

SERUpdate

VOLUME 19—NUMBER 3

SEPTEMBER 2009

Promoting Independent Learning

INTRODUCTION

This SERUpdate focuses on *Promoting Independent Learning* and the value placed on people being life long and independent learners. What then, is the implication for families and educators when working with children and students with learning difficulties through to those with severe and multiple disabilities? How do we optimise independence in learning for these learners?

In this edition we share the varied ways educators and allied health professionals support children and students to develop the necessary skills and capabilities which allow them to be actively engaged in learning experiences and to become independent and lifelong learners.

The first article *Independent Learning: What is it and how does it develop?* by Ingrid Alderton gives great insight into what it means to be an independent learner and the skills children and students need to become independent learners. The most important role of adults and educators is to structure an environment, explicitly teach skills, ensure learning experiences have meaning for the learner and provide the scaffolding and support that enables children and students to experience success as an independent learner. Importantly we are reminded that independent learning will look different for different people and that our modelling and encouragement as well as the learning experiences we structure, will enable children and students to develop the self management strategies they need to be effective learners.

Contributors to this edition bring varied

perspectives to the theme of independent learning but there is one constant belief evident - **all** children are able to learn. However, they may need specific support to be active rather than passive participants in the learning process. Our challenge as adults and educators is to provide the experiences and support that allow children and students to develop the skills and abilities that will empower them to be as independent as they can be.

The last article will be of particular interest to parents and carers. Anne Patmore, from Life's for Living, describes an on-line resource which allows families or carers to develop 'a dynamic and ongoing record of their child's life, adapting and changing just as she or he does throughout life.' The profile developed can support schools' planning to address barriers to learning and avoid parents having to tell their child's story over and over again.

Only when educators have a deep understanding of children's strengths, interests and the issues that impact on learning can they construct a relevant educational program. Importantly learning will build on current abilities and successes, have relevance to the learner and encourage their authentic engagement in learning activities. This will ensure children and students achieve optimal learning outcomes and are empowered to meaningfully participate in school and community activities.

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Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

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Opening Times →

Tuesday

8.45 am—3.00 pm



Government of South Australia
Department of Education and
Children's Services

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INDEPENDENT LEARNING—WHAT IS IT AND HOW DOES IT DEVELOP?

Educators and families will all, at different times, talk about the need for children and students to learn to be independent, to make decisions by themselves about how best to live and manage their daily life and their relationships with others, as well as being able to take responsibility for their own learning. Independent learning or self management is demonstrated by a child or student when they can take control of their own behaviour, their environment and the development of responsibility for their own social and academic learning. Educators acknowledge that it is essential for all students to have self management strategies if they are to be effective learners.

Making decisions and managing one's own learning means that children and students need to have developed values, attitudes, knowledge and skills. Adults support children and students to become independent by providing a learning environment where there are opportunities and experiences which encourage motivation, curiosity, self-confidence, self-reliance and a positive self-concept. Positive relationships are central to this. Independent learning is ongoing and a lifelong process where children and students continue to develop knowledge and skills. They make meaning for themselves, based on their understanding and how it is connected to their own experiences, interests and needs. They utilize this knowledge in a range of contexts.

Independence looks different for different individuals. Adults and educators need to encourage learning so that children and students develop independence and reflect about their decisions and judgements. These can be fostered in an environment which is sensitive, flexible, promotes "student voice" and is responsive to the needs of students. It also needs an environment where the children and students are provided with tasks that can be completed with minimal assistance.

The following skills are needed for children and students to develop as an independent learner:

- The skill of listening to a speaker
- Being confident and prepared to ask questions
- Being able to utilize cues and strategies

- Having ability to self check/self correct and monitor their own work
- Being able to set and successfully attain their goals

Listening

Students are required to spend a significant amount of the school day listening. In order to be an effective listener, attention to, and comprehension of, what is heard is required. "Effective listeners listen for the 'real content' of the message as well as listen for the 'feelings' in the message." (Bos & Vaughn 2002) Effective listeners are able to restate or summarize what is heard, identify emotions or feelings and give the speaker an opportunity to confirm or correct what is perceived to have been said by the listener.

Heaton and O'Shea (1995) suggest that the use of mnemonics assist students in remembering how to listen. The LISTEN Strategy can be used for students of all ages and is taught for the purpose of learning to listen attentively to stories. The strategy is introduced and modelled. Role play can be used in which the teacher models how attentive students listen to a story being read. Pictorial representations can be used for each word and step of the strategy instead of relying only on the words of the acronym.

LISTEN

- Look at the teacher
- Ignore the student next to you
- Stay in your place
- Try to visualise and understand the story
- Enjoy the story
- Nice job! You are a good listener.

Activities to develop and practise listening skills include sharing circles, interviewing others, providing positive or constructive feedback to others about their work. The game 'People Domino' is played by beginning with small groups of students and gradually increasing the size of the groups until finally all students are in one group. This will occur over numerous games. Students stand next to a person who is a "match" in some way eg. Mary is the first person in the chain, Boyko has the same colour t-shirt. The game can focus on relationships, attributes, opinions and skills.

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A range of listening activities can be found on the website:

http://changingminds.org/techniques/listening/types_listening.htm

Being confident and prepared to ask questions

The learning environment and the instructional approach of the teacher can significantly influence the confidence and independence of children and students particularly those with learning difficulties. Students will be motivated to learn if the learning is meaningful and if the knowledge is useful and provides a means of achieving a goal.

Classrooms where students

- know how to organise themselves
- know the class routines
- can begin tasks independently
- can maintain tasks without constantly seeking reassurance
- know what to do if experiencing difficulties
- have opportunities for regular feedback
- know how to celebrate success

will support the development of confidence and independence.

Discussion, asking and answering questions and debate will be fostered in an environment that allows students to be responsible for their classroom community that is, having a voice in 'the running of the class'. Students will be more confident in asking questions, seeking solutions and understanding that persistence in learning is to be valued and that their own actions have an influence on their successes and failures.

Skills such as asking and answering questions may need to be explicitly taught to some students. Knowing the student's skill and ability in asking and responding to different levels of questions allows the teacher to more effectively program activities for the student. Level one questions are generally stated explicitly in a text e.g. who, what, where types of questions. Level two questions are implied in a text eg how and why questions that involve a level of interpretation and analysis. Level three questions go beyond a text involving analytic questions.

In order to develop skills around questions and questioning teachers need to model good questioning skills, explicitly teach, create an atmosphere of trust and encourage questions, limit the number of questions that can be answered by only "yes" or "no," and increase wait-time between asking and answering questions to at least five seconds.

Utilising cues and strategies

Modelling, demonstration and explicit instruction provide the means for some students to transition to independence as a learner. The goal is that students will develop meta-cognitive skills so they are able to identify what they do/don't know, talk about how they are thinking, connect what they already know with what they are learning, make judgments and inferences, apply new ideas and evaluate their work.

Teachers modelling talking aloud strategies assist students to understand thinking processes. It provides students with the language they need for thinking and talking about their own thinking.

Students can partner with a peer and use a 'paired problem-solving' approach. This involves one student talking through a problem, describing his/her thinking processes. The partner listens and asks questions to help clarify thinking.

A reciprocal teaching approach utilizes a similar strategy where small groups of students take turns playing teacher, asking questions, and clarifying and summarizing.

Other approaches which facilitate independent learning include using visual cues, mind mapping, journal writing, using learning centres and research based learning.

Self checking/self correcting and monitoring their own work

A student who is effectively using meta-cognitive skills will be monitoring their own work and will be able to identify when there is a need to stop, check, modify or alter work and when there is a need to seek assistance from a peer or adult.

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Explicit teaching of strategies and cue cards or charts for students to refer to will assist them to become more effective at self checking and self monitoring.

A framework such as the 'self study technique' will not only guide students about the task, but it can also be used as a prompt for checking/monitoring what has been done, and planning and monitoring a timeline for task completion.

Self Study Technique

- Preview the passage by reading the paragraph headings.
- Recite the paragraph heading without looking.
- Ask questions about what might be important to learn.
- Read the paragraph to find the important details.
- Reread the paragraph heading & recite the important details.
- Repeat steps 1 through 5 for each paragraph.
- Rehearse by reading each paragraph heading and recall the important information.

Setting and successfully attaining their goals

Goal setting assists in the development of independent learners by providing them with a means of exploring outcomes that will be achieved, monitoring growth in learning in the short term and as a means of confirming success.

Students need explicit teaching in how to set goals. A useful model is the SMART model. Setting goals that are:

- **S**pecific - rather than broad
- **M**easurable - by identifying how the level of progress will be determined
- **A**chievable (Agreed) - by building on a student's existing skill/knowledge
- **R**ealistic - relevant to a student's level of development
- **T**ime - constrained/specific

The process of a teacher modelling and discussing what a goal is, why do people have goals, how goals can be monitored, what is needed to achieve the specific goal

supports the student in developing the skill of goal setting.

In summary, independent learners are those students who have had the experiences of seeing adults model, scaffold, and encourage them to become more skilled as listeners, effective users of cues and strategies and supported them in learning to set goals.

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http://changingminds.org/techniques/listening/types_listening.htm

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CONDUCTIVE EDUCATION—MAXIMISING INDEPENDENCE

Independence gives us the freedom to achieve our goals. Everyday we make choices, solve problems and find solutions for different situations. There are times when we need help and support from others to make choices and solve problems; there are some people who need more assistance to do the things we take for granted to help empower them to reach their full potential and fulfil their goals.

“Conductive Education (CE) teaches children and adults with physical disabilities such as Cerebral Palsy, dyspraxia, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson’s, stroke and head injuries how to overcome their movement problems to lead more independent, dignified and fulfilled lives.”

(Andrew Sutton www.conductive-education.org.uk)

In Conductive Education (CE) the focus is on the whole child. Emotional, cognitive and physical components are part of the teaching and learning program. Conductors believe that all students are able to learn and all students are acknowledged as individuals with different abilities and needs.

CE is a holistic educational approach, which works best in a group setting of peers where students are able to learn from each other and are motivated to show their skills to others in a positive, challenging and encouraging environment.



The aim is independence. CE teaches children to be as independent as possible in all situations. This doesn’t mean that they perform all physical tasks on their own, but that they are always active learners during activities and are not just passive participants.

Conductors encourage students to be successful and achieve individual goals. The daily routine, task series, facilitation and rhythmical intentions are the most important

tools in CE apart from the Conductor-Teacher who encourages the students to extend their abilities. CE provides students with a safe environment they can trust. They know that they can perform tasks safely and when they need assistance, the Conductor is there to give the extra help which will make them successful. Success gives an emotional feedback which motivates students even further.



All parents wish that their children will be independent and successful. However there are different levels of independence. In Conductive Education, success may be if a student:

- Is able to roll over in bed to change position independently
- Maintains a crossed leg sitting position independently while playing with a toy
- Takes a first step on his/her own
- Learns to hold a spoon and feed him/herself

All the tasks and programs are individually designed for each child. All students have their own individual plan and goals. The motto is: *With minimal facilitation to reach maximum independency.*



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It is very important to highlight that CE is an educational approach, not a therapy or a collection of tasks. Curriculum is the motivation and, for example, may include comprehension or maths tasks on paper but also may include 'real life situations'. Children do not always have the opportunity to be independent, because the caring environment can sometimes be over protective. Conductors teach skills for the students to become proactive and useful in their own communities.

The value of Conductive Education is evident in the comments below.

The Learning Centre Coordinator, Enza Maselli, from Kidman Primary School:

The Principles of Conductive Education program empowers students to achieve independence by providing them with problem solving strategies within the various task series.

The lying task series can be carried out either on plinths (wooden slatted tables) or on the floor and enables students to work without the constraints of gravity whilst sitting upright in a wheelchair. It incorporates the strategies of explicit instruction, explicit teaching and observational learning. The Conductor sets appropriate goals and breaks motor tasks up into small steps that students are able to carry out for themselves.

Facilitation is a term used for the selection of the most appropriate "tool" to assist the student. There is also a focus on the intention of the activity and verbal cues which assist the student to complete the activity. For example, a particular grasp or chant may guide the student.

Rhythmic Intention is a "very important and powerful tool in teaching movement. Spoken language is used as an auditory prompt in learning a motor task. The rhythm is the time given to complete the task. Rhythmic intentions assist the student to think about and anticipate what needs to be done, therefore assisting to initiate, control and complete movements. The task becomes the intention, the time given to perform it the rhythm" (Bayly B., Teacher KPPS, 2002).

The skills the students learn during the Task series can then be transferred into real life situations. For example, a student who is learning to drive a power chair needs to be able to reach out and hold onto and apply the correct pressure to the driving control. Through the task series, the student learns to reach out in front to grasp a stick, saying the intention "I reach out and hold onto the stick with my right hand." In the left hand is held another stick, but this arm needs to be still, so the intention is "I hold onto the stick with my left hand. My left arm is by my side". Emphasis is also placed on correct body alignment and knowledge of right / left side which also assists the student with driving, and the correct position the arms. As with all learning, the driving must have a purpose, so throughout the day, the student drives to where they need to go.

The skill of grasping and moving the stick can also be transferred by the student into many other aspects of their day, such as hair and



teeth brushing, using utensils during mealtimes and using pencils and paintbrushes.

Two comments from families whose children attend CE:

"We were first informed about the Conductive Education program when my grandson was around 3 years of age. We started the program working with the Conductor instructing us in an intensive program, which helped to develop physical as well as mental awareness; this was a great teaching tool for my daughter and myself. My grandson now attends the Conductive Education Mobility class every Wednesday which provides

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wonderful support to help him to achieve with both his mobility and learning, and to help him to grow and become more independent. Conductive Education is an excellent and beneficial program with very caring and dedicated staff.”

