



Celebrating Strengths and Diversity in ASD, Implementing the best practise from the USA in Australia

Brooke Briody

An International Specialised Skills Fellowship

Sponsored by the Pratt Foundation - Bella Irlicht Fellowship



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i. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

By celebrating the strengths of those diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), school staff, employers, parents, and care workers can provide opportunities for those people with ASD to be as independent and efficient as they are able, hence allowing them to fully contribute to their community.

By visiting and examining approaches in schools and centres in the USA The Fellow found that those centres committing to the Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH) philosophy and approach developed individual approaches which centred on a persons strengths and interests. By doing so they were able to engage these people in suitable and ongoing job and life training.

The implementation of the TEACCH approach across the sector of education would benefit us all. With a reduction of challenging behaviour and an increase in engagement people with ASD will obtain the support they need to successfully engage in school. By providing consultation to schools in the North Western Region of Melbourne and hosting TEACCH training conferences at Northern School for Autism, schools, service providers and parents will be able to gain the training necessary to implement this approach. Hosting visitors to Northern School for Autism will also allow Australians to see the TEACCH approach in its authentic form.

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ii. ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

AAC	Augmentative and Alternative Communication
ABA	Applied Behaviour Analysis
AFLS	Assessment of Functional Living Skills
AHRC	Association for the Help of Retarded Children
CARS2	Child Autism Rating Scale
CLLC	Carolina Living and Learning Centre
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
MIPS	Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs)
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy
NSA	Northern School for Autism
NSW DET	Department of Education and Training New South Wales
NYCA	New York City Autism
PCS	Picture Communication Symbol
PSD	The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD)
TEACCH	Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communication Handicapped Children
TTAP-TEACCH	Transition Assessment Profile - TEACCH

iii. DEFINITIONS

AAC

Augmentative and Alternative Communication and it relates to all the tools and strategies that we use with people who have little or no speech.

GESTALT TRAINING

A training approach that is made of many parts and yet is somehow more than or different from the combination of such parts.

TEACCH

Now known only as TEACCH rather than in its expanded acronym. TEACCH provides a philosophy and approach which celebrates the Culture of Autism and prescribes individual structures in physical layout, schedule use and visual structures and supports to increase independence and decrease anxiety.

1. ABOUT THE FELLOW

Name: Brooke Briody

Current Employment: Campus Principal, Northern School for Autism, Lalor, Victoria, Australia

Qualifications:

- Bachelor of Teaching (Primary), University New South Wales, 1996
- Diploma of Special Education, Macquarie University, 2000

After several years as a Primary teacher in the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) teaching students with special needs, the Fellow won a retraining cadetship to gain formal qualifications in Special Education. This course of study was centred on the adaptation of the curriculum for equitable access for students with special needs. The importance of developing the program to meet the needs of the student rather than focussing on how to fit the student to the program became the key driver for the Fellows' future involvement in Special Education.

After gaining excellent skills in developing individual Numeracy and Literacy programs and acquiring a vast knowledge in supporting challenging behaviour in the classrooms, the Fellow was placed in a Special School for students with physical disabilities, Autism, mild to severe Intellectual disabilities and complex medical needs. At this school, the Fellow implemented her knowledge into practice. Without any formal training, the Fellow implemented elements of Structured TEACCHing, an approach which implements visual structure and celebrates the strengths of individuals with ASD, and saw immense progress in the learning of skills and reduction in challenging behaviours with almost all her students.

After three years working across the age groups three to 16 years, the Fellow won an Assistant Principal position at Forest House School in Sydney – a school for primary age students with diagnosed emotional disturbance and behaviour disorders. Again using elements of Structured TEACCHing, the Fellow reshaped the school's teaching approach to supporting the Sydney regions' most challenging students. The focus was the development of academic skills through short visual activities with visual contracts to support a reduction in behaviour.

After three years in this setting, the Fellow was offered the opportunity to travel to the United Kingdom (UK). Keen to investigate other teaching approaches, the Fellow accepted a position as the Lead Educator at Eagle House Residential School for Students with Autism. It was in this setting the Fellow came across the TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children) Program. Using this method, the Fellow saw an enormous increase in the independent skills of students and a decrease in the most challenging of behaviours.

After winning a Deputy Headteacher position and moving to Briarwood School, Bristol, the Fellow was offered the opportunity for formal training in Structured TEACCHing by the then director Gary Mesibov. During the five years at Briarwood School, the Fellow implemented the Structured TEACCHing the approach promoted by TEACCH across her school. The result of this structured approach was the school being awarded an 'Outstanding' grade from OFSTED, the UK independent inspection of schools body.

Upon returning to Australia in 2012 and taking up an Assistant Principal position in Newcastle Middle School, the Fellow was disappointed to find that Structured TEACCHing had still not made an impact in the NSW education system. Working back in the classroom, the Fellow trialled the implementation across three rooms. Now as the Campus Principal of a specialist Autism School in Victoria, the Fellow has worked with staff to implement the TEACCH approach across the school. This is the second year of implementation.

2. AIM OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

'If you've met one person with ASD, you've met one person with ASD.' (Anon.)

As the Campus Principal of the Senior Campus of the Northern School for Autism, the Fellow has the ability to support staff within her own setting and across the Northern Region to reduce the differences Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has on students and their families. By completing the TEACCH Five-Day Training, the Fellow will become a TEACCH Certified Practitioner.

The mission and vision of the TEACCH approach is to reduce the differences in learning, thinking and neurobehavioral patterns caused by ASD. The emphasis and priorities of the program are clearly focused on the strengths of the individual. In Victoria, the focus of training provided is centred on the 'core deficits' or 'core impairments' of ASD. Deficit models tend to be more negative for everyone involved, repeatedly emphasising what students do not understand and cannot do. Building on the strengths of an individual takes advantage of the unusual pattern of skills that is typically found in people with ASD. Deficits are difficult to erase; strengths in certain aspects or unique talents are easily cultivated and increase the achievement for people diagnosed with ASD. By reducing these differences, our community will value the positive contribution people with ASD can make – such as in the workplace in paid employment.

Structured TEACCHing enables teachers in all settings to understand and appreciate the positive attributes and strengths of children and young people diagnosed with ASD. In any setting, Structured TEACCHing increases attention and cognitive understanding whilst reducing anxiety. The TEACCH program promotes an increase in independence at school, home and beyond school. This leads to an increased participation in paid employment. TEACCH can be applied in any setting, with any ability level to achieve these results. All students will have the opportunity to:

- Achieve potential
- Achieve maximum competency as an adult
- Have their fundamental human needs satisfied i.e.:
 - a. Dignity
 - b. Engagement in productive and personally meaningful activities, feelings of security, self-efficacy and self-confidence.

By meeting with TEACCH personnel and ASD specific provisions across the New York City and North Carolina through the Fellowship, the Fellow aims to:

- Visit other proclaimed best practise centres for people with ASD: evaluate the implementation of Structured TEACCHing outside North Carolina; and evaluate the effectiveness of combined approaches Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Structured TEACCHing
- Investigate ways to increase the employment rates of adults with ASD by developing a more structured post school transition plan for special settings and students with Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) funding in the Northern Region Department of Education and Training (DET)
- Gain first-hand experience adapting the workplace and workplace training to implement the TEACCH approach at Northern School for Autism – Lalor Campus
- Update knowledge of evidence based practise of implementation in a school setting
- Visit the Carolina Living and Learning Centre. The Carolina Living and Learning Centre (CLLC) is an integrated vocational and residential program for adults with ASD located in Pittsboro, North Carolina. The CLLC is part of TEACCH and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

2. AIM OF THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

By completing the five-day TEACCH Training, the Fellow will update knowledge and skills to support others to:

- Implement Structured TEACCHing at the Northern School for Autism, the Northern Region Department of Education & Training, Victoria and possibly nationwide therefore increasing the level of independence of students with ASD
- Increase teacher knowledge of teaching and assessment strategies in the areas of academics (literacy and numeracy), communication, independence, play, social and leisure, vocational, relaxation and coping strategies
- Create meaningful and individualised visual structure for students with ASD in both individual and group settings
- Implement problem solving approaches to reduce behavioural difficulties.

3. THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

“ASD affects around one in every 100-110 people. This equates to around 55,000 Victorians and around 250,000 Australians.”¹

“A disability is usually defined in terms of what is missing... But autism... is as much about what is abundant as what is missing, an over-expression of the very traits that make our species unique.”²

Strengths

In Victoria, the Department of Education and Training has allocated extra funding to establish five Specialist Schools for students ASD. The Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) provides funding to these Specialist Autism Schools at a higher level than other specialist programs. This funding is provided directly to the school. The School Principal has autonomy to allocate funding to implement programs and interventions. This can be seen as a strength, as it allows for innovative programs to be developed without the strict adherence to show progress via traditional mainstream curriculum mainstream areas like NAPLAN. The PSD process has clear guidelines and eligibility requirements for accessing additional funding. As a result, students with the highest needs are being identified and supported. Another strength is the specific funding that has been distributed to schools to promote a successful transition to post school life through the Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) support program.

