



Mapping the Journey

Inclusive Education for Students with Severe
Vision Impairment in Rural South Australia

Bev Priest and Marianne Scherer

SA School For Vision Impaired

Mapping the Journey

- Exploring the contributing factors for inclusive R-7 education for a boy with severe vision impairment in one country school community
- Identifying key learning which can assist a school community in an adjacent region in providing inclusive R-7 education for a boy with severe vision impairment

Bailey – Years 1 and 7
Tyson – Reception



Students

- Bailey Year 7 in 2012
 - Transition to high school in 2013
 - History of retinoblastoma and enucleation
 - Low vision in early years; no vision by year 2
 - Braille and multiple technologies
- Tyson Reception in 2012
 - Transition to school in 2012
 - History of severe cataracts, glaucoma and retinal detachment
 - Light perception in one eye by school commencement
 - Learning braille



Context

- Neighbouring rural regional centres for outback SA
 - Approximately 1 hour apart
 - Approximately 4 and 5 hours from SASVI
- Local schools
- SASVI Statewide Support Service
 - Itinerant service from Adelaide
 - 2-3 site visits per school term
 - SASVI Short Courses in Adelaide and/or Community Programs in the country region
 - Staff or student visit to SASVI (1 per term)

Family Perspectives

- Resourcefulness and resilience
- Valuing families' experiences, core values and structures
 - Mutual trust and respect
Angell, M. E., Stoner, J. B., & Shelden, D. L. (2009)
 - Siblings and grandparents
- Communication
- Key questions
Ravenscroft, J. (2009)

Service Delivery & Collaboration

- Building school capacity to use teachable moments
 - Communication between SASVI and local staff
 - Day to day progress and record-keeping
 - Processes and structures for provision of on-time and accessible resources
 - Developing planning structures for regular school team planning: class teacher and SSOs
 - SASVI Short Courses : Intensive learning opportunities for students, staff and parents
 - Other services:
 - CanDo4Kids for Occupational Therapy & Assistive Technology
 - Blind Sports SA
 - Guide Dogs Association SA.NT for Orientation and Mobility
- Hatlen, P. (2002); Brown, J. E., & Beamish, W. (2012); Osburn, J., Caruso, G., & Wolfensberger, W. (2011); Harris, B. (2011)

Professional Learning

- Flexible and multi-layered approaches
 - Visits to SASVI for observation of R-7 classes
 - SASVI Short Courses
 - Local Community Programs
 - SASVI braille course for SSOs
- Braille and assistive technology learning

Male, D. B. (2011); Lewis, S., & McKenzie, A. R. (2009)



MOPS Priorities for Inclusion – 1

“It is widely accepted that social emotional development plays a crucial role in children’s development and for children to develop and be successful in many contexts they require both social emotional and academic achievement.” Roe (2008) p. 147

MOPS Priorities for Inclusion – 2

- Psychosocial experiences and friendship
 - Daily fitness
 - Weekly swimming
 - Classmates rostered for excursions, activities, play breaks

George and Duquette (2006); Roe, J. (2008)
- Assistive technology skills
 - Braille Note
 - Embossing, tables, diary, calculator, address book
 - Computer with JAWS
 - Email, internet research, Word, Excel spreadsheets, Power Point, Audacity
- Transition to secondary school