Very thankful Mother and Grandmother

“Conductive Education allows my daughter to have control and an understanding of her body which enables her to focus on other areas eg. school work. Being more confident about her body makes it easier for her to learn. Gaining head control means she is able to focus on an object/word etc. Being able to maintain a sitting position, turn her head, to look in the required direction, all contributes to helping her learn. She learns methods to assist control, to have verbal intention, which allows other functions, and helps take the focus off her lack of control. It is easier for staff to assist her with school work if she has learnt some motor control, and it also means she requires less assistance. Conductive Education keeps Rosie fit; it prevents tightness so she is more comfortable and able to learn more easily. Her self confidence and self image is improved through Conductive Education as it is a positive approach. The individual programs and functional aims give my daughter a reason for learning and therefore creating the independence that enables her to learn.”

Gill Ward and her daughter, Rosie

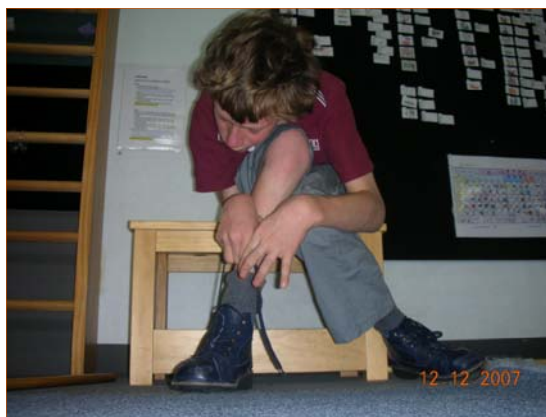
Ruth Matthews, teacher at Kidman Park Primary School:

My first teaching appointment in Special Education involved teaching students with a variety of abilities. While much was done to ensure the engagement of ambulatory students with autism, those students who were seated in wheelchairs received curriculum passively but with little real interaction.

Fast forward to my introduction to Conductive Education where teachers were expected to deliver curriculum within a framework of physical tasks and students with disabilities were expected to be engaged and respond both physically and cognitively. They did indeed respond, all students were more alert

and all students were challenged at the edge of their ability to grow holistically. Students were able to read out and give me the solutions to cognitive problems. They were able to look around their physical environment to find the answer to questions I posed. These students have been able to challenge themselves and transcend their physical disabilities to learn, communicate and on occasions be naughty. There are no passive learners in a conductive education class. All students push the boundaries to achieve an independent response to the challenges posed by their Conductors and teachers. As a teacher I am grateful to be able to work with a Conductor as my guide in posing challenges of increasing complexities to students who create independent and ingenious responses.

Conductive Education recognises that all students are able to learn, in different ways and at different paces. It is the role of the Conductor to teach the children to make decisions, to be active participants in life, to take control of their own lives and to be as independent as possible. Conductors are equally as proud when children have learnt to put their socks and shoes on, count to ten or write their name.



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SUPPORT THAT BUILDS INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN THE PRESCHOOL CONTEXT

Given that all children learn through their own experiences and discoveries, what is our role as educators in supporting those children who are yet to become active learners? How do we assist them to move forward and become independent and active learners in the preschool setting?

The challenge before us is to remove the “velcro” and support these children to develop a spirit of enquiry. For many of the children who are diagnosed with autism, communication and developmental delays much of the focus is on their access and participation. We acknowledge that the preschool environment is largely based on play but many of these children will have poor play skills with difficulties choosing and staying on task. As educators we develop individual learning plans based on skill deficits often including the goal of independence somewhere in the mix without considering the pre requisite skills needed to achieve this or how we might use the support to achieve this end. We often become fixated on the achievement of skills rather than whether children are now independently accessing the activity and achieving the goal unsupported.

We need to ask ourselves “Are we allowing them the freedom to participate, explore, revisit, reflect and then generalize the new skill across all the areas of the curriculum?”

There are a number of key areas to consider as educators if we are to support independence in learning and in accessing the preschool curriculum. These include: the interests and motivators for the child, the learning environment and how we teach and model the skill. Often we make choices around activities ignoring the interests of the child as we become focused on the skill needing to be learnt. We need to take more time to observe, be aware of children’s interests and teach the skills through these rather than always creating new activities. Understanding children’s strengths and weaknesses and what motivates them provides valuable information about the activities and materials we might use to engage them. We need to understand what style of learning suits children best whether that is visual, pragmatic or active. This in turn

informs how we deliver the program – e.g. more actively or more experientially. Many children require tasks to be broken down into more manageable steps to assist them in making the connections with other learning.

The preschool environment should be structured to encourage motivation, self confidence, curiosity, and a desire to learn. How we set up the environment is critical in developing the child’s ability to make choices, and to accessing activities at their developmental level with increasing independence. We also need to ensure that materials are appropriate and differentiated to meet the needs of the individual. If the child is functioning at a two year old level then activities and materials need to be presented at this level and easily accessed. The child needs multiple opportunities to practice, revisit and initiate the activity when the support is not there. The tendency is to have a “box of tricks” that we bring out to engage the child when we are supporting them and then remove to use another day. If we observe typical children accessing activities they have multiple opportunities to return and to practice and we know that independently succeeding in a task is a direct result of having learned and practiced the task. Therefore it is critical to provide activities within the preschool environment where the child can access and practice without support.

As educators we can provide a range of supports that eventually lead to independence. Our tendency can be to rush, rather than provide more time for practice and repetition. We need to follow the child’s lead and engage in what they are doing before we plan multiple activities that may or may not engage them, gradually adding to their repertoire with a same but different approach. Routines for example provide predictability and practice opportunities and support the child in knowing expectations. This is often supported by visual schedules and activity sequences, timers for example that lead to the child being able to follow a task through to its conclusion with ever reducing support.

SUPPORT THAT BUILDS INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN THE PRESCHOOL CONTEXT

Our role is threefold: we begin as instructors, we then guide and then facilitate. Our challenge is to make the experience more meaningful and to judge the child's readiness for a more stand back approach. Judgments then need to be made about when to intervene at those critical intervals in their learning.

In conclusion, Piaget's insight into our role as educators when supporting children to continue to build their independence in learning is aptly described in the following quote.

"In our view, the role of the teacher remains essential but very difficult to gauge: it consists essentially in arousing the child's curiosity and

in stimulating the child's research. It accomplishes this by encouraging the child to set his or her own problems, and not by thrusting problems upon the child or dictating solutions. Above all the adult must continually find fresh ways to stimulate the child's activity and be prepared to vary his or her approach as the child raises new questions or imagines new solutions"

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IT'S ALL ABOUT KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT TO DO

Students in the Special Class at Dernancourt Junior Primary School have a predictable routine and an array of visual tools that support them to understand what is expected and to engage in the learning program. Students quickly learn that they can independently manage classroom routines and learning tasks. They know help is available should they need it.

The day starts with **Morning Routine** and **Morning Activities** to accommodate different (taxi) arrival times and to allow them to begin the day in a calm way. On arrival students follow a visual prompt to

1. Identify on the **Photo Chart** how they are feeling – happy, sad, angry, tired
2. Put their lunch box and drink bottle in their basket
3. Check their **Personal Chart** for what they are to do (children have a colour code and everything related to them is that colour and often has their photo on it)

At 9.30 the class comes together as a group and the Special Helper for the day uses a **Daily Planner** to explain to the class what they will be doing for the day. A **Class Timetable** shows what students can expect for the week.

Class Rules are a reminder about what is expected and a **Behaviour Chart** helps children to follow these. Other visuals also support students to regulate their behaviour for example **Who's the Boss** pyramid, the **Great,**

Good, OK, Silly, Bad chart and the **Pooh Bear** characters where Tigger indicates High, Pooh is Just Right and Eyore is Low. If student's behaviour escalates they go to the **Thinking Chair** to reflect on - What did I do? How did this make me feel? What do I need to do? A 3 minute timer is used so that the children aim to get back to learning tasks as quickly as possible.

Visual schedules and tools are used as much as possible to engineer the classroom for success.

- Each student has a **Work Time** schedule on their desk so they know what to do and what is expected
- Cupboards are **colour coded** so that students can independently access resources and materials
- A **Today's Special Activity** chart enable students to self organize
- **Homework Cards** and **Homework Folders** ensure children have all they need to complete tasks and parents know what is expected
- **Home Routine** cards allow children to finish the day on a positive note and to self organise packing up and getting ready to go home
- **Play cards** support students to make positive play choices
- **Coloured spots** on the floor remind students where to sit in group time

IT'S ALL ABOUT KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT AND WHAT TO DO

- The **Smart Board** involves the children in interactive learning experiences as well as providing visual prompts for students to complete activities – eg reading a story and completing the follow up activity.
- The **Weekend News** folder provides a structure for families to support students share what they have done with the class

Whilst it has taken enormous amounts of time to implement these tools the benefits have also

been enormous. It is a very calm and purposeful learning environment where students quickly learn that they can self manage most learning tasks as well as their behaviour. As a result they are able to engage with learning activities and maximise their learning outcomes.

Kaye Coley

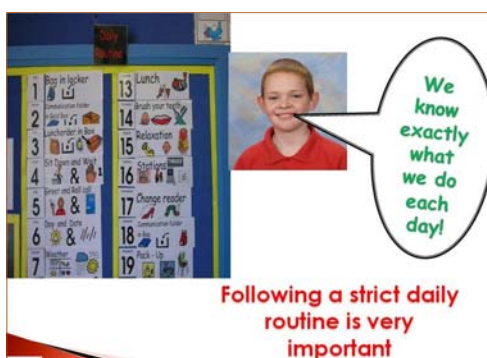
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CREATING A STUDENT CENTRED ENVIRONMENT BY USING LEARNING STATIONS

Para Hills Primary School special class caters for students in years 3 to 7. Students have a range of abilities and enjoy a positive learning experience in a student centred and highly supportive environment. Creating an atmosphere that is calm, safe and focused on the students' individual needs promotes risk taking and the development of skills to enable students to become lifelong learners.

A classroom should be a welcoming place where students can be nurtured and grow into responsible members of society. This is particularly important for students who may not have appropriate role models at home or in the media to teach them how to contribute positively to society. Students are motivated to learn when they feel a part of a positive group they can relate to. Students should feel positive about themselves and this can be achieved by feeling a sense of belonging. Team building results in improved self esteem and confidence.



Students learn best in an environment in which they can experience success and feel supported. This can be accomplished by clearly stating behavioural and work expectations which are compiled in collaboration with all students. Useful strategies are the Langford Quality Improvement Tools of Brainstorming and Y – charts to develop class values and Code of Cooperation that is signed by all students and shared with parents.

The Keys of Success provide both learning and behaviour goals for the students. Our class reward system is also based on the Keys of Success. The students are encouraged to set their own learning and behaviour goals at the

Think Time Station

When we forget to STOP and THINK!
We go to the THINK! Time Station to draw or write about another choice we could have made



beginning of each term and this encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning. Learning outcomes for all students take into account their gender, age, different abilities, cultural, social and economic backgrounds. All students have different needs and abilities and the right to be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

To teach students effectively it is necessary to implement a range of strategies to meet the individual needs of each student. Success is seen in the behavioural change that is brought about in the students. To achieve this, learning stations are set up with the support of student input about relevant themes.

What is a Learning Station?

- Learning stations are desks set up with different activities
- Each station focuses on a specific skill or ability
- Each station is furnished with written and visual directions
- Each station is equipped with the necessary equipment and materials for completing tasks
- One or more students may work at each station at the same time while the teacher and SSO circulate among the stations to monitor, assist or assess students

Students need to be involved in the positioning of the various stations and to help define what behaviour is appropriate for each learning station. It is important to support students to learn how to behave appropriately through role play and to practice this.

CREATING A STUDENT CENTRED ENVIRONMENT BY USING LEARNING STATIONS

Our learning stations

- Think Time
- Daily Writing
- Mathematics
- Computers
- Science
- Technology
- Art
- Society and Environment
- Reading
- Interactive Whiteboard
- Listening
- Health and PE
- Cooking



Visual procedures of acceptable behaviour are displayed at each learning station as reminders for students.

When planning Learning stations it is essential to focus on activities that do not require specialised skills. This promotes cooperation instead of competition. Always remember to *promote participation* rather than exclusion. Activities can be planned to have varying levels that are within a range of abilities but still provide a challenge.

In order to facilitate this type of learning a thematic approach is used. Firstly, a theme is chosen and then cross curricular planning including all learning areas occurs. Successful themes are those that students can relate to, as this facilitates an increased ability to retain and retrieve information. Activities involving cooking, craft and activities in a variety of settings are incorporated. Through the use of technology, more students have the opportunity to engage with learning. Students learn best when tasks are set at a level that is achievable, yet challenging enough to encourage students to raise their level of thinking.

Computer Stations



We are making a movie in **Windows Moviemaker** about the chocolates we made

Student comments on Learning Stations include:

- Stations support our behaviour

- We don't have to do writing in the morning
- We can move to another station when we are finished
- We can learn at our own time
- We take responsibility for our own learning
- We never get bored
- We are good at taking turns

The implementation of Learning Stations and strategies and tools to create a student centred learning environment in Para Hills Primary School special class have resulted in many success stories. These include students being

Cooking Station



Preparing vegetables for a stir-fry

Cracking eggs to make pancakes

Games Station



We are playing the Hungry Hippo and Operation

dedicated to learning, less behavioural disturbances, students feeling optimistic about their education and future as well as valued members of the school and the community. Due to improved behaviour students are more integrated in school activities. They are accepted and do not miss out on learning opportunities which results in greater academic achievements. Promoting inclusion and participation not competition, as well as accommodating a range of abilities and a focus on the child's ability not disability is optimising learning outcomes.

