

NEWSLETTER



Australian Association of Special Education Inc. | WA Chapter

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President's Comment

Welcome to 2019.

I hope your year has started smoothly and you are all well. I am looking forward to seeing the Black Swan State Theatre Company's production *You Know We Belong Together* at Heath Ledger Theatre in March as I missed this last time and have been told it is excellent. It is described as a joyful celebration of community spirit. Family, friends and lovers are all part of Julia Hales' deeply personal account of her experiences as a daughter, actor, dreamer and person with Down syndrome.

In this newsletter, Rachael and Zoe provide some interesting information about PBS in schools and some great ideas for implementing this approach. We congratulate last year's AASE WA Award winner and remind you that this award will be available again in 2019. The AASE National response to the latest Gonski report is also included.

The Term 1 professional development is on Improving Collaborative Practices and is a practical hands-on session on the 27th of March. There is also information about last year's AASE conference to whet your interest in the 2019 AASE conference to be held in Hobart, Tasmania in September. The last day for abstracts is Friday the 8th of March, so you only have a few days left if you would like an opportunity to present at the conference. Early Bird registration rates are available until Friday, 14th June, 2019. This year we are offering a bursary for an AASE WA member to attend the conference. The application details are included in this newsletter and we encourage you to apply.

I hope your term goes well and we see you at the PD on the 27th of March.

Dr Susan Main
President WA Chapter, AASE

Science Apps for SEN | Tiny Bop

The Tiny Bop series of apps are exquisitely designed and allow for inquiry based and hands-on exploration of a range of scientific topics. For example, 'The Human Body' app allows students to discover inside the human body by exploring various layers to determine the purpose of body parts and organs. 'The Everything Machine' allows



students to code and connect "machines" together to invent new tools that have real life functionality on an iPad, such as creating a new tool to change how the camera on your iPad works. Other apps in the series include *Plants*, *Weather*, *Simple Machines*, *Homes*, *Sky Scrapers*, *Space*, *Robots* and *Monsters*.

Search for Tiny Bop in your App Store or go to www.tinybop.com for more information.

Follow us on Twitter & Facebook



Positive Behaviour Support | A Whole School Initiative

Rachael Jones, L3CT, Cannington Community ESC, B.Psych (Hons), GradDip.Ed.

Zoe Thring, PBS Leader, Cannington Community ESC, B.Ed.

Our Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) journey at Cannington Community Education Support Centre began in 2016 with the purpose of creating and maintaining a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students. We encourage positive behaviour and attitudes through the explicit teaching and modelling of our core values; *Achievement*, *Independence* and *Respect (AIR)*.

Positive behaviour is reinforced with "Frequent Flyer Points" (tokens) which are accompanied by immediate and explicit feedback outlining what behaviour, specifically, is being reinforced. For example, consider 2 ways to positively reinforce a student after walking into the classroom respectfully;

1. "Thank you."
2. "Thank you for demonstrating respect by taking off your hat and walking in quietly."

One of these statements is more likely to result in the desired positive behaviours being repeated in the future, the other is vague and will have a minimal impact on future behaviours.

Specific and immediate feedback is a core component of PBS. Moreover, when you also throw in a few visual aids and Key Word Signs, you've got yourself a potent solution for supporting student understanding of "respectful" behaviour. As is well documented in research pertaining to

motivation and behaviour, PBS utilises the core underpinnings of *Operant Conditioning*. Skinner is regarded as the father of Operant Conditioning, however, his work was based on Thorndike's (1898) *Law of Effect*. According to this principle, behaviour that is followed by pleasant consequences is likely to be **repeated**, and behaviour followed by unpleasant consequences is less likely to be repeated.

PBS in schools simply boils down to this basic principle.

If you want to see students demonstrate more of [x] and less of [y], then you need to ensure [x] is consistently followed by a positive consequence.

