

Your help line
(03) 9916 5821

Website:

www.acedisability.org.au

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Welcome to Spring

It's still a bit wet and cold – but the wattle is out, blossoms are beginning to appear and the sun is getting warmer at last.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

The big news item this year is the campaign for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). If successful, the scheme would replace the existing funding and service system for people with permanent disability. The NDIS will transform the way services are funded and delivered; ensuring people are better supported enabling them to have greater choice and control.

It is vital for people with disability and their carers to be able to access essential care, support, therapy, equipment, early intervention and training. So, please assist the campaign and take action by going on line at: www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au and signing the petition.



'Zines

In this edition we have a good practice story in literacy with people with disability and the creation of 'Zines – which are homemade magazines and which students can make and sell at speciality shops like the Sticky Institute in the Degraeves Subway in Melbourne* for \$1-\$5 depending on how much work or expense has gone into them.

*For non city providers, Sticky Institute can be accessed on-line at : www.stickyinstitute.com

Good practice in working with people who have hearing loss

This is the focus of this edition – more information overleaf and a tip sheet (as always) on the back.

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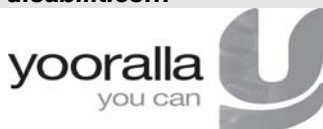
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Challenge Multimedia is a Yooralla enterprise that supports people with disabilities...



Learning with 'Zines



It's funny how we expect our students to get excited about learning literacy when most of their hard work ends up sitting on a shelf, in their folder, with no purpose and no productive outcome. Yooralla's Adult Education Program 'AbleLinks' for adults with disability, banishes the trend of useless projects, with its policy of having a quality end-point for students work.

'Zines, home-made magazines, have proved particularly popular both in providing a tailored project for each student and increasing confidence, with many 'zines selling out, some requiring more copies to meet demand.

Thomas tentatively produced his first 'zine last year, writing under a pseudonym and putting his magazine up for sale in Sticky Institute. First, he wrote a story using his own experiences. He did this slowly with the help of his trainer. He then created an original A5 version of his 'zine from three sheets of A4 paper folded down the middle, pasting in pictures and typed text.

Finally, he ran off 10 photocopied versions of his 'zine and stapled them ready for sale. After filling in a few simple forms with assistance he was ready to submit his magazines for sale. His 'zine was a huge success, with Sticky Institute requesting extra copies to sell. Staff at Sticky then asked for the next instalment and a fantastic new journey in literacy learning began. Prior to working on 'zines Thomas had struggled to find his niche, but with his new project he has found a zeal for his writing that was previously untapped. The benefits of this approach to his work are multi-layered, he can direct his learning by choosing a topic to write about, other students are interested in his work, Sticky Institute allows him to hang out there and use their resources and on top of that he makes a few dollars from the sale of his 'zines. Thomas is currently working on his second 'zine, a sequel to the first and has found a new drive to create quality work that others will want to read.

It's crucial that literacy educators recognise the potential value of students work; it is often the out-pouring of their lives, an expression of their thoughts or record of their personal experiences. Projects that are written up in their own words naturally pitch themselves at the right level for their peers who read them. Sharing their work provides feedback, affirmation to reward their efforts and increased motivation for future projects.

Carmen Harris, Trainer & Assessor, Yooralla Adult Education- Ablelinks

Museum accessibility breakthrough with Smart Auslan

Accessibility to museum audio tours has taken a major breakthrough in accessibility to museum audio tours - the launch by the Australian Communication Exchange (ACE) of its new *Smart Auslan* service. Deaf and hearing impaired visitors to the National Sports Museum in Melbourne can now receive an Auslan translation as well as captions for all exhibits that have an audio commentary.

Visitors can either pick up a pre-loaded handset from the museum counter or download the application free to their Android phone via www.smartauslan.com.au. When the handset is pointed at the Quick Response code on the exhibit, the device plays an Auslan video translation with captions

People with hearing loss or who are Deaf

According to recent studies, hearing loss is estimated to affect 20% of Australians. People who have hearing loss can be divided into two groups:

1. Those who are hard of hearing and use speech reading and spoken language as their main form of communication
2. Those who are Deaf (the capital D signifies that they are people who share a common language, culture and history) and use sign language as their main form of communication.

