



Concurrent Presentation Abstracts, Thursday, 25th May at 4.00 pm

Location: Kennedy Room

Maintaining Your Mojo – Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

Adrienne Ford and Sarah Hewitt, Nambour Special School

Special Education is, by definition, a specialised area of instruction. Providing an educational program to students with specialised educational requirements can have a significant impact on staff mental health and wellbeing. Generally the supports provided by schools following the 'big' incidents are very effective and comprehensive, however within the realm of special education it is often the cumulative effect of multiple minor incidents daily that can impact staff mojo and eventually mental health and wellbeing. The slow deflation of someone's 'mojo' can go largely unnoticed, until it becomes a larger mental health and wellbeing concern. It can impact perspective, ability to work effectively, and flow on into life outside of school.

In this mental health and wellbeing initiative, Nambour Special School has partnered with Nick Burnett, (*positive creative solutions*) and Paul Montgomery (www.uniqueoutcomes.com.au) to identify the tools that positive staff use to maintain their 'mojo'. By identifying the strengths already existing within the school, the multidisciplinary implementation team were able to create a reflective practices instrument that provides the opportunity for all staff to learn how to use these 'mojo-maintenance tools' to support their own mental health and wellbeing.

This interactive workshop will give participants the opportunity to: 'check their mojo'; learn more about mojo maintenance tools; identify some strategies that might be useful in their own setting; and leave the session having had a boost to their mojo!

"...our mojo is that special power of influence that we have, perhaps our unique talent or ability to make things happen, influence others or get things done" (*Barbara Capstick*)

Location: Roosevelt Room

Equity Through Engagement, Engagement Through Innovation: Appropriate Holistic Teaching and Learning Environments for Students at 1a and 1b

Sue Lowry and Bec Anderson, Southport Special School

Equity in curriculum access does not mean using the same pedagogy for all. Equity in curriculum access means employing the most appropriate pedagogy and approach for the student.

Evidence suggests that equity in curriculum access and success relies on increasing student engagement. Over the last two years, Southport Special School has been developing holistic learning environments, that when coupled with process based/central



pedagogical approaches including Intensive Interaction, have dramatically increased engagement for students at General Capabilities 1a and 1b. For this cohort, if this is in place, the curriculum can then be a vehicle which enables fundamental communicative and cognitive development to occur.

At QASEL 2016, Southport Special School introduced the work we had developed on delivering mathematics through a process based pedagogical approach. This work has expanded to encompass the full curriculum through holistic learning environments and using process based pedagogies. Evident student progress and growth in teacher knowledge and pedagogical practice was recognised as a strength of the school, in our 2016 school review.

This workshop shares the further developments in innovative practice across pedagogies, teacher development and school wide cultural change, that has produced equity in curriculum access, within our school, and is influencing change in practice across South East Queensland.

Location: Lincoln Room

Exploring Fraction Knowledge with Telling Time: a Case Study of Students who Have Learning Difficulties

Heidi Clausen, Queensland University of Technology

Learning to tell time is part of the Mathematics Curriculum. It sits in the Measurement Strand. All primary school children are expected to read, record, and communicate time. To do this children must use knowledge involving mathematics, mundane time expressions, written text, and analogue and digital clocks.

Available studies have shown that many children (including children who have LD) continue to struggle with the complex conceptual and procedural demands required to perform this life skill (Andersson, 2008; Burny, Valcke, & Desoete, 2012, Friedman & Laycock, 1989; Williams, 2012). The purpose of the study was to explore the connections children who have LD made when telling half hour, quarter past, and quarter to hour time. In particular the children's' Mathematics knowledge, and specifically fractions.

Queensland government schools are mandated to implement processes and procedures to recognise and support children who have persistent difficulties accessing curriculum content in Numeracy and Literacy. The approach used to identify participants for this study was implemented by the school staff in accordance with the DET policy 'A whole school approach to support student learning' (2015). Those children not meeting Year 4 achievement standards in Literacy and Numeracy were identified.

