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ISSN 1018-2071

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**Centre for Augmentative and
Alternative Communication**

CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

Time to celebrate!

I recently mused about the possibility of cancelling my birthday this year... It just seems such a busy time of the year that a party seems like an extra burden! However, I quickly repented, realising that, the busier we get, the more we probably need to take time to stop running, and enjoy a good festivity. Festivals and celebrations are wonderful opportunities to get together with others, to have fun, to enjoy being alive and to enjoy each other's company. Such times can help us remember what is important to us as individuals, as groups and simply as human beings.

At the Centre for AAC, we are planning a year of festivities, to celebrate the Centre's 21st birthday this year. When the Centre was started 21 years ago (by Prof Erna Alant from the University of Pretoria, with the help of Prof Lyle Lloyd from Purdue University, USA), the main aim was delivering direct clinical service to persons in need of AAC and their families. Non-degree training, research and postgraduate training were soon added to the activities, as a way of establishing this field in South Africa. The Centre furthermore has a long history of national and international collaboration with a variety of people in the field of AAC.

Through all the Centre's activities, we, as staff, have had the privilege of meeting and working with many people who are passionate about the cause of persons with disabilities. These people come from all walks and spheres of life, but share the same vision – improving the quality of life for those that are most vulnerable and

often without a voice. These people have truly touched our lives, inspired us and changed us. And this is what we want to celebrate this year – the privilege of amazing road companions who crossed our path during the past 21 years, and shared the journey with us.

So get out your party hat, because you are invited! One opportunity to celebrate with us is at the 2nd Regional African AAC Conference from 1-4 August 2011. We hope to see many old and new friends at this exciting event. See the article on p. 4 for more details. Another opportunity will be to join us at the Open Day concluding the Fofa project (leadership for young adults with severe communication disabilities), on the 23rd of September 2011. The participants will get an opportunity to address an open audience, sharing their life stories and what role they see AAC playing in their life. We are also planning a 'Walk for a Voice' on the afternoon of the same day, and want to invite everyone who has an interest in AAC or uses AAC to join in this walk at the UP sports grounds (LC De Villiers) for raising awareness about AAC.

Let's celebrate this year. Celebrate the achievements and possibilities of people using AAC, families and supporters.

Let's celebrate it in the big events and also in the 'small' ones. May every day of 2011 be a feast.

*Kerstin Tönsing
Editor: Centre for AAC*



Interface promotes communication for people with little or no functional speech by supplementing existing communication with gestures, communication boards and assistive technology (thus, augmentative & alternative communication)

Interface Branch News

Interface KZN: Full throttle into 2011!

Interface KZN has a few exciting events planned for this year. We are lucky enough to be able to have an opportunity to address a Lion's club meeting and we will be doing so in March, informing them about Interface and having an opportunity to request funding from them for communication devices required by some individuals who do not have the funds for them. In addition to AAC screenings and support for AAC users and families, we have various projects planned for this year. One of these is the Communication Circle, which will enable AAC users of various ages from the greater Ethekwini area, especially children, to get together at our resource centre to chat; support each other; and to learn how to solve communication challenges they may face. During the Communication Circle, experienced AAC users will mentor "newer users".

At the end of last year, we applied to Woolworths to be part of their My Village/My Planet initiative. So if anyone would like to support Interface KZN in a way that will be at no cost to yourself, please apply online (www.myschool.co.za) and then go to the My Village My Planet option and select Interface KZN as your beneficiary). The application takes a few minutes and the card is then posted to you within 2 to 3 weeks. Then it is just a matter of swiping the card at participating stores when you make purchases and Interface KZN benefits immediately. It is simple as that! Our social network sites are also active (Facebook and Twitter), so feel free to follow us and participate online, in addition to getting up to date information from our website.

In March, we will be hosting an evening at the Sneddon theatre at U-KZN the production is 'A hand full of keys.'



The committee members will be selling tickets with the help of our events coordinator Freddie Batten.

Our Action Labs for 2011 will begin on Friday 18 Feb, with the last being scheduled for the 16 September. They will continue to run in the same format as previously i.e. from 2 to 4pm on Friday afternoons. The first few dates and topics are

18th February: What is AAC?

4th March: Unaided AAC

18th March: Aided AAC and The Power of Communication: My Life Story by Paul Burdett

Some additional topics to be covered will include: 'Evaluation of the child using AAC in the classroom'; and 'Using AAC with the Visually Impaired', to mention a few. These sessions are as always open to the public as well as educators.