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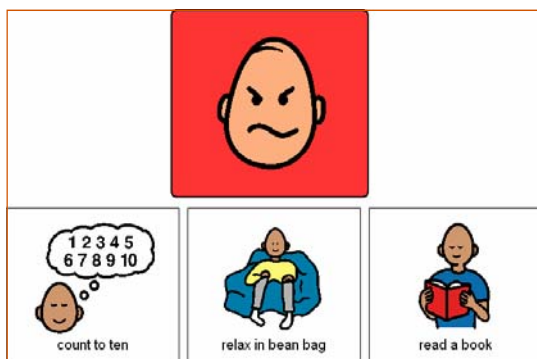
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USING VISUAL STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LEARNING

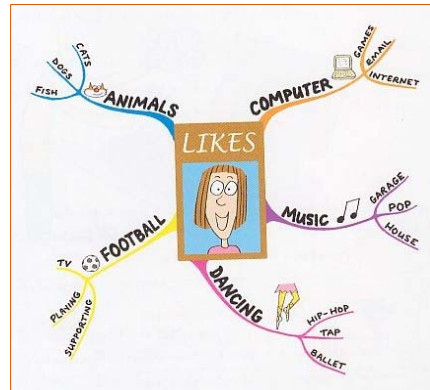
In the SERU workshops on visual strategies, one of the activities requires the participants to follow verbal instructions to complete a task using paper and scissors. It is explained that children in junior primary are able to successfully complete the task. Imagine then how they feel when they have difficulty following the instructions and sometimes end up with confetti on their table (not the required outcome)! Of course when we engage junior primary children in this task it is modelled and then the example is displayed so that it becomes a visual tool. The point of this activity is to demonstrate that using visual tools enables children to complete a task that adults find difficult or even impossible!

Following are some visual strategies to facilitate the engagement and independent learning of children with special needs. All the strategies are based on sound principles of good teaching and so will benefit most learners in an inclusive classroom. This means that they can be implemented for the whole class rather than for individual children.

1. **Self management.** Being able to identify appropriate behaviours, record them and then reward themselves means that students are less dependent on adults.



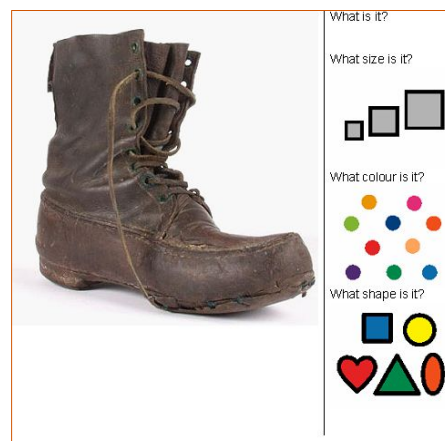
2. **Graphic organisers.** Visual supports that present concrete depictions of key ideas, showing essential concepts and the links between them. Graphic organisers can be used as a teaching tool as well as a means for students to generate, organise and record their ideas.



3. **Visual cues.** These are pictorial representations of content to assist comprehension. Visual supports help the learner maintain attention to the task, clarify expectations and encourage participation.

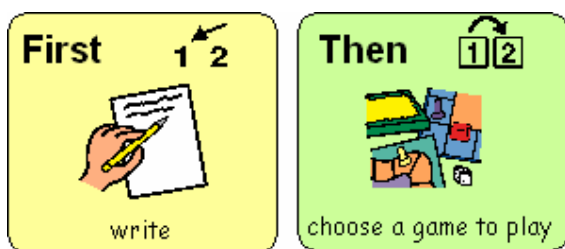
My news plan.		Name _____
When?	Who?	
What happened?		Feelings?
What happened in the end?		Feelings?

4. **Scripts.** Written or visual prompts used to initiate or sustain and interaction. Usually scripts are used to promote social interaction, but they can also be applied in classrooms to provide a way for the student to participate in learning interactions.

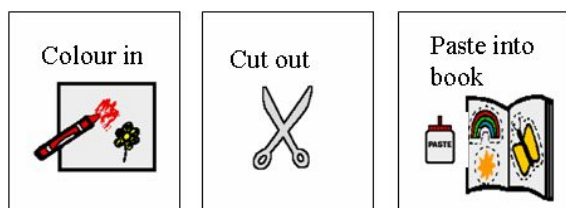


USING VISUAL STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE INDEPENDENT LEARNING

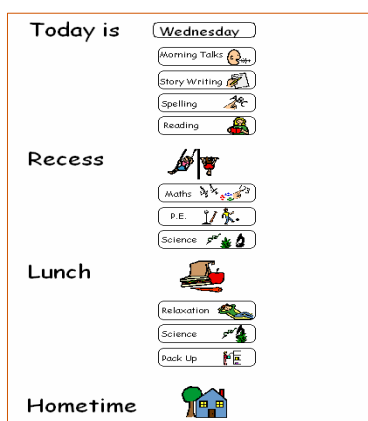
5. Task selection. Using a visual menu of choices based on student interests has been shown to increase on-task response and reduce problem behaviour. Alternating between non-preferred and preferred activities has a positive effect on academic engagement.



6. Providing directions in multiple forms. Many teachers in general education settings may often present directions for a task verbally, but many children have difficulty interpreting spoken language. By pairing verbal directions with written and pictorial representations, tasks become more inclusive of students of all abilities in the class.



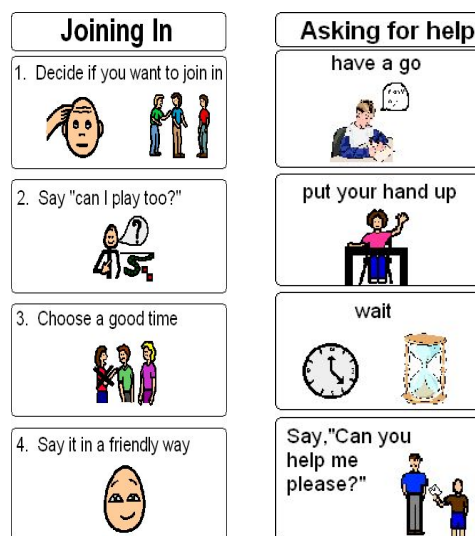
7. Activity schedules. Visual schedules (written, pictorial or both) communicate what, when and how work is to be completed. When children learn how to follow a schedule their level of independence increases and so the need for the teacher to verbally prompt is decreased.



8. Priming. It is important for children with language difficulties to be exposed to topics and activities before they are introduced to the class. Pre-tutoring exposes the student to new content in a less pressured context. Looking at books, pictures, visual texts about an upcoming topic provides an opportunity to introduce subject and topic specific vocabulary, and to practice skills that may be required.

9. Visualisation. During classroom instruction it is beneficial for students to visualise incoming information. Encourage students to create a picture in their minds and then ask them to describe what they are 'seeing'. This is also a good way to link those images to past experiences.

10. Social Stories. Carol Gray developed the visual strategy of using individualised stories to teach social skills. Social stories can also be used to enhance classroom survival skills.



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CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT LEARNERS FOR CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Psychologists working at Novita Childrens Services specialise in both educational and mental health services and address issues that may hinder children's learning experiences in their journey towards achieving their full potential. That is, they help students succeed academically, emotionally and socially.

Ultimately learning about the world we live in helps improve how we connect with it and to achieve the best possible quality of life. However, there are several factors that may present obstacles in the learning process for children with Cerebral Palsy (CP) and indeed for all of us at various times and situations in life. For some children with CP (and their families) the challenge of managing these hindrances to learning may well be a long-term issue for them, especially when these are closely related to their neurological condition. However, it is possible to work towards minimizing the impact of these obstacles.

The nature of CP often requires the involvement of a multidisciplinary team (MDT). MDT members collaborate with each other, the family, educators, and other health services to address the ongoing and changing needs of the child and family. Learning issues are also typically addressed through the collaborative efforts of the Psychologist with the child's educators, parents/carers and therapists.

What is Cerebral Palsy?

Cerebral Palsy (CP) is a developmental disability that results from damage to or dysfunction of the developing brain. It is a permanent but non-progressive physical condition that affects movement. Muscles can be stiff or tight and movements may be unpredictable. Some children may experience shaky movements or tremors. Varying degrees of disability related to functional mobility (movement and posture), daily living skills and communication/ socialisation skills may result from the impairment.

Children with mild CP often need very little support to undertake activities that most people enjoy. Others may need assistance to go to the toilet, to move (eg walker, wheelchair), eat their meals or to communicate using devices.

Difficulties Associated with CP may include:

- Eyesight Disorders
- Hearing Disorders
- Sensation
- Spatial Perception
- Speech
- Epilepsy
- Intellectual or learning disability.

Without appropriate input and support, CP not only causes physical and cognitive problems, it may also cause psychological and social difficulties that may further impact on a child's ability to learn. To treat the learning problem alone without addressing the psychological and family issues is not particularly effective. Maintaining a positive attitude and working conscientiously can present huge obstacles for children who must constantly battle to process and retain sensory information, concentrate and stay on task. Some children give up easily while others may continue to work diligently without success, repeatedly using inefficient strategies to tackle tasks. Either way, the outcome is often that the child develops a negative attitude about themselves and/or about school. Some children develop poor self-concepts in relation to how they perceive themselves and their disability and the resulting limitations they may experience –eg excessive fatigue and inability to sustain concentration, slower pace of work, moving about the class/school, eating their lunch, unclear speech that others find difficult to understand. Self-consciousness about their appearance, in the way they move or that they use a wheelchair or the weakness in their hand/leg, perception that their writing is untidy or requiring assistance in toileting or dressing for Physical Education classes further erodes their self esteem. The way each child responds to their situation is affected by many things, including their temperament, intellectual ability in terms of self-awareness and making sense of what is going on around them, how they process verbal and visual feedback, understanding or interpretation of consequences, extent of parental and sibling support and encouragement, and the suitability of their learning goals set by educators and parents in relation to the capabilities of the child.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT LEARNERS FOR CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

Opportunities for children to increase their self-esteem, sense of identity and belonging are critical and can be achieved through structuring learning situations accordingly. Experiencing success increases the child's awareness of their own abilities and develops their bank of skills. Using the child's interests and strengths to encourage participation in activities helps them develop confidence and motivation. A well-planned, consistent program will assist positive behaviour changes for the child and optimize their learning experiences. To achieve such a program, information from a comprehensive psychological assessment of abilities and behaviour is required with ongoing collaboration between disability services, school and parents to implement strategies to help the child's learning process.

The first step in addressing learning problems and/or behaviour problems is to obtain an up to date Psychological Assessment of the child's strengths and weaknesses and learning needs. The assessment may include behavioural assessments to provide a comprehensive picture of the whole child. Typically the assessment process involves the following:

- Cognitive and Learning Ability Tests
- School Achievement Tests
- Adaptive Behaviour, Self-esteem, Anxiety or Mood Rating scales
- Parent and Teacher Rating scales and checklists
- Observation of the child in the class and school environment
- Interviewing: The child, Parent(s), Teacher (s)
- Consultation with other key stakeholders
- School Meetings

Program/Intervention Development for Behaviour and Learning

Identification of obstacles to learning may be achieved through the psychology assessment process and at other times by teachers/parents raising their concerns about a specific problem they feel is negatively affecting the child's progress. Having established the child's capabilities from the previous Psychology Assessment (and other reports from the multidisciplinary team involved with the child), the process of planning a Behaviour Analysis

and a behaviour management strategy is undertaken with key staff and parent consultation/involvement.

Often interventions involve:

- Skill building elements for the child that include various combinations of the following: direct teaching of the skill level appropriate for that child, using methods compatible to the child's capabilities and often including additional sessions with the Psychologist; reinforcement for the child displaying the desired actions/behaviours; strategies for staff/parents to use to deal with the problem behaviours when they occur
- Adults and other children changing the way in which they interact with the child, such that their behaviour is consistent with facilitating the child to work towards achieving the set goal eg instructions given in one or two parts instead of long and complicated; waiting for the child to respond – often people don't allow the time for the child to process what has been said and then respond; providing feedback to the child on how they are doing in a manner that is understood by the child (verbal and visual where appropriate)
- modifying the physical environment to support the child's progress toward their goal(s) and minimise physical fatigue, eg easy access to aides such as slope board, walking frame, etc and other everyday objects in the class; correct positioning in seating for activities; modifications to toilet area and other areas of the school grounds (Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists assist schools to plan necessary modifications).

The goal of methodical behaviour management is to essentially teach children how to self regulate, handle problems constructively and acquire an appropriate work ethic, all which facilitate learning. These capacities are very important for the development of self-confidence, self-sufficiency and self-esteem.

Examples of some issues that interfere with learning where Psychologists are called upon to work with the child and assist school staff and/or parents include:

CONTRIBUTING TO THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT LEARNERS FOR CHILDREN WITH CEREBRAL PALSY

- Non-Compliance issues in class/playground/home
- Victim of bullying or teasing at school
- Social skills issues
- Toileting, continence and hygiene issues

Emotional blocks to learning:

Patterns of counterproductive, maladaptive and self-sabotaging behaviour and attitudes may be related to the child's emotional reaction to learning difficulties, disability, family problems, or their inherent disposition. Thoughts and feelings about school-related responsibilities and performance can contribute to inappropriate conduct, self-defeating attitudes, and feelings of incompetence which can result in increased procrastination, resistance to help and/or authority and irresponsible behaviours. The emotional issues are addressed by the Psychologist to assist the child to reformulate their perceptions of themselves, their abilities and their need for help and thus enable the child to gain as much as possible from their learning experiences. For example children with CP, (like many other children) may have emotional issues such as

- fears and anxiety problems: eg fear of rejection by others; fear of failure because of past struggles or of the unfamiliar task/situation or unfamiliar people; performance anxiety;
- Anger and frustration management issues where there may be a wide range of circumstances that may be the reason for maintaining or fuelling anger and frustration including prolonged significant frustration related to their disability;
- Low self-esteem, low self-confidence, poor self-image which can result in isolation, withdrawal, and passivity, or the converse being disruptive, unacceptable compensatory behaviour to disguise insecurity and inadequacy.