Skinner introduced a new term into the *Law of Effect*; "**reinforcement**". Simply put, behaviour which is *reinforced* tends to be repeated (i.e. strengthened"), whereas behaviour that's not reinforced tends to die out, or be *extinguished* (i.e. weakened). Skinner's theories of reinforcement are echoed in the work of Scheuermann and Hall (2008) who state, "*When teachers know and use positive and preventative management strategies, many of the commonly reported minor classroom behaviours can be avoided.*" When implemented with **fidelity**, PBS in schools works well because positive behaviours in classrooms are strengthened, whereas negative behaviours are avoided and, naturally, "die out".

Modifying behaviour is not always straightforward; be careful not to inadvertently **reinforce undesired behaviours** that you desire to **weaken**. For example, "*detention*" for some students may, in fact, be a **positive** outcome; particularly if he or she feels anxious or awkward in social situations. Similarly, be mindful that you are not accidentally **extinguishing positive behaviours** that you desire to **strengthen**. For example, being acknowledged and congratulated in front of hundreds of people at a school assembly can be a **negative** consequence and, for some students, this experience invokes feelings of shame and embarrassment.

The key is to use appropriate incentives that the student finds genuinely pleasant and rewarding. The best way to do this is to simply *ask the students* (and parents). Utilise therapists to support communication. Provide choices using visuals, AAC, Boardmaker pics, and Talking Mats. Have capable students choose items from online catalogues, allowing them to add items to a "wish list" or



“shopping cart”. Some students prefer opportunities for free time on the computer, iPad, or video games in which case you can negotiate with them as to what that time is “worth” in tokens. The more you include students in developing their own expectations and incentives the more they are willing to engage in the initiative. Ask yourself; *“what sort of proverbial carrot provides sufficient incentive for the student to exhibit expected behaviours?”*

Another core component of PBS, when done right, is the explicit teaching of expected behaviours. Consider this quote from Tom Herner (1998, NASDE President, Counterpoint, p. 2):

“If a child doesn’t know how to read, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to swim, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to multiply, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to drive, we teach.”

“If a child doesn’t know how to behave, we...teach? ...punish?”

The fundamentals of PBS in our school are two-fold; we respect the principles of operant conditioning and we believe that if we want it, we must TEACH it. However, whilst we believe this to be true, this is also an area we are seeking to improve across the school. *How do you explicitly teach expected behaviours in your classroom?* How do you teach *respect*? How do you teach *“independence”*? Currently we are looking to create a repertoire of short videos and reproducible lessons as well as methods to support student understanding with visuals, AAC, and opportunities to demonstrate the skills in real life settings. We would also like to better utilise classroom observations as an opportunity to promote shared practice and conversations in this area.

Tracking progress is imperative to the successful rollout of PBS. First, when staff start to “see” it working (reflected in whole-school data), their initial efforts (i.e. behaviours) are **positively reinforced**, which results in the **increased likelihood** of teachers continuing to use PBS principles in their classrooms in the future. Second, data allows us to track

expected behaviours on a whole-school, classroom, and *individual* level. At CCESC, we utilise SIS to document positive behaviours (in addition to problem behaviours) and we use EXCEL spreadsheets to make daily records of Frequent Flyer Points for each student. These records are tracked on a whole school level and are acknowledged at school assemblies at the end of each term. For example, students are entertained and rewarded with our “PBS prize wheel” which, visually,



represents our core values (achievement, independence, and respect). The wheel contains a variety of popular “**reinforcers**” such as vouchers, movie tickets and canteen vouchers. Students have an increased chance of having their name drawn out of a hat (to spin the wheel) based on the number of Frequent Flyer Points earned that term.