Should you wish to become part of our mailing list or put your name down for a particular workshop, please contact Linda at the Interface office.

Leandra Hinds

Chairperson: Interface KZN

<http://interface-kzn.co.za/index.php>

SCHOOL NEWS

News from Pathways Pretoria

We are excited about the new year 2011! We are privileged to have 10 new children added to our school and 7 young adults added to the Young Adult Studio. We are also looking back on a blessed year. We have redecorated our school with a lick of paint. In each class we have put up a BIG maisonaité calendar for a month to help our children understand time. Each day that passes we pull off that date

and replace it with a cross. We also have a clock and weather thermometer in each class to measure time and temperature so that we can keep ahead of time! We have inaugurated our child kinetic gym with Natasha Smit who is still looking for sponsors to make it state of the art!

Our first 'buddy programme' outreach was to visit Maranatha Bana centre in Centurion. We had a wonderful class visit and picnic with our old buddies and enjoyed ourselves!

Our young adults are in their own Young Adult studio now. They are a group of 28 pupils. Most of our young adults work for 2 days independently in the open labour market or in small work crews in businesses. We have revamped our small businesses and will have young adults doing beadwork, leather, cards and fruit packaging and hopefully also baking homemade biscuits!

We plan to have our annual Pathways Toolbox training in this term. We are looking at dates in February. We will present a graded toolbox with norms on fine motor skills, a reading book toolbox (with worksheets on different Gr1, 2 levels, dolce words, stickers and tags) and a personal care, life skill toolbox. We will also do some individualised training at ELSEN schools.

Hope it is a wonderful term for all!
Love from all @ Pathways-Pretoria!

Ina Potgieter

Pathways Pretoria

www.ptapathways.co.za



Picnic with our friends at Maranatha Bana

Our new child kinetic gym.



**News from Pathways Polokwane:
Highlights of 2010**

The year 2010 had many highlights! Herewith a choice of a few of them:

Project Trust Students: Jenny, Yzzy and Sarah have slotted in so well with our Enrichment Centre family. They have eased into their duties and are consistently adding their valuable assistance wherever necessary.

Inter-house Gala: Our Senior and Life Skills students participated in the inter-house last year. They put in their very best efforts and managed to conquer a whole lap of the school pool in icy water.



Braving the waters at the inter-house gala

Disability awareness assembly: We held our disability awareness assemblies at the end of last year for the college and the primary school. The primary children were intrigued as they were told they were attending a ‘silent assembly’. They entered the theatre in absolute silence greatly anticipating what was about to happen. The council presented their part of the assembly using nothing more than speaking devices. Hymns were merely mouthed and the children were given the opportunity to participate by making choices of their hymns using a choice board. The college children were presented with something a little more up their alley... an iPod that can be used as a voice for a non-speaking person. We were all amazed to see how wonderful technology can be. Both assemblies got us all thinking about the endless possibilities that can be available to non-speaking people.

Christmas concert: We ended off 2010 with the annual Christmas concert, and despite threats of rain, it turned out to be a huge success! The Life Skills class organized a tea garden for the parents to enjoy while we got the children ready for their big performance. The Junior class set the tone with three wonderful songs accompanied by instruments and dancing. Then the Life Skills class came to entertain us with dancing and playing of instruments, after which all three classes came together for a grand



Christmas concert fun

finale of “Shalom” and “Good Bye”. The whole performance was so moving and a great time was had by all.

*Renate Jane Wieffering
Pathways Polokwane*

www.mitchellhouse.co.za/enrichment.html

Pathways Roodepoort: Going the extra mile for special needs kids

Pathways Roodepoort had a very successful 2010 and faces 2011 with a colourful attitude of determination and enthusiasm. We do have a very pressing problem of requiring larger premises within Roodepoort. This is a large hurdle as we won’t qualify for much of a bond and our classroom and bathroom needs are calling for us to find a Nursery School type facility in order to cope with our 14 staff members and 22 special needs children. Our waiting list has also grown at an alarming rate but without larger premises we simply cannot take on any new children.

On the up side, our Support Group is still going strong. Anyone is welcome to attend our themed talks on the 1st Saturday of every month at Pathways Roodepoort from 10h00 till 12h00 – except over public and school holidays.

