winning the main prize on one occasion. Sarah Cheesmur, assistant coordinator at Superstars and facilitator at *Sit down, Shut-up and Watch* talks about the *new media* and *community* aspects of the new film festival:

We have formed a relationship with a global community of other artists with disabilities. 'Under the umbrella of the Tutti Ensemble we are working towards Australia's first disability led training and film festival. This is optimised by new media and the broadband circuit. We are removing the barrier of geographical location and forming social relationships with other like minded artists with disabilities.'

continued

Research and the Australian Curriculum

Robyn Ewing (2010) recommends in her paper, *The Arts and Australian Education: Realising Potential*, that schools re-evaluate the value of community arts programs and engage with them particularly for students on the margins. She points to research Reeves (2002), Matarasso (1997) and Ruiz (2004) who clearly demonstrate the social impact benefits of community arts programs including: personal development; social cohesion; community image/regeneration and health and well-being. Growing research is casting a highly favourable light on the benefits of community arts groups that already exist in many Australian communities. South Australia is also blessed with large disability arts groups such as Tutti Arts, Restless Dance Theatre and No Strings Attached-Theatre of Disabilities all of whom can help guide anyone interested in setting up their own group. Schools can help support this process.

If it is understood that many people with disabilities find valued roles in the arts then Ewing's advocacy can be seen to relate to the goals of *Social Role Valorization (SRV)* a concept outlined by Wolfensberger (1983). SRV is described as: "*The application of what science can tell us about the enablement, establishment, enhancement, maintenance, and/or defense of valued social roles for people*"

(WOLFENBERGER, 1995A)

Jo Osburn (1998) presents a table demonstrating the *action implications* of Social Role Valorization as being 'enhancing social image' and 'enhancing personal competencies' can each be considered in the different relations of *Individual person, primary social systems, intermediate and secondary social systems* and *entire society of an individual, group or class of people*.

Superstars and Impromptu have worked for several years to enhance the 'social image' of its members at many of these levels and the same is true in regard to enhancing 'personal competencies'. The outcomes described by Ewing correlate to the experiences of those involved in the Clare groups over the best part of the last decade and it is hoped that these groups will continue to function and grow long into the future.

One cause for optimism is the new Draft Arts Curriculum in the Australian Curriculum.

For the first time since European settlement, there is about to be a national curriculum for all Australia, and one which, for the first time, mandates the Arts of dance, drama, media arts, music and visual arts as a basic entitlement for all Australians

JOHN O'TOOLE, LEAD WRITER FOR THE ARTS IN THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM IN EWING (2010)

There may be opportunities for both schools and community arts groups to work more closely that come about as a result of schools needing to fulfil their students' entitlements to a quality arts

curriculum. As has so often happened before, it may be that special educators are once again leading the way in the realisation of these partnerships. ■

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Websites and links

Draft ACARA arts curriculum

<http://www.acara.edu.au/verve/resources/Draft+Shape+Of+The+Australian+Curriculum+The+Arts-FINAL.pdf>

Disability Arts How To Manual from Restless Dance theatre, Tutti, No Strings Attached etc

<http://restlessdance.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Dot-to-Dot.pdf>

Ken Robinson, Feb 2006, TED

http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.html

research inspired social skills games

<http://www.parentingscience.com/social-skills-activities.html>

Australian research into the benefits of pretend play

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

Drama in education Robyn Ewing's project with Cate Blanchett 7:30 report

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-10-11/dramatising-the-syllabus/3503434>

social role valorization

<http://www.socialrolevalorization.com/articles/overview-of-srv-theory.html>

English Disability-led Film Festival

www.oskabright.co.uk/

Paul MacLeod

Disability Coordinator, Yorke and Mid North
paul.macleod@sa.gov.au

SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Andamooka Primary school provides information on two ways students with intellectual disabilities are supported. The first is through 'Learning Stories' and the second 'technology'.

1. Learning Stories

A learning story is a tale about what the child is learning and how they are learning. A learning story is always positive and begins with the child's interest, curiosity and engagement....what has the child chosen to do? It's a personal letter to the child.

The story is told from the storytellers perspective, ("today when I saw you do this" I could see that you were feeling a bit scared" " you had the hugest smile"). It contains some of the thoughts and feelings of the educator, for example, " I was really impressed", "I was so proud", "I know that it was hard for you".

A learning story always contains at least one photo as the children love seeing themselves and continually ask to have more pictures taken of them. The best part of the learning story is sharing it with the child, the look on their faces is priceless. They are so proud of their stories and they always want to know when we are going to write their next story.

The learning story always contains a paragraph that describes the significance of the learning taking place, for example 'when you placed the counters in groups, you were categorising, this means that you are looking and thinking about how they are the same or different'. The story has a where to next section in which the storyteller makes suggestions or offers possibilities about what other things the child could try to further develop their interest or skills.

The final part of the story gives the child a direction of where to go next with their learning. The educator might offer suggestions such as, " now that you know how to count to twenty, I would like to see you practice writing those numbers as well. " The story is then given a title, either by the child or a great title just comes to mind.

At Andamooka primary school, learning stories are used as an assessment and reporting tool. The stories provide educators with a clear picture of each child's abilities and when more stories are written about the child, their progress can be clearly tracked. All staff on the site have their own iPad, so can take photos or videos, and take notes whenever they see a 'wow-look-at-that moment' happening.

Each child has a folder and the learning stories are added to the folder as they are written. At the end of the year the folder becomes a book which has captured many of the child's magic learning moments on their learning journey.

The learning stories are shared with the child and their family and a blank page is included for the family to comment. By involving the families in the learning story process, we have found families feel much more involved in their child's schooling. The wider community, including grandparents and siblings, are reading and enjoying the stories. For some families who have not had much contact with formal education settings, it has dispelled some of the fear and mistrust that they may have had about schools.

As learning stories are shared with the child as soon as they are written, this provides a positive connection between the child and the educator and the child feels valued as an individual learner. Positive self-esteem, trust, open communication and a clear reflection of their own learning are some of the positives to the child. As educators look at each child's learning, they come to know each child's ways of learning, interests, personality and culture and have a clearer understanding of where each child is with their learning and how to move them forward.

Although sometimes we might struggle with writing the story, we find that great learning stories just beg to be written, and there is something addictive about seeing the child's face when you show the story to them.

An example of a learning story created for a child:

Good job Brady

10/5/2012

Hi Brady,

I want to let you know what a great job you are doing in phonics, spelling and maths. You have been working with me for a while now and you are always so enthusiastic about our small group times. Today, we concentrated on your sounding and then we looked at saying, sounding and writing some sight words using different mediums. We played phonics bingo, and I was very pleased when you knew all the letter names and sounds, you practiced writing the sounds on the whiteboard and then I introduced you to a new program on the I-pad. You had so much fun writing the words in fireworks that you managed to get all the words on the first list written out without realising it.

In maths, we have been looking at categorizing things. Over the last couple of days we have tried using pictures, but this was proving to be a bit of a challenge, so today, we decided to try a different approach and use lollies and chocolates instead. Do you know what? You were really interested in the lesson and you were able to successfully arrange the lollies into groups in various ways. Today you succeeded in figuring out how to categorise things according to their various attributes. I am so proud of you.

continued

What is the learning?

Brady, you have been learning your letters and sounds through the use of word games and technology, and you are having so much fun that you don't even realize how hard you are working.

In maths you learnt how to look at the individual objects in an assortment and take notice of their similarities and differences so that you could arrange them into various groups. You learnt how to describe to other people why you grouped the objects in the way you did.

Where to next?

Brady, we are going to continue to work on letter sounds by looking at the sounds made when two letters are put together.

In maths, we are going to continue looking at grouping things together in more complex ways.

Keep up the great work.

Kathy



2. Using iPads in the classroom

In our classroom we have children with a variety of needs, including those with intellectual disability and iPad technology is used with all of them. Some children confidently use it unassisted, while others require step by step instruction, but no matter what the level of competency, their enthusiasm is universal.

The iPad is used in conjunction with other methods to deliver structured speech therapy programs to a number of children. The Apps that have proved to be enduring favourites are interactive and allow the child to see and hear the letters and words. The child progresses through the programs at his/her own pace and is provided with frequent feedback and rewards. Children prefer using the iPad for phonemic awareness to writing in their books, especially if they have difficulty with muscle tone, endurance and co-ordination. It is curious to note that a child who is usually easily distracted or finds it difficult to begin a task, will happily work with the iPad for the duration of a lesson.

There are fun apps on the iPads which are used as part of our reward system. A deal is made with the child to receive a five minute reward with the iPad if they stay on task for an agreed amount of time. Negative behaviours have markedly decreased when the children know that there is a fun reward for them.

The iPad has also helped some children with their social skills, which was an unexpected bonus. The camera app assists children in learning social cues such as facial expressions and appropriate behaviours in different situations. Previously when teaching facial expressions, photos in books or line drawings were relied on, however, with the iPad, the child can photograph others or themselves and experiment with different facial expressions. The video is used to take footage of the child exhibiting appropriate situational behaviour, and then it is played back to them. Children watch the footage of themselves over and over again....it's easy, fun reinforcement.

Children are consistent in their desire to use the technologies in the classroom and are encouraged to use them with most activities as they provide wonderful hands on mediums for learning. All the classrooms, including the Kindy, have interactive whiteboards, which encourage the children to be hands on with the morning routines, phonics, and other special lessons such as languages and song and drama.

Examples of apps used include: Angry birds, Face Goo, Montessori Crosswords, Photobooth, Shape puzzle -word learning game, Early zoo, Math puppy, My world in Spanish, Ana Lomba - early languages early immersion classic storybooks. ■

Kathy Pirie

Andamooka Primary School
Ph 8672 7018



BAINS ROAD PRESCHOOL INCLUSIVE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

Bains Road Preschool, provides a specialised program for children eligible to access full time sessional pre-school, who have significant global developmental delay including a significant cognitive delay. This Inclusive Preschool Program is one of 9 in South Australian preschools.

The Preschool program provided at Bains Road is based on the National Curriculum *Belonging, Being & Becoming* with knowledge of individual child and family needs. The *Reflect, Respect, Relate* observation tool (DECD) is constantly incorporated to enhance understanding of the children and our program. The curriculum is implemented within a

play based learning environment, which is designed to support the access and participation of all children. Activities are planned based on observations, anecdotal recordings and staff discussion of individual children using current knowledge of early childhood education, methodology, growth and development.

In addition, a focus for the program is centred around **sensory based learning**. Children access a variety of equipment including hammocks, vibrating tubes, weighted vests etc which allow them to remain in a calm alert state

continued

The staff at Bains Road work within a multi-disciplinary team framework. Therapy staff from other agencies come into the centre by negotiation and work alongside preschool staff to provide input that ensures a balanced curriculum for all children.