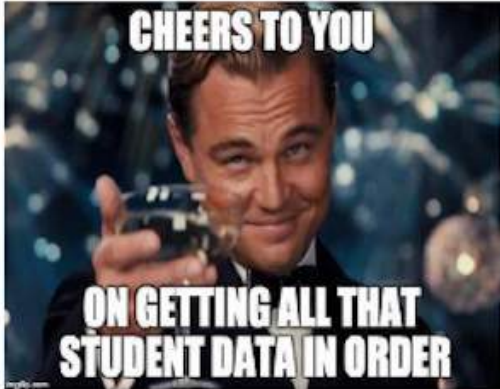
Like all new initiatives, PBS requires regular PR to stay at the forefront of our mind. To keep staff engaged in PBS, our internal coach sends a fun and informal “booster shot” once a term. This keeps staff up-to-date with all things “PBS” and aims to inspire and recalibrate attitudes towards the “big picture”. At the end of the day, we are committed to PBS because we want to promote a positive learning environment in our school and improve future outcomes for all students using evidence-based practices.

Below: an example of a PBS “Booster Shot” sent to all staff via email.

PBS BOOSTER SHOT

Term 2, 2018

“The goal of Positive Behavior Support is not “perfect children.” Rather the goal should be creating the perfect environment for enhancing their growth.”
 -Randy Sprick




Congratulations to all the classes who got their data in on time! Prompt return of FF data to Bernardo is essential to the success of PBS. HOWEVER, there are still classes dragging their feet, requiring regular email requests and reminders. Data collection and analysis is the backbone of PBS and your support is both needed and appreciated.


DATA SUBMISSION DATES:

Term 2- Week 8, Friday 22nd June (8 weeks of data for assembly)

Term 3- Week 1, Friday 20th July (complete figures for Term 2)

The data collected is analysed to recognise student achievement, improve systems and encourage positive behaviours.. So please, help us to help you!







AASE WA NATIONAL CONFERENCE BURSARY 2019

AASE WA is committed to providing access to quality professional learning opportunities to ensure students are provided with services from highly qualified and engaged staff. To this end, an occasional national conference bursary is offered to members of AASE WA.

The 2019 AASE WA Bursary will provide the successful recipient with funds to cover the majority of the costs of attendance at the AASE National Conference in Hobart, Tasmania, 22-24th September 2019.

- One Bursary of \$1500 will be awarded to an AASE WA member to attend the AASE National Conference.
- Application for the Bursary is encouraged from all members of AASE WA.

To apply, complete the attached application form and email to (jennifer.lockyer2@education.wa.edu.au) by **Wednesday 15th May 2019** (no late applications will be accepted). Applicants will be notified of the result of their application by Friday 31st May.

For enquiries please contact Rachael.Jones@education.wa.edu.au. See <https://gems.eventsair.com/2019-aase-national-conference/> for conference information.

Selection Criteria for the 2019 AASE WA National Conference Bursary

1. The recipient will be a current member of the AASE WA Chapter.
2. The Bursary is to attend the AASE National Conference 2019 in Hobart, Tasmania, 22-24th September.
3. Attendance at the Conference should have the potential to enhance the work/knowledge of the recipient in his/her workplace/home or in the educational context of WA.
4. The successful applicant is required to contribute an article to the next AASE WA newsletter following their attendance (support will be provided if required).

The decision on who is to receive the AASE WA National Conference Bursary will be made by the AASE WA selection group based on the set criteria.

Careful consideration will be made when addressing the criteria which must be met in full for a final decision to be made by the selection group committee.

Funds will be provided on presentation of paid tax invoices to the Treasurer of AASE WA, PO Box 507, Leederville 6903 mbivens@iinet.net.au



AASE WA NATIONAL CONFERENCE BURSARY 2019

Hobart, Tasmania 22-24 September, 2019

APPLICATION FORM

Name	
Postal address	
Phone (home/work)	
Email	
School/organisation	
Position	
Cost of attending the conference	
SELECTION CRITERIA	
<p>What benefits can you see arising from your attendance at the conference?</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How might your attendance at the conference enhance your work/support of students with disability?</i> • <i>What contribution might this make to the WA context?</i> • <i>How might this extend your professional perspective?</i> 	
<p>How will you share the knowledge gained with your professional community?</p>	

In submitting this application I confirm that I am willing to write an article about this PD opportunity for the AASE WA Newsletter following the conference

Can be expanded to no more than one sheet of A4 paper.