One on one counselling will help reveal the core problems as perceived by the child and enable appropriate interventions to be devised and implemented to improve self-esteem, coping skills and attitude. Sometimes Psychologists conduct small groups for children with similar issues.

Working with Parents:

Working with parents or caregivers is also critical in supporting them to help their child's

journey towards becoming an independent learner. They need to be aware of the challenges their child faces at school and they need to communicate their support. Their values, standards for performance and behaviour and how they communicate these, influences the child's self-concept, attitude and behaviour. The transition from external parent-based control to internal child-based control is important for the development of a child's self-concept. Psychologists help parents with these processes through 1:1 sessions, school meetings and parent groups/workshops.

Reducing dependency and increasing self-sufficiency can be a difficult and slow process for children with CP who have learning difficulties, physical limitations and social-emotional issues. The challenge for parents is getting the balance between the amount of help they give so as not to perpetuate dependency and helplessness in their child, or not providing sufficient help such that their child is likely to become increasingly demoralized and defeated. Children who feel fearful, guilty, ashamed, or insecure, may lean on others to 'rescue' them, (including teachers, tutors and peers). Counselling the child and parents helps to break the cycle of dependency, as well as working with the education staff to address the inappropriate levels of dependent behaviours that can occur at school.

There is clearly a complex interrelationship between child factors, school factors and home factors that interact in various ways at different times and impact on the child with CP. Psychologists at Novita Children's Services work with and for the child and their family across all of these settings and play an important role in facilitating communication and collaboration between school, home, the child's therapists and agencies.

More information is available in the links below.

References

- www.novita.org.au.
- www.scopevic.org.au
- www.thespasticcentre.org.au

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SCAFFOLDING AND ENGAGEMENT—THE FOUNDATION IN BUILDING INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Kensington Centre is a special school catering for secondary aged students with intellectual disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger Syndrome, Down Syndrome, and Tourette's Syndrome, learning and communication disorders and other complex needs. Kensington Centre implements practices targeting individual student needs to generate positive outcomes for all students as they transition to the workplace and independent community participation. Programming specifies clearly for whom the practice is effective and in what context (Odom, Brantlinger, Gersten, Horner, Thompson, Harris, 2005). Central to Kensington Centre ethos is valuing student diversity and building a community of practice where students feel safe, are valued and develop connectedness and belonging. Students' individual and collective skills, interests and abilities are the catalysts in the design of programs to engage students in learning thus enhancing cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development.

'Learning is a process through which we become one with the collective through carrying out personal activity in collaboration with other people' (McInerney & McInerney 2006, p.58). Utilising Vygotskian principles, staff at Kensington Centre recognise the importance of knowing each individual student very well, are familiar with the social dynamics and social setting and have a good understanding of their teaching skills to facilitate learning. Learning occurs within the individual student's zone of proximal development when they are challenged, but the task is not too difficult. Staff establish high expectations and believe students can achieve beyond their current level of independent achievement. Students are empowered to pursue their potential level of development through the assistance of more capable peers, teachers, support personnel, caregivers and community members. To support this, intensive scaffolded instruction through cues, prompts, rehearsal, imagery and guided practice is initially needed and gradually withdrawn as students gain in skill, confidence and self regulation (McInerney & McInerney, 2006). Authentic and engaging pedagogy is the context within which learning occurs.

The following programs at Kensington Centre promote student independence through modeling, scaffolding and engaging principles in building communities of practice.

Kensington Centre Café

Students aged from 13 to 19 years run a cafe service for the local school community. Intensive training and scaffolding is provided initially including health regulations, safety rules, food preparation and serving patrons. As skills develop increased independence occurs. Working within this community provides students with opportunities to experience a working environment and build team work, the capacity to see other people's point of view, communication skills and ability to relate to school community members, whilst developing transferable skills such as personal care, completion of tasks, cooperation with workmates and handling money. Students rotate through varying roles, planning three course summer/winter menus, compiling shopping lists, preparation, front of house duties and working as a kitchen hand. Providing purposeful, real life experiences actively engages students and promotes authenticity. Outcomes evidenced include improved problem solving skills, independence, confidence, self esteem and self worth, increased dexterity using knives and kitchen utensils and collaboration resulting in reduced anxiety levels.

Café Open: Wednesdays 12pm-1:30pm weekly.

School and individual bookings essential on 8331 0549.

Community Studies Project

Within this program a group of seven students with Asperger's Syndrome were involved in developing an individual community studies contract focusing on possible employment options within a field of interest. The project used an integrated thematic approach spanning the SACSA Framework strands of Personal and Social Development (Health), Societies and Cultures (SOSE) and Strategies (English), and the Essential Learnings of Futures, Identity, Interdependence and Communication.

SCAFFOLDING AND ENGAGEMENT—THE FOUNDATION IN BUILDING INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students were intensively scaffolded when brainstorming possible work opportunities to research, plan a logical sequence of steps, and assess prior knowledge, skills and/or understandings in order to complete the community activity. They were involved in identifying new knowledge, skills and understandings needed to successfully undertake the activity. Thorough planning of the contract provided students with a clear understanding of the purpose, steps to be taken and outcomes that promoted confidence in their ability to proceed and have ownership of the set goals. Students were supported in gathering evidence of learning including negotiation skills, community involvement, communication skills, planning and research skills, practical activities, organisation and time management skills and taking action. They were encouraged to creatively design a presentation for the school community. Work opportunity fields chosen included computing and/or graphic design occupations. Students researched training requirements, availability of training, school entry requirements, companies offering employment, web sites, library visits, council opportunities and VET programs that would align a pathway into the jobs. One student researched her passion to become a veterinary nurse. Outcomes include student confidence and knowledge of their ability to pursue and achieve future goals, planning, organisation, networking and evaluation skills.

Personal Learning Plan

The PLP maximises the learning outcomes for all students with the ultimate goal of encouraging achievement of the Future SACE/ New SACE requirements. Trials of modified/ non modified Personal Learning Plans are in place whereby students choose authentic activities of personal interest that promote capabilities including communication, personal development, learning, citizenship and work skills. The diversity of students with special needs at Kensington Centre requires individualised and explicit teaching of the learning requirements of the PLP. Students are provided with scaffolded support in learning how to identify learning goals, needs and abilities, make informed decisions to develop, implement and adjust plans and to understand and develop capabilities. Individual choice across these areas engages students in areas

of personal interest whilst developing literacy and numeracy skills, interaction with individuals both within and external to the school, and authentic experience in developing, implementing, reviewing, adjusting and achieving their goals and making informed decisions. Student success in the PLP process will promote confidence, self regulation and skill in achieving Future/New SACE requirements and support successful transition to post school options.

Community Access/Work Experience Initiatives

Scaffolding to support student independence and skill as active and contributory community members is evident through a number of initiatives. A Community Access program focuses on accessing inexpensive leisure opportunities using public transport, school bus or walking/bike riding within the community. These opportunities include visiting the Belair National Park, whale watching at Victor Harbor, Seahorse Farm, Morialta Conservation Park, St Kilda Mangrove Walk and beach walks. These initiatives promote learning through modelling of appropriate social and safe behaviour and utilising recreational options in the community to enhance wellbeing.

Building communities of practice has included linking with Marryatville High School special needs students with an aim of promoting social learning outcomes in collaboration with the Burnside Council. Students across the school sites cooperated with council members in designing weekly activities that promoted social skill development through interacting and networking together. Outcomes have included skills in establishing new friendship relationships, initiating conversation, language and communication skill development, collaborative planning and buddy programs.

To develop skills, knowledge and confidence in the work place, students are involved in work experience programs including working with preschool students with disabilities at The Briars Special Early Learning Centre, working at Bedford Industries, Phoenix Society, Product Action, Gepps Cross Senior School work skills training program and the State-Wide Transition Project, 'We Mean Business' at Findon High School.

SCAFFOLDING AND ENGAGEMENT—THE FOUNDATION IN BUILDING INDEPENDENT LEARNING IN STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Summary

To promote optimal success inclusive of all student needs, explicit scaffolded instruction is provided to support students. Within the small school community environment of Kensington Centre staff is able to address students' particular readiness needs, their particular interests and their preferred ways of learning. This enables the scaffolded instruction to meet the individual and complex needs of our students. Strategies are underpinned by sound classroom practice and a strong underlying belief in the potential of all learners. As individual confidence and independence emerges, students are encouraged to increasingly take responsibility for their learning and achievements with staff gradually withdrawing their intensive support. The initiatives at Kensington Centre engage students through authentic life experiences, opportunities to make choices and set goals relative to their individual interest and ability whilst contributing to building the Kensington

Centre sense of community.

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QUALITY LEARNING = QUALITY OF LIFE

The *Quality Learning* approach focuses on continuous improvement of the learning process. Students are supported to take increased responsibility for their learning. They are equipped with strategies and tools to become 'response-able', able to respond to this challenge. They are actively engaged, and intrinsically motivated to learn and achieve (Quality Learning Australia, 2008).

Educators today face extremely complex challenges daily, when working with students with special needs. It can be difficult for educators to facilitate learning that develops independence in students with complex and diverse needs as well as enable student voice and provide evidence of learning. However *Quality Learning* can provide educators with valuable tools assisting them to facilitate learning opportunities, provide student voice and evidence of learning and develop student independence. My vision is to ensure all students with disabilities, special needs and learning difficulties, have as many opportunities to use *Quality Learning* as possible, to improve their learning outcomes. I believe that *Quality Learning* improves quality

of life for each student and increases student voice.

As educators we must be dedicated through actions to being leaders in guiding students and educational processes which exceed the expectations of society (David P. Langford, 2006). To be able to provide mainstream *Quality Learning* for students with special needs educators need to provide students with the opportunity to use *Quality Learning* tools that are appropriate for each individual. Once this has been achieved a foundation is built for the student that promotes and embeds self directed learning and independence. Students who are provided with self directed learning become motivated to learn new skills and become more independent. To provide students with input on their own learning instantly enables them to feel valued. When students feel valued they develop confidence. Improved confidence enables them to become motivated and to engage in learning tasks. When students are motivated and are participating in learning tasks that they have self directed, students feel rewarded. Rewards are being involved in activities that they like to participate in.

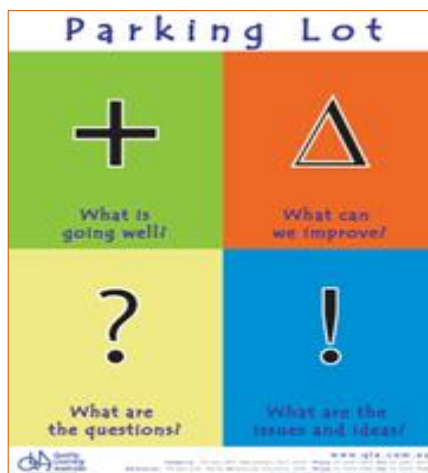
QUALITY LEARNING = QUALITY OF LIFE

The student becomes more independent in learning tasks. Improved student independence impacts on the student as a whole person hence *Quality Learning = Quality of life*.

There are many *Quality Learning* tools that can be adapted and implemented for students with special needs however in this article the *Quality Learning* tools the Parking lot and Capacity Matrices will be discussed.

The Parking Lot

The parking lot was created by David P Langford. It enables continuous improvement in every aspect of learning and it gives student advocacy. There are four quadrants on the parking lot for students to have input on their learning.



The standard parking Lot provides space for students to independently place sticky notes with their input, on a particular quadrant that relates to them. The parking lot can be adapted for students with special needs. The adapted Parking Lot uses pictures and velcro as well as sticky notes. Pictures of activities and emotions with velcro placed on the back of them can be placed next to the parking lot. This allows students who find it difficult to write or cannot write to pick a picture of an activity they would like to do or an emotion to express how they feel about a particular activity and place it in the relevant quadrant on the Parking Lot. Sticky notes are provided for students who wish to write their ideas.



Capacity Matrices

A Capacity Matrix enables the student and the educator to clearly identify what skills are to be learned from the curriculum and the student's interests. The capacity matrix allows the educator and student to monitor learning over a period of time. It is also very effective in providing evidence of learning. Capacity Matrices allow the student to self-assess their progress and are beneficial in motivating students to develop independent learning. Students are instantly set up for success.

However the standard capacity matrix is very complex and can be overwhelming for students with special needs. Educators need to ensure that Capacity matrices are adapted if required for the ease of use with students with special needs. This can be easily achieved by inserting pictures or photographs. A clear picture or photograph provides a direct visual association with an object or a person (Butler S.R, 1990). Photographs also provide evidence of the learning achieved and increase ownership and a sense of achievement. The print on each Capacity Matrix can also be enlarged. Limiting the number of capacities to be learned enables students to readily experience success and not feel over-whelmed. The content of each matrix is customised to the student's individual abilities. For example; a student was given a whistle to blow when instructed by the teacher. This new skill was included in his individualised capacity matrix as an umpiring skill - a great achievement for this student and a proud addition to his portfolio. The capacities can be developed to reflect the general capability of a whole class or the individual.

QUALITY LEARNING = QUALITY OF LIFE



It is important that the matrix reflects whatever the student is capable of achieving and that the levels of learning within the matrix are achievable. It is also important to allow the student to progress as much as possible at their own pace. Capacity Matrices can support students in all key learning areas. Capacity Matrices provide students with special needs with *Quality Learning* that develops independent learning skills and Quality of Life.

An electronic Capacity Matrix template and further information about Quality Learning and Capacity Matrices is available free to download at www.qia.com.au.

The capacity matrices below have been implemented with students who have special needs at Seaford 6-12 School.