Weaknesses

In Victoria, the focus of training in Universities is on the ‘core deficits’ or ‘core impairments’ of ASD. Deficit models tend to be more negative for everyone involved, repeatedly emphasising what students do not understand and cannot do. Building on the strengths of an individual takes advantage of the unusual pattern of skills that is typically found in people with ASD. Deficits are difficult to erase; strengths in certain aspects or unique talents are easily cultivated and increase the achievement for people diagnosed with ASD. By reducing these differences, our community will value the positive contribution people with ASD can make – such as in the workplace in paid employment. Whilst high funding levels have been provided to support students with ASD in schools and the DET has developed some policies and guidance to provide to schools – they have not monitored whether the funding has been used efficiently or effectively. There is no data to show that this funding has had an impact on the educational outcomes for students with ASD or their transition to meaningful post school placements. As students continue on their schooling journey their funding is reviewed at aged 12. This can mean and often does mean a reduction in funding which puts a lot of pressure on teachers and families at a challenging time for students planning for the next stage of life.

Opportunities

With the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme NDIS there will be individual funding packages available for each student. This is a fantastic opportunity to work collaboratively with families and service providers to change the way they plan for adulthood with young adults with ASD. As families become aware of the positive options for their young person, schools and service providers will be held more accountable for the programs they offer and planning for transitions.

¹ AMAZE Vic 2014, <http://www.amaze.org.au/discover/about-autism-spectrum-disorder/what-is-an-autism-spectrum-disorder/>

² Paul Collins, Not Even Wrong: Adventures in Autism (USA, Bloomsbury 2004)

3. THE AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

Threats

ASD is diagnosed in around four times as many males as females. ASD is a lifelong condition and there is no cure. Unemployment rates for individuals with ASD are around 65 per cent compared with only about six per cent for the whole population. Individuals with ASD are over-represented in the homeless population and in the justice system.

There are no TEACCH Certified Practitioners or TEACCH Certified Advanced Consultants in Australia.³

There are no identified training centres approved by TEACCH in Victoria or Australia. The professional certification is a new option for the University of North Carolina. Schools the Fellow have visited in Melbourne and NSW suggest they are using elements of Structured TEACCHing; however, without the fundamental knowledge from formal training they are implementing the approach in inconsistent and potentially detrimental ways to the learner, the educator and the family.

³ <http://teacch.com/trainings/teacch-professional-certification-program/list-of-certified-professionals>

4. IDENTIFYING THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE ENHANCEMENTS REQUIRED

"If they can't learn the way we teach, we teach the way they learn." O. Ivar Lovaas

School staff, Recruitment agencies and Adult Service Providers require the essential knowledge and understanding of current best practise in working with people with ASD to increase their independence and employability skills.

Aims

- Train NSA – Senior Campus staff in Structured TEACCHing. Work as a staff team to set up the Campus to reflect the pedagogical approach and document the impact on learners. Open the doors to NSA for tours and training
- Host a TEACCH conference every year to provide accredited training to Service providers and Schools in ASD and Structured TEACCHing
- Research, record and explore the possibility of NSA to pilot a Supported Employment Program for Students aged 19-21
- Research, record and document the concept of NSA providing consultation and support to referred schools.
- Research the concept of NSA providing support to rural Victorian schools via PolyCom
- Research the possibility of DHHS and DET VIC providing funding for staff to attend TEACCH training held at NSA.
- Research the possibility of Futures for Young Adult Funding (FFYA) to be accessed by both schools and service providers to support a transition into employment.
- Research and review the inclusion online courses and how to include practices from TEACCH program into this framework.

Outcomes

- Gain Certified Practitioner status as a Professional
- Gain the knowledge and skills to provide support to schools to increase teacher capacity to implement programs for students with ASD.

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

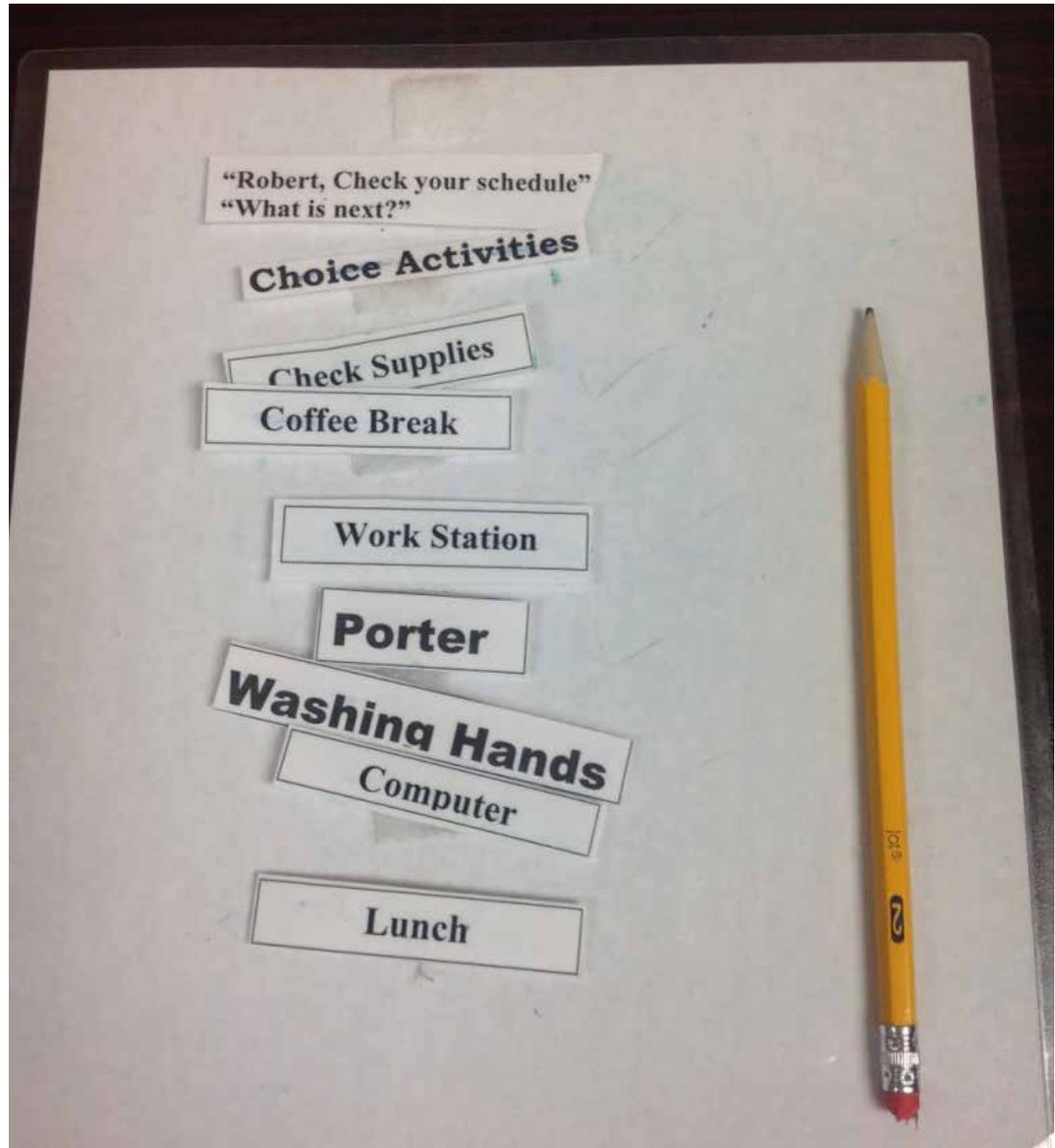


Photo of individual schedule used for adult learner at AHRC

Destination one: Association for the Help of Retarded Children (AHRC) - New York City

Location: New York City, USA

Facility Name: Joseph T. Weingold Adult Development Centre, Woodside, NY, USA

Contacts: Mary Donahue - Director of Psychological Services, AHRC Education Department and Adult Day Services Department & Munni Gurung, Program Psychologist, AHRC

AHRC New York City is a family governed organisation, dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. AHRC currently serves over 15,000

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and Autism (ASD) throughout the five boroughs.

Visit Objectives: Visit other proclaimed best practice centres for people with ASD. Evaluate the implementation of Structured TEACCHing outside North Carolina. Evaluate the effectiveness of combined approaches Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Structured TEACCHing.

The provision is an adult day centre. The majority of staff employed by the centre are untrained care workers. There is a Program Psychologist, Munni Gurung, on site who supports the implementation of programs and guides the organisation of staff and clients. The care workers are paid minimum wage and work 9am-3pm. These are the same hours the clients attend the centre. This means there is no time allocated for preparation and structuring resources - it is not an expectation of the employees.