The culture and philosophy at Bains Road Preschool celebrates each child's individual differences. Staff are dedicated to working with children with additional needs and constantly seek professional development to further develop their understanding. At Bains Road Preschool we have an enrolment number of 130 children, of which 35% have significant additional needs. From these figures it can be understood that **inclusion is part of everyday practice**; for example, we may use three to four types of communication at mat time (signing, visual cues, object cues, picture cues and verbal instruction).

The children that attend the Inclusive Preschool Program have the best of both worlds; they have access to their own outdoor environment, own separate area and a sensory room. Not only do they access these areas, but the children in the main room are encouraged to play and interact in these areas with and alongside the Inclusive Preschool Program children. We have developed a culture that any of the children that attend this centre have an ownership of where they play. There are many days when the children in the main room seek to spend time in the Inclusive Preschool Program environment or the children from the IPP are supported by all staff to play in the main area.



There is a saying and a belief at Bains Road Preschool that every staff member is responsible for the education and personal care of each child. When using the Reflect, Respect, Relate observation tool as a whole staff team, we challenge and question each other's beliefs and philosophies. The information gathered from these discussions is used to enhance the knowledge of each child and to reflect upon our set up of the environment and to look closely at the relationships with the children. In addition from these discussions all staff understand how each child communicates and learns. Therefore **each child's needs are met** in any area of the Preschool and are **each staff member's responsibility**.

Bains Road Preschool has created a positive reputation for inclusive practices throughout the Region and beyond, through DECD, support services and specialists. The staff are frequently being asked to present in different regions on a variety of topics (inclusion, sensory processing, applying the Reflect, Respect and Relate observation tool, using the *Early Years Learning Framework* document, etc). Each term a training and development session is held for support staff in the Southern region on various topics of interest and importance to the Preschool support role. We have developed relationships and a **mentoring program** throughout the region to encourage educators to come in and visit the site and spend time with the staff and the children. From these visits the **educators develop their understanding**, build resources, observe good practice and build personal confidence in working with children with significant global developmental delay including a significant cognitive delay.

Our site understands the importance of keeping our skills updated and relevant to the needs of the children. We constantly **invite experts and specialists to our site to present relevant topics**, and also seek the expertise, knowledge and resources from other services, for example, SERU, Autism SA, Novita, Disability Services, Kilparrin, DECD and private specialists and organisations. In addition the use of technology is incorporated in our practice to further enhance our children's access to the curriculum.

There is also an understanding that there needs to be a balance between technology and play based, relationship learning.

The Bains Road staff believe that it is a privilege to be working with the children, their families, their service providers and the wider community in creating a passionate environment **for all children to access the curriculum, and to reach their full potential in an inclusive and caring setting.** ■

Resource Recommendations:
Leslie Roffman & Todd Wanerman: *Including One, Including All*
Paula Kluth: *Your going to love this kid*

**Gordon Combes (Director),
Bec Fergie (IPP Teacher).**
Bains Road PreSchool.
Ph 8322 3798

All human beings are born with unique gifts. The healthy functioning community depends on realizing the capacity to develop each gift.

PETER SENGE

PROSPECT CENTRE - THE SUCCESSES AND THE CHALLENGES

The Managers of Daws Road and Prospect Transition Centres were recently invited to a symposium with their partners, Disability Employment Services (DES). It was interesting and illuminating to be part of their world and to hear about the challenges they face in trying to place our students, including those with intellectual disability, into open employment. We were told about PLUSS, a UK service provider whose vision is, "People of all abilities are inspired to achieve a career," an eloquent statement for us to adopt.



A speaker from Canberra advised the DES providers to collaborate in their efforts to find work for young people with disabilities rather than competing against each other (many already collaborate).

She spoke of 'real jobs, real money, real careers' and tellingly suggested that the Disability Employment Services focus on finding work for the *motivated* people with potential, under the premise that the less motivated will follow.

Another speaker stated that they were in the business of "selling" young people to employers and that they had to emphasise and work on the strength and credibility of their clients with employers.

This is the harsh reality of post-school life, and it serves as a demonstration of the world our students with disabilities face as jobseekers. It also helps to define the role of transition centres in this process where we develop our young people to be the best that they can. Within this framework, we work towards developing the whole 'person' rather than just the young worker.

Some of our students with intellectual disability will move from Prospect Centre into work but there are others who may require a little longer before they have developed skills and aptitudes for the workforce and for adult life. Students with intellectual disability come to the transition centres with a range of abilities and aptitudes, and often low in confidence. The students are from year level classes or from special classes and units.

Most of the students show delayed social and emotional maturity. Usually they will have recommendations from professionals for strategies such as *small group learning, approaches that embrace the students' interests, tasks that suit the interests of the learner, community-based learning and vocational programmes*. Often there is a recommendation for learning that enables access to literacy and numeracy in multi-modal formats. The transition centres are able to accommodate many of

these recommendations using individualised long-term planning processes and programmes in collaboration with schools and other agencies.

For one of our students with intellectual disability from a year level class we were able to provide a small-group learning opportunity within a Certificate 1 course whereby she gained specific skills in hospitality. She was able to practise and develop literacy aspects of hospitality and she was assessed using her relatively advanced oral communication skills. Group work skills and cooperation with peers were explicitly taught. Importantly she learnt valuable generic skills and understanding of how to apply for jobs and how to operate in the workforce. She was able to gain part-time work while still at Prospect Centre. She has since moved into open employment this year working in day options programmes with people with disabilities.

Prospect Centre encourages students with intellectual disability to register with a Disability Employment Service and to try to find a few hours of part-time work each week, either paid or voluntary, while still in school. This may mean working in the fast-food industry or in other enterprises such as car detailing or retail or working with a voluntary or charity organisation. The authentic nature of these experiences is invaluable for students who do not transfer skills and understanding readily.

For some students with intellectual disability who are not ready for open employment, an authentic and intensive work readiness course is offered in conjunction with Phoenix Society at Gepps Cross. Although this is a supported employment facility, the furniture construction work is relatively challenging and demands equal skills to an open employment position. Last year we took a group of eight students to Phoenix and two were offered positions in the factory at the end of the training. The other students will require further development to achieve at this level. This demonstrates the ever-increasing demands of the workplace today.

The employment statistics for people with intellectual disability show a much lower participation rate than for the general population. Most of the barriers to employment are due to perceptions from within the community. Our challenge is to address the needs of this group of students and equip them for valued participation in society. Fortunately most students who attend Prospect Centre demonstrate the motivation and potential to succeed. ■



Tom Clarke
Manager, Prospect Centre
Ph 8344 6508

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Daws Road Centre is a Transition Centre assisting students with disabilities into open employment, supported employment or Tafe. There are high expectations for the students while at school as this will make a difference when they enter the work force. The students are taught to have a strong work ethic as this is what employers are looking for. The curriculum areas are focussed on developing practical skills which can transfer into work situations. Work experience is essential for all our students and where possible, we will place students in open employment.

The students progress through a year of SACE to our VET offerings of Certificate 1 Hospitality, Certificate 1 Horticulture or Certificate 1 & 2 Retail Operations. The VET accreditation is Tafe and meets industry standards. If students join the program at 15 years of age, they complete 1 year of SACE and 2 years of a VET course of their choosing. This gives the students the best possible chance when they are in the employment market. In the last year of their program, they are referred to a Disability Employment Service (eg Personnel Employment) or an Australian Enterprise Service (eg Bedford).

It is wonderful to see how the ex-students have progressed since they left the DRC program. A number of the students have been interviewed to talk about their experiences and successes.

Hog's Breath Café

I feel very happy to have a job that I enjoy. I will get more confidence in myself that I am doing the right thing at work.

Every day that I work I need to do a checklist for the pass and wait station. I do the setting up to get it ready for the day that includes everything that has to be out there before the customers come into Hog's Breath Cafe. We also have to polish the cutlery, fill up the buckets, fold napkins, reset the tables and clear away the drinks from the tables.

At Daws Road Centre and Balyana Conference Centre, where I did work experience, it helped me to be able to learn what is needed to be able to have the job at Hog's Breath Café.

Rebekah Touzeau

Charles Young Retirement Home/Goodwill

My name is Kayla Blythman and I went to Daws Rd Centre between 2008 and 2010. I did the Introductory Vocational Education/Foods and the Community, Hospitality and Retail Certificates. The school I went to was Aberfoyle Park High School and I graduated at year 12 gaining my SACE. I don't have a licence to drive so I use public transport to go to places.

After I left school I started going to Personnel Employment. They are an agency that helps people with disabilities find employment. First they put me in the Personal Leadership Program or PLP for short to

help me get to know other people. I graduated from PLP after 10 weeks. I then started to volunteer at Goodwill at Christies Beach once a week. My duties included sorting clothes, pricing things, till work, putting newspaper into hand bags to make them stand better and putting clothes in to bags to take back to the warehouse as they can only be in the store a certain amount of weeks. Unfortunately they closed at Christmas due to lack of sales.

While I did job search at Personal Employment two men offered me a job at ECH the Charles Young Retirement home at Morphettville and I accepted it. Before I could work there I had to attend an all day session near Adelaide where I learnt about ECH. My job is to deliver pads and pull-ups to the residents.

I now working two days a week at the nursing home and I also volunteer at the Salvation Army Christies Beach one day a week. I am even attending Autism SA group of adult women doing meetings and going out to places.

I feel good about my progress so far thanks to the support of Daws Rd and Personnel Employment.

Kayla Blythman

Maceys/Greenbanks-Adelaide Recycling Depot

My name is Nathan and I was with the Daws Road Centre for two years. I specialised in Horticulture during this time as I really enjoy outdoors and gardening. Some months after I finished this course I was offered a fill-in position at an insulation company. Even though it wasn't gardening, I still found it enjoyable and the boss after a few months offered me a full-time job which I accepted. I have been there ever since and am coming up to the completion of my first year.

Part of my job involves assembling the insulation ready to be fitted to the workplace, where I cut the insulation before putting it in place. Then I tape the insulation to the pipe. This is done with both hot and cold piping. To insulate hot pipe, we use fibreglass and for the insulation of cold water we use foam.

Skills required: Be able to follow instructions; Follow OH&S procedures; Know angles; How to use a tape measure; How to be careful with a knife; Good communication skills; Be able to work both unsupervised and in a team; Also able to work individually.

Although I do not work with all of my fellow co-workers, I find that I get along with the people I work with well.

On the weekends, I am employed at Greenbanks, Adelaide Recycling Depot.

Nathan Patten ■

Suzette Griffiths

Daws Road Centre
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PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY AT ROMA MITCHELL SECONDARY COLLEGE

Roma Mitchell Secondary College (RMSC) is a multi campus school. It has 3 campuses, A Girls Education, Co-Education and Special Education Campus. In total there are 1100 students of these approx 80 are in the Special Education Campus, years 8 - 13. The school began in 2011. All students in the Special Education Campus have intellectual disabilities. The students, range from mild intellectual disability to severe with approximately 60% either diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or have Autistic tendencies. Like many staff, RMSC staff are dedicated to delivering the best teaching and learning programs that cater for the unique and individual nature of our students. In this article the two programs described, PECS and the Transition program, have empowered and skilled students for their future pathway options.