Learners Name: _____







Date: _____

Aim	Capacity	Capacity Breakdown	I have received information on this.	I know what this is.	I can explain this to others.
Visit to Finance office - Learning about finance for Independent living.	Have knowledge on how to use an ATM machine and Eftpos to purchase goods. 	Know how to use an ATM			
		Know how to use Eftpos.			
		Know how to purchase goods.			
	Have knowledge on how to pay bills.	Have information on what a purchase order is.			
		Have information on how to pay a bill.			
		Know what a tax invoice is.			
Have knowledge on what a cheque is.		Have information on how to fill in a cheque and pay bills with a cheque.			
		Understand how a cheque works.			
Have knowledge on what a savings account is.		Know what a savings account is.			
		Know what bank charges are.			

QUALITY LEARNING = QUALITY OF LIFE

Learner Name: _____

Date: _____

Aim	Capacity	Capacity Breakdown	I have heard of this.	I can do this.	I can teach this to others.
Practice appropriate table manners.	Appropriate table manners	 <p>Wait for everyone to sit down.</p>  <p>Use cutlery.</p>  <p>Eat with your mouth closed.</p>  <p>Pleasant conversation.</p>   <p>Avoid arguing.</p> <p>Signed by teacher.</p>			

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DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT WORK / PLAY SKILLS IN STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

The possession of self-management skills by a child with a disability or a learning problem seems to be one of the most important factors contributing to the successful inclusion of that child into a regular classroom. It is essential that students with special needs whether, placed in special settings or in the regular classroom, be helped to develop adequate levels of independence in their work habits, self control, social skills and readiness for basic academic learning.

Westwood P, *Commonsense Methods for children with Special Needs*, 1997

Students with Down syndrome can become very reliant on staff and peers to assist them in the classroom throughout the day. Many become masters at exhibiting 'learned helplessness' where they find it easier to seem incapable at a task than to work at completing or succeeding the activity/skill. It is vitally important then that students with Down syndrome are encouraged, from the time they enter school in reception, to become independent in their routines and then in the activities/ tasks that are set in the classroom.

Characteristics of Students with Down Syndrome

There are some characteristics common to students with Down syndrome that may impact on their ability to become independent in the school environment. These include:

- Hearing impairment – fluctuating hearing loss or sensorineural (permanent loss)
- Processing difficulties – auditory and visual
- Visual impairments
- Memory challenges both short and long term. Working memory is usually only 2-3 digits even in adults meaning that instructions given aurally cannot be processed
- Smaller vocabulary and knowledge of word meanings
- Generalising skills and transferring to new environments requires much practice
- Failure avoidance – students will avoid tasks that they think are too difficult/ presented differently
- Intrinsic motivation – many students are not motivated to be successful and require

encouragement/ verbal praise/ positive reinforcers to complete tasks

- Inability to recognise when they need help and request assistance.

Strategies that Encourage Independence

Bearing these characteristics in mind there are a number of strategies that can be used successfully to encourage independence in following routines and completing tasks.

- **Visual schedules/ timetables** – students need to understand the flow of the day, to feel that they have some control over their environment and activities.
- **Routines** – students with Down syndrome enjoy routine but these routines initially need to be taught until mastered. Begin by peers or adults modelling the routine / activity while also using visual and/or verbal cues. Over time the verbal cues are gradually faded, then the tutors slowly distance themselves as the student becomes more confident. This teaching process may take days, weeks or months depending on the complexity of the routine and the skill of the individual student.
- **Positive reinforcement** – students need regular reinforcement to encourage them to remain motivated. Until they feel they can be successful at a task, students with Down syndrome are not generally motivated to persevere at a task.

Developing Contract Systems

Contract systems are a very effective technique for students to complete tasks independently, especially *table tasks*. It is very important that the student can be successful immediately on beginning the contract system to encourage the student to attempt the tasks. Consider the following when beginning a contract system:

- **Present the contract visually** - the contract must be visual, usually pictorial using Boardmaker, clip art or photos of the task. Even students who read well appreciate a symbol to assist them to quickly identify their task.

DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT WORK / PLAY SKILLS IN STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

- **Use known task/s activities** – tasks must be well known to the student, *ie* the student looks at the tasks and immediately understands what is expected. It may take many lessons for the tutor to teach the procedure of each task with each step being explicitly taught. Once one task is taught and can be completed independently, a new task can be introduced so a range of tasks are gradually built up.
- **Simple tasks** – activities must be well within the ability of the student, *ie* NOT the current skill that the student is learning but revision work. If the student is not confident of success, he/she will not attempt the task. This also enables the student to enjoy the skills learnt and to build self-esteem.
- **Length of tasks** – initially activities must be short enough that they are completed before the student loses focus *ie* the student is still happy doing the task as the activity is completed. Gradually the length of the task can be extended as the student is able to work independently for longer.
- **Number of tasks** – begin with one or two tasks on the contract only. Gradually the number and length of tasks can be increased but the student must continue to feel successful.
- **Choice in the order activities will be done** – the student may choose the order that the tasks are done. This enables them to feel they have some control over their learning.
- **Use concrete materials** – students can focus on the task for longer periods of time when they use materials as part of the task. These materials also enable the student to complete more difficult tasks.
- **Tasks have an obvious conclusion** – the student must understand what makes the task complete *ie* the timer rings to end the task, the student has completed the worksheet or used all the materials (eg sorting).
- **Proformas** – a proforma enables the student to look at the sheet and immediately understand what is expected in the task. This is very important to prevent *failure avoidance*. A new worksheet, looks different and even though the skills involved may be well within the student's capabilities the student's initial response will be to avoid.
- **Enjoyable activities** - when setting up a contract system this will be important to encourage the student to complete tasks and so be successful.

The challenge for the teacher is to juggle


- the inclusion of the student in the classroom, especially in the social aspects of curriculum,
- independent work when unable to participate meaning fully in the class curriculum
- a negotiated curriculum to assist the student to learn new skills.



Examples of contract systems. The tasks are velcroed onto the baseboard so they can be easily changed.



DEVELOPING INDEPENDENT WORK / PLAY SKILLS IN STUDENTS WITH DOWN SYNDROME

<p>WORK STATION TASK</p> <p>DATE.....</p> <p>TASK.....</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table> <p>What did you do ?.....</p> <p>Signed off by.....</p>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8									<p>CAITIE'S WORK STATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> LIBRARY BOOKS ACTIVITY BOOKS WINNIE THE POOH FOLDED STICKER BOOK CEL TAPE AND WORK BOOK FELT STICKER MATS MYSTERY REWARD 	<p>Spelling</p> <p>Friday</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Give your Homework book to your teacher. Get out your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spelling Test book Pencil Eraser Look Cover Write Check words Ask your Buddy to give you a Spelling Test. Mark your Spelling Test. If you got any wrong do Look Cover Write Check (x 3) for each word. Show your teacher. <p>Great work!</p>	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8												
<p>Contract systems for particular subject areas. This contract had explicit instructions for each day of the week.</p>		<p>Example of a contract system with a recording sheet to record the completed activities.</p>																	

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INDEPENDENT LEARNERS AND EMPLOYMENT—A TRANSITION CENTRE PERSPECTIVE

For students with disabilities to succeed in the job market, they need to show many qualities. Achievement of these qualities is well within the ability level of many of the students with a Negotiated Education Plan. However it takes time, persistence, repetition and a strong focus of what is required in the work place.

A shared responsibility by students, parents, schools and transition centre staff to focus on the following employment qualities or skills will assist students to successfully gain employment.

Punctuality - Students need to understand the expectation of being on time when arriving at their workplace setting and returning promptly from morning and lunch breaks. This sometimes takes time to instill but is a very valuable quality to demonstrate in a work place. At Daws Road Centre students experience “real work place procedures” to encourage them to take responsibility for being punctual and this has been an excellent

strategy in aiding students to be successful.

Independent Transport travel. There should be an expectation that buses and timetables will be part of a student’s life. This habit should be established and be continued after the student leaves school. Students travelling by taxi to school should be trained and encouraged to catch a bus wherever possible. It is an expectation at Daws Road Centre and most students comply.

Willingness to accept instructions. Students who are able to follow instructions are well received and able to manage the workplace environment. This is part of the training at Daws Road Centre; students are helped to understand the importance of following instructions but also given training in the importance of asking appropriate questions when required so that they can complete tasks as expected. Employers value students who are open to being trained in the particular way they require workers to work.

INDEPENDENT LEARNERS AND EMPLOYMENT—A TRANSITION CENTRE PERSPECTIVE

Be prepared to try. Nobody needs to be perfect but willingness to try new tasks is highly valued. Trying new tasks whenever possible encourages students to take a risk. Even if it is easier to do the task yourself, don't. Students need the room to develop and grow. Making mistakes is part of the learning process and students need to be reassured about this.

Positive attitude. This goes a long way towards success. Students with this quality are generally easier to work with as they will give anything a go. Positive attitudes can be encouraged by reinforcing the student's ability to succeed. A negative attitude might be produced through a fear of or a history of failure. It is never too late to turn this around.

Out of comfort zone. This is good for everyone. It is important to work outside the normal bounds, solve problems, meet challenges and be successful. There is nothing quite so powerful for a student who succeeds here. This helps to build self esteem and confidence.

Ability to get on with others. Students who mix well with other students will be likely to fit more easily into a work environment. They are generally respectful, polite and mindful of the people around them. There are many opportunities in a student's day to reinforce this both at school and home.

Initiative. The job you do when you are not asked to do it. This can be explicitly taught and may make the difference between our students and other students successfully seeking employment. The employment agencies are teaching initiative to their clients in different work settings. Everyday situations can be used to reinforce this.

Attendance. Making a commitment and honouring that commitment is vitally important for students. Students need to take responsibility for the days they are absent by making the telephone call to inform the setting they will be absent. Students should be encouraged to negotiate with different people. They can successfully do this and support should be available if required.

Take responsibility for themselves. Some students are very good at taking responsibility for their actions while others constantly blame mum, teachers and other students. It is difficult to change this habit but not impossible. Fortunately there are always student role models to demonstrate this positively.

Resilience. This is a really important quality to have and is developed by students being allowed to have a go, make mistakes and have another go. Students with disabilities show great resilience in many situations and are to be encouraged and admired. Students who are independent usually show great resilience in their every day lives.

Daws Road Centre has a rating procedure that is used at the end of the day in each of the curriculum areas. Students are asked to rate themselves out of ten for the following categories of safety/hygiene, effort and group skills. This assists students to know how they are progressing within the work program at Daws Road Centre.

Safety /Hygiene

- Keep myself and others safe
- Follow all safety rules and directions
- Correctly use all safety equipment supplied
- Look around and be sure of a safe working space
- Follow all hygiene rules when cooking and handling food
- Only use equipment that I have been trained to use safely

Effort

- Work hard at every job I am given to do
- Stay where the job is
- Concentrate on the job I am doing
- When I finish my job, ask what my next job is

Group skills

- Treat others in my group fairly and with respect
- Always speak in a polite way
- Be cooperative
- Mind only what I am doing
- Join in all group discussions and help make decisions
- Offer to help others when needed

INDEPENDENT LEARNERS AND EMPLOYMENT—A TRANSITION CENTRE PERSPECTIVE

At Daws Road Centre, staff often use similar words to encourage the students. Some useful words to use with students to encourage independence include:

- Responsible
- Persevere
- Organise
- Support
- Reliable
- Appropriate
- Employable
- Enthusiastic
- Work ethic
- Initiative
- Flexible
- Self esteem
- Communicate
- Respect
- Leadership
- Sharing

- Resilient
- Responsible
- Team member
- Opportunity
- Attitude
- Advocate
- Focus

It takes time and effort to prepare students with disability for employment. This is made considerably easier when shared by school, home and the Transition Centre. From the experience at Daws Road Centre, it is well worth the effort when students are successfully employed.

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DESIGNING LITERACY FOR LEARNING AND LIVING

Students, who have access to a basic education, may not always have access to employment opportunities. Comber, (1997) argues that a combination of globalisation and national and local conditions impact on the role literacy teachers have in combating deficit discourses. These discourses appear to blame students, their families, and or the socio-economic area of their location. For students to access literacy as a means of becoming independent learners, schools can provide high quality rich and relevant literacy experiences for students. Multi-literacies incorporated into student learning experiences may provide the inclusive environment to enable some students to become life long and independent learners.

The Australian Government through a National Education Agreement is making a commitment to ensure that *All Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy.* The South Australian Government through the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) is committed to supporting the declaration through the DECS Statement

of Directions 2005-2010, where all children and students can gain the *knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to enable them to participate fully as confident and competent citizensirrespective of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.*

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA 2006, survey OECD), highlighted that *significant levels of educational disadvantage exists in Australia and that the gap between students of the same age can be equivalent to several years of schooling* (Thomson and De Bortoli, 2008). The report continues to emphasize the unacceptable proportion of students who are *at serious risk of not achieving levels sufficient to allow them to adequately participate in the 21st century work force and contribute as productive citizens.*

Our schools and schooling systems can, and do make a difference to student learning using innovative and researched means to better keep up with globalised changes, enabling students to become independent lifelong learners.

DESIGNING LITERACY FOR LEARNING AND LIVING

Learning through Multi-literacies

Multi-literacies can promote opportunities for students to use their everyday experiences and their individual differences as their strengths to direct their learning towards becoming literate beings. Multi-literacies in Australia are defined by Street (1995, Chapter, 6), in a pedagogical and assessment framework as literacy for knowledge, self-expression, practical purpose and public debate. For students with learning difficulties or for those who are unable to successfully engage with mainstream literacy, a multi-literacy framework embedded within community learning practices may improve not only their literacy outcomes but also their self esteem and relationships with others. Community learning experiences can build students' cognitive and social processes of reading, writing, self-awareness and responsibilities. They can also encourage students to be hard working, self-regulating and literate beings, while having fun in the process.