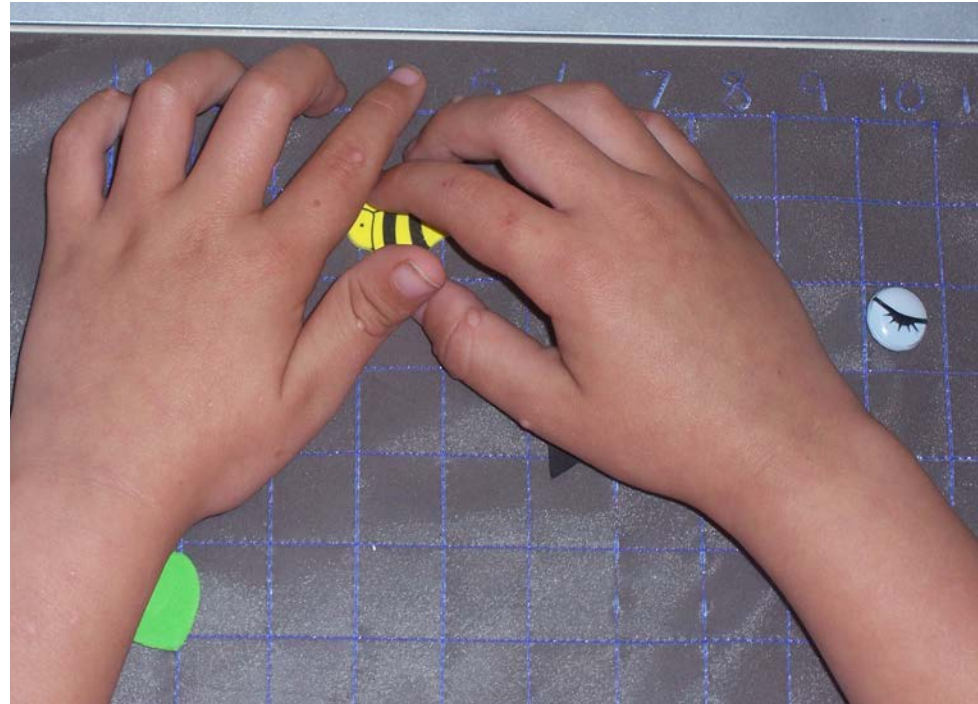
Learning in Groups



Core Curriculum

- Class participation
- Building on strengths
- Physical Education
 - Daily fitness
 - Skipping
 - School Sports Days
- Maths
 - Mental computation skills
- Literacy

Herold, H., & Dandolo, J. (2009)



2006

Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with VI

- Priority Areas
 - Assistive Technologies
 - Braille
 - Independent Living Skills
 - Orientation and Mobility
 - Recreation and Leisure
 - Social Skills
 - Self-Determination

Sapp, W., & Hatlen, P. (2010)

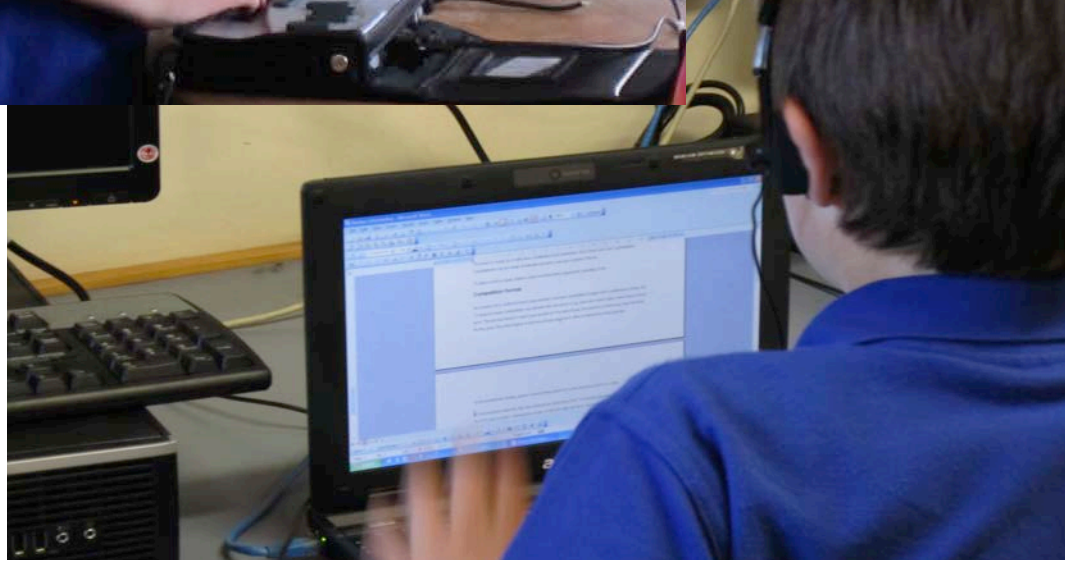
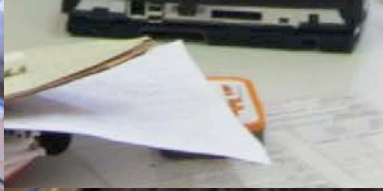
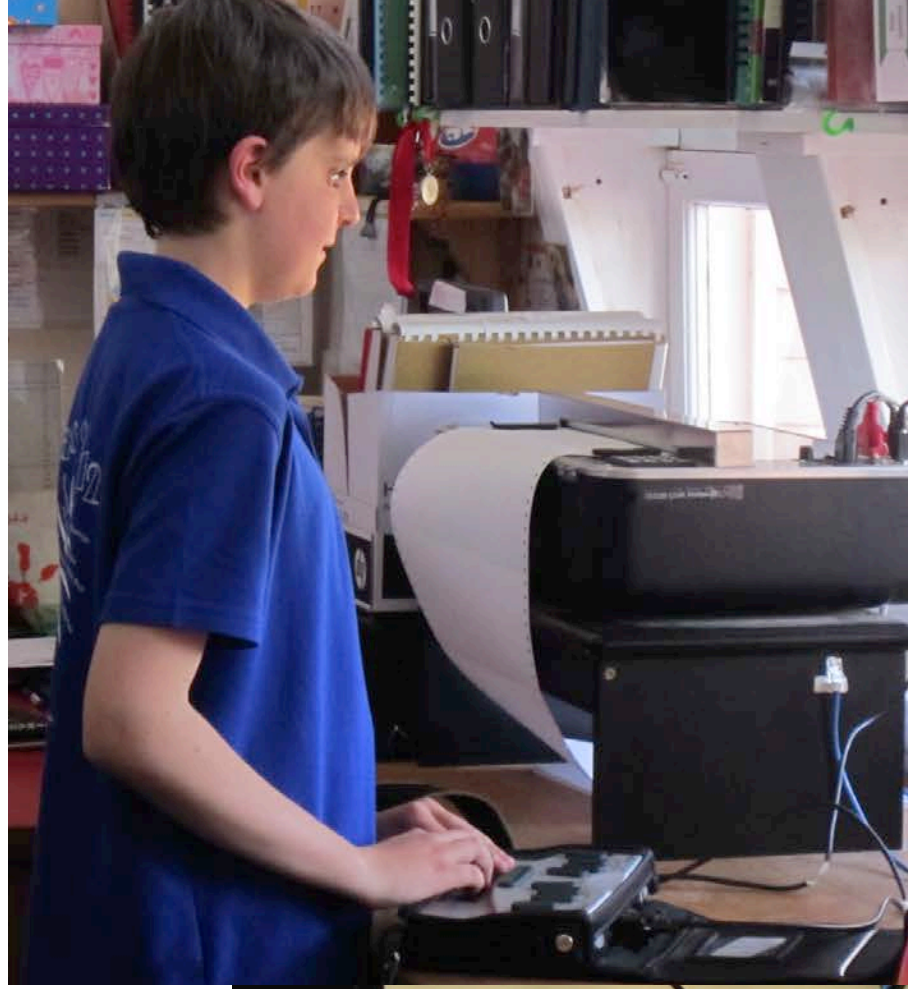
Jessup, G. M., Cornell, E., & Bundy, A. C. (2010)