1. PECS

What is PECS?

Picture exchange communication system (PECS) was developed by Andrew S. Bondy, Ph.D. in 1985. It was developed as a simple augmentative and alternative communication device for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and other associated condition who have delayed speech development. PECS uses low tech materials that are readily sourced and replaced if damaged through use. The basic PECS package includes a modified binder/folder with hard plastic inserts and Velcro strips that hold the picture symbols. The communication strip is also attached to the folder via Velcro. The communication strip is the portion of the PECS folder that the student passes to the communication partner.

PECS is usually taught in six phases. In the initial phases the individual is motivated to make an exchange in order to gain access or receive a highly motivational item. This may be food, a sensory toy or activity. In the later phases individuals are taught to make comments about their environment using sentence starters such as "I hear.." and "I see..".

Why use PECS?

The PECS has been successfully used by Roma Mitchell Secondary College staff in the last couple of years.

The students are given an opportunity to acquire a socially acceptable communication skill that allows them to turn an inner desire into an external reward without having to speak. By making an exchange with a communication partner, students are learning that they can have what they need without resorting to aggression or tantrums which may have been their previous mode of communication.

PECS is a unique communication system that

addresses the teaching and learning of the initial stages of communication. It teaches individuals with ASD that for communication to be effective there has to be an exchange. This exchange takes place when the individual removes the communication strip and puts it into the hand of the communication partner.

Where is PECS taught and used?

Students at RMSC use PECS throughout the day to ask for items and make comments. Teachers structure their curriculum around the use of PECS and immerse their students in activities that require them to use their PECS folder to gain access to the curriculum. These classes begin with literacy activities that provide the students with opportunities to learn new picture symbols. These new symbols are then incorporated into the activities and likely to be added to the student PECS folder in the future. Staff support students to use PECS to ask for food items at recess and lunch and to ask for access to preferred activities or sensory items in free time and break times.

Case study of a student using PECS in the community.

When Alex* enrolled at our school he had great receptive language and limited verbal skills. With the implementation of PECS (which can be understood by the wider community) Alex quickly moved through the first 4 phases of the PECS program. Alex found his voice. However this new freedom created a new frustration when he couldn't access pictures on his folder. During phase five of PECS Alex developed speech and now has a vocabulary of 30 words that he can say clearly. Alex also uses Auslan signs to support his speech. Alex now can express feelings and is able to clearly define his needs and have these met. Alex enjoys using his PECS folder as it gives him freedom to make communication connections and relationships with people who were previously inaccessible to him and because of this, his community has been broadened. Alex is able to make his wishes known when he is on community access excursions. He uses his PECS folder to support his speech and orders his favorite cake at the local bakery.

**Name changed.*



Food is a great motivator. This PECS sentence strip "want red smartie please".

continued

How have we supported family and carers?

RMSC staff receive regular training in PECS. Our two staff members who are undertaking their accreditation to become trainers, facilitated a workshop for parents, carers and post school option providers. These successful workshops enable families, carers and post school option service providers to better understand this empowering communication system. Students in turn are supported to use their duplicate PECS folders in their life outside school.

2. Transition to Post School Options Program at Roma Mitchell College

In the Senior Years, the main focus of curriculum is to develop students' skills in order to function as independently as possible in their preferred post school pathway whether it be open employment, supported employment or day options. To strengthen and improve our offerings in this area a Transition Day program has been implemented. Currently all of the students in year 10 and above participate in the Transition Day program every Friday throughout the year. The types of programs offered and skills learnt are detailed below.

The **Canteen and Café** groups run business enterprises that develop practical kitchen skills, customer relations and organisational skills. The Canteen group work in a commercial kitchen, the Café group run a barista business. Both groups develop important team work skills as well as the ability to problem solve, show initiative and develop appropriate work ethic. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed as students record and read orders, follow recipes, write a journal, tally orders, make measurements during cooking and count and balance money.



The **Horticulture** group participate in an onsite TAFE course, Certificate 1 in Amenities Horticulture. Students develop important teamwork skills, initiative and work ethic. Students also learn safe work practices and practical skills that can be used at home or in a workplace. This course has been particularly successful, as it has led some of our students to get paid work at Bedford Adelaide Property and Gardens at Pooraka when they transition from school.

Some of our students express a desire to work in

Open Employment. These students and their families are supported to access the Statewide Transition Program. Students participate in an off-site program 1 day per week. In semester 1 they study generic work skills such as interview preparation and personal presentation. In semester 2 they select from a range of industry areas such as retail, building and construction and community services, to study a certificate 1 course. Towards the end of this course they do a work experience block. The high level of support received has meant that many of our students participating have achieved successful employment in a range of places such as cafes, factories and supermarkets.

Students also attend **industrial work experiences** at supported employment places such as Phoenix, Orana, Hands On and Bedford. The students who participate in this form of work experience gain a valuable insight into a traditional working day.

The students learn and apply safe working practices within the workplace that can also be transferred to the home environment. Students develop and consolidate teamwork skills to ensure successful completion of all tasks. During the transition day students are exposed to high standards of work and the importance of quality control. Many students have gained paid employment with these services after finishing school due to the students being exposed to the working environment throughout their schooling years. The students also have access to a workroom at school which features activities that resemble tasks that they may be given in a workplace.

The **recycling** group is in charge of collecting all the recycling material within the campus. Students work within different roles to complete all tasks, ranging from collecting and sorting to shredding of documents. The group focuses on developing teamwork skills and safety within the workplace. Students practice numeracy skills by identifying recyclable items with a monetary value.

Our pathway groups are aimed at resembling **Day Option** services. They focus on developing students' group work and life skills through various activities. The skills that the students develop in these groups help during the transition from schooling to day option services. ■

I thank and acknowledge the Special Education leadership team for their contribution to this article - Bette Pontikinas, Senior Leader; Barbara Henwood, Curriculum Coordinator; Dee Vojnovic, Literacy/Communication/ICT Coordinator; Paul Brolese, Transition /Work Education Coordinator.

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SOCIAL INCLUSION, COMMUNICATION AND INTEGRATION FOR STUDENTS WITH COMPLEX DISABILITIES AT FINDON HIGH SCHOOL SPECIAL NEEDS UNIT

At Findon High School the integration of students from the Special Needs Unit into the mainstream classes demonstrates that integration and reverse integration can occur, while still allowing for adequate adapted areas for explicit teaching, learning and personal care needs. Integration for students with complex challenges is beneficial for all participants, however the severity of multiple disabilities and complex communication needs adds another dimension to the learning environment.

Special Needs Unit students are integrated one day a week into mainstream subjects at the students relevant year levels. Some subjects chosen by the students are interest based (Home Economics, Dance, Music), and others are core subjects (English as a Second Language for our device users and SOCE).

Initially a presentation was delivered to the Findon High School (FHS) mainstream teachers about integration, and included the following points:



- Acknowledgement of the mainstream teachers who already have students with Negotiated Education Plans (NEP's) in their classes.....

“Australian research consistently finds that the most frequently reported concerns of teachers (with students with disabilities in their class) is the lack of time and the demands on instructional time” (Frolin, 2001; Westwood, 2003)

- Agreement by teachers in the FHS mainstream who have special needs students that
The other students are taught patience, respect and caring towards students with a disability. They take great pride in these children's success”
(Interviewed teacher for “Students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms report” – Shaddock; Giorcelli; Smith 2007)

- Information for teachers in the mainstream about the legalities related to the inclusion of students with disabilities into the mainstream.

- *“International agreements have confirmed the rights of students with disabilities to be educated in mainstream schools and Australian legislation supports that choice”* “Students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms report” – Shaddock; Giorcelli; Smith 2007

-Australia's Disability Discrimination Act (1992) and the Standards for Education (2005) are exerting a major influence on schools as they focus on the rights of students with a disability to access education on the same basis as students without a disability and with reasonable accommodations or adjustments.

The relevance of the above quotes resonated in particular with the mainstream teachers due to the severity and complexity of the students in the Special Needs Special Needs Unit.

Some of the students arrived at FHS with little means of communication other than eye-pointing “yes” – left, or “no” – right - and even this was intermittent. It has taken 3-4 years of consolidated work and effort for these young people to realise that they (at school):-

- a) Have a right to an opinion
- b) Have a means in which to express their opinion
- c) Have a right to make their own decisions
- d) Have the knowledge that their choice will be acted upon, respected and valued
- e) Have the right to learn the same as their mainstream peers

Today all students in the special needs Special Needs Unit have a PODD – (Pragmatically Organised Dynamic Display) that enables them to communicate their opinions, wants and dreams and has allowed them to develop and express their personalities. Through continuous use, PODD gives students the ability to organise their thoughts and present information regarding topics using their opinions and feelings, rather than answering closed questions (eg. Do you like carrots? Yes or no?) PODD is incorporated into every session, including literacy development. Staff and students have seen the benefit of being able to give more information to each other through this means of communication. PODD in its paper book form, has been the best prelude to obtaining communication devices before a communication device is provided

An intensive literacy program called the 4Blocks has been implemented as an additional step to promoting and understanding the communicative skills required in a mainstream setting, as well as for life.



continued



Four-Blocks is a balanced literacy framework, based on a comprehensive language arts model that allows students to develop their reading, writing, “speaking” and listening skills towards becoming effective, literate communicators.

The Self-Selected Reading Block; teachers help students develop a habit of reading.

The Guided Reading Block; students become aware that the ultimate objective of reading is to gather meaning from print (for pleasure, knowledge or information)

The Working with Words Block assists students to learn more about the “word level” of reading – encoding and de-coding words.

The Writing block provides the greatest opportunity for children to apply their own phonetic understanding and where students put together so much of what they’ve learned in all the blocks.

Armed with the developments of the past few years, it was necessary to embark on a further step towards the communication goal of interacting with mainstream peers. Mainstream teachers were encouraged to think creatively of how and why the special needs students can and should actively participate in their lessons.

The students in the Special Needs Unit are first and foremost Findon High School students and as such should be able to integrate with their peers in subjects. Although this is mainly performed in the Special Needs Unit setting, further learning will be promoted in the classroom setting amongst their peers.

The Benefits of Integration:

- Students who gravitate to assisting those less able than themselves develop a greater self-esteem and self-belief
- Special Needs Unit students learn to interact with mainstream teachers and peers therefore enhancing their FHS citizenship
- Academically, through participation in the learning process and interaction with their peers
- Socially and Emotionally, students feel like a part of FHS class, school and wider community
- Psychologically, integration improves the self-esteem and self-awareness of the students in the Special Needs Unit.