Schools can promote multi-literacies through their existing structures, rather than as interventions, remediations or exclusion programs. The SACE Personal Learning Plan (PLP) and Innovative Community Action Networks (ICANs) are examples of social innovations in South Australia that engage and empower students in education, training and employment using a multi-literacy approach to learning. They encourage a personalised approach to learning where students can present their learning according to their needs and wants using goal-setting assessments. The PLP is designed to help students make informed decisions about their personal development, education, and training. The program of learning as outlined by the SACE Board provides students with time to work with their teachers and other experts to develop knowledge and skills in planning for their South Australian Certificate Education (SACE) and their future beyond school (<http://www.ssabsa.sa.edu.au/index.htm>).

Planning and assessing multi-literacies requires an understanding of language knowledge and literate practices for how texts work, based upon Freebody and Lukes '4 Roles of a Literate Learner': Code Breaker; Meaning Maker; Text Participant / Use; and Text Analyst (DECS 2009).

Literacy for Knowledge enhances students' opportunities to make meaning of learning as students can acquire the necessary skills and knowledge required for a multi-literate curriculum. Core compulsory topics may include developing personal profiles, time-management skills, goal setting and assessment strategies, career pathways, therapeutic courses and volunteers in the community. Teachers can use explicit instruction and mediation processes and facilitate student learning to build the critical life skills required to become independent learners. Such skills may include digital literacies enhanced by personal identity webs or in-school web pages.

Literacy for Self Expression encourages students to understand how they think and what is required to be responsible for themselves. Developing personal management goals, questioning and reflective thinking skills, coping with stress and identifying personal relaxation strategies may help them to improve their attitude to learning and to have positive life experiences.

Literacy for Practical Purpose: Community and Creative Practices encourages students to work within community interest areas of their choice and potential availability. In this component of the multi-literacy framework, students have an opportunity to practice the skills and knowledge learnt throughout the core curriculum or literacy for knowledge component. Students are able to collect and gather information on their area of interest and later develop their ideas back in the classroom or learning environment. Students would be encouraged to share their learning with their peers and keep a community journal of their experiences. To enhance creative pedagogy or genre based learning and assist students to understand lifestyle activities, various social activities can be designed, based on different cognitive levels of understanding. Through reflective text productions students have an opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities towards becoming competent workplace or community members and who are also able to positively give to others in society.

DESIGNING LITERACY FOR LEARNING AND LIVING

Literacy for Public Debate: Technical Literacy, Critical Literacy and Multi-modal Literacy Building student's social, economic and cultural capacities requires building technological skills, computer literacy and an understanding of how texts through critical literacy may engage people with a point of view that may be different from others. Rapid decision making and problem solving skills required for our globalised society requires students to develop technological communication competencies. Multi-modal literacy involves the multiple ways students use language to communicate with society. Creating a portfolio will assist them to keep a record of their learning experiences and develop an understanding of what they are doing. Being able to interpret their learning orally means exploring the relationships they formed with others and having an ability to express pride in their learning (What did I know?, What do I now know?, What did I learn?, What experiences did I have? and What more do I want to learn?).

Using a Multi-literacy Pedagogical and Assessment Framework may develop the abilities of those students who do not successfully acquire the necessary literacy competencies from classrooms and schooling systems to become independent learners. Literacy that becomes a social construct within the curriculum may improve a student's ability to read, write and communicate with others. Students may become confident independent thinkers and develop a range of skills, habits, attitudes, interests and knowledge to empower their learning. Literacy that is designed for learning and living becomes relevant in their

lives and valued for life long learning.

Students engaged in a multi-literacy approach to learning may move from a Yep! Nup! Shuffle! Shrug! attitude to become Logged On! Linked Up! Multi-tasked! and Connected! members of society.

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'WHAT I'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT ME' - CAN HELP CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS LEARN

All parents and carers, including those with children with special needs, want their children to flourish in the learning environment and to reach their full potential in their educational journey. So as parents and carers how can we help?

The *What I'd Like You To Know About Me* online resource was developed for families who have a child or adult with a disability and

the services that support them. This resource assists families and carers to create, update and print, individualised and comprehensive profiles (books) about their child with special needs. It has age appropriate page designs for four age groups 0-6, 6-12, 12-18, and 18+. The profile or book is a dynamic and ongoing record of the child's life, adapting and changing just as she or he does throughout life.

'WHAT I'D LIKE YOU TO KNOW ABOUT ME' - CAN HELP CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS LEARN

As information is the raw ingredient of effective decision making it stands to reason that the more detailed and holistic information teachers and other relevant professionals have about a child with special needs, the better off the child will be. Having an understanding and insight into how to communicate with the child and what the child's likes and dislikes are can support teaching staff to create a successful learning environment. *The What I'd Like You To Know About Me* resource has a wide variety of topics available—likes, dislikes, strengths, support needs, family, friends, behaviour support needs, medical and health needs and communication style, to name just a few.

Imagine then, the information that can be created about a child that could be used at NEP meetings, or by the classroom teacher and relief staff, when supporting a child. The resource assists teachers and other care workers to build relationships with children with special needs and shortens the time for all to get to know each other. It assists schools to create and maintain standard care plans and learning plans which focus on all aspects of a child's life allowing for interest based activities and learning frameworks that are relevant and meaningful to the child. This can encourage the child's learning and participation in the classroom and in the wider school and community environment.

Having an understanding and awareness of behavioural 'triggers' (things in the environment that can stimulate, positively or negatively, your child's responses) can help teachers and other support staff to avoid the occurrence of negative 'triggers' and thus contribute towards a positive learning environment and through positive reinforcers support and maintain positive behaviour.

The *What I'd Like You To Know About Me* resource allows you to create 'guests' for a period of 6 months or one day giving these 'guests' access to the child's information. Guests may be Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, other teaching professionals, or anyone that supports your child with special needs to flourish in their learning and throughout their development. All of this can add up to an active independent learner in and out of the class room - how wonderful!

To find out more about this online resource contact Life's For Living on 82773300 or drop into SERU and pick up a brochure.

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TECHBITS

AccessApps Independent Use, Independent Tools – anywhere, anytime



AccessApps is an initiative of the JISC Regional Support Centres (RSC) in Scotland. It is a collection of over 60 open source and freeware Windows applications. All the software programs are portable versions and are designed to run directly from a USB stick. Students can therefore carry their software with them and use these software programs on any computer at any time. The AccessApps

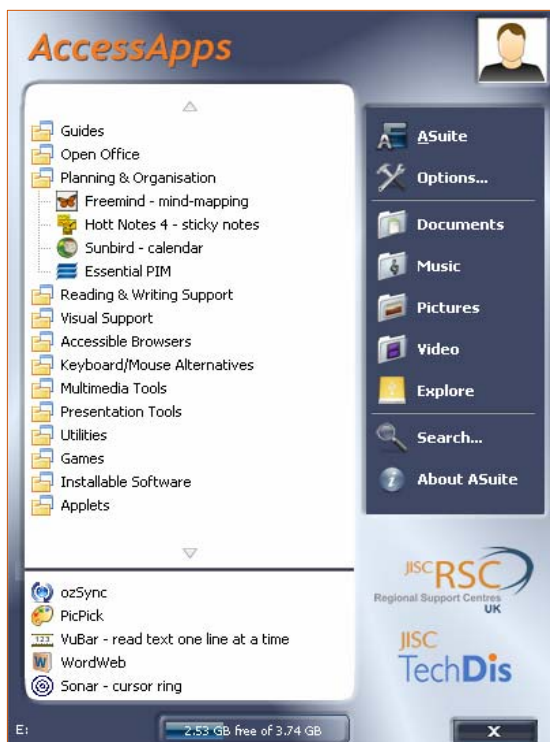
collection of software tools provides a range of solutions to support writing, reading and planning. There are also a number of specialized applications to support students with sensory, cognitive and physical difficulties.

The software is accessed from the AccessApps Start menu. This Start menu can be personalized for better access to software and files saved in the My Documents folders on the Flash drive.

The software programs are categorized into Planning and Organization, Reading and Writing Support, Visual Support, Accessible Browsers, Keyboard/Mouse Alternatives,

TECHBITS

Multimedia Tools, Presentation Tools, Utilities and Games. It also includes Open Office Suite. This free Microsoft Office lookalike has a word processor, spreadsheet and presenter program which can also open and edit existing Microsoft documents. It is also possible to install other portable software that can be readily found on the Internet.



The AccessApps Start Menu

There are over 50 software programs on the AccessApps bundle. Some of these include

Dspeech

This is a very useful and powerful text-to-speech program. It will speak any text typed into the program or copied and pasted from another source. It offers a range of male and female voices. It can also convert text to an audio file.

PowerReader

Reading support for users who are dyslexic

TypeFast

A useful and handy typing tutor

TheSage

A powerful and extensive dictionary and thesaurus

FreeMind

A Mind Mapping tool, predominantly text based with use of icons

VU Bar

Isolate and visually track text on the screen with the use of resizable 'ruler'.

Hott Notes 4

Sticky notes – ideal for creating To-Do lists and set reminders with alarms

Click 'n' Type

An onscreen keyboard that has word prediction built in.

Sunbird Calendar (or Personal Information Manager)

These programs assist with planning and organization. Embed timetables and schedules and assign reminder alarms.

TOP OCR

Scans a photograph and extracts any text in to an editable text document.

To acquire the AccessApps collection of software tools visit <http://www.rsc-ne-scotland.ac.uk/eduapps/download.php>. The site also has two other collections of portable software called LearnApps and TeachApps. It is also possible to personalize your software package by picking which specific programs you wish to download. A link to a detailed description of all the software programs can also be found on the page. The web site has extensive tutorial documentation and video guides.

There are a number of benefits in providing students with their own AccessApps flash drive. One of the key benefits is that it gives a greater level of ownership to students. They can configure their personal preferences on the Start menu and each software program to have consistency of access. This total control of the ready made technology solutions on the flash drive can be very empowering for students.

There are a growing number of free software tools that are available as portable versions. AccessApps allows for the addition of newly discovered tools that a student may wish to trial. The installation of these tools does not require technical support or installation permissions. This means that there is no time lag to students being provided with new software tools to trial and evaluate.

Note: SERU has downloaded the AccessApps collection and has made it available on a 4 Gigabyte flash drive for \$22. SERU's version includes additional assistive software programs sourced from the web. SERU also runs workshops on AccessApps. The SERU website provides upcoming dates.

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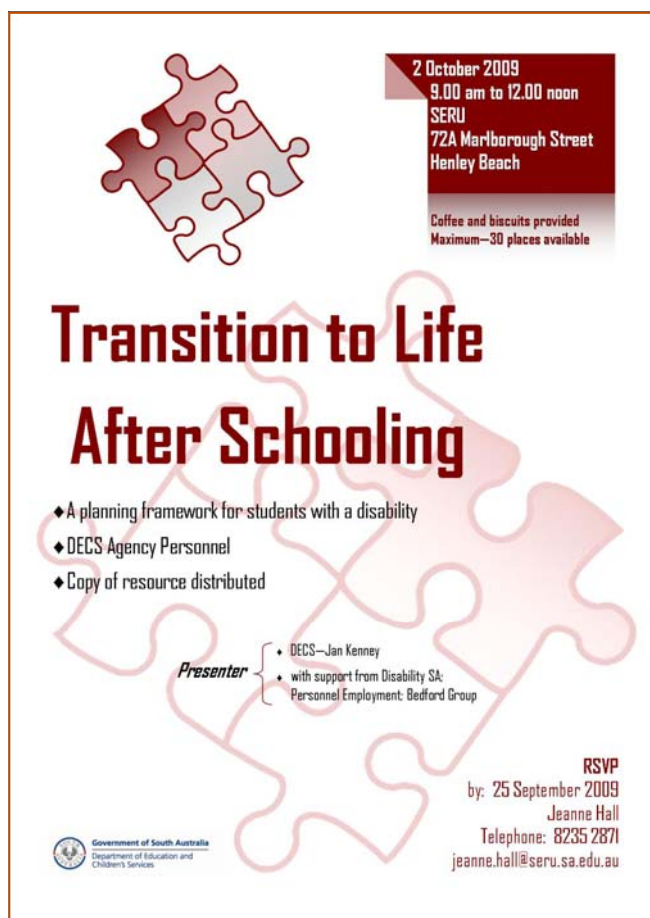
Collaboration to Promote Social Competence For Students with Mild Disabilities in the General Classroom: A Structure for Providing Social Support

Meadan, H; Monda-Amaya, L—Intervention in School and Clinic—Vol 43 No 3, January 2008 SERU1540

Real World Strategies for Managing and Regulating Challenges

Bolick, T—Autism Spectrum Quarterly, Summer 2008—SERU1603

YOU MAY BE INTERESTED ...



2 October 2009
9.00 am to 12.00 noon
SERU
72A Marlborough Street
Henley Beach

Coffee and biscuits provided
Maximum—30 places available

Transition to Life After Schooling

- ◆ A planning framework for students with a disability
- ◆ DECS Agency Personnel
- ◆ Copy of resource distributed

Presenter

- DECS—Jan Kenney
- with support from Disability SA: Personnel Employment: Bedford Group

RSVP
by: 25 September 2009
Jeanne Hall
Telephone: 8235 2871
jeanne.hall@seru.sa.edu.au

Government of South Australia
Department of Education and
Children's Services



AGOSCI Winter Literacy Intensive 2010

Presented by Dr Karen Erickson and Dr David Koppenhaver

What: A 5-day instructional tour which covers theoretical and practice aspects of literacy instructions for children and adults with complex communication needs.

Who: The course is aimed at teachers and therapists who work in the area. Parents of children with complex communication needs are also welcome to apply. Numbers are strictly limited to 30 lucky people.

When: 5th – 9th July 2010

Where: Rawson Village A campsite approx 90 minutes drive from Melbourne

Cost: \$1700 per registrant, inclusive of course instructional fee course materials, accommodation in a shared room at Rawson Village (all registrants must stay on-site) and all meals for the duration of the course.