Our fundraising calendar for this year looks very exciting, including a team of 30 who will be doing the Fish River Canyon at the end of June 2011. This adventure is in aid of raising awareness about the children at Pathways Roodepoort with each hiker representing a special needs child while raising money for the Centre. We will walk almost 100km for the children to demonstrate that able-bodied people will go the “Extra Mile” for children who walk their own difficult path every day.

We will also be running our usual Golf Day, encouraging people to join our R100 a month donation group, participating in Casual Day by selling stickers ordered through our organisation, doing Bingo and Barnyard evenings and conducting Ladies Teas amongst other things.

I am conducting motivational talks to shine a light on the unique journey of parents with special needs children and the sometimes tough but beautiful lessons learned along the way.

From all at Pathways Roodepoort, we wish you a magnificent 2011 and may you also go the Extra Mile within yourselves in helping make life easier for people with disabilities and challenges.



*Julie Botha: Pathways Roodepoort
Founder & Motivational Speaker*
www.pathwaysroodepoort.org.za

2nd Regional African AAC Conference 2011



It is time.... for the **2nd Regional African AAC Conference!!** Everyone who attended the first conference in 2004 will recall what a wonderful occasion and great networking opportunity this conference was. And the 2nd one promises to be exactly that. The conference will be hosted by the Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication, together with INTERFACE with the support of ISAAC (The International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication), and will take place at the Birchwood Hotel and OR Tambo Conference Centre, Boksburg, South Africa.

A full-day research symposium will be held on the 1st of August 2011. The theme for the research symposium is: *Ethical considerations in research with people with disabilities.*

The main conference will be hosted over 3 days (2-4 August 2011) and will consist of 3 strands. These represent the different contexts in which AAC intervention takes place and highlight the relevant stakeholders involved in the process of AAC intervention, research and service delivery. The conference intends to bring together all those with a stake in AAC, be it as a person with a disability, a parent, or an education/health professional. The aim is to network, share knowledge and experiences and learn from each other. The conference is also CPD accredited.

For more information regarding the conference and to benefit from the Early Bird registration, please visit our conference webpage: <http://tinyurl.com/AAC-in-Africa-2011> or contact **Liezl Maasdorp** at **012 420 2001** or liezl.maasdorp@up.ac.za

Silent Auction

Interface KZN has volunteered to organise the Silent Auction at the conference. For those of you who have never heard of a “Silent Auction” it is a fun way to raise funds and all the monies raised at the conference silent auction will be put towards the sponsorship of delegates who require AAC to attend the next conference. The “Silent Auction” is a great way for any conference delegate to acquire an AAC resource, a piece of original artwork or craft, or a wonderful item of memorabilia!

How does it work? All the items donated to the Silent Auction will be displayed along with a bidding sheet. The bidding sheet will give a short description of the item, how much it is worth, who donated it as well as the minimum bid. To bid you merely have to record your name, your cell number and the amount you are bidding for the item. There are only two rules: 1) Each bid has to be higher than the previous bid and 2) The person with the highest bid at the end of the auction wins the item. Bidding will close at lunchtime on the last day of the conference to allow delegates to collect the items they successfully bid on and to donate the amount of their winning bid.

Remember, you can bid on as many items as you wish and you can bid on a single item as many times as you wish. Go back periodically to the Silent Auction display area to see whether you have been outbid! And if you have – just bid higher.

To assist Interface KZN in organising the Silent Auction bring your items with you when you register at the conference. Even better email us beforehand at ifacekzn@saol.com to tell us what items you are bringing so that we can prepare bidding sheets in advance. Don't forget to visit the Silent Auction to bid on the items you want to win! We have only just announced the “Silent Auction” and have already been promised some beadwork (of Zulu origin of course), a pack of laminated coloured pre-primary song-boards using Picture Communication Symbols (Boardmaker symbols) and a copy of Neville Cohen's book. “Mind if I sit?”.

Margi Lilienfeld
Former board member
of Interface KZN





As some of you may have heard, Celeste Mukeibir, the founder of the company Inclusive Solutions, sadly passed away in December last year, after a long battle with cancer. Celeste was an extraordinary person who devoted her life to improving things for people with communication difficulties. We would therefore like to devote a special tribute to her in this issue, in order to celebrate her life and commemorate her as someone who has touched the lives of many of us.

Celeste had a background in computer programming and teaching. She was also the mother of two children both of whom are adults now. Her daughter Samantha has cerebral palsy. Being an advocate for access to the least restrictive environment for her daughter, Celeste achieved that Samantha moved from a special school to conclude her schooling in mainstream. Samantha is currently furthering her studies.