The Fellow visited rooms and work centres and observed clients engaged in tasks. Physical structure was present throughout the centre with clearly labelled resources, rooms and tasks. Most, if not all clients had individual schedules. The environment was calm and productive. Clients, whilst vigilantly observed by staff, were able to independently complete chores, duties or work tasks.

Gurung and Donahue explained the centre's history. Clients with ASD were disengaged, heavily medicated and at times aggressive towards staff and each other. They showed limited capacity for employment or access of the community. ARHC senior leadership, searching for ways to develop their staff and provide a supportive and productive environment for their clients, provided three-day training in Structured TEACCHing.

After this training Gurung went to North Carolina to attend the five-day training in Structured TEACCHing. Believing in the benefits of the approach to their clients, Munni and Mary planned a staged implementation.

The obvious shortfalls of implementation for this centre is the time it takes to implement Structured TEACCHing: time to create, edit and individualise resources and tasks as well as keeping them clean and up to date. Staff are paid for the hours the clients are on site only.

Gurung implemented the approach with one client - a client who displayed behaviours and disengagement most challenging to staff. During the implementation she invited staff to see the progress the client had made. All staff celebrated the success. Gurung then waited for staff to "buy in". This did not happen. The next step for Gurung was to use the relationships she had developed with her staff. She spoke to them about the success and asked for them to model the approach in their rooms. Two staff 'volunteered'. She supported them with the initial implementation, however when they experienced the success they were keen to implement independently. These staff came to work early and left late - they used their own time to devise and create resources.

Outcomes: Staff are proud of the environment in which they work. They were very keen to share resources that they had made and insisted the Fellow take photos. They were all eager to share the positive impact on independence and engagement of the clients. Staff reported:

- An increase in independence of clients
- A reduction in reported anxiety in clients
- An increase in leisure options available for the client
- An increase in appropriate community participation
- AHRC employees, who are implementing Structured TEACCHing, meet monthly to share best practice and compare resources and success. They also problem solve with an ex-employee of TEACCH UNC to investigate the reasons something may or may not have worked

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Time, equipment, space were the limitations of the approach - Structured TEACCHing is heavily focussed on the preparation of resources. This requires time and funding
- Staff made use of iPad apps like Choiceworks and Proloquo 2 Go to create and manage client schedules.

Concluding Remarks

Staff at Joseph T Weingold have been implementing the TEACCH approach for two years. The Fellow, aware of the time it takes to implement this approach, was amazed at the dedication of these care workers. Being paid minimum wage and given no planning means they are using their own time to implement this approach. This visit demonstrated that Structured TEACCHing, whilst time consuming and costly, really has a massive positive impact of those diagnosed with ASD.

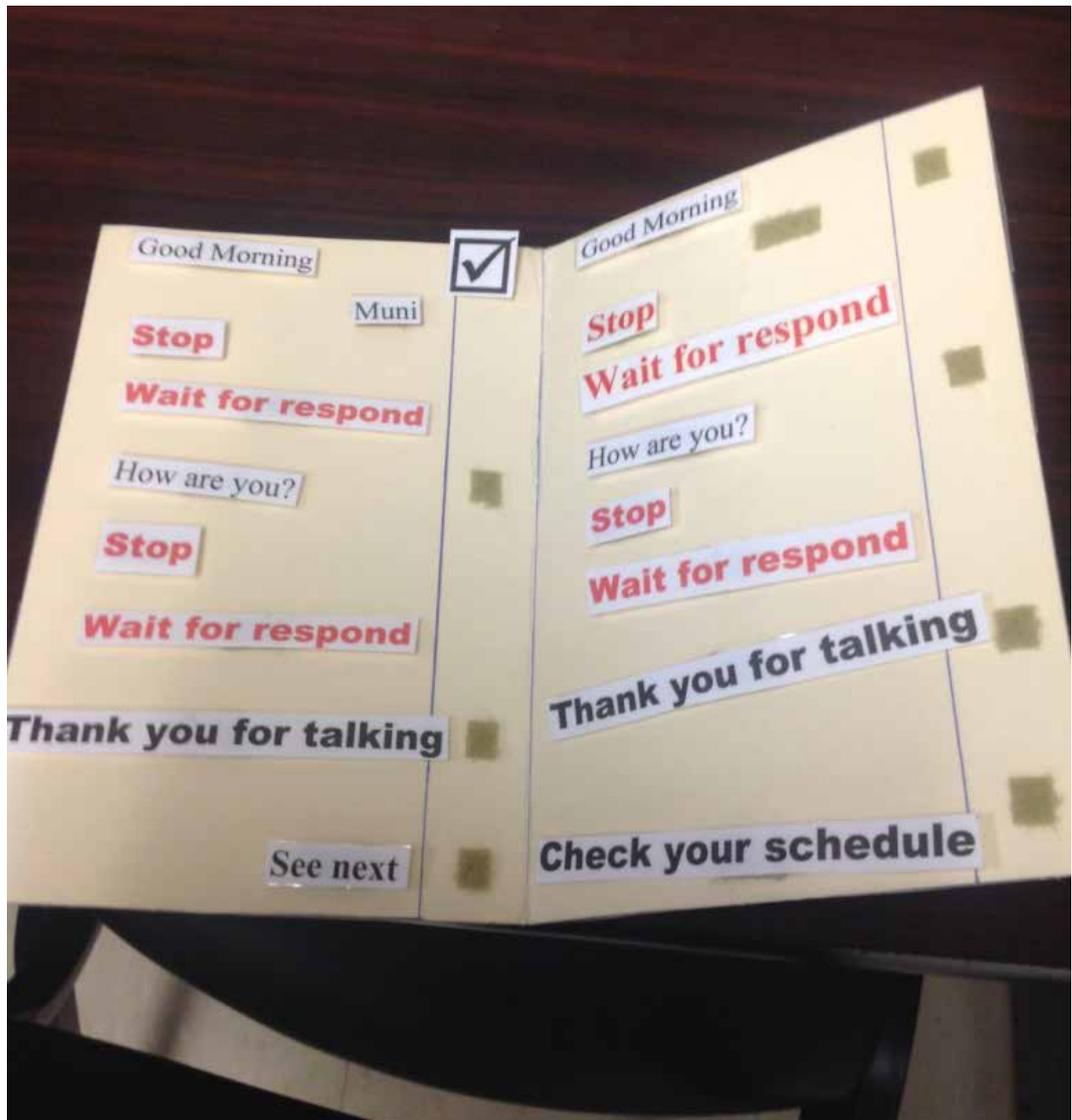


Photo of Visual Cue to support the development of appropriate conversations between adults

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Destination Two: Association for the Help of Retarded Children (AHRC) New York City

Location: New York City, USA

Facility Name: Cyril Weinberg Adult Development Centre Long Island City

Contact: Mary Donahue - Director of Psychological Services, Education Department and Adult Day Services Department.

AHRC New York City is a family governed organisation, dedicated to enhancing the lives of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. AHRC currently serves over 15,000 individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and Autism (ASD) throughout the five boroughs.

Visit Objectives: Visit other proclaimed best practice centres for people with ASD. Evaluate the implementation of Structured TEACCHing outside North Carolina. Evaluate the effectiveness of combined approaches Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Structured TEACCHing.

The facility is an adult day centre. The majority of staff employed by the centre are untrained care workers. There is a Program Psychologist on site who supports the implementation of programs and guides the organisation of staff and clients. The care workers are paid minimum wage and work 9am-3pm. These are the same hours the clients attend the centre.

The Fellow visited rooms and work centres and observed elements of Structured TEACCHing; however this was not consistent across the groups or within groups. Some clients wandered aimlessly about whilst others were engaged in independent tasks - this did not seem linked to their intellectual ability. Staff were inconsistent in their management of client behaviour and their expectations of their abilities. There was no work training provided other than visiting the local supermarket.

Outcomes: The centre used elements the TEACCH approach and elements of ABA when teaching skills. Staff skills and approaches were inconsistent in comparison the Joseph T Weingold facility. The facility was larger and had more clients. Resources were generic and clients presented as disengaged. Staff at this facility had not received TEACCH training as yet. After the success of the Joseph T Weingold implementation, this centre will follow the same plan. Staff were focussed on the use of Augmentative or Alternative Communication Systems (AAC) devices both high and low tech. These devices supplement existing speech or replace speech that is not functional. Special augmentative aids, such as picture and symbol communication boards and electronic devices, are available to help people express themselves. This may increase social interaction, school performance, and feelings of self-worth. Staff used Android and iPad applications to promote independent communications from clients.

Concluding Remarks

During the Fellow's visit to the Cyril Weinberg facility, she did not observe a high standard of engagement or independence of the clients. Programs and approaches from staff were inconsistent and this had a negative impact on the client's ability to be self-efficient.