WEBLINKS

Promoting the Self-Determination of Students with Severe Disabilities
http://www.education.com/reference/article/Ref_Promoting_Self/

LD Online
<http://www.ldonline.org/index.php>

Self-Advocacy for College Students
http://www.ldonline.org/article/Self-Advocacy_for_College_Students

More Time To Teach...More Motivated to Try Helping Learning Disabled Students Become More Independent
<http://www.learningdisability.com/articles/moretime.htm> or <http://snipurl.com/qk4gm>

Instructional Routines and Learning Strategies
<http://webpages.maine207.org/district/administration/readinginservice/Instructional%20routines%20and%20learning%20strategies03.doc> - <http://snipurl.com/r6wz4>

Teaching Decision Making to Students with Learning Disabilities by Promoting Self-Determination
<http://www.tourettesyndrome.net/Files/Hoffman.pdf>

Teach This -Graphic Organisers Printable Teacher Resources, Games and Activities
<http://www.teachthis.com.au/index.php>

Educational Activities for Children
<http://www.dltk-teach.com/>

RESOURCES RELATED TO PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Show Me How To Learn: Practical Guidelines for Creating a Learning Community, English, R; Dean, S. 25-0175-01.

This book provides practical guidelines for creating a learning community and presents teachers with strategies and techniques to create an environment in which students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

Graphic Organiser and Planning Outlines, Forte, I; Schurr, S, 1997. 63-2944-01.

This book contains blackline masters of forms, planning outlines and graphic organisers. It describes how to use graphic organisers eg planning a lesson, studying for a test, writing a paper, planning a performance, creating a project, staying on track, presenting new learning.

Self-Esteem—Skills to Build Self-Worth, Ruscoe, A, 2006. 66-1237-01.

The activity topics in this book address issues specific to learners with a view to building self-worth and establishing resilience in challenging situations.

Graphic Organisers Years K-3, Null-Peterson, C, 2005. 66-1349-01.

This book contains graphic organisers that are designed to assist learners to brainstorm ideas, outline facts, recognize patterns, access prior knowledge and sequence events.

Differentiated Instruction—Different Strategies for Different Learners, Forsten, C et al, 2002 34-0329-01.

This book, for learners from preschool to the end of primary school, contains strategies designed to meet the needs of a range of different learners. Content includes: *Management; Community Building; Teaching Tools; Literacy; Math; Assessment.*

The Ultimate Book of Mind Maps, Buzan, T, 2005. 25-0168-01.

This book is a guide to using *Mind Maps*, a thinking tool developed by the author. It introduces mind maps and how they work and how they help the brain to learn and think creatively.

RESOURCES RELATED TO PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Dyslexia Action Plans for Successful Learning, Hannell, Glynis. 18-0169-01.

This book contains an overview of Dyslexia and provides a range of information and strategies. Contents include: *What is Dyslexia?; Reading, dyslexia and school work; Learning letters and sounds; Reading comprehension; Visual Tracking; Remembering how to spell words; Letter and number reversals; Multiplication tables; Memory; Confidence and stress; Alternative or new treatments for Dyslexia.*

Secondary School Transition Checklist, Down Syndrome Association. 59-0042-02.

This book aims to support the smooth transition of a learner with Down syndrome to Secondary School. The checklist consists of: a checklist questionnaire; classroom composition; physical arrangement; daily schedule; classroom rules and routines; academics; educator attention; self help skills; parent involvement; support systems; social skills; sexuality issues; bibliography.

Preschool AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) Checklist, Henderson, J, 2001. 59-0062-01.

The Preschool AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) Checklist is a tracking system for educators, parents and therapists. It is designed to monitor a student's development in AAC skills and technology use from age three until kindergarten or reception where formal academics begin. The diagnosis of cerebral palsy is not necessary for a student to use this checklist. The Preschool AAC Checklist serves as a resource to those working in the area of AAC. Each checklist item has explanations, examples, materials and published references.

Preschool / Kindergarten Visual Activity Schedule Pack 2, 2008. 61-0889-02.

This set of Boardmaker picture squares depict a variety of common activities and routines that occur in preschools and kindergartens. They are designed to be used with learners requiring visual strategies to support their learning.

Teaching Occupational Social Skills—Transition Series, Elksnin, N & L, 1998. 45-0106-01.

The *PRO-ED series on Transition* provides practical resources to transition personnel on a variety of topics that are critical to the process of preparing individuals with disabilities for adulthood. This text focuses on occupational or job-related social skills. See also: 45.0107.01.01 - *Transition Issues Related to Students with Visual Disabilities.*

Smart Chute—Vowel Phonemes, Syllables, Smart Kids, 2000. 63-2928-01.

Smart Chute is a fun and self-correcting classroom teaching resource. It is designed to help students develop instant recognition of key facts. Also available are four other sets of cards to use with *Smart Chute—Blend Beginnings, Initial and Final Sounds, Medial Vowel Sounds—63-2927-01.*

The Inclusive Early Childhood Classroom—Easy Ways to Adapt Learning Centres for all Children, Gould, P; Sullivan, J, 1999. 34-0230-01.

This book describes practical ways to adjust centres and classroom routines for children with special needs. The suggestions are designed to enable all children to learn by keeping them involved in developmentally appropriate routines and centre-based activities.

Visual Strategies for Improving Communication Volume 1—Practical Support for School and Home, Hodgdon, L. 17-0158-01.

This is a 'how to' book, designed to assist with solutions to the communication and self management challenges, students with autism or moderate to severe communication disorders experience.

Mind Maps—An Introduction, The Shortcut to Success at School, Buzan, Tony, 2003. 66-1098-01.

This practical workbook, containing jokes, cartoons and brainteasers, shows learners aged 7 - 14 how to use *Mind Maps*, a system of note-taking and planning, to succeed in every subject and find new inspiration out of the classroom.

RESOURCES RELATED TO PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Achieving Learning Goals Through Play, Widerstrom, Anne. 27-0089-01.

This book provides creative, ready-to-use strategies for incorporating individual learning goals into play activities throughout the school day. It assists in: fostering children's cognitive, communication, motor, social and pre-literacy skills during group activities and free play.

Autism Spectrum Australia—Transition to School, Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect), 2005. 19-0096-01.

This guide details preparation for transition to school. The *Starting School Checklist* can be completed to indicate what skills are needed for school. Strategies, worksheets and visual supports are provided to support the development of a program designed to prepare a child for transition.

The Self Directed Learning Handbook, Gibbons, M, 2002. 34-0334-01.

This book presents a practical framework for introducing self-directed learning approaches in the classroom. It shows educators how to: *allow learners to devise individualised approaches to their work; design engaging classroom lessons; negotiate and structure effective student learning agreements; encourage self-motivated learning and skill development; encourage learner self-assessment.*

Steps to Independence, Baker, B, 2005. 34-0371-01.

This book provides strategies for teaching the life skills learners from age 3 through to young adulthood need to live as independently as possible. A step-by-step guide is provided for teaching: *get-ready, self-help, toilet training, play, self-care, home care, functional academic.*

2008 Practical Sensory Programs for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Larkey, Sue, 2007. 19-0211-01.

This book offers a six-step approach to developing a successful program to help learners cope with sensory input they find overwhelming, and to identify activities they may find relaxing or rewarding. Advice is provided on how to use activities as opportunities to improve communication skills.

Because We're Worth It—Enhancing Self Esteem in Young Children, Collins, Margaret, 2001. 66-1179-01.

This book provides educators with a range of ideas designed to enhance learners self-esteem. The 10 sections in the book are designed to help learners to develop relationships, take responsibility and to feel positive about themselves.

Teacher Assistants Big Red Book of Ideas for Supporting Students with ASD (Autism / Aspergers). 19-0207-01.

This book provides a wide range of information and strategies for School Services Officers supporting learners on the Autism Spectrum to engage in education and learning.

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 explores the best strategies for adapting schoolwork and improving teacher-student communication. It also covers augmentative communication between children with Down syndrome and their peers.

About the Right to Know Program, Down Syndrome Society, 2004. 66-1142-01.

This booklet provides information about the *Right to Know* program. This program addresses the specificity of the learning styles of people with Down syndrome, and provides a developmental approach to teaching young people about personal safety, sexuality and friendships. See other booklets from the *Right to Know* series.

Mathflips D Subtraction, Era Publications, 1979. 64-0341-01.

This pack contains 10 cards and teacher notes. Each card is coloured and the child is required to write in the missing numerals in a subtraction problem. The answer may be checked by turning the card over.

RESOURCES RELATED TO PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Success at Work: Looking Good—The Importance of Personal Appearance and Presentation, McMurtie, C, 2004.

66-1120-01.

This book of blackline masters, one in the series *Success at Work*, focuses on *Looking Good* and the importance of personal appearance and presentation. Each section of this book contains notes and ideas for the teacher, activity pages to photocopy, pages that can be enlarged to use as posters and a competency check page. See also: 66-1120-03—*Success at Work: Get Up and Go—Leaving Home and Getting to Work on Time*; 66-1120-02—*Success at Work: Dollars and Sense—Developing an Understanding of Money Management*.

Family Involvement in Transition Planning and Implementation, Wehmeyer, M.

45-0110-01.

The *Transition* series provides practical resources and strategies on a variety of topics that are critical to the process of preparing individuals for adulthood. Includes: *Overview and Introduction*; *Barriers to Effective Family Involvement*; *Family Systems Theory*; *Family Involvement in Transition Assessment and Planning*; *Parent Involvement in Transition Program Implementation*. See also: 45-0109-01—*Self Determination Strategies for Adolescents in Transition*.

Vocabulary Builders for Daily Living, Oceanside, Ca: Academic, 2002.

66-1198-01.

This book contains a collection of reproducible word cards, signs and other instructional resources that can be used to assist learners develop the language and literacy skills they need to function effectively in real life situations. It is suitable for learners aged 10 years and over and aims to increase awareness of signs and printed messages relating to daily activities, understanding of vocabulary concepts and competence in reading signs and printed messages commonly encountered within the community.

Day to Day Life Skills Speaking, Academic Communication Associates, 2002.

66-1199-01.

The *Day-to-Day Life Skills* Series, suitable for learners between 11 and 17 years of age, targets life skills in a specific academic area using activities that connect learning to real world situations. This life skills activity resource focuses on everyday life situations in which people use language to express needs, obtain information and interact with others in social situations.

Community Success: An Illustrated Guide to Community Access, Bastian, D, 2005.

66-1223-01

This book is an illustrated encyclopedia of community based skills. Sixty commonplace activities like using public toilets, crossing streets and shopping at a department store, are illustrated step-by-step. Appropriate corresponding social skills are integrated into each activity.

Vocabulary of Community and Living (VOCAL), Murdoch, C; Leonard, R, 2001

66-1193-01

This book was designed to assist learners between 10 and 17 years of age to strengthen listening, vocabulary and critical thinking skills relevant to daily life experiences.

Transition Support: Enhancing Transition Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Autism SA, 2005.

45-0128-01.

This resource is designed to enhance the provision of transition education and to assist teachers working with individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder. It provides: *suggestions on preparing individuals for post school options; an outline of alternative pathways available post school and the process taken to access them; strategies to use to promote positive and proactive behaviours; strategies to assist with challenging behaviours.*

Transition Issues for Young Adolescents, Hyland, Maureen, 2004. 66-1101-01

This book, containing blackline masters, is designed to help teachers, particularly in the upper primary and lower secondary levels, address: *bullying; peer pressure; death of a friend or relative; drugs; accepting people with differences; transition to secondary school; marriage breakdown.*

RESOURCES RELATED TO PROMOTING INDEPENDENT LEARNING

Teaching and Learning Multiliteracies, Anstey, M; Bull, G, 2006. 36-0269-01.

This text discusses the relatively new concepts of multiliteracies, brought about by ever increasing technological change. It also offers well developed and well thought out practices for teachers involved in the teaching and learning of literacy with students aged between 5 and 15 years.

Self-Determination Strategies for Adolescents in Transition—Transition Series, Field, S et al. 45-0109-01.

The *Transition* series provides practical resources and strategies on a variety of topics that are critical to the process of preparing individuals for adulthood.

Contracts for Independent Learning, Wilson, J; Cutting, L. 66-1071-01.

This book is designed to assist teachers cater for a wide range of learning needs, offering practical student-centred activities in the areas of literature studies and integrated curriculum, with a focus on students in the upper primary years. The contracts provide students with the opportunity to choose how, when and what they want to learn within the parameters of the teachers' guidelines.

Work Smarter Not Harder—Study Skills for People who Really Hate Homework, Fuller, Andrew, 2003. 66-0996-01.

This book is designed to help young people examine their strengths and weaknesses for succeeding at school. Contents include: *Why study or do homework? Increase your ability to do homework; memory tricks; write great essays and papers; giving a talk; taking notes in class; physical health.*

The Visual Supports Handbook—More Visual Support Strategies to Enhance Learning, Hadley-Buxton, J, 2003. 66-1105-02.

This book is designed to help develop and advance visual strategy knowledge in the areas of routines, learning and behaviour. It includes help for self-management tasks such as making a bed, preparing a timetable, organizing ideas for academic assignments and recording agreed class rules.

Bookworm Quick Start Kit (CD), Abelnec Inc, 2002. 61-0964-01.

The BookWorm is an inclusive literacy tool which can be used to turn most books into *talking books*. It allows students to join in the literacy experience by working on language comprehension, vocabulary building, fluency and print recognition and engaging in turn taking skills.

Looking Back and Looking Forwards—Developments in Conductive Education, Hari, M, 2005. 11-0039-01.

This book includes a diverse collection of papers written by conductors, parents, educationalists, a doctor, a journalist and a young man with cerebral palsy.