While ordering assistive equipment for her daughter, Celeste was approached by other parents from the special school and asked whether she would order equipment for them too. Celeste realised that a need existed for a distributor of assistive communication and access technology in South Africa, and Inclusive Solutions was born. The company really grew in the past years and was involved not only in the import of devices and technology, but also in consultation services for people and families in need of such technology. They were furthermore involved with government tenders on assistive technology provision in schools and conducted teacher training all over the country.

Celeste was a people's person. She had many good friends. We asked some of them to share their personal memories of this amazing lady:

Celeste must be one of the strongest and bravest people that I have ever come across. That being said, she was also the calmest, warmest, and sweetest lady I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. Needless to say, she was an amazing boss to work for. People always came first with Celeste, whether it was her employees or her customers, personal relationships would always take priority over business. Some might argue that that is not the best way to run a business, but having worked for Celeste, I can see how it is the only way to run a business. Inclusive Solutions has grown from strength

to strength and is and will always be the flagship business for assistive technology in South Africa.

I started working for Celeste in 2006 under the premise that I was just going to be doing some design work for her as well as little odd jobs she needed help with, nothing serious. I am now still working at Inclusive Solutions 4 years down the line. The only reason I stayed is because of Celeste, her business ethics, warm and caring personality, her integrity, positivity, and her great sense of humour.

Also, the only memory I have from going to swimming lessons as a child, was the day when Celeste substituted for the swimming teacher for whatever reason. She taught us how to float like a starfish. So in my mind (or for a lack of memories contained therein), if it weren't for Celeste, I would probably drown.

Ivor Moolman
Colleague
Inclusive Solutions

Celeste was a person of great courage and commitment to life. Often when she came into my office, we used to joke about the different types of challenges in our lives and how life is just not perfect...

But then the conversation always turned at some point to focus on "Yes, but it is still worth living...making some small difference in someone's life is just magical..." She will always stay with me.

Erna Alant
Otting Endowed Chair in Special Education
Iowa University
Former Director of the Centre for AAC

I was deeply saddened to hear of Celeste's passing. She was a wonderful friend to Interface KZN and always so willing to go the extra mile to assist us. Inclusive Solutions, the company she founded, was clearly never just a business to Celeste but rather the embodiment of her passion to assist children with severe disabilities. Over the years Celeste had a profound influence on the lives of so many adults and children in South Africa who required AAC! I do not think that Celeste was aware of the huge impact she had in developing the field of alternative access to computers and moving AAC forward in South Africa. Optimistic in attitude, generous in spirit and courageous in facing adversity, she was a truly remarkable person. I will always remember her caring attitude and her willingness to share her time, expertise and knowledge, irrespective of how tired or ill she was. To her husband Gary, and to Jarrod and Samantha – words are totally inadequate - but please accept my sincerest condolences.

Margi Lilienfeld
Former board member of Interface KZN

*Paradise -
I see flowers
from the cottage where I lie.*

Yaitsu's death poem, 1807



All of us who knew Celeste, have our own unique memories of her. To me she was a colleague and collaboration partner who shared my vision of making AAC accessible to as many people in South Africa as possible. We often talked about the joy of providing somebody with a means of expression and the responsibilities that go alongside it. We bitterly complained to each other that the road sometimes seemed too steep and difficult to climb, but then we would remind each other how great the rewards were.

But as friends we also shared a joint enemy: cancer. We sometimes spoke about the many things that cancer stole from us, but more often we would speak about the things it couldn't take. In the end it took Celeste's life, but it could never take away her faith.

People do not die for us immediately, but continue to occupy our thoughts in the same way as when they were alive. It is as if they were travelling abroad. This is how I think of Celeste. She has gone before us to Paradise. Therefore we shouldn't be dismayed at saying goodbye. After all, a farewell is necessary before we can meet again. And where better to meet again than in Paradise? Goodbye my friend.

Juan Bornman
Acting Director: Centre for AAC

I met Celeste in 2002, and began working for her company Inclusive Solutions in 2006. I came to her as a parent who had no clue as to what to do with my daughter who had been diagnosed with cerebral palsy, and who at 5 years old, had very little communication. Two years later, after using Boardmaker as recommended and supported by Celeste, Savannah exceeded both Celeste's and my expectations in her progress in communicating. Celeste then offered me a job, and my life changed forever. I was always struck by Celeste's passion to help people with little or no functional speech, as her own child did not have speech problems. Being a mother of a child with a disability myself, I recognise that parents

are usually most interested in what meets their own child's needs. Celeste however, was profoundly affected by lack of tools for communication in schools as well as tools to access the curriculum for the physically disabled. She worked late into the night and often through week-ends to ensure that she understood the mechanics and use of devices or software, so that she could take it to a family or school that might need it.