- Physically, being able to access the classrooms and be surrounded by peers
- Communicatively, reacting to Teachers and peers conversations and statements

Other advice/comments about students and classes:

- Teachers need to look at the students with special needs when asking them a question, and not the staff member assisting them
- Teachers need to ask the students a question, then allow time for the student to answer (with assistance from the staff member)
- The Special Needs Unit staff members are trained to support the Special Needs students and small groups of mainstream students, and are not to be left in charge of the mainstream class (eg if photocopying is required).
- The students are learning about social and required behaviour in a busy and active classroom, they can be easily distracted and will need time to adjust.
- The Special Needs Unit students love to have their peers “chat” and incorporate them into a conversation.

Be patient, by the end of the year the students from the Special Needs Unit will be regarded as just another student in the class, with additional support of course!

The tangible and observable outcomes from this integration and reverse integration are:

- Mainstream students assist the Special Needs Unit students with their communication, movement around the school and their learning, therefore accruing hours towards their Community Service awards.
- Reverse Integration: ESL and other subject teachers are encouraging their students to create/write interest based books and will read these to our students in the Special Needs Unit. A win/win situation for all.
- Some innovative teachers are asking special needs students who have iPads on their trays, to look something up for them and “tell” (with assistance) the rest of the class what they have found; mainstream students thus realise that the students in the Special Needs Unit have awareness, intellect and the capability to learn and enhance other peoples learning.



continued

Inclusive school culture is nurtured by constant development of staff capacity to include students, collaborate with other professionals and work in partnership with parents. Such a positive culture also fosters team planning, collaborative teaching, cooperative learning and transitional planning for students as they progress through their schooling. "Students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms report" – Shaddock; Giorcelli; Smith 2007

The National Disability Strategy Outcome has stated: "People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high quality education system that is responsive to their needs".

Providing specially adapted areas for teaching, personal care and therapy assistance, along with integrating special needs students into mainstream subjects and settings is an absolutely ideal situation, benefitting the entire school and wider community.

Realistically, if we only aspire to low expectations, then that is all we will ever see and all our students will ever achieve. Aim high and think big! ■

Excerpts quoted from:-
Students with Disabilities in Mainstream Classrooms (Shaddock, A; Giorcelli,L; Smith, S 2007)
National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020 (Commonwealth of Australia 2011)

Cheryl McGill
Findon High School , Special Needs Unit
Manager/Coordinator
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What would happen, they conjectured, if they simply went on assuming their children would do everything. Perhaps not quickly. Perhaps not by the book. But what if they simply erased those growth and development charts, with their precise, constricting points and curves? What if they kept their expectations but erased the time line? What harm could it do? Why not try?"

KIM EDWARDS - *The Memory Keepers Daughter*

THE ENGAGEMENT PROFILES AND SCALES AT MODBURY SPECIAL SCHOOL

In September 2010 Modbury Special School was invited to participate in the Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CLDD) Research Project lead by Professor Barry Carpenter from the UK. Two staff, a teacher and Senior Leader, were asked to undertake this research with two students. As the teacher, I was responsible for co-ordinating and collating all the data produced.

The first step was to select the students for the case studies, chosen according to how well they fitted into the *definition of Complex Learning Difficulties and Disabilities*. For example, one of the selected students has 12 identified cognitive and sensory impairments with significant health issues, whereas, the other student has ASD with an Intellectual disability and both students have challenging behaviours. After selecting these students, we were identified as key researchers in this project and were responsible for requesting permission from parents to allow students to be part of these studies. The teachers then developed 'Inquiry Frameworks for Learning' for each student with a focus on identifying the Priority issues, a key inquiry question and a specific area of learning to guide the research. The major basis for this study was to create *personalised learning pathways* for these students, therefore the

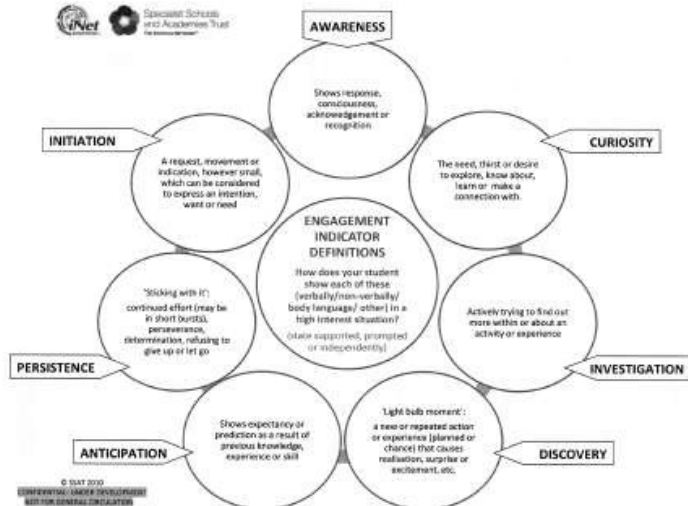
data we collected has concentrated on *engagement* in learning as an individual process.

Engagement is the single best predictor of successful learning for children with learning disabilities (Iovannone et al., 2003). Without engagement, there is no deep learning (Hargreaves, 2006), effective teaching, meaningful outcome, real attainment or quality progress (Carpenter, 2010).

The Engagement Profiles and Scales documents were used as a guide to deeper thinking about how our students were engaging with the learning tasks provided. We used observation and video taping as the source to share with our class teams and to complete data. The indicators for engagement are outlined below, used directly from the CLLD Research Project.

Engagement is multi-dimensional, and encompasses awareness, curiosity, investigation, discovery, anticipation, persistence and initiation. By focusing on these seven indicators of engagement, teachers can ask themselves questions, such as: 'How can I change the learning activity to stimulate Robert's curiosity?' 'What can I change about this experience to encourage Shannon to persist?'

continued



- Six students who met the CLDD criteria were selected for case studies.
- Weekly video taping of teacher specified tasks from the literacy learning area and preferred tasks (highly engaging).
- Editing and transferring the video tapes to USBs and DVDs for the teachers to access, observe and record data from.
- Weekly recording of engagement data by class teachers and some SSO's.
- Regular conversations with the teachers about the engagement specifics for each student and the feedback the video data provided.
- This information led to specific resources being made and environmental adjustments being put into place.

Our initial research in 2010, which included student's video tapes, engagement profiles and scales for each week of the project, was sent to the UK and processed as part of the International schools' trial and results were published online (<http://complexld.ssatrust.org.uk>).

The next step with the engagement project began late in Term 2, 2011, when I was asked to trial the process with more of our students and staff. From my previous experience of using the process, I approached the task to fit our particular site, for example:

- Slight modifications were made to the documents and parent consent forms.
- Two teachers received information on the Engagement Profiles and Scales.

The recording process was repeated each week for eight weeks, with modifications being made according to the on-going feedback. The quantity of recordings was subject to student attendance, teacher availability and student involvement on the day. Teacher feedback has been positive and has provided useful information to encourage students to increase their engagement in learning.

One of the students showed definite progress in reaching his designated Literacy goal, 'looking at a book and turning pages'. Information we received by watching each of his videos and recording engagement details led to changing the environment and making resources to personalise his learning. His engagement data and photographs of the video clips are featured in the following text.

Engagement chart and scale

Student name: JD

Age: 10

Lesson / activity: Literacy - Pre Reading

Target / strategy: Look at a book & turn pages

Date: 23/8/11

Time: 9:30am

Date for review:

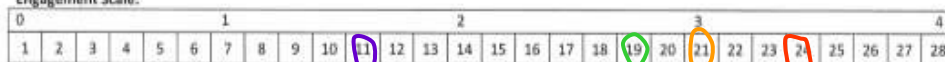
Completed by: Elizabeth Blanco

Overview of relevant issues

e.g. Environment / learner mood / noteworthy factors or differences

On file: Student is diagnosed with ASD, predominately, he also has a noted language disorder and has high sensory needs. Teacher information: previously, it has been challenging to engage J with books, he looks away, moves away or sometimes shows agitated behaviour towards others. He had been given deep pressure and Thera-putty to use, before task and his teacher expressed that this has helped him to keep calm and alert. Parent information: 'Nemo' is of interest to J. Four separate video clips and engagement charts have been filled in, to analyse his engagement in stages. 1, 2, 3, 4

Engagement Scale:



continued



1. JD engages with a preferred task



2. With the discovery of a change, he grips the putty



3. Interest & persistence is shown in the Nemo task on smartboard



4. JD initiated focused engagement with the personalised Nemo book

Since the student observations in 2011, information about the Engagement Profiles has been presented to other special schools and teachers. The next step for Modbury Special School is to:

- Present information to all MSS staff for further discussion on developing this process as a whole school procedure
- Start the school year with a more detailed learning profile of the students who are challenging to engage, or students who are considered for intensive intervention
- Consider this as a procedure that can be managed in the classroom, as part of programming and implementation
- Involve staff other than teachers to carry out the recording, with the aim to develop a common understanding of the elements of engagement,

within teams and within the whole school environment

- Review student engagement profiles in term 3 and also consider this as an ongoing and relevant and qualitative procedure for improved student learning
- Share successful procedures with other schools and educators of CLDD students.

Overall, as educators, we need to use an analytical and personalised approach to improving engagement in learning for our CLDD students, encouraging the best outcomes and wellbeing for them. ■

Elizabeth Blanco
Modbury Special School
Ph 8263 4449

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

SHine SA is the lead sexual health agency in South Australia. SHine SA works to improve the sexual health of all South Australians. One of SHine SA's target communities of interest is people with a disability. Our main focus in the area of disability is to build the capacity of workers and teachers within agencies, organisations and schools to be able to provide for the sexual health needs of their clients, including educational needs. SHine SA takes the position that it is usually people who are known to the person with a disability who are best positioned to have long term positive impact on their sexual identity, understanding, skill improvement and behaviour. Additionally, SHine SA has extremely limited capacity to respond to requests for one-on-one work with clients with a disability. Sometimes SHine SA will be better able to respond to dilemmas workers and next-of-kin face by discussing strategic approaches over the phone and recommending the most appropriate support resources.

SHine SA's Primary Health Care services are located at 3 metropolitan sites:

- Southern office: 19-23 Beach Road, Christies Beach (Tel: 8186 8600)
- East/West office: 64c Woodville Road, Woodville (Tel: 8300 5300)
- Northern office: 43 Peachey Road, Davoren Park (Tel: 8256 0700)

Also based at the Woodville site is the Workforce Development and Resources Team, whose main focus is to provide education and build the capacity of Doctors, Nurses and Midwives, Youth workers, Teachers, Aboriginal workers and Disability workers to respond to the sexual health needs of their clients. The Close the Gap team, based at Woodville, works with Aboriginal Communities in metropolitan, rural and remote parts of South Australia.

continued

The SHine SA Library and Resource Centre is also based at Woodville. Individuals can become members of the library at no cost; organisations and schools can become members of the Resource Centre at a cost of \$100 per year. The Resource Centre has a significant range of resources suitable for use in working with people with a disability, particularly those with an intellectual disability, including those of school age. The Library and Resource Centre is open 9-12.30 and 1.00-4.30pm Monday to Friday. Visitors are always welcome.