The overall findings demonstrate the predominate use of number and arithmetic operations, only two of the three key concepts of domain specific knowledge (Mathematics) by participants who have LD. Results have also shown that some participants fraction thinking was still developing as they selected and used only arithmetic and number knowledge to tell half past, quarter past, and quarter to time.



The relative time system were of primary interest as fraction words half and quarter are incorporated in expressions when telling the time. Only four participants consistently used relative time expressions with reference to fractions. Both analogue and digital clocks were recognisable as such, even though some participants reversed some numerals.

The findings suggest that domain specific knowledge (Mathematics), mundane time expressions, clock representation, and domain general cognitive processes facilitate the learning of telling time. To make this clearer a web has been constructed by this researcher to show the connections. It is these necessary components that create the complexity of telling the time when encountered by children who have LD. Children who have LD achieve a depth of understanding when they recognise, select and use, and communicate their reasoning for applying the different components to tell time.

Location: Westminster Room

Capturing and Recording Literacy Data for Students Working Below Foundation

Jenni Irving and Sarah Hewitt, Nambour Special School

Tracking and assessing the literacy growth of students with severe and multiple disabilities is challenging and often relies heavily on teacher judgement, which cannot be objectively moderated. Through the Master Teacher Project, Nambour Special School have formulated a tool that is a systematic means to assess (and reassess) a student's literacy skills and engagement in literacy-based activities. Systematic, ongoing assessment is essential to teaching staff in developing a targeted, comprehensive, long-term plan for progressing student literacy skills and engagement, as well as for correctly identifying appropriate curriculum intent and planning a teaching sequence.

The ELAT (Emergent Literacy Assessment Tool) breaks down literacy behaviours into an incremental progression of emergent literacy skills. It incorporates five levels: Encountering, Building a Foundation, Early Emergent Literacy, Emergent Literacy and Emergent Transitional, with a target population of students accessing the Australian Curriculum through General Capabilities Literacy Levels 1a, 1b and 1c. The ELAT is designed so that data can be recorded on OneSchool and provides a platform for moderation.

Location: Washington Room

Zoning In On Self-Regulation

Elizabeth Noske, Caravonica Cluster SEP

**Please note: this presentation is a repeat of the 2.45 pm session*

"Children will do well if they can", Ross Green declares in his book, "The Explosive Child". Despite their best intentions, many students, especially those with ASD, struggle to learn the basics of self-regulation that enable them to 'do well'. *The Zones of*



Regulation® program, written by Leah Kuypers, with lessons by Michelle Garcia Winner, is an increasingly popular and highly successful approach to teaching self-regulation to students. The stratagem is particularly pertinent to students on the spectrum, most of whom are well able to master the concepts of self-regulation cognitively, but require focused, intensive and repetitive practice and consolidation in order to understand their own, and others' emotional states and to use the tool-box of strategies and skills to maintain or return to a state of self-regulation. Lacking an age-appropriate Theory of Mind headset is a considerable hurdle they cannot easily and independently learn to overcome. The *Zones* program is comprehensive, well supported with lesson plans, reproducible visuals and learning activities, set out through a lesson-by-lesson sequence of skills development for students in the younger and middle years.

The program is suitable for one-on-one or small group instruction or whole class participation. While some students quickly master the concepts and skills, other require a slower, more circular pace and longer exposure to each segment of the program. Many other social learning programs and resources, including the plethora of YouTube social stories and vignettes, will complement and enrich the standard program and provide variety and engagement for students requiring additional practice.

Although suitable as a stand-alone program for individual students, a whole school approach to the use of the conceptual framework and the terminology of the Zone's program will do much to consolidate the children's understanding and use of their own self-regulation toolbox. It is particularly powerful when the teacher, encountering a student in their Red Zone, in the playground can use the four zone's vocabulary to assist the student to identify how they feel, how this will drive their behaviour and how they can use the strategies they have learnt to return to the calm, self-regulated Green Zone. When each and every class and specialist teacher, administrator, teacher aide and support person naturally and automatically uses the Zone's framework to do a daily check-in, respond to an upset student, manage conflicts or repair damaged relationships, the success of the program can be life-changing for vulnerable students.