Donahue was an amazing guide, full of knowledge of best practice and high expectations of her staff and clients. She, however, is realistic about the expectations she has for untrained care workers. Whilst the Fellow intended to observe different practices, Donahue was able to show two comparing facilities that really promote the implementation of the TEACCH approach. She displayed remarkable leadership in her ability to see the long-term goals for her centres. Taking the time to showcase success and support staff to increase their knowledge and skills, she plans to fund TEACCH training for her staff.

Destination Three: The New York City Autism (NYCA) Charter School

Location: New York, NY

Contact and guide: Julie Fischer, Executive Director



Photo of task card to show job completion when cleaning exercise machine

The NYCA Charter School is a school for the public school education of children with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders. Opened in September 2005 and housed in East Harlem's P.S./I.S. 50, the NYCA Charter School is New York State's first public charter school dedicated exclusively to educating children with autism.

The NYCA Charter School provides an intensive, 30-hours-per-week, year-round individualised educational program based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis (ABA). Certified special education teachers and Bachelor's level instructors deliver direct one-on-one instruction concentrating on the development of social, communication and academic skills. They provide positive reinforcement for even the smallest steps toward the instructional goal, with the intent of making social interactions enjoyable for the student.

Visit Objectives: Visit other proclaimed best practise centres for people with ASD. Evaluate the effectiveness of combined approaches including Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). Update knowledge of evidence based practice of implementation in a school setting.

This school implements an authentic ABA approach across the school. There are 30 students enrolled from four to 21 years old. Student academic skills are assessed using the VB-MAPP assessment tool and Assessment of Functional Living Skills (AFLS). An Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

following the NY Charter school's own curriculum. Students work through this curriculum at an individual level in a hierarchical order. The students are involved in enrichment programs like piano and baseball and art based programs. Students are taught in both one-to-one teaching environments and small groups. All staff are ABA certified trained. Challenging behaviours are managed through functional behaviour assessments and positive reinforcements. There is an approach to intensive systematic teaching to develop neuro-typical skills.

Throughout the school there were visuals, schedules and physical structures. During teaching time, teachers were observed using discrete trial training where reinforcements were used for developments of skills, e.g. a student matched a small Picture Communication Symbol (PCS) to a larger PCS and received a piece of cookie. Student progress was closely monitored and documented and as goals were achieved the student moved on to the next goal in the curriculum.

Outcomes: Fischer explained the approach of ABA and stated that the school in no way implemented Structured TEACCHing. She displayed a deep knowledge of the approach and was able to define and clarify any questions or misunderstandings the Fellow had of the approach. Mary has high expectations of her staff and certainly supports them to provide the best ABA program available for the students. The school was staffed at a very high ratio: one teacher to one student - often a two to one ratio. This is necessary to provide an authentic program. Students were closely monitored in any movement or task they carried out.

Concluding Remarks

The Fellow appreciated the knowledge of the school staff; however it was difficult to see how this approach would support these students to generalise their skills to the workplace or community instruction. It was clear that the targets chosen for IEPs were in line with 'normal' development rather than based on the student's particular strengths and interests. Skills were taught in isolation unlike the TEACCH approach that has more of a focus on gestalt training where skills are taught as a part of a whole rather than in isolation. It was interesting to see the distinct difference being that ABA approach focuses on the consequence and TEACCH focuses on the antecedent.

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Destination Four: Brooklyn Blue Feather Elementary School

Location: Brooklyn, NY 11229

Contact: Zoe Ann Deeds – Principal

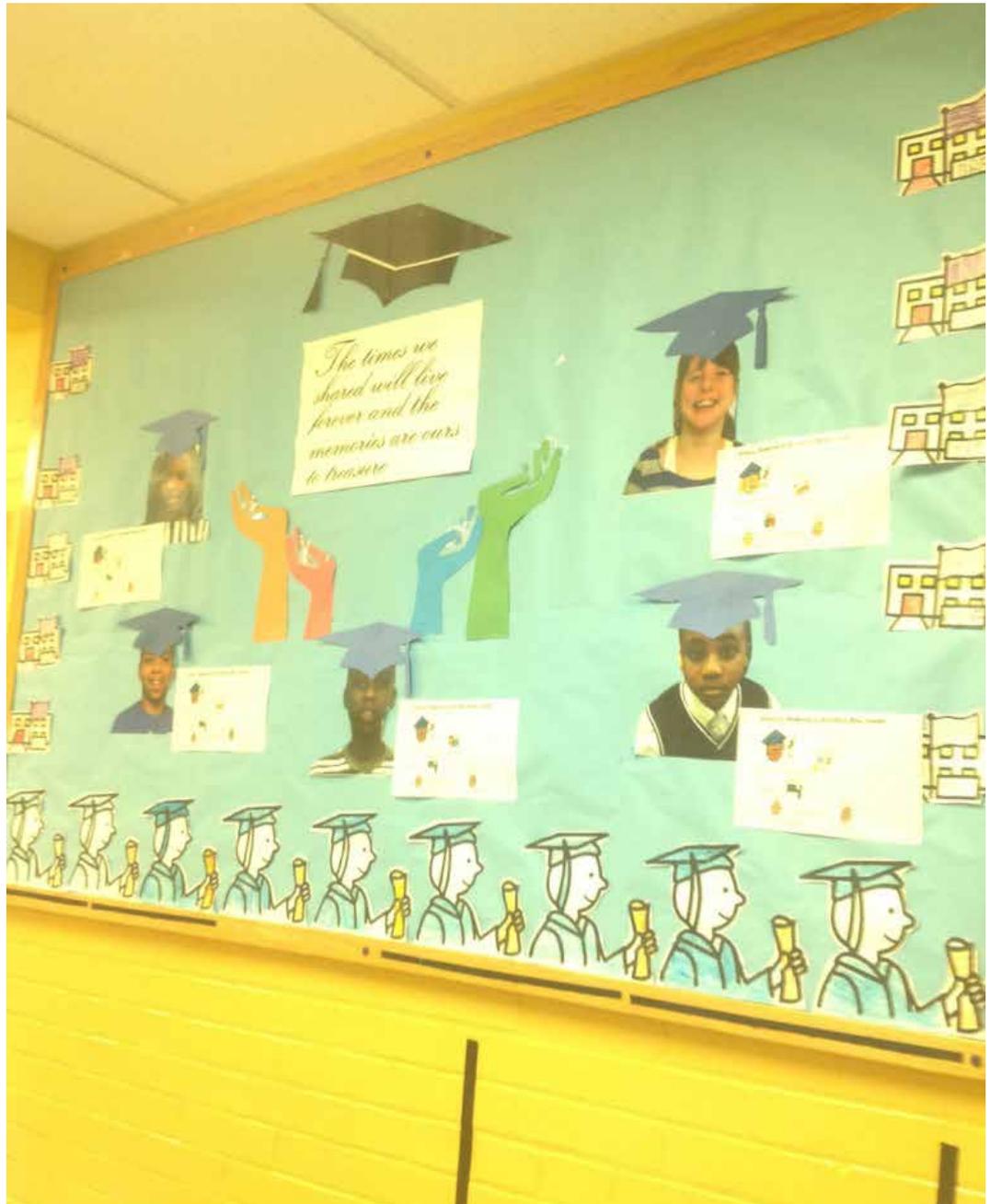


Photo of students who have graduated from the school to a mainstream setting

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Visit Objectives: Update knowledge of evidence based practise of implementation in a school setting. Visit other proclaimed best practise centres for people with ASD. Evaluate the implementation of Structured TEACCHing outside North Carolina. Evaluate the effectiveness of combined approaches Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) and Structured TEACCHing.

Brooklyn Blue Feather Elementary (also known as BBF) accepts children between five and 12 years of age who reside in the five New York City boroughs. Children must exhibit behavioural characteristics associated with autism and must have an educational classification of autism. The school aims to help students achieve the level of functioning that will allow them to transition to less restrictive environments.

The school uses a wide range of approaches and programs in working with students with ASD. The main approaches are ABA and Structured TEACCHing. The instructional programming focuses on: teaching academics, language, self-help and daily living skills, effective communication and appropriate social skills. Brooklyn Blue Feather Elementary School follows the Common Core State Standards that are the US mainstream standards for educational achievement and all children are assessed alternatively. Classrooms teachers utilise VB-MAPP, ABLLS, Individualised Goal Selection (IGS) and the Syracuse Curriculum to create educational plans and devise appropriate learning objectives. The Syracuse Curriculum serves learners from Kindergarten through to age 21 and is a field-tested curriculum for professionals and parents devoted to directly preparing a student to function in the world. It examines the role of community living domains, functional academics and embedded skills and includes practical implementation strategies and indispensable information for preparing students whose learning needs go beyond the scope of traditional academic programs.