Celeste was a wealth of knowledge and information to many families and professionals, and she always made the time to encourage and inspire parents to never give up. She did not just speak some pretty words but would literally roll up her sleeves and show the parents exactly what she meant. I remember sitting alongside Celeste en route to schools in remote parts of Gauteng, so that Celeste could show them what was possible for their learners, if they just tried a different approach. And she would go back again and again until someone in the school was inspired to try. She never quit, never gave up and never gave in.

When I think back to the hours spent working with Celeste in her home office, I also remember the lady who told the funniest stories about life in general, who had advice to give about everything and who had a great appreciation for her family and friends. She had a unique way of assessing situations, and was relentless once she had an idea in her head. Celeste gave me advice that has influenced me in the way I raise my family and live my life. If ever I got carried away with work or overwhelmed with the task of being a mom, Celeste never failed to redirect me to what was important in life, my family.

I often find myself quoting her, or remembering something she said to me at a time when I need it the most. I will always be grateful to her for the opportunities she gave me, and the lessons she taught me. She will be sadly missed.

My love and prayers are with Gary, Jarrod and Samantha.



Desirae Pillay
Former colleague
Disability
Consultant

I met Celeste when I started working at Forest Town School as an OT. Celeste was a mom of an ex-pupil at the school, and she accessed funds for us to set up a computer unit in the OT Dept. She and I shared an interest in all matters concerning AAC and computer access. We always joked that 'she sold what I did'.

Celeste's heart was in her business Inclusive Solutions. I saw her grow it from a vision to a flourishing business. When she became ill, she agonised for a long time over what would become of it. She was greatly relieved, and saw it as a direct answer to prayer, when she was able to hand her business over to people whom she thought would be able to take it into the future. She was comforted knowing that a part of her would remain in the business she left behind. I just wonder if she realised how large her legacy is

She had a unique ability to inspire both organisations and individuals. She could raise funds and get projects started. She empowered people through training.

She advised and counselled parents and users with the compassion that only someone with a related life experience could do. She kept abreast with and introduced new products to us, and in her choices influenced the direction of service provision in our country. There is hardly a practice of AAC throughout South Africa that has not been influenced by Celeste Mukheibir, directly or indirectly!

Over the years, Celeste became much more than a work colleague to me. We developed a friendship that brought us together on a personal level as well, and especially so after she became ill five years ago. When her illness was no longer treatable, I had the privilege of walking alongside her as she confronted the reality of her mortality, and the meaning and purpose of life itself. The last year was as much a faith journey as it was a physical battle. I will forever be challenged by the way Celeste faced her difficulties with such dignity and humility - and always a smile.

Marina Herold
Occupational therapist and AAC specialist

News from the Centre for AAC



Meet the new team members of the Centre for AAC:

Ensa Johnson, a special education

teacher and former graduate from the Centre for AAC has joined the Centre on a part-time basis. Ensa has extensive experience teaching learners with a variety of disabilities and has also worked in programme development for ECD practitioner training. It is wonderful to have someone with such a wealth of experience as part of our team.



Dr. Dana Donohue from Georgia State University, USA, has taken up a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship at the Centre for AAC. Dana recently completed her PhD in Developmental Psychology. We are very excited to have her on

board, and we know she will be an absolute asset especially when it comes to honing our research skills! We wish her a very happy and fulfilling stay in South Africa.

Congratulations!

Prof Juan Bornman received a certificate from the Education Innovation Department for her management of the PhD Course in AAC and severe disabilities.



Kerstin Tönsing was awarded second place for best student paper for the presentation for her pilot study at the Clinical AAC conference in Iowa, USA.

Adapting workbooks for children with little or no functional speech

In February 2011 the TTT from the Centre for AAC presented possible solutions to the Department of Education on how to adapt the new colourful range of workbooks (Grade 1 – Grade 6) for learners with little or no functional speech. Ensa Johnson, Gloria Ledwaba and Priscilla Kershaw represent the teachers at the CAAC and refer to themselves as the TTT (three teachers' team).

It is indeed wonderful that learners all across our country will in future have the opportunity to engage in exactly the same standard of workbook activities as their peers. These books will be adapted for learners with hearing impairments, visual impairments as well as learners with little or no functional speech.