SHine SA has a particular focus on supporting schools and building the capacity of teachers to teach relationships and sexual health – this includes teachers and other school support staff who work with students with a disability. SHine SA runs training programs for workers who work with people with a disability throughout the year, several of these are specifically designed for teachers and school support staff.

People with disabilities of all ages are less likely to have had comprehensive relationships and sexual health education than people who do not have a disability. For everyone there is naturally a degree of curiosity and certainly a need to learn about relationships and sexual health. SHine SA believes all young people (including those with an intellectual disability) need education in order to prepare them to understand their own body, to be sexually healthy and to enjoy safe and respectful relationships. If someone with an intellectual disability does not understand the nature and consequences of sexual activity, then they cannot reasonably consent, negotiate or say no to sexual activity.

We know that people with disabilities are more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation. They are also more vulnerable to engaging in problematic socio-sexual behaviours. There are a variety of reasons for this including:

- They are often touched by many different family members, carers and professionals without negotiation about this, so they may learn to become compliant or to reciprocate.
- They may not have been taught about their rights and responsibilities in relation to their bodies.
- They may not understand what is happening to them.
- They are often over-protected (from positive formative learning experiences) and have restricted social life or opportunities for independence, and may lack self-esteem and confidence to be assertive.
- Assumptions are commonly made by people right across the community that young people with a disability will never have intimate relationships and therefore do not need relationships and sexual health education.

Learning about healthy relationships is an important element of relationships and sexual health education as it has been linked to physical and emotional wellbeing. It is important for young people with a disability to learn about healthy relationships so that they can enjoy relationships and feel empowered to manage or even end them if they go wrong.

A comprehensive relationships and sexual health program includes the following topics which should be introduced in an age appropriate way as they become relevant:

- body, puberty, hygiene, menstrual management, wet dreams and masturbation
- concepts of public and private as they relate to their body parts, behaviours and places
- relationships
- emotions
- sexual activity, rules about sexual behaviours and touch
- sexual relationships, feelings, and personal boundaries
- getting help from trusted people
- safer sex, contraception, condoms and how to use them

Many of these topics are reinforced through the DECD Keeping Safe: Child protection curriculum that has the four key themes of:

- the right to be safe
- relationships
- recognising and reporting abuse
- protective strategies

Resources to support this work which are in the SHine SA Library and Resource Centre include:

Comprehensive Teaching Manuals

- Every Body Needs to Know (from Family Planning Queensland); available in hard copy or PDF format
- Right To Know (from Downs Syndrome Society SA)

3D Models

- Penis and vagina models, Condom training model; Banana penis
- Anatomically correct dolls: Suzy and Fred; Tak-tak & Kar-kar
- Anatomy models

CD/DVDs

- Rules about sex (training session and CD)
- Feel Safe (Interactive CD Rom)
- Love and Kisses
- All about us
- Feeling Sexy Feeling Safe
- Kylie's Private World
- Jason's Private World

continued

- Friendships and dating: information about relationships for parents, carers and young people with a disability
- The new guide to relationships and sex

Books

- Everybody’s got a bottom (from Family Planning Queensland)
- Special Girl’s Business & Special Boy’s Business (from <http://www.secretgb.com/>)
- About Masturbation – for males (from Family Planning NSW)
- About Masturbation – for females (from Family Planning NSW)

- Puberty & Sexuality for Children and Young People with a Learning Disability – NHS Leeds, UK (downloadable via <http://www.nursingtimes.net/puberty-and-sexuality-for-children-with-learning-disabilities/5002600.article>) ■

Jane Flentje

Coordinator: Teacher Education

Ralph Brew

Coordinator: Disability Worker Education

SHine SA

Ph 83005300

THE IModeling PROGRAM, A SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT GROUP PROGRAM

The Telstra Foundation iModeling™ Project is a combined research project and social development group program for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder aged 8-12 run by Autism SA from 2009-2013. The aim of the project is to use video based interventions and information technologies to teach socio-communicative skills and self-protective behaviours in a group setting, with a focus on improved retention and generalisation of learned skills over time.

In the iModeling™ program we use two different kinds of video modeling. Firstly we use the Feed-Forward method. This is the creation of videos displaying skills that the child has not yet developed (Delano, 2007, 34). Creating Feed-Forward videos typically requires editing together components of skills that the child possesses but has not yet displayed appropriately.

Secondly we use the Positive Self-Review method. This is used to improve the frequency and/or quality of an existing behavior (Buggey, 2009, 3-4). A person is filmed performing the same skill or behaviour multiple times. The edited footage shows only the best instances of the desired behaviour.

The autism and intellectual disability group

One of the groups which is run at Autism SA is the autism and intellectual disability group. This group is a mixed gender group with children aged 8-12.

The group for children with Autism and an intellectual disability focuses on: communication skills, play skills, safety skills, and relaxation techniques.

All the skills taught in the program start at a basic entry level. This ensures that all the children will have

the same level of skills before stepping up to the next skill level.

Some of the children might already have mastered the basic level before participating in the program. These children are given the opportunity to take on a leadership role and help the other children learn the new skill.

The iModeling™ program is a group program. This means that the program is tailored for the entire group and not for each separate individual. Hence the strong focus on group activities for each session. Each session has a main learning goal however, each session will address play skills such as waiting, taking turns, joining group activities, experience being a leader in a group etc. through the activities presented in the session.

Different activities are used to teach the targeted skills: such as games, role-plays and online activities. The main goal is creating a group atmosphere where the children can feel a sense of belonging and can be valuable group members.

In the autism and intellectual disability group, the Positive Self-Review video modeling method is primarily used. This involves taking video footage of the children participating in an activity. The best instances of the children using the targeted skill are kept in the footage. With this footage a video model is created for each child. The child needs to watch each model 5 to 10 times to learn the skill and to generalise the skill.

Research Results

The Disabilities Research Unit at the University of Adelaide independently evaluates the program using the Social Skills improvement System to assess the maintenance and generalisation of learned skills. Parents are interviewed at the start of the program (baseline), at the end of the program (post-intervention) and three months after the program has finished (follow-up) to assess the level of social skills of their child.

continued

Communication Skills:	Play Skills:	Safety skills:
Saying "hello"	Taking turns	Personal space
Saying "hello how are you?"	Playing together	Boundaries of touch
Saying "goodbye"	Joining in play	Feelings
Talking about the same topic		Relaxation

Research results for the autism and intellectual disability group for 2011 show that all four of the children increased in their social skills at post-intervention and that all of the children maintained their social skills. Three of the children kept increasing their social skills after participating in the iModeling™ Program.

All parents indicated to have found the iModeling™ program to be helpful in improving the social skills for their child.

In our pilot year for the autism and intellectual disability group four of the five children increased in their social skills at post-intervention and 2 of the 5 children maintained their skills and also increased their social skills.

When we compare this to our second year for the Autism and intellectual disability group we can see that the usefulness of the program increased to a 100% success rate. From the research and insights gained in the pilot year the program was reconstructed to incorporate increased learning goals for the children and this is believed to have impacted positively on the second years results.

Parent Involvement

The iModeling™ program has a strong parent inclusion component. Parents are required to participate in parent support groups, which are during their child's session in a separate area. The aim of these sessions is for the parents to be able to build a support network and to share experiences and strategies. Three of those sessions, the Parent Safety Forums, are facilitated by a consultant from Autism SA. During this forum the topics bullying, privacy and sexuality are discussed in a safe, supportive and autism specific environment.

Whilst participating in the iModeling™ Program parents can see their child learning new skills and improving on existing skills, however parents have indicated to feel at a loss at the end of the year, as they are not able to continue the learning for their child.

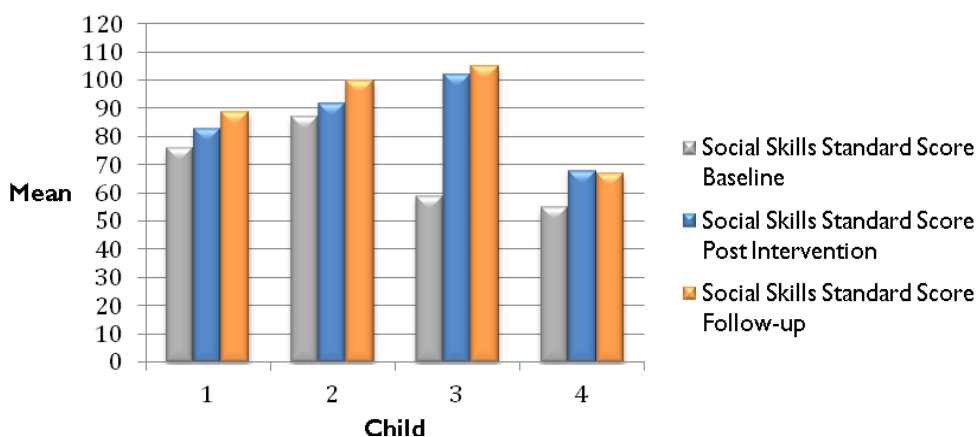
Besides creating the video models during the group sessions by the group facilitators, this year parents are also asked to create video models of the targeted skill at home. The aim of parents using video modeling at home is to give the parents the skills to implement video modeling for their child once the iModeling™ program has finished. To assist with this goal the iModeling™ Project has developed the iModeling™ application for iOS platforms available as an app for use on iPads or iPhones. This is a simple and easy to use video modeling tool, allowing parents to create their own video models wherever they are and whenever they have the time to do so.

Parents are also asked to follow up with certain skills taught in the group such as the teaching of boundaries of touch. This skill requires the parents' assistance to make it specific for their family situation, morals and beliefs. Something that is not possible in a group-orientated program. Parents can use the paper model of the Boundaries of Touch or they can use the specifically developed application for iOS platforms; the iModeling Boundaries™ app. This model is focussing on teaching the different kinds of touch that are available and combines this with the different kinds of groups of people a child will come across with in their life. Parents can upload photos of every person in the child's life into the app. The child then sorts the photos into appropriate groups with the supervision of the parent. The model allows for the child to make a choice regarding the type of touch designated for that person, for example: who to hug and who they just feel comfortable with giving a handshake. The choice of types of touch should be limited by the parents, depending on the stage of the individual's emotional development.

The research of the iModeling™ Project is, besides researching the usefulness of the social development group program, taking a new direction. A new focus of the research will be looking into the usefulness of the iModeling™ application and the iModeling Boundaries™ application. ■

For more information contact **Merel Purmer** at mpurmer@autismsa.org.au

Mean Social Skills Scores for the Boys with an ID 2011



TEACHING STUDENTS WITH MODERATE AND SEVERE DISABILITIES

Authors:

Diane M Browder & Fred Spooner

Publisher

The Guilford Press 2011

ISBN: 978 1 60623 991 9

SERU Catalogue number 09.0203.01.01

Teaching Students with Moderate and Severe Disabilities by Diane Browder and Fred Spooner was recommended reading for members of the ACARA Students with Disabilities Advisory Group.