Please return this completed form to jennifer.lockyer2@education.wa.edu.au by 30 June 2019.

2018 AASE National Conference | Reflections

Alana Williams



Cairns was a beautiful setting for the 2018 Australian Association of Special Education National Conference 'Creating Connections: Developing Personal and Social Capabilities'. The conference began with the welcome reception at the Daintree's Pool Deck of the Pullman Cairns International. As well as introducing us to some of the wildlife of Cairns we made introductions with fellow delegates who we were to share the next two days with.

The opening of the conference included the launching of the new look AASE Journal – Australasian Journal of Special and Inclusive Education.

Professor Stephen Elliott, Mickelson Foundation Professor, from Arizona State University, USA was the opening keynote presentation on Practises that Improve Social Emotional Learning Skills, Opportunities, and Outcomes for Students with Additional Needs. He highlighted the importance of social emotional learning skills and the connection of these to successful outcomes for all students - acceptance by peers, success with learning, engagement

and involvement with their learning and an increase of appropriate behaviour.

The breakout sessions were streamed into Curriculum as Practice, Relationships, Social Emotional Learning and Wellbeing and Resilience. The sessions I attended were well attended and informative

I believe the standout presentation of the Cairns Conference was the 2018 Des English Memorial Lecture by Chris Varney. Chris is the Founder and Chief Enabling Officer of I CAN Network. His brief was to inspire educators to go the extra mile with their students on the Autism Spectrum and how they can improve their school communities for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. He succeeded with this by using his personal experiences with Asperger's and sharing his current work through the I CAN Network.

I would encourage you to visit the AASE website for all the keynote and breakout presenter's materials. The conference provided a valuable learning and networking experience for us and I recommend attending the next AASE national conference in Hobart, Tasmania in September 2019.

2018 AASE WA AWARD | Congratulations Margaret Prior

Maggie Balfe

Each year the ASSE WA Chapter provides opportunity for special educators to be nominated for an award which is representative of their contributions in their field of expertise. We are pleased to announce the 2018 successful candidate is **Margaret Prior** from Ballajura Community College.

Margaret has dedicated her career to teaching students with special needs. She started at the college in 2001 and has moved with the times to meet the individual needs of students, developing a positive education support culture at the school where every student is valued. Margaret's career moved forward when she became Teacher in Charge at the college when she developed the "Education Support House" programme in 2015 for students of high support needs.

She has worked with the Curriculum Council (SCSA) developing life skill units plus assisted with the development of the Foundation and Preliminary Health Courses.

Despite her challenging role at the college Margaret found time to complete her Masters in 2006 from Charles Sturt University. She focussed on an area of great need 'interacting with parents and positive encouragement'.

Margaret has given so much to so many as a Special Education Teacher, may she continue to have a long and successful career in this field as her contributions are truly valued.

Information about applying for the 2019 award will be available in term 2.



A gentle reminder to pay for your membership. Opportunities for members include a bursary to attend the 2019 AASE National conference, the AASE WA award for

REMiNDER



If you haven't already done so, *please pay your 2018/19 membership!*

AASE NATIONAL RESPONSE | Gonski Position Paper

The following Press Release on the AASE National Response to Gonski was made available for download on the AASE National Website on June 21st 2018.



The Press Release reads as follows:

The Australian Association of Special Education Inc. (AASE) contributed a submission to the recent Gonski report "Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools" which was released by the Australian Government in late April.

AASE considers that the report has many strengths, including:

- a focus on better meeting the educational needs of all students*
- an expectation of educational progress for all students*
- a recommendation for personalised, tailored teaching and learning*
- the promotion of mixed-ability classrooms*

AASE is strongly of the view that the recommendation for a national research institution (recommendation 23) has significant merit if set to high standards and based on scientific principles. It is recommended that findings articulate meaningfully with AITSL's Professional Standards.

