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Interface

&
 Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication
CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Interface National Newsletter



What really matters...

The older I get, the more I ask myself this question: What really matters? Maybe it is because life gets increasingly complicated – and busy. At the moment, the year-end rush is upon us, with too many demands and too little time. We have to prioritise.

Together with the year end comes the advertising season in the name of “Christmas.” The DVD recorder to improve your quality of life. The new car, because you deserve it. New clothes, to show who you really are.

What really matters? We need to ask ourselves that question, so that we can spend what has been entrusted to us wisely – our money, time, energy and efforts.

Earlier this year I attended a funeral of a neighbour. Let’s call him Paul. Paul had had a serious car accident many years ago. As a result, he had an intellectual disability, could not speak very well and walked with difficulty. Paul had never married. He had never had his own family. He had never owned a house, or even a car. He had not had a job. Yet, Paul had been the relational hub of the family and his circle of friends, as was clearly testified at his funeral. He kept up with everybody, via short sms’s or email. He never forgot a birthday or anniversary. I’m sure it mattered to Paul that he did not have many things and could not do many things in life. Yet, he did not let it define him. He invested where he could, in what mattered to him – relationships, and the opportunity to love and be loved.

Maybe the festive season (AFTER the year end rush!) is a good time to think about what really matters to you. Try to listen past what society and the media tell you. Another way to find out is to list 10 things you are thankful for. No doubt those will be things that matter to you.

Investing in what matters may not always come easy. It takes effort. And often a degree of stubbornness – resisting the voices that tell us that we will fail, or that we are wasting our time. Live for what matters – this will probably forever ruin your chance to have an easy life, but infinitely increase your chance to have a fulfilled one.

So enjoy this last 2009 edition of the Newsletter. May you look beyond the surface as you read – maybe beyond words and activities—and find some things in it that really matter. Have a good festive season - see you back in 2010!

*Kerstin Tönsing
 Editor*



Interface promotes communication for people with complex communication needs by supplementing existing communication with gestures, communication boards and assistive technology (thus, augmentative & alternative communication)

Interface Branch News

News from KZN

During the second half of this year, Interface KZN has been focusing on fund-raising towards specific projects. One of our projects which we plan to implement in January 2010 will focus on the Khulani Special School. This small school was developed by a mother of a child with special needs, together with support from Therapists at Mseleni Hospital in 1998. The school now has 13 learners, all of whom have severe physical disabilities and/or cognitive impairments.

The school programme is run entirely by voluntary effort provided by mothers and caregivers of the learners. Interface KZN proposes to partner with this small special school, and the Therapists at Mseleni Hospital to implement an AAC programme, over a week period, with continued follow-up thereafter, over a period of 6 months to a year.

Paul Burdett once again was able to acquire a venue (classroom) at The Brown's School fete in September 2008. Paul actively promotes Interface KZN and "Friends of Interface" at the fete, but unfortunately, there was not much traffic to his part of the school and this resulted in very few visitors.

For a fourth consecutive year, Interface KZN participated in Casual Day 2009. Through this event, we continue to raise awareness of Interface and AAC.

Our AAC Action labs during August and September included topics such as: Early and Emergent Literacy, Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Children with AAC needs; Use of Visual Schedules and Social Stories; Beginning Strategies AAC; and AAC with children with Visual Impairments. Although we had scheduled a third series of Action Labs for the last school term, we realised in retrospect that this is such a busy time of year for educators, therapists and parents, that we will now be presenting these topics in the new year.

Instead of an Action Lab on Friday the 4th of December, our last event of the 2009 will be the screening of "Including Sam". This movie will be shown at the Interface KZN Resource and Training Centre, and is the story of a father's experience of his son's inclusion in school.

As part of our ongoing efforts to raise funds to support Dan Ngcobo and Paul Burdett in their efforts to attend the ISAAC 2010 Conference in Barcelona, we will be holding a fund-raiser with the *My Fair Lady* show at the Playhouse Theatre, on Wednesday the 18th November.

During the months of November and December we will also be holding an email auction for numerous one of a kind items such as first book editions signed by authors and a photograph of the Liverpool Football team signed by the players, to name but a few.

Chris Engels who is himself an adult AAC user, is currently in the process of revamping our Interface KZN webpage, which will be up and running by Friday the 13th November.....*so watch this space!*

Felicity Jonck



News from Johannesburg

As 2009 draws to an end, Interface Johannesburg is being rejuvenated!

We end the year on Nov 21st on a high with a talk by Prof. Kitty Uys at the TMI. The talk will focus on the very important topic of "how to transition adolescents with disabilities from school to the workplace" so that they can become productive members of society.

In fact, we have received requests for this talk from all over the country. Prof Uys may have to go on a national tour!!

In order to make the Johannesburg branch a success, I urge

all AAC users or people who work with AAC users to watch out for and attend our talks. Furthermore, please send me topics on which you would like to receive training. I would love to hear from you.