This book is a resource for teachers with a focus on teaching academic content to students with moderate and severe disabilities and it also provides teachers with alternative and balanced information about academic and life skills learning. There are three parts:

- ✦ Part One: Educational Foundations
- ✦ Part Two: Adapting the General Education
- ✦ Part Three: Life Skills and Quality of Life

Part two of the book, Adapting the General Education Content includes a number of chapters on learning areas such as Mathematics, Science, Literacy, Social skills and Positive Behaviour Support and Comprehension. Vignettes are used as examples and in the chapter on literacy an example is provided to illustrate how a teacher uses a structured process to teach literature content to two students.

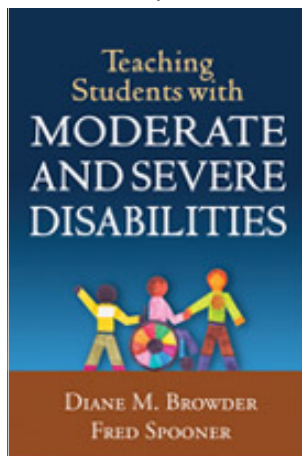
The book links Standards based IEPs and progress monitoring. If teachers substitute the American terminology to that used by teachers in South Australia this chapter shows how to develop a student's Negotiated Education Plan with linkages to assessment and reporting against a standardised learning area such as Science or Maths. Of equal importance this chapter provides information on how to teach students with severe disabilities to participate in the development of their own plans.

The chapter on Evidence-based Practices describes systematic instruction. Diane Browder asserts that, *when students fail to make progress, the most powerful variable influence learning is the method of instruction*. Choosing the right instructional strategies can be time consuming for teachers and in this chapter an overview of instructional strategies based on research are provided.

Summary

Though there is an emphasis on the United States legislative processes and requirements, it is a highly recommended resource for teachers of students with severe disabilities particularly teachers in special schools, disability units and special classes.

For specific strategies for teaching a student with severe disabilities comprehension or for researched evidence-based examples for teaching Science or Maths I would recommend this book.



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EVERY BODY NEEDS TO KNOW

EVERY BODY NEEDS TO KNOW: A sexual and reproductive health education resource for teaching people with a disability.

This kit, produced by Family Planning Queensland (FPQ), provides lesson plans which are designed for learners with a mild intellectual disability. It is designed to be used by professionals working with learners in the Middle and Senior Years. Additional strategies, suggestions and adjustments are provided for other learners with disabilities, including: Moderate Intellectual Impairment; Profound Intellectual Impairment Hearing Impairment; Autistic Spectrum Disorder; Visual Impairment; Physical Impairment; Communication Impairment; Behavioural.

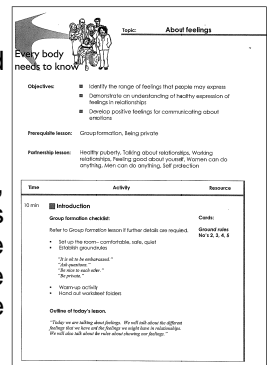
Every Body Needs to Know addresses the sexuality issues of people with a disability. They may have:

- Limited ability to acquire knowledge
- Limited peer interactions
- Difficulties in distinguishing fact from fiction
- Increased vulnerability to sexual assault and exploitation
- Difficulties determining appropriate behaviours
- Difficulties predicting consequences of actions
- High rates of sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancies and sexually related offences
- Strong negative messages about selves and sexuality

The lessons, each with a one-hour duration, are designed for small groups of 1-10 and can be adapted for individual sessions.



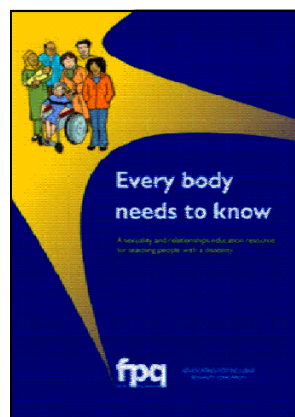
Each lesson plan includes information about the lesson content, structure, resources and worksheets and indicates the picture cards that are required. The cards depict over two hundred black and white line drawings and signs correlating to each lesson. These cards have the corresponding lessons listed on the back and one card may be used with several lessons.



An information booklet is included that details how the programme can be conducted, participants, protocols, legal issues, sensitivities, evaluation and relevant disability specific details.

The topics covered in the kit include:

- Group Formation
- Private Bodies
- Puberty
- Menstruation
- Relationships
- Sexual Relationships
- Pregnancy
- Feeling Good
- Being Safe
- Sexual Health Checks



The kit is available for loan from SERU. A CD of the program is also available for loan.

RESOURCES RELATED TO THE TOPIC

Introduction to Augmentative and Alternative Communication, 2nd ed, Von Tetzchner, S. 2000. 17.0336.01

This book is designed for families and professionals who work with severely communication impaired children, adolescents and adults who have limited spoken language and use alternative communication systems.

Growing up with Fragile X Syndrome: The Road to Marty Campbell, Iredale, R. 2011. 34.0395.01

This book traces the story of the life of a person with Fragile X. It also includes research findings and information on various health, social and economic aspects of FX.

Children with Fragile X Syndrome: A Parent's Syndrome, Weber, J. 2000. 09.0191.01

This book, written by professionals and parents, is for parents of children with Fragile X Syndrome, a condition caused by a mutation of the X chromosome.

The Challenge of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: Overcoming Secondary disabilities, Streissguth, A. & Kanter, J. 2002. 09.0188.01

This book includes a summary of recent findings and recommendations from a study carried out on people of all ages with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and fetal alcohol effects.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome & Effects: Strategies for Professionals, Malbin, D. 1993. 09.0186.01

This booklet describes the symptoms of FAS/FAE and provides a framework for understanding and guidelines for educating people about these syndromes. Strategies are also included.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Information Pack. 2005. 09.0187.01

This information pack contains materials related to fetal alcohol syndrome.

Meville to Weville Early Literacy Communication Program, Abelnec inc. 2005. 61.0963.01

Meville to Weville is a research based literacy based program that integrates reading, writing, speaking, augmentative communication and listening for early to mid primary students. It is a comprehensive, systematic instruction or approach for students with cognitive disabilities in the moderate to severe range.

The Soccer Club, Duke, S. 2009. 63.3312.02

This pack, designed for secondary aged learners, is a recount of a 19 year old boy who joins a neighbourhood soccer club. There are one or two sentences on each page of the readers with an accompanying comic style illustration. The kit contains sentence strips, flash cards, blackline masters and a CD with the story and audio recording.

Circles Level 1 - Intimacy & Relationships: Relationship Building, Champagne, M & Walker-Hirsch, L. 1993. 66.1455.01

This revised Circles program aims to teach people with disabilities social sexual concepts of personal space, social distance and social/sexual concepts.

Special Needs What to Know and What to Do, Macconville, R. 2010. 07.0030.01

This resource provides materials to be used in training and development programs to help educators identify and support students with special needs that include learning, medical and behavioural needs.

Building Social Relationships Pack, Bellini, S. 2008. 66.1402.03

This pack addresses the need for social skills programming for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders and other social difficulties. It is a comprehensive model that incorporates the following five steps: assessing social functioning, distinguishing between skill acquisition and performance deficits, selecting intervention strategies, implementing intervention and evaluating and monitoring progress.

Smart Moves: Motor Skills Development Programme, Smart CC Publishing. 2006. 43.0088.01

This programme, devised by an Occupational Therapist, aims to assist educators to evaluate learners in the early years with motor coordination difficulties and to design programmes to develop motor skills.

Real Life Writing for Lower Secondary Students, Chohen, D. 2002. 67.0568.01

This book of blackline masters provides lower secondary students with practical and common situations in which they might find themselves as they grow up.

My Sensory Book, Kerstein, L. 2008. 18.0223.01

This workbook can be used with children to assist them to understand their sensory systems better. Information about sensory integration is presented and strategies to manage the emotional and physical reaction to sensory stimuli are suggested.

It's So Much Work to be your Friend: Helping the Child with Learning Disabilities find Social Success, Lavoie, R. 2005. 18.0202.01

This book provides techniques and practical strategies designed to assist learners, aged six to seventeen, who have a learning disability to: overcome shyness and low self esteem; focus attention and avoid disruptive behavior; enjoy play and making friends; employ strategies for counteracting bullying and harassment.

Super Talker Progressive Communicator, Abeln, 2011. 61.1041.01

This resource is a voice output device which can be configured in one, two, four and eight grid formats. It features 16 minutes of recording time with variable message length and a total of eight levels of messaging capability.

Classroom language Skills for Children with Down Syndrome: A Guide for Parents and Teachers, Kumin, L. 2001. 09.0193.01

This book covers every aspect of a child's language needs from kindergarten through middle school. It provides an overview of the characteristic communication problems associated with Down Syndrome and explores the best strategies for adapting school work and improving student teacher communication.

101 Games and Activities for Children with Autism, Asperger's and Sensory Processing Disorders, Delaney, T. 2010. 19.0239.01

This book offers interactive games and activities to improve motor, language and social skills in children. Many of the games can be played indoors and outdoors and are suitable for children in preschool and the early years of schooling.

Relaxation Sensory Tub 2. 2007. 80.0331.02

This tub contains a collection of items intended to be used in relaxation sessions and for sensory development. The Sensory Integration Teacher Support Pack (18.0168.01) provides a range of related activities and suggestions for further exploration.

Communication in all Curriculum Areas: Embedded an Exchange Communication System in Learning Activities, Gant, J & Webb, P. 2002. 17.0168.01

This book is useful for any teacher with one or more nonverbal students and includes step by step instructions, personal experiences and case studies.

Tips For Toileting, Larkey, S. & Adkins, J. 2008. 19.0213.01

This guide for parents and professionals provides strategies that are applicable for a range of children with special needs. According to the authors, traditional methods of toilet training often do not work with children with autism. They need different strategies such as routines, visuals and prompting by adults.

Dual Disability Resource Directory. IDSC. 2003. 09.0185.01

Dual Disability for the purpose of this directory is defined as the coexistence of intellectual disability and mental illness. The complexity of the issues surrounding dual disability and the high rate of mental illness in the population of people with intellectual disability resulted in the production of this easy to use, informative resource.

Are you Ready? Toilet Training Package. Disability SA. 2001. 26.0138.02

This DVD is designed to assist parent/carers working with children with intellectual disability with toilet training.

Purposeful Play for Students with Severe Intellectual Disability, Hunt, M. 27.0081.01

This handbook is designed to provide information about equipment for students with severe to profound intellectual disability. It includes photographs of equipment with details on how to use them and what skills are being achieved.