The school implements many programs and philosophical approaches. In particular, BBF utilises strategies, programming and instructional methods such as:

- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)
- Picture Exchange Communication System(PECS)
- Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children (TEACCH)
- Word/Sign (Sign Language)
- AAC Devices / Communication Devices
- Sensory Integration
- Self-Help and Daily Living Skills
- Social Skills Groups.

It is clear that there is a philosophical divide amongst the staff. Those who have received TEACCH training have set their rooms up with physical structure, schedules and work systems. Those who have not had the training are inconsistent in their approaches. They use elements of ABA and Structured TEACCHing. Principal Zoe Ann reports that she does not want a school that embodies one philosophy only. Their school aims to meet the needs of the child. It is her belief that the more offered, the more likely they will find an approach that suits the child's particular learning style. All materials for teaching seem to provide visual clarity and organisation in line with Structured TEACCHing.

Outcomes: The psychology team are all TEACCH trained - their aim is to implement Structured TEACCHing across the school and make a consistent philosophical approach for the school. They are finding this difficult. From room to room there are different approaches and therefore different outcomes for student learning. It was amazing to see the engagement and productivity from room to room. It was also noted that the rooms implementing the TEACCH approach required less staff. The school psychologists conducted observations to reinforce the elements of Structured TEACCHing. This feedback was given to teachers; however as the philosophy is not an expectation across the

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

school there was generally no follow up or expectation from leadership. It relied on the teacher choice to implement the recommendations.

Concluding remarks

Deeds shows a strong commitment to working to provide to best opportunities for students individually. There does seem to be a lack of understanding across the school however about Structured TEACCHing and its principles. Perhaps with one philosophical underpinning the school would provide an even more productive setting for young people with ASD.

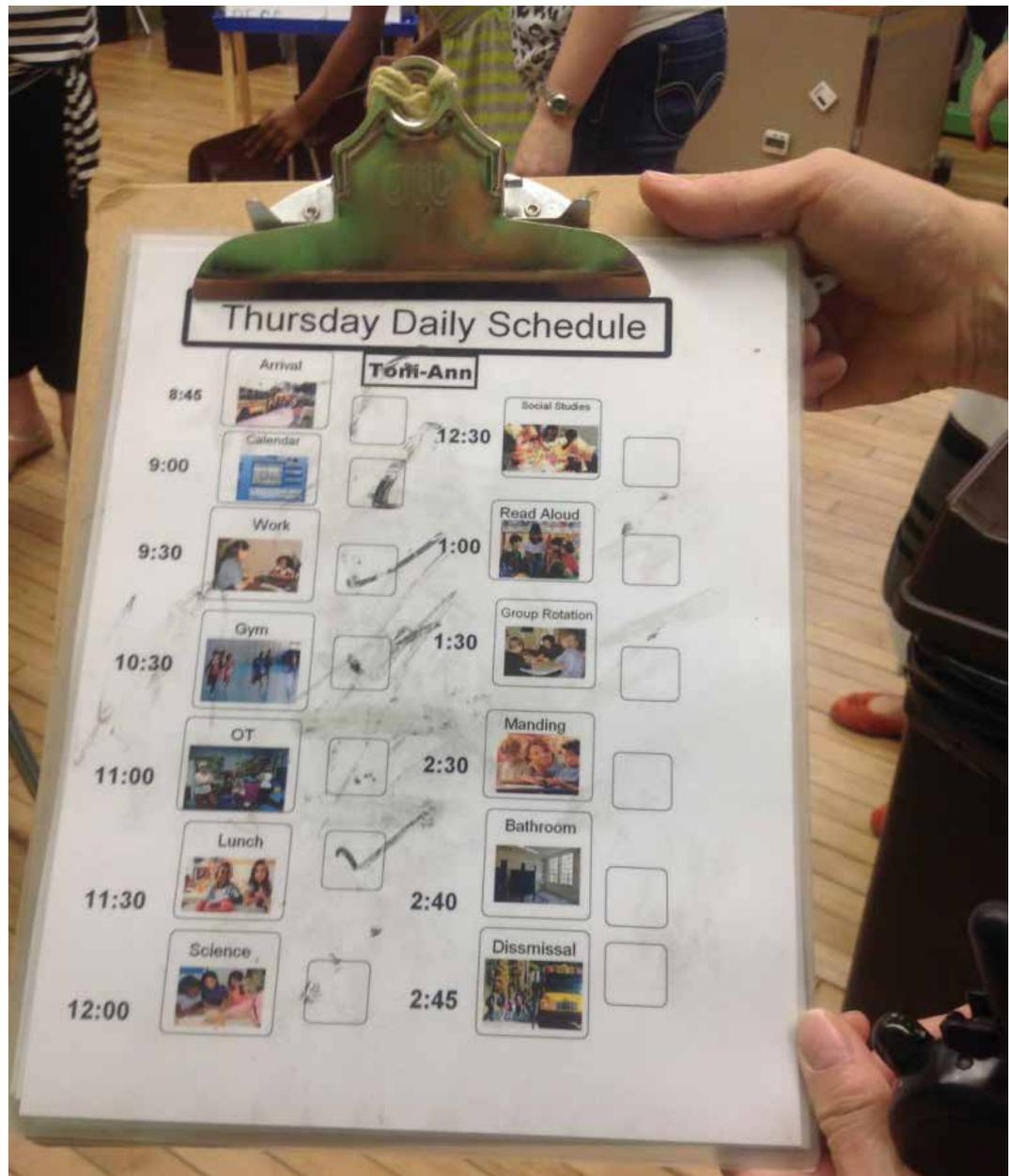


Photo of a well used individual schedule

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Destination Five: TEACCH® - Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children

Program: Carolina Living and Learning Centre



Photo of the main building at the CLLC showcasing the impressive grounds

Location: Pittsboro, NC

Contact: Tom Wiebe - Adult/Adolescent Psychoeducational Therapist

Visit Objectives: Visit the Carolina Living and Learning Centre (CLLC). The CLLC is an integrated vocational and residential program for adults with autism located in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Gain first-hand experience adapting the workplace and workplace training to implement the TEACCH approach at NSA.

The CLLC is part of TEACCH® and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It is located on 79 acres of land just north of Pittsboro, North Carolina. The CLLC has one home for five adults and a second home for 10 adults with autism. Both homes are certified as Intermediate Care Facilities (ICF-MR) and the primary source of operating funds is Medicaid - the government insurance program for those who face social disadvantage. The residential program emphasises the development of independent skills in a wide variety of areas. Communication, social, leisure, vocational, self-help, domestic and cooking skills are taught in activities both at the CLLC and in the community. Vocationally, the CLLC focuses a gardening and landscaping curriculum. In addition to the residents of the CLLC, several individuals with autism from the community also participate in the vocational program. The individuals with autism work collaboratively with the staff members to build and maintain vegetable, herb and flower gardens and to maintain the CLLC grounds.

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Most work tasks are set up on an individual basis, where the client can work at his/her own pace. Outdoor activities include mowing, raking, weeding, planting, watering, building compost and harvesting produce. Individuals with autism working at the CLLC also enjoy indoor activities such as making pesto or salsa and making soap, cards and potpourri using dried herbs and flowers from the gardens. Some also work on office tasks and/or cleaning tasks. Residents and day participants are active in preparing harvested vegetables for consumption at the CLLC or for sale to staff members, friends and family.

Throughout the Fellow's visit to the centre, residents were engaged in tasks with minimal support. Activities and task were set up for maximum independence and this was clear by the low level of assistance necessary by staff. All residents had an individual schedule based on the learning style and need. There were schedules in bedrooms - carried around on iPads and in the group dining area. All tasks were organised and visually clear for the resident to start and end independently. Within tasks there were work systems to guide them through steps and processes with the least amount of interaction with staff. Residents were observed weeding within hula hoops, moving with a push mower in between witch's hats and mowing on ride-on mowers. All residents not only had an individual goal set to achieve but also had an individual profile of their learning styles - this gave staff the information necessary to set up tasks for the resident. It is an expectation that all staff prepare tasks for optimum understanding and independence. Staff problem solve and reflect on the task set up if there has been an incident of challenging behaviour or the task has not been executed independently.



Photo Tom Wiebe – Director of the Carolina Living and Learning Centre

Outcomes: Wiebe was an amazing guide. His knowledge and confidence in the TEACCH philosophy was inspiring and infectious. He supports all staff and residents to be safe, productive and engaged

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to their absolute potential. He focuses on the strengths of his residents and staff and celebrates their commitment to provide the best opportunities. The Fellow came away feeling inspired that a centre could provide such a meaningful and supportive environment for the most challenging population group.