Michelle Aronson
maronson@myconnection.co.za

School News

Pathways Kloof

The year at Pathways-Kloof is drawing to a close with no signs of slowing down! Our children have continued to progress and grow this year with development in all areas.

One of the highlights of the second half of the year has to be our Family Sports Day. Our children, their parents and siblings gathered for a morning of crazy racing where teamwork was the name of the game.

Great fun was had by all with the children thrilled to show off their friends and skills while the even dads and granddads forging an SA rugby match in favour of the wheelchair and bean bag races!



Up for a race? On your marks, get set, go!



Fun in the sun at the family sports day

Jenny Head

Pathways Brits

Pathways Brits is situated in Brits in the North West province and we serve the Madibeng , (Brits Hartbeespoort Lethlabile)area. There are 10 children in Pathways and 5 of them have limited or no expressive speech. We are very privileged to have Elmarie van der Merwe as part of our team. She guides us in the implementation of AAC and we follow step by step. It is a continuous learning and implementation process.

Our equi therapist started using AAC as part of the therapy program on horseback, adapting it to specific childrens needs. Picture schedules are implemented as part of our equi therapy . Small children understand the picture symbols and make choices. And others have a “voice” now.

Let us share Thumi’s story...

Thumelo was born with brain damage after his mother Virginia was in labour for 3 days. At age three he had a terrible burning accident , and lost vision in his right eye. When Thumi first arrived at Pathways, he had no speech, didn’t realise that he could use his hands and body and was totally dependent on his mother. He used to cry or laugh continuously through the night, disturbing everybody, as he only slept 3 hours per night.

After assessment by our Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist an IEP was put together to address his needs. On horseback we saw a miracle happen ... Thumi immediately enjoyed this new feeling of movement , and responded to his environment by starting to sign for “more”, when the horse stopped. It was his first attempt to sign! After an hour on horseback he slept through the night, and after every subsequent equi therapy session he slept through. His sleeping pattern has normalized. At this stage Thumi signs “more” to make the horse walk, and started tongue clicking as part of his unique language to make the horse walk faster. When he asks long enough Neno will go over into a trot to his pure delight.!!!”

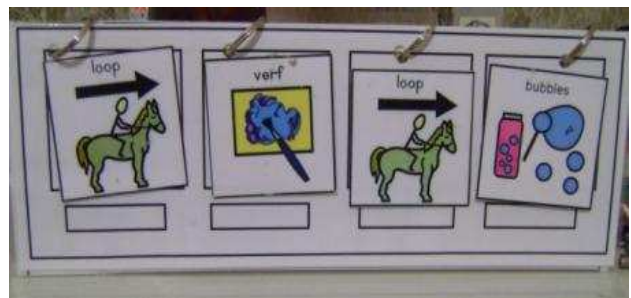
Joshua is being trained on the Go Talk +9 . We hope to be able to strap the Go Talk +9 to the saddle to make communication easier for this young boy who enjoys the horse riding so much.

If we look back at this year we are thankful for:

- the improvement in our children, and the opportunity for personnel to learn more and implement this knowledge,
- AAC devices for some of our children,
- our newly built ablution block,
- having a sleepover veldschool adventure for 2 days for the first time with every child attending!

- having our own website at last!
www.opkykpathways.co.za
- having new friends in our community,
- knowing that famous singers care so much that they decided to perform at our yearly OPPOP Concert: Eden, Liani May, Arno Jordaan, Bobby van Jaarsveld, Karlien van Jaarsveld and Vaughan Gardiner,
- being part of the Pathways family,
- above all experiencing our Heavenly Father’s love and provision.

We wish you all a peaceful and blessed recess time. We remember Mattias du Plessis, son of our OT Ninette, who is now able to run and speak and play in heaven since 5 October. We miss you, Tias! Enjoy heaven!



Boards like these are being used at the horse therapy



A visual schedule used by some of the children on horseback



Thumelo on Neno for his first ride

Drika Kruger,
Cell: 0823564370
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E-mail: opkykpathways@vodamail.co.za

Pathways Roodepoort

It has been a tough year for the economy, but amazingly people have been so generous in helping Pathways Roodepoort in spite of financial constraints. We also have an excellent group of parents who have outdone themselves in creating exciting events for Pathways Roodepoort as fund raisers.

Fay Bjornstad, our Principal, involved us as members of Casual Day and for the first time we were out there selling stickers with a mission instead of just supporting the initiative. We also walked the 702 Walk the Talk in July as a group with one of our facilitators, Palesa, bravely wearing the Abel outfit from Casual Day for the whole walk. A lot of laughter and cheers throughout the walk and we had a fantastic time.

Discovery Health noticed our efforts and donated R5000,00 to our school. Most recently, we have been taking our children to Farmyard Frenz where they get to pet the farm animals. Their faces tell a story of sheer joy when they hold the animals.

A friend of Pathways Roodepoort donated money towards the heating of the swimming pool at our facility and now we cannot get our children out of the pool.