Scott, B. (2009); Agran, M., Hong, S., & Blankenship, K. (2007)



2010

Using Technology





Recreation and Leisure

Braille and Literacy – 1

- Bailey: early focus was still around print
- Tyson: introduction to tactile developmental experiences began at school
- Both boys: structured and specific teaching with materials provided by SASVI
 - *Mangold Developmental Program of Tactile and Braille Letter Recognition* for tracking and tactile discrimination skills and the initial introduction of letters



Braille and Literacy – 2

- Tyson, term 3 2012: introduction of braille alphabet
 - *Braille for Infants*
 - *Moving on to Pages* for spatial and maths concepts
 - *Tactile Treasures* for Maths concepts

“... our youngest students may be more motivated by letters and words with which they have an emotional connection: the first letter of their name or a favourite activity..., the names of family members and friends...”

Swenson, A. M. (2008) p. 208

Braille and Literacy – 3

- Willsden PS SSOs learning braille code and basics of introducing braille to a young learner
- Tyson, end term 4 2012: knows 9 letters and can read some phrases and short sentences

Leaders' Perspectives

- Site Leaders
 - Commitment to resourcing group staff attendance at SASVI Short Courses
- Regional Leaders
 - Continuing disability supplementary funding to the school
 - Additional resourcing to support staff attendance at SASVI Short Courses