Photo of Structured TEACCHing in the garden – workers only weed between the hoops

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Concluding Remarks

It was remarkable to witness the most vulnerable adults roam freely and participate in employable tasks. In my observations of care facilities in Victoria, those who access an intermediate care facility are unlikely to have this level of independence, let alone the use of say a (and perhaps be a ride-on lawn mower. This facility was inspiring and a true testament to Structured TEACCHing and the training of staff. Yet it was also sad to know that this type of facility does not exist in Victoria yet and unless more funding is provided to train staff working with adults with ASD in best practise approaches the focus on care for our students is more common. The introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme NDIS could provide the funds to improve these provisions but funding alone will not improve facilities – training and accountability measures are necessary.



Left: Photo of a visual task to find ingredients for a recipe. Right: Photo of a visual task to choose meals with a balanced diet.

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Destination Six: TEACCH® - Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children

Program: Supported Employment employer - World Market, Carolina Café & Bakery

Location: Meadowmont Village Cir, Durham, NC

Contact: Mike Chapman - Director of Supported Employment

Objectives: Gain first-hand experience adapting the workplace and workplace training to implement the TEACCH approach at NSA LC.

The TEACCH® Supported Employment program currently serves adolescents and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder at the Chapel Hill and Greensboro TEACCH Centres. The Supported Employment Program helps individuals with ASD to become as independent as possible by assisting them in obtaining and maintaining meaningful and stable employment in predictable and rewarding work environments. Since its inception in 1989, this program has used a variety of job support models to assist more than 500 people with ASD to secure gainful employment and to become productive members in their communities.

In an effort to provide the most appropriate and individualised vocational program, TEACCH utilises four different models of Supported employment: the standard placement model, the shared support model, the mobile crew model and the one-to-one model.

Within each of these models, an emphasis is placed on the individual's strengths and interests, identifying appropriate job and vocational settings, applying structured teaching techniques, collaborating with families, caregivers and employers and providing the necessary long-term support services.

Each of these models incorporates the use of a 'job coach', a trained professional, employed by TEACCH, who provides on-going support for the individual or individuals with ASD. The job coach follows the TEACCH philosophy to implement intervention strategies to teach the individual with ASD the necessary vocational and social skills required in the employment setting. Job Coaches also educate co-workers and supervisors about ASD and act as liaisons between the individuals with ASD and their employers. These four distinct, yet similar models of support are seen in a wide array of vocational settings.

At World Market, the Fellow met with an adult with ASD and a job coach. Whilst observing the adult the Fellow noted his use of the structures to support him whilst using the cash register. These written scripts were stuck on the cash register. There were general notes about using the actual cash register as well as conversation rules used for talking with customers. During one interaction with a customer, the worker seemed stuck and frozen. The job coach moved in quickly and calmly and pointed to one of the scripts. This seemed to refocus the worker and he moved on to complete the sale successfully. The job coach did not talk or take over at any point and to the Fellow this seemed so respectful and productive. The only prompts the job coach used were to use the visuals and scripts set up. The aim of this is for the worker to rely on the visual supports rather than the job coach.

At the Carolina Café & Bakery, the Fellow met with another experienced worker. This employee had worked with the Carolina café for 15 years. He took the Fellow through the kitchen area where his tasks ranged from stacking the dishwasher to clearing tables and restocking napkins and straws. He talked about how much he liked his job and that he was now able to live by himself and visit his parents on the weekend. The job coach, or Joe as he called him, visited with his manager only and he talked only of social gatherings to Joe. This displayed another unique side of the supported employment for TEACCH. Not only do they support continuous employment. As one of the goals of TEACCH is to support health and wellbeing, a role for the job coach is to check in on the health and wellbeing of the clients. As it was coming up to the 4th July celebrations, the job coach was asking whether the

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employee knew that bus routes and timetables may change and whether his shifts may change. He also enquired about his social life and what he would be doing over the long weekend. He promoted social events that TEACCH were running over the holiday weekend and gave written information to the employee.

Outcomes: It was inspiring to see these quite severely autistic adults working independently in paid employment. The use of visuals to support independence was discreet and incredibly valuable. As a model of support, these adults were in environments that they enjoyed and hence they felt effective and efficient. Their colleagues and customers respected them and valued their contribution. The health and wellbeing support is not something the Fellow has witnessed by a recruitment agency. It is clear that TEACCH are providing a package of support for their clients not only to promote their ability to gain and sustain employment but to also focus on their health and wellbeing. With the increasing rates of depression amongst people with ASD, it is clearly something they strive to reduce.

Concluding Remarks:

Given the right individual funding package available through the NDIS, the Fellow sees no reason why this system could not be replicated in Victoria. It relies on appropriate training for the job coaches and many of the coaches were university students looking for work on the side. Given a funding grant the Fellow would welcome the opportunity to trial this approach as Northern School for Autism Students leave after their 18th year.

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Destination Seven: Extraordinary Ventures

Program: Local Business Organisation that employs adults with ASD only

Location: Chapel Hill, NC

Contact: Van Hatchell & Tom Kuell, Managing Directors

Visit Objectives: Gain first-hand experience adapting the workplace and workplace training to implement the TEACCH approach at NSA LC.

Extraordinary Ventures is a local business run by ex-employees of TEACCH. Throughout their college degrees they worked for TEACCH as job coaches. Using this knowledge and experience, Hatchell and Kuell found a niche market employing adults with ASD and learning disabilities to work in business designed around the interests or skills of the employees. They run an event centre, make handmade products to sell to gift shops and boutiques around Chapel Hill, provide a wash/dry/fold service for students living on campus at University of North Carolina, provide office work solutions for small businesses, operate safe and secure parking for UNC football games and clean and maintain the interior of the Chapel Hill Transit buses.

Hatchell walked the Fellow through their workplace. They inhabit the basement area of a medium size conference centre. As the Fellow walked around, employees were working quietly and efficiently. There were 20 workers on site on the day of the tour. A job coach from TEACCH was also working on site to support a new employee. Employees each had individual schedules of the work tasks. Each work task had a discreet beginning and end. There were visual models and scripts to support the employee to complete the task independently. Most of the employees onsite during the Fellow's visit were non-verbal. In one section, they were engaged in sorting washing, folding washing, operating the washer/dryers. In another there was mail compiling and office work. In another employees were manufacturing beautiful smelling candles and soaps .

Hatchell talked about the bi-weekly social events offered by the employers. The focus of these is to promote physical and mental wellbeing for their clients. They offer movie nights and onsite activities. Once a month they also offer nights to the cinema, basketball and football. As employers they monitor the attendance by their employees.

Outcomes: All work tasks were set up with clear instructions and systems to promote independence. There was the use of 'Flip Folds' an amazing folding tool that can fold clothes to a uniform size in less than 5 seconds to ensure consistency and high quality. There was a real focus on providing support for the employees to work independently rather than with a supporting adult. This meant better productivity for the employers but also better self-esteem for the workers. The employers and managers spent and spend a large proportion of their time setting up the structures.

Concluding remarks

The Fellow found this a truly amazing place to work and manage. It is clear these young men have used their experience as TEACCH job coaches to build a sustainable business that promotes the strengths and interests of their employees. Every area was well thought out and evaluated on a weekly basis. Their ability to support their employees both in work productivity as well as their social wellbeing was inspiring.

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Photo of the entrance to Extraordinary Ventures Chapel Hill NC



Photo of the medium sized conference room – one of the many jobs the workers are employed to do

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE



Photo of visual tasks used to track and implement a successful Laundry program.

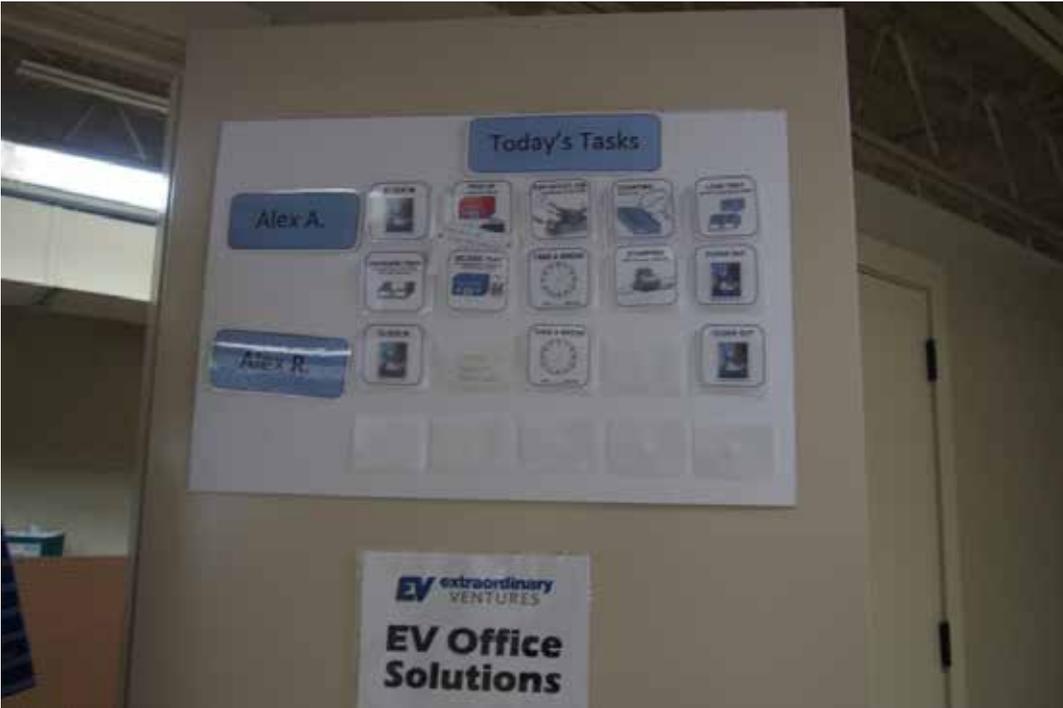


Photo of a visual schedule to indicate jobs for certain employees.