General suggestions from the TTT aimed at keeping affordability in mind by making adaptations from everyday materials and offering skill shops to educators to develop creative thinking. Adaptations of the book itself included ideas such as the use of pegs and paper clips to function as page turners in order to enable learners to participate as independently as possible within a classroom situation.

A generic communication board designed to suit the individual learner's needs, incorporating core and fringe vocabulary, was suggested to facilitate language enrichment and communication. Emphasis was placed on Aided Language Stimulation to build and support a sound language foundation, assist with memory and aid with with the acquisition of a second language.

The TTT found that the new books were diverse in representing gender and cultural differences but lack the portrayal of learners with disabilities. To think in an inclusive way we need to truly embrace diversity and the gifts it brings. We are privileged to speak up for those who can't and even more privileged to have a Department of Education willing to make the changes needed to make inclusive education the reality it ought to be.



All children deserve a quality education: "Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand" – Chinese proverb.

Priscilla Kershaw
Centre for AAC

User forum

Challenging behaviour: Switch on the electricity! PART 2

In the December 2010 Newsletter we embarked on a journey looking at challenging behaviour. Electricity was used as a metaphor for describing a holistic positive behaviour management approach. When lights are switched on, everything is lit up, and everybody involved can see all there is to be seen. In contrast, a torch only lights up one aspect at a time, and what is seen, is dependant on the direction in which the torch is pointed. Therefore it is safe to say that a holistic, multi-strategic approach, using a collection of coordinated strategies (electricity) is much more effective in preventing challenging behaviour than a single approach (torch).

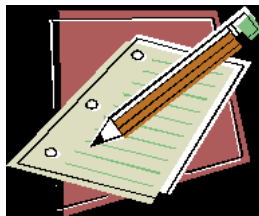
In Part 1 we looked at three groups of setting events, namely environmental events, biological/medical/personal events and social events. We also provided a checklist for noting them. In this edition of the Newsletter we will focus on describing the challenging behaviour itself as a first step in the assessment process. Challenging behaviour is seen as a descriptive term which means that the interventionist (teacher, therapist or parent) should aim to describe the behaviour, rather than label the behaviour. Ask a descriptive question such as "Can you tell me exactly what the child does?" as that will lead to a descriptive answer such as "Tebogo screams and falls on the ground when I ask him to do certain classroom activities". This type of answer is more useful in trying to understand why a particular behaviour is seen, as opposed to a judgement such as "The child is aggressive / rude / annoying". The latter type of label closes the door for an alternative interpretation regarding the function of the behaviour.

Other descriptive terms include: hitting, biting, scratching, screaming, self-stimulation behaviour (e.g. hand flapping, rocking), self damaging behaviour (head banging, hand biting, face slapping), pica (eating inedible things, e.g. chalk, ground, etc.), destroying objects, inappropriate sexual behaviour (e.g. public masturbation) and toileting problems (e.g. soiling and wetting). However, while describing the child's behaviour it is important to always use person first language. For example "Refilwe bites her hand when she becomes anxious and doesn't know what to do", rather than "She's a biter" because Refilwe is more than simply a biter – biting is just one part of what she does.

In order to clearly describe the behaviour, four aspects should be included

- ◆ the **type** of behaviour (e.g. hand flapping),

- ◆ the **severity** of the behaviour (e.g. the impact of the behaviour on the health or safety of the child and others in the child’s environment),
- ◆ the **time of the day** when the behaviour takes place (e.g. every time when demands are placed on the child).
- ◆ the **frequency** of the behaviour (e.g. “3 times an hour” or “once a day” rather than “the whole time” or “never”).



The first two aspects will typically be described in written format as discussed above, while a scatter plot is effective to describe the last two aspects. Scatter plots are effective for identifying the times of the day associated with the challenging behaviour as it contains a graphic display of observable behaviour over a couple of days (e.g. a week).

If we look at the above completed scatterplot it is clear that we can see a pattern arising: this child displays a lot of challenging behaviour during circle time. Why then? Maybe because it is the first activity of the day, and the child has difficulty in transitioning, e.g. when coming into the classroom from outside. We note that the activity in which the challenging behaviour occurs second most, is the art activity, which also happens after a transition period (coming into the classroom after break time). The scatter plot thus helps in trying to formulate a hypothesis of when the challenging behaviour is seen, and which activities are more problematic. Specific intervention strategies can then be suggested.