School Staff Perspectives – 1

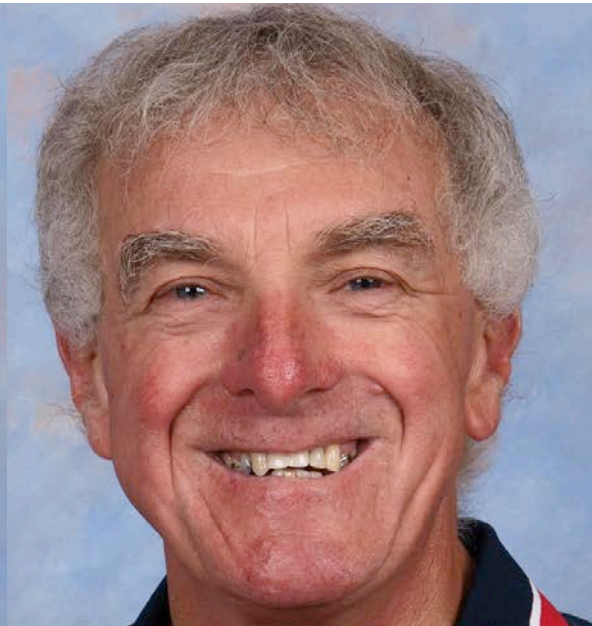
- Teachers

I guess the achievements are seeing how far Tyson has come this year – socially & academically, even though we are not trained in teaching a blind student – seeing him grow in the classroom and as a learner has made me very proud to have him in my classroom (WPS 2012)



School Staff Perspectives – 2

- School Service Officers
 - The role was presented as a choice; it built on our previous work
 - Our shared work ethic and core values: responsibility, team work, mutual respect
 - Regular positive feedback from school leader who appreciated the complexities of our roles (MOPS 2012)



Inclusive Year 1-7 Education for Bailey

- Commitment of human and financial resources by school leaders
- Continuity of class teachers in years: 1-3, and 4-5
- Team work of 3 SSOs
 - Sharing the load when learning braille code
 - Specialising in Literacy, Maths or PE

Inclusive Year 1-7 Education for Bailey

- SSOs' commitment to seeing Bailey through primary school
 - Continuing to secondary school
- Development of SSOs' confidence in their braille skills
- Emerging belief by parents and school staff that Bailey could learn braille
- Effective communication, openness between school and SASVI: shared problem-solving
- Skilled, timely and flexible services by SASVI Advisory Teachers

Inclusive Education in Reception for Tyson

Class Teacher's Perspective:

- Support from Marianne & SASVI
- SSO support for Tyson to learn his braille in a 1:1 situation
- The relationship with the family – being able to talk to parent and grandparent about concerns or achievements (December 2012)



Inclusive Education in Reception for Tyson

Advisory Teacher's Perspective

- Inclusive classroom strategies and culture
- Family communication and proactivity
- Grandparent's positive commitment to Tyson's wellbeing and learning (Dec 2012)