Reference: Vicdeaf information sheet "Understanding Hearing Loss"

Myths about people with hearing loss

Myth: Deaf people can't hear.

Fact: Only very few deaf people have no residual hearing at all. Even those with a severe hearing loss can pick up certain ranges of sound via hearing aids or other equipment. However, hearing aids do not restore the full range of hearing, and some deaf people choose not to use them.

Myth: Deaf people can't speak.

Fact: Many deaf people have been exposed to some sort of oral/aural education in which speech development was of primary importance. Those with a mild to severe hearing loss and those who have become deaf later in life are very likely to be able to communicate effectively via speech.

Myth: All deaf people use sign language.

Fact: Sign language is most likely to be used by people with a moderate to profound hearing loss, with Auslan being considered their preferred first language. Those with a mild hearing loss and those who have lost hearing over time are most likely to prefer the use of a spoken language.

Myth: All deaf people can lip read.

Fact: Although this is a skill that many deaf people employ, it should be noted that it is not an accurate means of deciphering speech, as about 60% of lip reading is guesswork. It is a skill that some people may not be able to master.

Reference: Guidance notes for deaf and hard of hearing students and their tutors, 2003–2004, Open University, UK.

National Relay Service

The Commonwealth Government funds a National TTY Relay Service which relays telephone calls between deaf people or those with a hearing or speech impairment and the community. The National Relay Service can be accessed as follows:

TTY users – use 13 36 77

Speak and listen users – use 1300 555 727

Further Information:

Vicdeaf information Sheets: <http://www.vicdeaf.com.au/>

Guidance notes for deaf and hard of hearing students and their tutors, 2003–2004, Open University
www.open.ac.uk/disability/documents/hear2help_scr.pdf

TIP SHEET FOR WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH HEARING LOSS

Even if someone is wearing hearing aids it doesn't mean they can hear you perfectly. Ask if they need to lip read or would like you to write notes.

If you are using an interpreter, always remember to talk directly to the person you are communicating with, not the interpreter.

Make sure you have face-to-face contact with the person you are talking to.

Get the listener's attention before you start speaking, maybe by waving or tapping them on the arm or shoulder.

Speak clearly but not too slowly, and don't exaggerate your lip movements – this can make it harder to lip read.

Use natural facial expressions and gestures.

If you're talking to a group that includes deaf and hearing people, don't just focus on the hearing people.

Don't shout. It can be uncomfortable for hearing aid users, it can distort lip patterns and it looks aggressive.

If someone doesn't understand what you've said, don't keep repeating it. Try saying it in a different way instead e.g. "rug" instead of "carpet".

Find a suitable place to talk, with good lighting and away from noise and distractions.

Check that the person you're talking to is following you during the conversation. Use plain language and don't waffle. Avoid jargon and unfamiliar abbreviations.

To make it easy to lip read, don't cover your mouth with your hands or clothing.

Let the person with hearing loss know the subject of the conversation beforehand if possible

Cut down on background noise

Maximise visual clues e.g. good signage, directions, handouts and captions

Write down communications if necessary.

When in doubt ask the person with hearing loss for suggestions to improve communication

Using interpreters

Speak to the student, not the interpreter.

Speak at your normal pace - the interpreter will tell you if you are speaking too fast. You may just have to pause now and then to allow the interpreter to catch up. Apart from the delay caused by information passing through a third party, there is a time lag in what is being signed because Auslan has a different syntax to spoken English.

The interpreter may not have a detailed knowledge of the subject they are translating.

Provide glossaries or notes in advance to help them prepare, particularly where unfamiliar words or names or acronyms will need to be spelled out (finger spelling).

Interpreting is tiring and an interpreter working on their own needs regular breaks (usually every 20–30 minutes), and two people may be needed for long sessions/classes (over an hour).