Example of a completed scatterplot (Bornman & Rose, 2010)

Name of child: _____

Name of Observer: _____

Date: _____

Time	Activity	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Total
08:00	Arrival	x					1
08:30	Circle time	x	x	x	x	x	5
09:00	Free Play	x	x		x		3
09:30	Break						0
10:00	Art	x		x	x	x	4

If we look at the above completed scatter plot it is clear that we can see a pattern arising: this child displays a lot of challenging behaviour during circle time. Why then? Maybe because it is the first activity of the day, and the child has difficulty in transitioning, e.g. when coming into the classroom from outside. We note that the activity in which the challenging behaviour occurs second most, is the art activity, which also happens after a transition period (coming into the classroom after break time).

The scatterplot thus helps in trying to formulate a hypothesis of when the challenging behaviour is seen, and which activities are more problematic. Specific intervention strategies can then be suggested.

In the next edition of the newsletter we will discuss some more assessment strategies (e.g. A-B-C charts), as accurate assessment is a critical part of intervention

when dealing with challenging behaviour! I want to encourage you to try and use a scatter plot and see how much clearer you see the behaviour patterns developing. By doing this, the electricity is coming on!



*Prof Juan Bornman
Centre for AAC*

Name of child: _____

Name of Observer: _____

Date: _____

SCATTERPLOT

Instructions: List the major activities of the day. Once you write in your schedule, make multiple copies before using this scatter plot to avoid writing the schedule every day. Try to complete this form 1-3 times a week.

Time	Activity	Challenging Behaviour (Check one)			Engagement in Activity (Check one)		
		None	Some	Throughout	None	Some	Throughout
08:00							
08:30							
09:00							
09:30							

AAC Consultations

The Centre for AAC offers **consultations** to persons with little or no functional speech and their intervention teams (family and service providers).

In order to schedule a consultation, please contact Priscilla Kershaw (012 420 2035) or phone our office at (012 420 2001).

Acquisition of numeracy skills in learners with disabilities

It is a dream of every parent and teacher that all children should acquire numeracy skills which will facilitate their independence as contributing members of the society in which they live. The question is, does this dream also apply to learners with moderate intellectual disabilities? I can hear you saying “yes”.

I agree with you. Children with disabilities should also be provided with the opportunity to experience success in numeracy just like learners with typical developments. According to Westling and Fox (2009), numeracy instruction for learners with moderate intellectual disabilities has historically focused on the following areas of learning:

- ◆ Acquiring basic concepts and skills
- ◆ Acquiring skills to handle money
- ◆ Applying numeracy skills to time management.

There are several fun ways which teachers can use to teach learners with moderate intellectual disabilities basic numeracy concepts and skills such as counting. Here is a Setswana song to teach counting up to 10:

Re bana ba ba nyanyane

Re bana ba ba nyanyane, Rena rutwa kwa sekolong (X 2)

Re bala 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Re bala 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 (X 2)

Opang diatla le dule fase

Rena re rutwa kwa sekolong (X 2)

English version with symbols:

Gloria Ledwaba, Centre for AAC

The.Sponge project

The.Sponge project is a privately funded initiative that aims at creating better networks for people with disabilities, as well as to advocate for better rehabilitation and other services. Herewith some interesting news snippets from the website:

- ◆ On 10 December 2010, the Community Law Centre at UWC and NGOs launched a campaign on the “Right to Education for Children with Disabilities”. Contact Samantha, swaterhouse@uwc.ac.za
- ◆ On 11 November 2010, judgement was delivered in the High Court “that every child in the Western Cape who is severely and profoundly intellectually disabled has affordable access to a basic education of an adequate quality...” Contact Felicity at the Western Cape Forum for Intellectual Disability, wcfid@kingsley.co.za
- ◆ In June 2009, the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs rolled out the National Disability Framework for Local Government. Did it roll as far as your municipality?
- ◆ Some municipalities reacted positively, reviewed their own disability policies and compiled strategic action plans for the implementation of improved service delivery to disabled people.

For more interesting information and contacts see The.Sponge website:

<http://thespongeproject.yolasite.com/>.

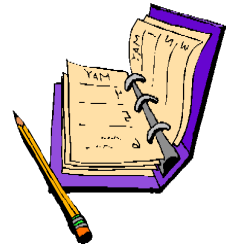
Don't forget to encourage service providers and NGO's to add their names to the data base!