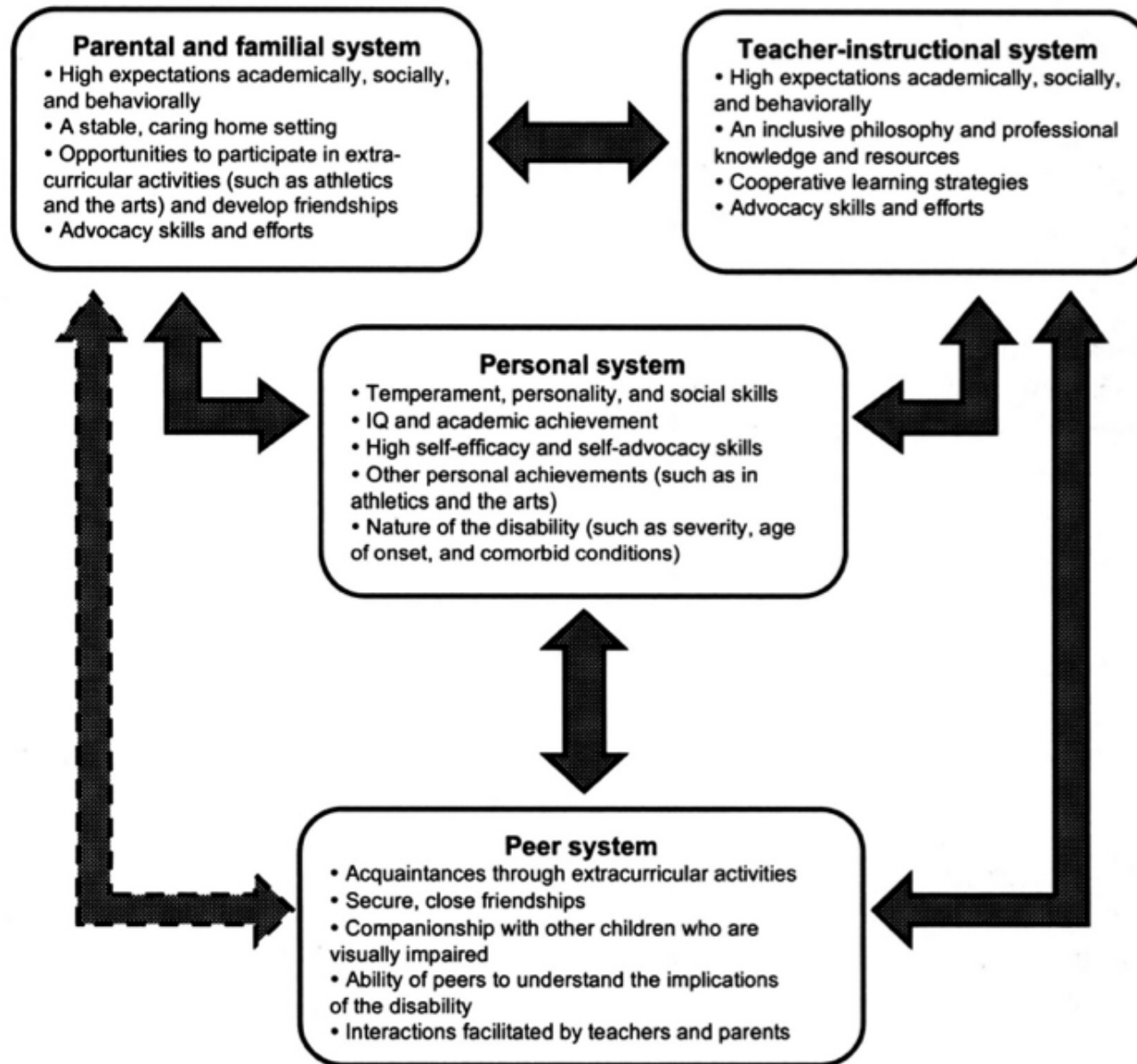


Figure 1. A model of successful inclusion. A variety of systems operate simultaneously, with each system influencing the others.

George, A. L., & Duquette, C. (2006).

Legislation and Education Policies

- Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- Melbourne Declaration (2008)
- DECD Policies and Frameworks
 - Students with Disabilities (2006)
 - DECS Learner Wellbeing Framework (2007)
 - TfEL *Teaching for Effective Learning Framework Guide* (2010)
 - DIAf *DECD Improvement and Accountability Framework* (2007)

References – 1

Agran, M., Hong, S., & Blankenship, K. (2007). Promoting the self-determination of students with visual impairments: Reducing the gap between knowledge and practice. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* , 101 (8).

Angell, M. E., Stoner, J. B., & Shelden, D. L. (2009). Trust in education professionals. Perspectives of mothers of children with disabilities. *Remedial and Special Education* , 30 (3), 160-176.

Brown, J. E., & Beamish, W. (2012). The changing role and practice of teachers of students with visual impairments: Practitioners' views from Australia. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* , 106 (2), 81-92.

George, A. L., & Duquette, C. (2006). The psychosocial experiences of a student with low vision. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* , 100 (3), 152-163.

Harris, B. (2011). Effects of the proximity of paraeducators on the interactions of braille readers in inclusive settings. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* , 105 (8), 467-478.

Hatlen, P. (2002). The most difficult decision: How to share responsibility between local schools and schools for the blind. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* , 96 (10).

Herold, H., & Dandolo, J. (2009). Including visually impaired students in physical education lessons: a study of teacher and pupil experiences. *British Journal of Visual Impairment* , 27 (1), 75-84.

Jessup, G. M., Cornell, E., & Bundy, A. C. (2010). The treasure in leisure activities: Fostering resilience in young people who are blind . *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* , 104 (7), 419-430.

References – 2

Lewis, S., & McKenzie, A. R. (2009). Knowledge and skills for teachers of students with visual impairments supervising the work of paraeducators. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness* , 103 (8), 481-494.

Male, D. B. (2011). The impact of a professional development programme on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. *British Journal of Learning Support* , 26 (4).

Osburn, J., Caruso, G., & Wolfensberger, W. (2011). The concept of "best practice": A brief overview of its meanings, scope, uses and shortcomings. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education* , 58 (3), 213-222.

Ravenscroft, J. (2009). What parents of children with vision impairment ask their children's teacher(s). *Journal of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment* , 4 (1).

Roe, J. (2008). Social inclusion: Meeting the socio-emotional needs of children with vision needs. *British Journal of Visual Impairment* , 26 (2), 147-158.

Sapp, W., & Hatlen, P. (2010). The Expanded core curriculum: Where have we been, where are we going, and how can we get there. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* , 104 (6), 338-348.

Scott, B. (2009). Orientation and mobility in the Australian education system. *Journal of South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment* , 4 (1).

Swenson, A. M. (2008). Reflections on teaching reading in braille. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* , 102 (4), 206-209.