Commonsense Methods for Children with Special Needs: Strategies for the Regular Classroom, Westwood, P. 2003. 34.0209.01

This book provides teachers with an immediate and comprehensive source of practical strategies for meeting children's special needs in regular classrooms and includes chapters on learning difficulties, effective instruction, behavior management, self regulation, the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and differentiation across the curriculum.

Explaining Down Syndrome, Royston, A. 2010. 60.1072.01

This title in the Explaining series helps children to understand what Down Syndrome is, how it affects people and their families and what help is available.

Exploring My Anger, Loeffler, A. 1998. 66.1480.01

This game can be played in a small group or one to one and is designed to give children an opportunity to express their anger in a safe environment and to develop a repertoire of alternatives from which to draw.

Is It Sensory or is it Behaviour? Murray-Slutsky, C. 2005. 18.0186.01

This book provides information and strategies for distinguishing between sensory based and non sensory based behaviours as well as intervention techniques. Topics addressed include causes of behavior, sensory integrative dysfunction, environmental factors that impact on behaviour, managing challenging behavior and implementing sensory diets.

Special Girls' Business, Angelo, F. et al. 2005. 66.1185.01

This book, containing simple clear pictures and limited text, takes a girl and her parents/caregivers step by step through the process of managing periods. See also 66.1352.01.01

Identifying children with special needs: Checklist for Professionals, Hannell, G. 2002. 58.0012.01

These checklists provide indicators of learners who may be at risk in a range of areas including: giftedness, intellectual disability, dyslexia, language disorders and oppositional defiant disorder.



National Year of Reading 2012

The Literacy Room

The current literacy room display is VOCABULARY. Come in and see /borrow from a range of vocabulary resources. There is information on building and extending vocabulary and fact sheets/information to take with you.

MiniLit at SERU

MultiLit has released their new *MiniLit Early Intervention Program* after five years of research and development. Like MultiLit (Making Up Lost Time In Literacy) MiniLit is an intensive literacy intervention, which is designed for children in the early years. The program is delivered in small groups by a teacher or school services officer. MiniLit incorporates the 5 Big Ideas in Beginning Reading – Vocabulary, Phonological awareness, Phonics, Fluency and Comprehension through the components of Sounds and Words, Text Reading and Storybook reading. There are two levels of the program and children can enter the program at any lesson, depending on their ability. Progress is carefully monitored by regularly testing students.



The MiniLit package consists of two days of professional training and the MiniLit Starter Kit with all the necessary teacher and student resources to run up to three groups of up to four students. Support materials can be accessed on-line if you have bought the package.

SERU has a copy of the MiniLit Program which is not for loan. However, you can visit our Literacy Room where the program is on display, and talk to one of our teachers who will show you through the program components.

Literacy Toolbox 2

Did you know you can borrow a Literacy Tool Box 2? Why not borrow one for a staff meeting? The resources focus on reading comprehension, spelling, grammar and effective teaching strategies. The titles include:

- A New Grammar Companion for Teachers - Derewianka
- Strategies That Work – Harvey & Goudis
- Guiding Thinking for Effective Spelling – Topfer & Arendt
- Read Record Respond – A. Bayetto
- Spell Record Respond – A Bayetto
- PAT-SPG Assessment
- Probe 2 Assessment
- News Talk for Teachers CD Rom

These resources are also available to borrow separately. Contact SERU for further information.

A small selection of literacy resources available at SERU

HIP Book Pack, Jennings, S. et al. 2006. 63.3328.01

The stories in this set have been written to motivate reluctant readers by providing cliffhanger situations. The reading level is aimed at year 2-3 in all books.

Team X Fluency & Vocabulary Pack, Badman, T. 2010. 63.3337.01

This pack contains six identical books, activity cards and a CD, with a focus on fluency and vocabulary.

Action Words An Introduction To Verbs in an Easy and Fun Way. 61.1081.01

This puzzle game consists of 24 self correcting matching picture and words and an activity poster. Players are required to match each picture card with the correct corresponding verb word card.

Farticus Maximus Bottomus Burps of Britannia, Arena, F. 2010. 63.3341.01

This collection of humorous short stories is suitable for learners requiring high interest low vocabulary materials.

THE IPAD FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Teachers have embraced the iPad as another teaching tool to facilitate learning for students. Teachers have explored how the iPad can be used to benefit students with intellectual disabilities as a functional tool.

Why an iPad?

- ↵ The iPad's screen uses multi-touch sensitivity and students only need to lightly tap the screen in order to achieve a response.
- ↵ The iPad has built in accessibility features for people with disabilities, such as screen reading technology.
- ↵ The iPad can be used as a communication device. Communication boards can be set up and modified quickly and easily for any given situation.
- ↵ It can be used to create visual schedules, social stories and for video modeling.
- ↵ The app store has over 500,000 apps available and many are educationally appropriate for students with intellectual disability. Many apps can be customised to meet student needs.
- ↵ The iPad with its built in accessibility features provides students with intellectual disabilities the scaffolding to formulate and express their creativity.

“Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions. Imagination is more important than knowledge.”

Lets Talk Apps!

Cause and Effect Apps

Confetti, Art of Glow, Pocket Pond, Ooze, Reactickles, Drawing with Stars, Hidden Grid, Peeping Musicians



The Arts

Glow Tunes, Virtuoso, Songify, Drawing Pad, SpinArt Studio, DoodleBuddy



Cognition

Toddler Counting, Five Sharks Swimming, Spingo!, Alien Buddies, Hairy Letters, Magical Concepts



Interactive Stories

Wonkey Donkey, AvatarBook Peter Pan, Ten Giggly Gorillas, The Cranky Bear, Hairy Maclary



Emotions

Smarty Pants (emotions), Autism Xpress



continued

Visual Schedules, Social Stories & Video Modeling

Visual Schedule Planner, First then Board, Visual Schedule, Pictello, iModeling



Communication

TapSpeak Sequence, Proloquo2go, Answers HD, Tapspeak Choice, Scene & Heard



Other useful links:

Communication Apps from Jane Farrall

<http://www.spectronicsinoz.com/article/iphoneipad-apps-for-aac>

IPAD LIBRARY

SERU iPads, available for general loan, have proved to be a very popular service as they provide borrowers with the opportunity to preview and evaluate the accessibility features of the device and a sampling of apps in the areas of language development, literacy, numeracy, augmentative communication and social skills.

In response to a recent survey, the loan period for iPads has been extended to 4 weeks for city borrowers and 6 weeks for country borrowers. The iPads are updated with additional apps on a monthly basis and at this point in time there are approximately 130 apps loaded on to the devices for evaluation. A number of tutorials have also been developed by SERU staff to assist borrowers with creating activities and resources with various apps.

ICT EQUIPMENT LOANS

SERU provides assistive technologies for short term and long term loan periods to students with a disability who attend a DECD site.

The first phase of a review of SERU's assistive technology provision processes has recently been conducted. This phase focussed on the short term loan processes in place for the trial and evaluation of devices and software. It has been decided to no longer have a short term loan process and have these assistive technologies available as general loan items to all SERU registered borrowers. This will allow easier access to these technologies and provides department educators an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the technology in the classroom environment. Parents can also borrow these technologies for home use to evaluate the effectiveness of the technology in the home environment.

The range of equipment available as a general loan item includes:

- ↳ Word processors such as Quickpads, Alpha Smart Neos
- ↳ Alternative keyboards such as Big Keys, Clevy, IntelliKeys
- ↳ Alternative pointing devices, adapted mice, trackballs, joysticks and switches
- ↳ Digital pens
- ↳ Mid tech AAC devices such as GoTalks.

Laptops with dedicated software will also be available for general loan to evaluate programs such as Clicker 6, Read and Write Gold and Dragon Dictate. Though a standard general loan period also applies to these laptops, borrowers of laptops with Dragon Dictate have an additional 2 weeks in their loan agreement.

		
Clicker 6	Read and Write Gold 10	Dragon 11

Successful use of assistive technologies involves careful planning, selection, training and monitoring. This also applies to the trialling phase of assistive technology use. It is therefore essential that borrowers of these general loan items have laid the groundwork required to ensure that a child or student accessing these technologies during the trial period is well supported in utilising the technology in a purposeful manner. The Project Officers of the Inclusive Technologies Service can assist borrowers with advice and resources.

REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Inclusive Technologies Service provides support and training opportunities and requests for these services can be lodged using the new forms available from the SERU web site.

The Inclusive Technologies Team offers an extensive range of presentations and hands-on workshops. The Request for PD form is used to request PD opportunities that can be delivered at SERU or at a site. This form can be downloaded from <http://web.seru.sa.edu.au/Workshops.htm>.

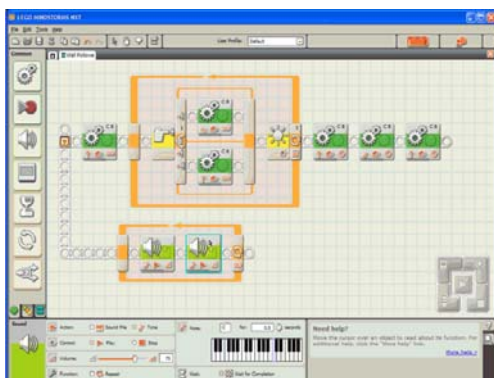
The Inclusive Technologies Service also provides professional support to schools accessing SERU's technology resource provision. The School Request for Consultation form can be downloaded from the Assistive Technology page at <http://web.seru.sa.edu.au/Equipment.htm>.

LEGO NXT ROBOTICS CLASS PACK

SERU has available a class pack of Lego NXT Robotics which can be borrowed by Special Class staff. The pack consists of four robot kits for the class to share. There is an extended loan time for this resource.



Lego NXT Robotics are LEGO models which have powered working motors and sensors; students build the models (robots) and connect them to a computer and use a visually based software tool to program the robot. The software offers an icon-based interface that enables "drag and drop" programming. The user-friendly nature of the software enables programming at all levels, from beginner to advanced. Students can develop skills within science, technology and mathematics, as well as language and literacy. Social skills and problem solving skills can be developed as students work collaboratively to carry out a range of activities to build, program and test the robot's behaviour.



MEVILLE TO WEVILLE

SERU has developed a number of MEville to WEville kits and there is an extended loan time for this resource. MEville to WEville curriculum books and the Accessory Packs are a restricted loan item and may be borrowed by DECD school staff in Special Schools / Units / Classes who work with students that have moderate to severe cognitive disabilities.



MEville to WEville is a research-based literacy program that integrates reading, writing, speaking, augmentative communication and listening for early to mid primary students with cognitive disabilities in the moderate to severe range. It consists of three units: Me, My Family and My School.

Each unit consists of 75 lessons and 60 extension activities, a book that supports the theme, support materials (eg vocabulary cards) and data collection charts. Teachers can follow the Lesson Planner or use the Create Your Own Lesson Planner format to assist in planning lessons.