Tony Webb

The.Sponge Project Team, Port Elizabeth



FOR YOUR DIARY....



Second Regional African AAC conference: Beginning a new chapter! This conference aims to bring together local and international experts in AAC – these including persons using AAC, family members, educators, clinicians and researchers. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to network, share and learn!

When: 1-4 August 2011
Where: Birchwood Hotel, Boksburg, Gauteng
Early bird registration: Ends 30 April 2011
Registration: Ends 30 June 2011

For more information please visit the website at <http://tinyurl.com/AAC-in-Africa-2011>

Action Labs: Interface KZN: A series of open mini-workshops on AAC that are designed to build skills and knowledge about the methods, strategies and implementation of AAC in a fun, and practical way. Action Labs are held for 2 hours each on Friday afternoons. Costs are R100 per Lab for Interface-KZN members, and R120 per Lab for non-members. Upcoming workshops are:

18 February: What is AAC?
4 March: Unaided AAC
18 March: Aided AAC and The Power of Communication: My Life Story by Paul Burdett

For more information and to book your place, please contact Linda on 076 819 6750 / 031 708 4237 or facekzn@saol.com

Skillshops (Centre for AAC): We will once again offer our 2-hour Wednesday afternoon skillshops at the Centre for AAC. Costs will be R 75, per workshop and tea/coffee will be served. The workshops are CPD accredited. We are planning a range of exciting new topics. The dates are:

16 March: Developing an extensive low technology AAC system Part 1
13 April: Developing an extensive low technology AAC system Part 2

The further provisional dates are 25 May, 24 August and 14 September 2010, with topics to be announced.

For more information or bookings please contact Liezl Maasdorp at 012 420 2001, or email her at liezl.maasdorp@up.ac.za.

Basic AAC training course for educators: This course introduces basic themes around AAC, including symbol systems, assessment, early intervention and positioning as well as communication technology.

When: 28 March – 1 April 2011
Where: Centre for AAC
Costs: R 600 per day or R 2750 for the whole week. If three or more people attend from one school/organization, the costs are R 550 per person per day.

For more information or bookings please contact Liezl Maasdorp at 012 420 2001, or email her at liezl.maasdorp@up.ac.za.

Fofa Programme Open Day (Centre for AAC): Participants of the Fofa Programme (leadership for young adults with severe communication disabilities) will address an open audience, sharing their life stories and their views about the importance of communication and AAC. Everyone is welcome.

When: 23 September 2011
Where: Centre for AAC

Watch future issues of the newsletter for more information.

Walk for a Voice (Centre for AAC): Join us for this event in celebration of our 21st birthday, and raise awareness of AAC.

When: 23 September 2011
Where: Sports Grounds: University of Pretoria

Watch future issues of the newsletter for more information.

COMMUNICATION BILL OF RIGHTS

All persons, regardless of the extent or severity of their disabilities, have a basic right to affect, through communication, the conditions of their own existence. Beyond this general right, a number of specific communication rights, should be ensured in all daily interactions and interventions involving persons who have severe disabilities. These basic communication rights are as follows:

1. The right to request desired objects, actions, events, and persons, and to express personal preferences, or feelings.
2. The right to be offered choices and alternatives.
3. The right to reject or refuse undesired objects, events or actions, including the right to decline or request all proffered choices.
4. The right to request, and be given, attention from and interaction with another person.
5. The right to request feedback or information about a state, an object, a person, or an event of interest.
6. The right to active treatment and intervention efforts to enable people with severe disabilities to communicate messages in whatever modes and as effectively and efficiently as their specific abilities allow.
7. The right to have communicative acts acknowledged and responded to, even when the intent of these acts cannot be fulfilled by the responder.
8. The right to have access at all times to any needed augmentative and alternative communication devices and other assistive devices, and to have those devices in good working order.
9. The right to environmental context, interactions, and opportunities that expect and encourage persons with disabilities to participate as full communicative partners with other people, including peers.
10. The right to be informed about people, things, and events in one's immediate environment.
11. The right to be communicated with in a manner that recognizes and acknowledges the inherent dignity of the person being addressed, including the right to be part of communication exchanges about individuals that are conducted in his or her presence.
12. The right to be communicated with in ways that are meaningful, understandable, and culturally and linguistically appropriate.

From the National Joint Committee for the Communication Needs of Persons with Severe Disabilities. (1992) Guidelines for meeting the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities. ASHA, 34 (Suppl. 7), 2-3; reprinted by permission.