AASE considers that the report fell short, however, in demonstrating a strong academic basis for all conclusions and recommendation. Many areas appeared not well supported by data, some of the language was overly broad, and the overall vision therefore lacked necessary detail. For example, the proposal to structure the Australian curriculum as learning progressions and emphasise general capabilities does not acknowledge the limited success associated with this approach in other jurisdictions. Disappointingly, a strong focus of the report was on international student comparisons. The report gave little attention to the learning needs of students with disabilities, and the importance of evidence-based teaching practice which is imperative for the successful learning for all students.

AASE is a broad-based non-categorical association with chapters in each state and territory and is concerned with ensuring a quality education for all who have disabilities and special education needs.

Media Contact

Karen L Wilson

Vice President

Mobile 0400441208

You can access this press release using the following link: <http://aase.edu.au/document/2240>

Call for Abstracts | AASE National Conference 2019

The AASE Tasmanian Conference Committee is pleased to invite all members to participate in the 2019 Australian Association of Special Education (AASE) National Conference to be held at the Grand Chancellor Hobart, on Monday, 23rd and Tuesday, 24th September, 2019.

The theme for the 2019 Conference is:

“Flourishing Learners in Thriving Learning Communities”

The Conference Organising Committee is seeking submissions related to the following conference streams:

Inclusive practice including a focus on:

Personalising quality learning plans
Differentiation to support diverse learning needs
Inclusive pedagogy
Quality teaching and learning programs

Working in Partnership including a focus on:

Engaging and connecting with families
Collaborative partnerships to support quality teaching and learning
Student/teacher relationships
Fostering friendships among students

Engagement and wellbeing including a focus on:

Reengaging disengaged students
Planning for positive behaviour
Flexible learning options
Whole school approaches to student and staff wellbeing

Leadership including a focus on:

Quality inclusive leadership
Whole school and community approaches to inclusivity
Leading professional learning for high quality teaching

Transitions including a focus on:

School transitions
Post school transitions
Preparations for work
Type of Submissions

Calls for Submissions are due by Friday, 8th March, 2019



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION Inc. WA CHAPTER



Improving Collaborative Practices

The definition of collaborate is to 'work jointly on an activity or project' – so why do so many of our teachers and students feel isolated? Teachers striving to meet deadlines and curriculum expectations, students working away to meet that grade 'churn out' that task. Schools can work together as Professional Learning Communities to develop collaborative practices both in the classroom and as teachers.

Providing a brief outline of what we might mean by these practices, teachers will be given opportunity to 'collaborate' to share what they do in the classroom and how they work together with colleagues to develop effective learning communities.

Speaker: Maggie Balfe

Maggie Balfe has been working with Inclusive Education team at AISWA since January 2015.

Maggie started her career in special education teaching in the 1980s with the Department of Education in Western Australia as a teacher in special schools. During the early 1990's she worked in the United Kingdom as part of an early intervention team supporting families of children with disabilities. On her return to Western Australia she worked for Catholic Education WA taking on a variety of roles, Consultant for Students with Disabilities, followed by Coordinator of a High Support Needs Centre and finally teaching students with disabilities at secondary level. As an Inclusive Education Consultant Maggie supports schools promoting positive inclusive practices for students with disabilities in schools. Maggie has a Bachelor of Education and a Graduate Diploma in Special Education.

Wednesday 27th March 2019

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm Registration/refreshments

4:00pm – 5:30pm Presentation

Venue: Newman Siena Centre, 33 Williamstown Rd, Doubleview WA 6018

Room: Flexi 1

Cost: AASE Members: \$20.00 (please indicate if you/your school is a member - max of 3 people per group membership)

Non Members: \$40.00 (payment on the day)

*Invoices for organizations/schools are available if requested one week prior to the event.
Please bring organization/school cheques with you on the day of the seminar.*

Afternoon tea will be provided.

Registration by 25th March 2019 to: Mark Bivens email: mbivens@inet.net.au

Enquiries to Maggie Balfe on mbalfe@ais.wa.edu.au

If cancellation is necessary please advise Mark Bivens



AASE WA Executive & Committee 2017

Executive

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