MEville to WEville incorporates a range of accommodations and technologies to ensure that students can successfully participate and learn. To enable Special Schools/Units/Classes to implement the MEville to WEville Early Communication program, SERU has compiled an Accessory Pack that has many of the assistive technologies mentioned in the program. ■



The Accessory Pack contains:

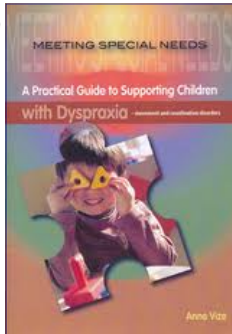
- All Turn It Spinner
- Big Mac Communicator
- Step By Step Communicator with levels
- iTalk2,
- GoTalk9+
- Jelly Bean switch
- Battery operated fan
- Battery operated scissors,
- Switch Adapted digital camera
- Universal Mounting System
- Talking photo album
- Talking symbols notepads
- VoicePod
- Bookworm

Make A Sandwich. 62.0269.02

This make a sandwich pack can be used during creative play one to one or in a small group. The pack contains brightly coloured plastic life size facsimiles of slices of bread, cheese, tomato, ham and lettuce leaves that can be used to make sandwiches

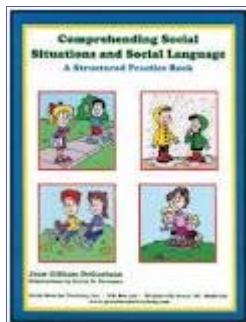
Meeting special needs a practical guide to supporting children with dyspraxia, Vize, A. 2010 18.0221.01

This book will help teachers and parents to identify children who may have dyspraxia and other movement difficulties and require intervention. Suggestions are made to help support children with a range of tasks including fine and gross motor, mealtimes, ICT and table top.



Comprehending Social situations and Social language, Degaetano, J. 2007. 66.1475.01

This book provides material for repetitious practice in understanding social situations. A short social story is read while the student looks at a picture depicting the situation. The teacher support pages provide a series of questions that can be used to help the student better understand the social problem in the story. The specific skills that are taught are listening, observing, connecting and responding. The lessons are simple, and can be used with a range of students and in a variety of contexts.



Cubes Sorting. 83. 1699. 01

These coloured wooden cubes, can be stacked or nested together, are suitable for children aged 2 years and over and can assist developing early math skills e.g. recognition of colours, shapes and size.

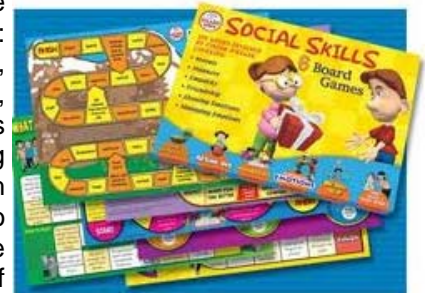
Exploring My Self-esteem, Loeffler, A. 1998. 66.1482.01



A game suitable for up to five players aged 5 to 12. Players tell stories about various aspects of their world, thereby giving the adult a chance to examine feelings, relationships, and responses to the events presented in the stories. The adult can select meaningful material from the child's stories and incorporate in strategies designed to assist the child.

Social Skills Boxed Set of Board Games. 66.1473.01

This set of 6 board games is designed to model good social skills and behaviour. The games include: morals, manners, empathy, friendship, showing emotions and managing emotions. Each game is designed to support the development of social and emotional skills and the consolidation of those already learnt.

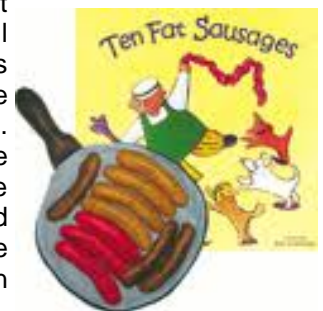


Trundle Wheel 64.1540. 01

This hard plastic coloured trundle wheel is suitable for learners aged 8 years and over. The trundle wheel can be used for a range of activities while learning how to measure length. The accompanying activity booklet provides information on how to use the wheel as a learning device. Skills developed include measurement and problem solving.

Ten Fat Sausages. 64.1536.01

This pack consists of a colourful book and a felt frying pan containing 10 felt sausages. The book has full page coloured illustrations with repetitive text at the base of one of the pages. The text on each double page has the repetitive stanzas one went pop and the other went bang and one of the numerals 10 to 0 in descending order.



Search & Find. 82.0618.01

This game can support the development of visual discrimination, matching and fine motor skills. It can be played by an individual or two or more players and consists of a wooden playing board with 16 red wooden discs and 8 wooden activity cards. The activity boards depict: what belongs together; front and back of an object/animal; what matches; positive and negative; which part is missing.

Farm Carousel 83.1715.01

This colourful, visually appealing hard plastic spinning carousel is suitable for learners from 6 months and up. When the button on the dome is depressed the farm animals inside spin around very quickly. Skills developed includes, eye hand coordination, cause and effect, and visual tracking.



Sort-n-Lock 81.1572 01

This wooden posting cube has a door on one side with a red lock which can be opened by the attached wooden blue handled key. The top of the cube has four differently shaped apertures (square, circle, rectangle, triangle). The skills it aims to develop include increasing concentration, matching, problem solving, eye hand coordination, fine motor skills, shape and colour.

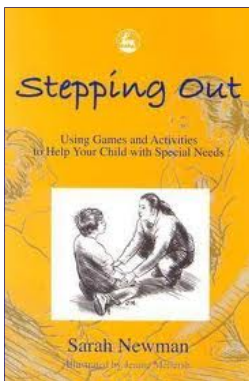
Race Car Math Game 64.1534.01

This math board game is suitable for up to four players aged 5 and over. The game consists of two different games: one for addition the other for subtraction skills. As players race their cars around and across the game board they solve equations and earn laps. The skills it develops include, addition and subtraction, turn taking, social skills.



Stepping Out, Newman, S. 2004 26. 0172. 01

This book has been written for parents/carers of children with Autism, Down Syndrome or other forms of developmental delay. It provides practical advice, games and activities that parents can use to support development of their children's skills in six areas: cognitive, physical, sensory, language, social and emotional. It is particularly relevant to primary aged children aged 3-11 and topics covered include: sleep, behaviour and toilet training.



Spinning Popping Pals 83.1716. 01

This colourful, clear plastic dome is designed to develop visual tracking, cause and effect and eye hand coordination skills. The dome encloses small coloured balls in two separate layers and pressing a large red knob on top of the dome activates the movement of the balls inside the dome. Skills developed include visual tracking, cause and effect and eye hand coordination skills.

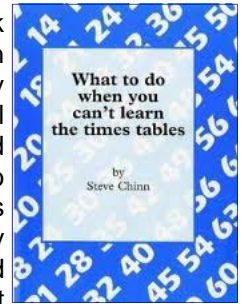
Pole Position 64.1539.01

This math board game assists players to develop their addition and subtraction skills while racing around the car track. It is suitable for 2 to 4 players, aged 4 years and over. The game also encourages observation, listening and social skills.

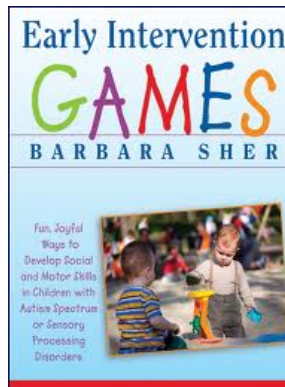


What To Do When You Can't Learn The Times Tables, Chinn, S. 2009. 64.1526.01

This book explains how to work out and remember the key facts in learning the times tables. By using a multi-sensory, sequential approach and providing worked examples the book shows how to learn the core skills. The book is divided into two sections, firstly using the times table square and then covering each number fact individually.



Early Intervention Games, Sher, B. 2009. 19.0145.01



This reference book has been written by an occupational therapist and provides a wide selection of games that can be done at home or in a classroom, including a variety that involve water play. The games are designed to assist children with Autism Spectrum or Sensory Processing Disorders to enhance and increase their social, motor and sensory skills.

Joybox 61.1073.01

A switch driver device designed to facilitate learners emulating any keyboard press or mouse click by manually depressing a switch. The Joy box consists of three large switches in red, blue and green enabling a picture clue to be placed underneath the plastic cover.



Speech In Action, Gonzalez, A et al. 2011. 61.1082.01

This resource can be used by teachers and other professionals working with children with delayed communication skills. It provides practical photocopiable lesson plans and details the simple techniques from speech and language pathology with physical exercise.

Speller Junior, Creative Educational Aids. 2011. 67.0571.02

This spelling game is designed to test the players knowledge of the spelling of up to 560 words. It provides practice and reinforcement of the spelling of these words, enriches vocabulary and supports reading and writing.

SAVE THE DATE FOR SERU WORKSHOPS

AUGUST

Wed 1st

Setting up for Success
4:00 - 5:00pm

Thurs 2nd

Supporting Children's Learning Using the iPad
1:30 - 3:30pm or 4:30 - 6:30pm

Wed 8th

Communication and Behaviour
4:00 - 6:00pm

Thurs 9th

Practical Strategies and Simple Activities for Language Interaction
10:00am - 3:00pm

Wed 15th

Introduction to Apps for Speech & Language
4:00 - 5:00pm

Wed 22nd

Introduction to Apps for Speech & Language
4:00 - 5:00pm

Mon 27th

Reluctant Readers and Assistive Technology
9:30am - 3:30pm

Wed 29th

Introduction to Clicker 6
4:30pm - 7:30pm
Basic Boardmaker 6
1:00 - 4:00pm

SEPTEMBER

Wed 5th

Creative Book Builder
4:30 - 7:30pm

Mon 24th

AAC An Overview of Apps
9:30 - 11:30am
An Introduction to Tap Speak Choice
1:00 - 4:00pm

Tue 25th

Introduction to Proloquo2go
9:30am - 12:30pm
Making Learning Accessible with the iPad
1:00 - 4:00pm

OCTOBER

Wed 17th

eBook Creation with the iPad
4:30 - 7:30pm

Wed 18th

Creative Book Builder
4:30 - 7:30pm

Saturday 20th

iCan Customise the iPad for Learners with Individual Needs and Abilities
9:30am - 12:30pm

FAMILY SESSIONS

Apps for Speech & Language in the Early Years
Friday 10th August - 10:00am - 12:00pm

SERU Open Night
Tuesday 16th October - 7:00 - 9:00pm

My Child has Been Assessed What Next?
Tuesday 11th September - 7:00 - 8:30pm

Descriptors and registration forms can be found at <http://web.seru.sa.edu.au/Workshops.htm>

SERUpdate – Term 3, 2012

Would you like to contribute an article?

The SERUpdate relies on the willingness of DECS personnel to contribute articles. Feedback from readers confirms that contributions from sites are a valuable way of keeping informed with what is happening at other schools.

The topic for the next edition of SERUpdate is **Special Education Expo**.

Presenters from the DECD Special Education Expo will contribute articles based on their presentations. Resources that are available for loan from SERU that reflect the content of the articles will be described.