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Destination Eight: TEACCH® - Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children



Photo of the Fellow outside the TEACCH building in Chapel Hill.

Program: Diagnosis & Treatment, TEACCH Chapel Hill Centre

Location: Carborro, Chapel Hill, NC

Contact: Lee Marcus, Ph.D., Director, TEACCH Training

Visit Objectives: Update knowledge of evidence based practice of implementation in a school setting.

Chapel Hill TEACCH provides diagnostic evaluations for children, adolescents and adults who are thought to have an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) but have not yet received a diagnosis. Evaluations typically last one to one and a half days (depending upon complexity of the case and services provided) at the clinic and focus on issues of diagnosis and educational programming and intervention. The evaluation includes caregiver interview and questionnaires; review of medical, social, academic, and developmental history; and testing sessions with the individual. The individual is directly assessed using state of the art, empirically-based assessment instruments: either the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule - 2nd edition (ADOS-2) or the Childhood Autism Rating Scale - 2nd edition (CARS2) are typically administered.

The Fellow was lucky to observe the CARS2 in implementation. Two TEACCH psychologists observed while one psychologist assessed the child. The child was observed interacting with the assessor and his mother.

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Outcomes: Observing the implementation of the assessment and the discussion that followed further evidenced that TEACCH are a consultative group valuing all stakeholder's input and opinion. Even the Fellow was asked about her observations and recommendations. It was mentioned by parents that this is a lengthy process; however the diagnosis is taken very seriously. As ASD diagnosis rates increase, TEACCH personnel are focussed on true diagnosis and supportive interventions.

Concluding Remarks

After discussions confirmed that the child was not on the spectrum, the group continued to discuss strategies that would support him in preschool and at home. They were very aware of the monetary cost to families and most willing to make sure they received support in return.

Destination Ten: TEACCH® - Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children, TEACCH Greensborough Centre

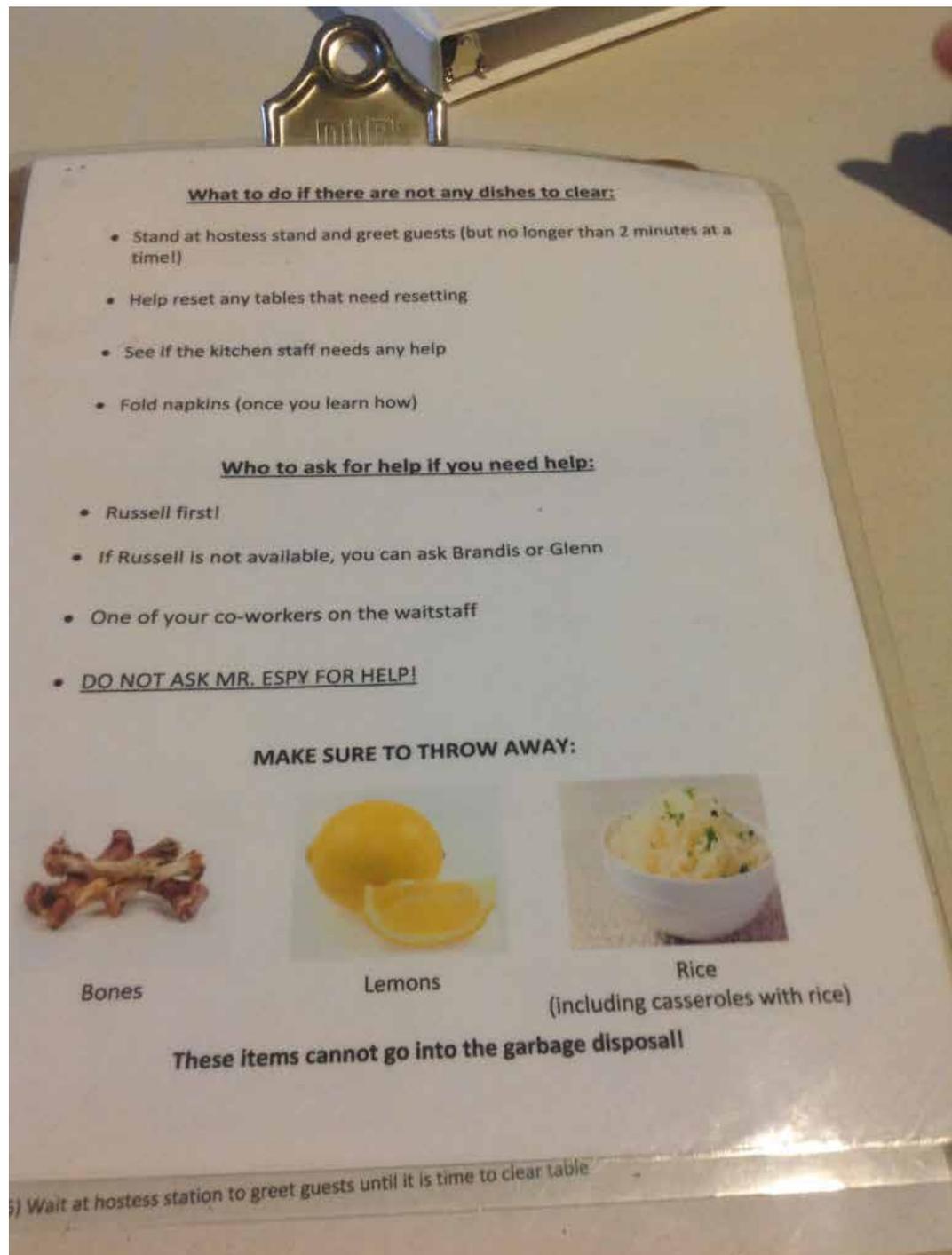


Photo of a visual task used to support an adult working at the Retirement Community who was having difficulty with job completion.

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Program: TTAP - TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile, Whitestone Retirement Community

Location: Greensboro, NC

Contact: Glenna Osborne - Program Consultant trainer, TTAP

Visit Objectives: Increase the employment rates of adults with ASD by developing a more structured post school transition plan for special settings and students with Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD) funding in the Northern Region Department of Education and Training (DET).

Greensboro TEACCH centre helps individuals with ASD obtain and maintain employment in community settings. The components of Supported Employment are vocational assessment, job development, intensive training, and long-term support. Individuals are not required to receive all components of this service. The vocational assessment used is the TTAP - TEACCH Transition Assessment Profile. This profile assesses a client's ability to complete certain practical tasks in line with common occupations like clerical and warehousing skills.

After meeting with Osborne, the Fellow met a young lady who was to undertake a vocational assessment. As the Fellow observed the implementation of the TTAP assessment - it was clear this was for a very different result than the Child Autism Rating Scale (CARS2). Osborne the assessor was focussed on ascertaining if the young adult could follow instructions in sequence and accurately. The assessment is broken into parts. Firstly hands on tasks. Secondly the young adult was taken into the community to observe her ability to meet her needs recreationally, i.e. ordering her lunch and taking a break. The assessment team then visited a retirement home to assess whether the young adult could work in this type of environment.

As the assessment took place the job coach provided more or less structure depending on the response of the young adult.

Outcomes: This well researched and empirically based assessment tool was very focussed on gathering and documenting the strengths of the young adult. This a lengthy process with much input from the young person and their families. Actually seeing it in practice will allow the Fellow to implement the assessment at Northern School for Autism.

Concluding Remarks

The development of an assessment that can be used by staff at a school will enable schools to prepare our young adults and their families for the next stage in their lives.