Quality Questioning—Research Based Practice to Engage Every Learner, Acree-Walsh, J et al, 2005. 17-0325-01.

This book provides strategies designed to engage learners in the teacher's questions and to encourage them to generate their own questions. It includes: *a framework for preparing questions, presenting questions, prompting learner responses, processing learners responses, teaching learners to generate questions and reflecting on questioning practice.*

Visual Learning—Academic Activities for the Visual Learner, Larkey, Sue, 2005 61-0791-01.

This manual for educators and parents describes visual strategies as an aid to learning and covers the curriculum areas of Mathematics, English, Society and Environment, Science and Life Skills.

How Do I Teach This Kid? - Visual Work Tasks for Beginning Learners on the Autism Spectrum, Henry, K, 2005. 19-0204-01.

This book, the first in a series of books designed to provide ideas for using visual strategies to teach learners with autism, is suitable for learners ages two to ten. The book provides over 80 different work tasks to teach independent work over an established length of time.

NEW RESOURCES

Looks Who's Listening, Super Duper Publications, 2001. 61-0946-01.

This is a unique board game for learners aged 4 years and over who have difficulty with auditory processing tasks. The 240 skill cards address ten essential auditory processing skills in the areas of auditory discrimination, auditory memory and auditory integration.

CD My Turn, Your Turn: Songs for Building Social Skills, Bollinger, Cathy, 2005. 69-0307-01.

This compilation of songs is designed to address the needs of learners who find social interaction confusing or challenging. Using descriptive, social story-like phrases to talk about concrete situations, this CD sings children through the area of engaging with others. The songs cover *empathy, asking for help, handling anger* and *daily social skills*.

DVD Preparing for Success: 11 Key Strategies for Teaching Students with ASD, Larkey, S; Sturgeon, Dr L. 19-0225-01.

Sue Larkey and Dr Lee Sturgeon present strategies they have found to be successful over many years experience in teaching students with ASD.

The Multiple Intelligencies of Reading and Writing, Armstrong, T, 2003. 36-0275-01.

In this book, Armstrong shows how all of Howard Gardner's Intelligencies, normally associated with reading and writing, can be involved to help all learners, acquire reading and writing skills. He uses a nuts-and-bolts approach, which can be applied to all settings where literacy is the focus of learning. He also incorporates recent brain research.

Differentiated Learn—Language and Literacy Projects ... Paterson, K, 2005 34-0375-01.

Differential Learning uses a constructivist pedagogy, an inquiry approach to learning and a framework based on Bloom's Taxonomy to show teachers from kindergarten to year 9 how to create motivating and authentic language and literacy learning opportunities for students. Suggestions for addressing a wide range of diversities: *cultural, linguistic, religious, intellectual, physical, and behavioural* are given.

Flip Up Flap Book Vocabulary, Paper Magic Group, 2002. 63-3233-01.

This simple book of 10 pages has 3 coloured pictures per page and is suitable for early childhood learners. Each picture is covered by a flap that lifts to reveal the word underneath.

Reading Photographs to Write with Meaning and Purpose, Van Horn, L, 2008. 40-0068-01.

This resource demonstrates how teachers can use students' own personal photographs as an inspiration to write in an authentic and creative way. The writing activities can easily be incorporated into existing classroom programs with learners operating at any ability level.

Feelie Book. 60-0939-01.

A small fabric book based around animals with several detachable parts.

Weighted Gecko Small, Badgers Workshop. 80-0337-01.

This small, brightly coloured weighted gecko is suitable for use by students with autism. See also: *80-0338-01 Weighted Turtle Small; 80-0339-01 Weighted Frog Small; 80-0340-01 Weighted Lizard Large.*

Building Reading Comprehension Habits in Grades 6-12, Zwiers, J, 2006. 36-0268-01.

This book is intended for use by middle and high school teachers in any curriculum area where learners struggle to read and understand challenging text. The activities are based around the multiple intelligences with the aim of being as motivating and effective as possible to strengthen students' reading comprehension.

Russell and the Lost Treasure, Scotton, R, 2006. 60-0938-01.

A story book in which Russell the sheep is determined to find the lost treasure of Frogsbottom. Equipped with his Super-Duper Treasure Seeker, he searches high and low, up and down and in and out to no avail. When he is disappointed in what he finally finds he uses his ingenuity to create a new treasure.

NEW RESOURCES

Nonfiction Matters—Reading, Writing and Research Grades 3-8, Harvey, S, 1998. 36-0266-01.

This text stresses the importance of teaching students with skills of researching and writing non-fiction genres. It uses the *Inquiry Based* model as the basis of life long learning.

Action Reaction, Creative Educational Aids. 85-0660-01.

These self correcting, two piece puzzles, suitable for learners 4 and over, can be used to assist in the development of matching, visual discrimination, early science concept, observation, logical thinking and language skills.

Specialised Lights and Vibration Sensory Tube, Toys for Special Children. 81-1274-01.

This tube was designed to assist learners in developing grasping skills and teaching cause and effect. By holding the tube in a vertical position the learner can see it light up and can feel it vibrate.

Yellow Brick Roads: Shared and Guided Paths to Independent Reading 4-12, Allen, J, 2000. 36-0265-01.

This book provides research, practical methods, detailed strategies and resources for read aloud, shared, guided and independent reading for learners in years 4-12.

Literacy Libraries and Learning, Pembroke Publishers, 2005. 36-0273-01.

This resource explores how teachers and teacher librarians can work collaboratively to create challenging learning environments where students can learn the skills needed to meet the challenges of the information age.

Reading for Media Literacy, Vize, A, 2009. 63-3236-01.

Reading for Media Literacy explores media from three different perspectives. These include how media affects the daily life of young people, the techniques used by advertisers and the links between media and literacy and the skills students need to manage media content at school and post school.

Teaching Reading in the Content Area: If Not Me Then Who? Second Edition, Billmeyer, R; Barton, M, 2002. 36-0276-01.

This book includes strategies that help learners across all levels develop their vocabularies, comprehend informational and narrative texts and engage in meaningful discussion about what they read.

Skill Based Fun Activities for all Physical Abilities Play Back, DBD Development by Design. 66-1398-01.

This pack of 15 skill based game cards can be easily adjusted for a range of ages (3-12+) and abilities and are intended to encourage social interaction between children as well as between adults and children. Easy to follow directions, skills and tips are found on the back of each card.

Basic Skill Development Gross Motor Focus Play Pack, DBD Development by Design. 66-1397-01.

This pack of 15 skills based game cards, focusing on gross motor development skills, can be easily adjusted for a range of ages (3-12) and abilities and are intended to also encourage social interaction between children as well as between adults and children.

Finding the Artist Within, Albers, P, 2007. 68-0092-01.

This book, intended for middle and high school students, introduces basic art techniques including examples of student and teacher generated visual texts, while the second section discusses artistic and critical reading of visual texts and helps teachers to design curriculum with the arts and technology in mind.

Let's Make Faces! Langelier, G, 2008. 66-1399-01.

This book, aimed at students aged up to approximately 8 years of age, introduces 8 basic feelings. The book is formatted in a double page layout. The left hand page shows a facial expression illustrating the feeling behind it with accompanying text to explain the emotion and when it may occur. The opposite page allows the child to draw a face to show the emotion, and to write personal memories about the emotion.

NEW RESOURCES

Ready to Go! Art Picture Pack, Blake Education, 2000. 68-0091-01.

This picture pack contains stimulus cards designed to be used in visual arts programs. Each picture card is double-sided with the picture on one side and ideas for exploring the depicted piece of art on the other side.

Meaningful Exchanges for People with Autism, Cafiero, J, 2005. 19-0226-01.

Written by an experienced AAC consultant and teacher, this book explains why AAC is such an effective and suitable means of communication for people on the ASD spectrum, regardless of their level of functioning. It offers a framework to help parents, teachers and clinicians to work together to create a communication strategy for every person on the autism spectrum.

Working Together—Linking Skills and Curriculum for Adolescents with a Language Learning Disability, Brent, M; Millgate-Smith, C, 2008. 17-0328-01.

This book incorporates an explanation of the key factors that impact on Language Learning Disability (LLD) students in the classroom. It offers detailed advice on sequencing learning and skill development strategies to assist LLD students to access mainstream curriculum successfully.

Survival Reading Skills for Secondary Students, Miller, W, 2003. 63-3019-01.

This *Survival Reading Skills* book for *Secondary Students* focuses on students in years 5-12 who have previously been adequate / good readers, but who increasingly struggle in responding to non-fiction texts at the interpretive and critical levels as they move into secondary school. Each of the seven chapters offers practical time saving strategies that are *referenced to specific reading programs*.

First Steps Speaking and Listening 2nd Edition, Rigby, 2006. 54-0029-01.

This resource draws upon contemporary research and development in the field of literacy learning since the original materials were published. It makes practical connections between assessment, teaching and learning and caters for diverse learner needs. It consists of two books: *The Maps of Development* and *The Speaking and Listening Resource Book*.

See Sign and Say Series—Preschool, Hearne, T; Ryan, A, 2008. 61-0965-04.

Each page of this book shows a coloured photograph depicting experiences a child may have at preschool. The word for the experience is shown below the photo and above it, a graphic with a written explanation of how to sign the word in Auslan is shown. Other titles in the series include: *Opposites Two; Colours; Emotions / Feelings; Directions; Food; Objects and Alphabet*.

Quick Guides to Inclusion 2, Giangreco, M, 1998. 34-0377-01.

This book follows on from the first volume *Quick Guides* and provides educators with brief factual summaries of information on 5 more topics of inclusion. Topic are: *Adapting the Curriculum; Instructional Strategies; Communication Systems in the Classroom; Administration in Inclusive Schools* and *Transition from School to Adult Life*.

Using Metacognitive Assessments, Israel, S, 2007. 36-0270-01.

After discussing the meaning of metacognition as it relates to reading instruction and the key metacognitive strategies use by effective middle school readers. Several metacognitive assessments that can be used to adapt literacy instruction to individual student needs is offered.

Magnetic Wooden To Truck Set, Ikea, 2008. 83-1609-01.

This pull-along wooden tow truck has a bendable magnetic pick up point which can be used to move the magnetized blocks in and out of the appropriate insets in the cart.

Jumbo ABC Floor Puzzle. 63-3239-01.

Each piece of this floor puzzle has an upper and lower case letter, a coloured photograph depicting something beginning with the letter and a clear word for the picture.

Reclaiming Reluctant Writers, Buis, K, 2008. 40-0069-01.

This text addresses the problem of students who have left primary school and are struggling with the differences in expectations in writing between the primary and middle years of schooling. It explores how teachers can identify the strengths of reluctant writers and build on them to achieve success, making writing purposeful and satisfying.

SERUUpdate

WORKSHOPS

[Reading Comprehension & Assistive Technologies](#)

The development of reading comprehension relies on a number of components and skills. This presentation will outline the range of skills and strategies required for reading and how assistive technology tools can be used at the various stages of the reading process to support reading comprehension. Participants will be guided through a series of activities which can be used at the before, during and after stages of reading. The various technology options for each of these activities will also be demonstrated. This workshop is suitable for teachers working with primary and middle school students.

[Thursday 1 October 2009 - 9.00 am to 1.00 pm at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[Lego Robotics Workshops for Teachers](#)

This workshop is suitable for primary and secondary teachers who are considering implementing a robotics program in their school, regardless of your level of expertise. It is also for teachers who have purchased the kits and would like to refresh their knowledge of how to use the NXT-G software. The workshop uses a hands-on approach supported by a range of activities that cater for all ability levels.

[Friday 23 October 2009 - 9.30 am to 3.00 pm at SERU](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[Basic Boardmaker 6](#)

This half-day hands-on session shows how to use the Boardmaker computer program to develop visual tools for use in the classroom. Suitable for staff of sites that have recently purchased the Boardmaker 6 program.

[Monday 28 September 2009 - 9.00 am to 12.00 noon at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[Extended PowerPoint Extreme](#)

This workshop will explore some creative ways PowerPoint can be used by students in learning. You will learn how to create hypermedia presentations such as: virtual tours, soundscapes, choose your own adventure stories, frame animation. Participants will also explore the ways PowerPoint can be used to support students with their learning tasks by the use of Addin Tools. The session will also look at a range of ways to source, create and edit digital audio and video files. A free

and innovative way to create Flash content using PowerPoint will be explored.

A basic knowledge of PowerPoint is essential. Participants will receive a USB drive with a host of resources and ideas to use.

Audience: Teachers/SSOs working with students in the Middle and Upper Primary Years.

[Wednesday 30 September 2009 - 9.00 am to 4.00 pm at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[MS Word Wizardry](#)

There are a number of tools in Microsoft Word which can be used by students to support them with their literacy tasks. Participants will explore tools and procedures which support the drafting process in writing, encourage students to use more sophisticated vocabulary, reduce working memory demands with reading and embed prompts for study and comprehension activities. A range of freeware tools will also be used in this session.

[Monday 28 September 2009 - 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[Clicker 5](#)

Clicker 5 is a writing and multimedia authoring tool which can be used to support students with the reading and writing process. It has a range of powerful assistive features which can be used by students to complete challenging literacy tasks or activities. Clicker is also a talking word processor which also includes the use of Clicker Grids. These grids scaffold the writing process by providing students with banks of words, phrases and pictures. The ability to create or utilise other forms of multimedia makes Clicker 5 a very powerful creativity tool that can change the way students write with technology. Participants will receive a USB drive with a host of resources and ideas to use.

[Tuesday 29 September 2009 - 9.00 am to 4.00 pm at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)

[Discover the Magic of ... CHESS](#)

Workshop for students with Autism / Asperger Syndrome - 7+. Students must be accompanied by a parent / caregiver. FREE.

[Tuesday 6 October 2009 - 9.30 am to 12.00 noon at SERU - School Holidays](#) - (download flyer/registration form - PDF format)