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Destination Eleven: TEACCH® - Treatment and Education of Autistic and other related Communication Handicapped Children

Program: Five-day training



Photo of a play area set up for a concrete learner

Contact: Mary Van Bourgondien, PhD - Clinical Director

Visit Objectives: Implement Structured TEACCHing at the Northern School for Autism, the Northern Region of DET, Victoria and possibly nationwide hence increasing the level of independence of students with ASD. Increase teacher knowledge of teaching and assessment strategies in the areas of academics (literacy and numeracy), communication, independence, play, social and leisure, vocational, relaxation and coping strategies. Create meaningful and individualised visual structure for students with ASD in both individual and group settings. Implement problem solving approaches to reduce behavioural difficulties.

This five-day course provided a theoretical foundation as well as hands-on opportunity to assess and teach school-aged children with ASD in a demonstration classroom setting. The focus was to understand the learning styles of individuals with ASD and how to use teaching strategies that capitalise on their learning strengths. An emphasis was placed on the use of Structured TEACCHing principles to teach children and adolescents with ASD skills in the areas of academics (literacy and numeracy), communication, independence, social and leisure, vocational, relaxation and coping strategies.

The Fellow was given the opportunity to apply these strategies with students of varying functioning levels in a classroom setting and in the community. The training included presentations, small group discussions, model classroom activities and hands-on experiences for five consecutive days.

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The overview of the training was as follows: Learning styles in ASD, Structured TEACCHing, Assessment and Teaching, Communication, Preparing for the Future, Leisure and Social Engagement, Behaviour Management through Structured TEACCHing and Classroom Management and Resources.

Each day started with a theory and research-based lecture. This followed with practical ideas and observations of Structured TEACCHing in practice. Every day the Fellow was able to structure an activity and teach it and then provided with feedback and asked to restructure and reteach. Group members were given roles throughout the sessions from eating with a student, reporting to their families and observing, assessing or teaching. Each day there was a guest panel, which was made up of parents, adults with ASD and teachers in special settings.

Outcomes: The Fellow has a reinvigorated commitment to Structured TEACCHing and its implementations across her campus. Her confidence was restored and her understandings furthered. The Fellow has now gathered a package of assessments and ideas with the intention to use with the teachers and students in her school. The training has given the Fellow an ability to now apply for certification as a practitioner, the only one in Australia.

Concluding Remarks

Listening to TEACCH professionals link research with exemplary practice and supporting individuals through practical activities was for the Fellow the best training approach in her experience. It is a model she will replicate in her school to up-skill her teachers and therapists so they will develop confidence in their own understanding and problem solving.

Getting Someone's Attention

Each day at the Sheraton, I will meet five or six new people. I will ask them if they have any pets. Sometimes, I need to get their attention when I need to ask them what pet they have.

When I need to get someone's attention, I will go to where they are, look at them, smile, say **Excuse me** and say their **Name**.

1. If the person is not looking at me, I can look at them, smile, and say



Excuse me
AMY.

Getting someone's Attention

4. Walk to them 

5. Look and smile  

6. Say "**Excuse me** _____."

Photo of a teaching task for a teenager having difficulty getting peoples attention appropriately.

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Destination Twelve: Autism Society of North Carolina

Program: Camp Royall - Summer Camp



Photo of the group meeting area of Camp Royall.

Location: Moncure, NC

Contact: Lesley Fraser - Relieving Camp Royall Program Director

Visit Objectives: Visit other proclaimed best practise centres for people with ASD.

The Autism Society of North Carolina opened Camp Royall, a 133-acre facility located near Pittsboro, in 1997 after trialling it in various setting including parents' backyards.

Camp Royall now houses the nation's oldest and largest summer camp program for people on the autism spectrum and runs year-round programs plus a wide variety of other functions and services throughout the year.

Camp Royall is designed to provide a week of typical camp activities, such as swimming, hiking, boating and arts and crafts in a structured environment to meet the needs of the campers.

Camp Royall serves campers from aged four up to older adults. Campers are assigned weeks according to their age and level of ability. The Camp also provides a place for individuals to learn new job skills. Several adults on the autism spectrum work at the camps, assisting in many areas from cleaning to activity preparation.

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The Camp's values are clearly observed by all staff and evident in all interactions.

Fraser walked the Fellow around and she witnessed what appeared to be activities accessed by happy and relaxed adolescents. What was different was the set up and structures. Every activity was presented visually, with scripts to remind campers what the activity involved and how to use or access it safely. There was fun, laughter and excitement as well as an air of confidence and calmness. It had a clearly, well thought out itinerary with well-trained confident staff. Each week the groups are scrutinised and organised by the profile of the camper with appropriately trained staff allocated to each camper. Horse riding, boating and truck rides used to expand the adolescent restricted behaviours with their favourite activity afterwards to motivate them to have a go.

Outcomes: The most difficult activities to structure are those that involve the outdoors and the activities that we would like to maintain an element of freedom and choice. Camp Royall staff have done this. Teenagers roam with adequate supervision and purpose but independently. Keys chains are used to signify beginnings and ends to bush walks. Each morning campers meet to see the schedule of events for the day. Each activity has a defined beginning and end and independent motivators are used to support teenagers to access new and exciting activities.

Concluding remarks

Put simply, Camp Royall uses the elements of Structured TEACCHing to motivate, reduce stress and provide a broad and balanced range of fun activities for campers. With the right funding and training of staff there is no reason why this program could not be replicated to provide a camping program for young people in Victoria. This would not only provide an equal provision for their mainstream peers but also provide a safe and relaxing respite for parents. This is something the Fellow will definitely investigate in Australia.



Photo of a work system to allow all attendees to use the water safely

5. THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE



Photo of Lesely Fraser modelling how to use the Bushwalking work system. Coloured Key rings indicate when the walk has finished

6. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER: APPLYING THE OUTCOMES

The Fellow will host TEACCH trainers from UNC at NSA.

TEACCH trainers will provide three day training in Structured TEACCHing for teachers, therapists and the leadership team.

After this training the TEACCH trainers will provide two days consultation to the Senior Campus to evaluate the implementation of Structured TEACCHing and its effectiveness for students and families.

NSA will fund the visit through the Professional Development budget.

The Fellow began hosting this training in 2015 and has continued into 2016. She has travelled to both mainstream and Special schools in Victoria and has been requested by schools in New South Wales and the Northern Territory

In 2015, the Fellow hosted TEACCH training at her school and opened this training to all schools and service providers in Australia. Staff from schools, consultancy businesses and government day service providers attended this training from all over Australia and New Zealand. This training will be hosted annually.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Many programs are being implemented stating they are effective for people with ASD. The Victorian Department of Education needs to provide some consistent advice on how best to support these young people.
 - » This advice needs to be published widely for all schools and the impact of approaches chosen by schools need to be closely monitored by regional staff.
- The Education Department and the Department of Health and Human Services need to establish some flexibility in their funding options. This could lead to establishing a Supported Employment Program for Students aged 19-21 catering to those diagnosed with ASD. This program could be supported by schools or service providers.
 - » As a school leader, the Fellow would be happy to investigate this as an option and pilot the program given the right funding.
- Universities need to include training modules for their pre-service teachers, Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists and Teacher Aides to understand ASD and how to work best with students with ASD.
 - » Specific interventions should be outlined and schools implementing these approaches visited.
- Post School providers need more training in effective delivery of training programs for adults with ASD. Job Coaches should be employed and trained in the implementation of Structured TEACCHing.
 - » This will increase the employability of people with ASD and change community perspectives around the capabilities of people on the spectrum.

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9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute) – The Awarding body

The ISS Institute exists to foster an aspirational, skilled and smart Australia by cultivating the mastery and knowledge of talented Australians through international research Fellowships.

The International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute) is proud of its heritage. The organisation was founded over 25 years ago by Sir James Gobbo AC CVO QC, former Governor of Victoria, to encourage investment in the development of Australia's specialised skills. Its international Fellowship program supports a large number of Australians and international leaders across a broad cross-section of industries to undertake applied research that will benefit economic development through vocational training, industry innovation and advancement. To date, over 350 Australian and international Fellows have undertaken Fellowships facilitated through ISS Institute. The program encourages mutual and shared learning, leadership and communities of practice.

At the heart of the ISS Institute are our individual Fellows. Under the International Applied Research Fellowship Program the Fellows travel overseas and upon their return, they are required to pass on what they have learnt by:

- Preparing a detailed report for distribution to government departments, industry and educational institutions
- Recommending improvements to accredited educational courses
- Delivering training activities including workshops, conferences and forums.

The organisation plays a pivotal role in creating value and opportunity, encouraging new thinking and early adoption of ideas and practice. By working with others, ISS Institute invests in individuals who wish to create an aspirational, skilled and smart Australia through innovation, mastery and knowledge cultivation.

For further information on ISS Institute Fellows, refer to www.issinstitute.org.au

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Supporters

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- Dr Mary Van Bourgondie Clinical Director, Chapel Hill Centre, University of North Carolina, TEACCH Autism Program
- Shane Spence Previous ISS Institute - Bella Irlicht Fellowship awardee