They LOVE the water and it is so therapeutic for them as it helps with stretching of their tight ligaments and muscles. Don't worry though, we have our pool net and pool blanket and observe all the safety rules and precautions when not using the pool.

In August, we lost little Jenna Nel to pneumonia. Her little body just gave up eventually and it was a terribly sad loss

for us. Our love and condolences go to her devoted parents who did their best for her and we are grateful for the time we had her at our Centre.



*Hug a friend...
Enjoying the Farmyard Frenz.*

We are struggling to keep our number at only 20 children as the need for Centres like ours are so great.

Our Support Group for parents with disabled children is going from strength to strength and attended by parents whose children come to Pathways Roodepoort as well as parents whose children go elsewhere.

I run the group on the first Saturday of every month at Pathways Roodepoort from 10h00 until 12h00 where we usually have a theme, have a guest speaker – an expert in a field of interest to us – and we share information.

It's been very helpful to everyone and a chance for parents to relax, laugh a bit and feel inspired. On that note, may everyone have a fantastic and safe festive season.

Julie Botha, Founder, Pathways Roodepoort, 083 653 5655

AAC AWARENESS INITIATIVES: NEW HOPE SCHOOL

Constance Ntuli and Francois Retief, two past pupils of New Hope school, visited the senior learners of our school on Monday, 12 October. Constance and Francois both use AAC to meet (some) of their communication needs.

Constance makes use of the iPod Touch and the Proloquo programme, while Francois uses a laptop and the Grid 2.

They shared their experiences about

living with a disability and using communication devices with the learners of New Hope School as part of their commitment to AAC awareness month. Thank you Constance and Francois – you really blessed our learners with your visit!



Constance, and Francois (front row) together with school and CAAC staff.

A big thank you to Dr Michal Harty

and Priscilla Kershaw from the CAAC who assisted these young people.

Three of our younger AAC learners visited the Grade 4 learners of Garsfontein laerskool on Friday, 16 October. Information about AAC and the different AAC strategies were shared with the learners through a powerpoint slide show and some roleplay.

Christel, Nathan and Arthur then entertained the Garsies by telling them more about themselves and their lives through the use of their devices.

They really made us proud and the Garsies couldn't believe that one can say so much although you are unable to speak. Thank you Garsies for your hospitality and the wonderful morning we could spend at your school.

*Enid Moolman
New Hope School*

Unica School for Learners with Autism

Unica School in Pretoria caters for learners on the autistic spectrum between the ages of 4-18 yrs. At the time of admission, a significant proportion of our learners have severely limited or no functional speech skills. To provide these learners access to communication, the Picture Exchange Communication Strategies (PECS) as well as Makaton (RSA) signing are introduced to both learners and parents shortly after admission to Unica School.

Both the Makaton and PECS systems are widely recognized and internationally used in educational settings catering for learners with autism due to the visual support it provides during the learning process (learners with autism are known to be visual learners). Furthermore, in accordance with international reports, the implementation of PECS is found to be very effective in teaching active communication initiation skills to learners and also encourages and enhances speech development in a high percentage of our learners.

Implementation of PECS involves the introduction and teaching of exchange strategies to the learner according to a set of clearly outlined phases. As with any other AAC system, parent involvement regarding identification of functional and motivational vocabulary for the learner as well training of parents in the use of PECS at home, is a crucial component of the whole process.

To provide accredited PECS training to others such as co-staff members and

parents, one needs to be trained as a PECS tutor. Although a few Unica staff members have received accredited basic PECS training in 2004, the school has been fundraising to provide basic PECS training as well as accredited tutor training within the next year to all staff members and interested parents.

In the meantime, however, parent information sessions on the use of PECS and Makaton signing have formed an integral part of our implementation of AAC strategies for our learners with limited or no speech. During the past year, the speech therapists at Unica organised four parent information sessions. Although all parents were invited, emphasis was placed on reaching parents of newly admitted learners. During our first session in March '09, the main focus fell on providing parents



Parents learning PECS

with knowledge and insight regarding the rationale behind the use of AAC systems as well as background information on the PECS and Makaton systems. This session was presented in the form of a lecture and question/answer discussions.

During the last three sessions in August and September practical workshops during which parents were provided hands-on opportunities were organized and presented. One session involved the

practical demonstration and DVD presentation of a few high frequency Makaton signs as requested by parents. During the PECS hands-on workshops, parents were introduced to the various phases of PECS training by means of a PECS training video.

Through role play activities parents could practically experience exchange strategies from both the learner's as well as the parent's perspective. Toys such as bubbles, balloons, Smarties, cars, colourful spinners, shakers and coloured balls, which from our experience we know have a high motivational value for children, were used during the workshops. To our delight, we also discovered that these toys provided high entertainment value to the adults at our workshops!

These sessions were found to be very helpful in learning how to implement PECS exchange strategies at home and were also found to be a lot of fun. Very interesting and positive feedback was received from those who attended.

Parents commented on how easy and "straightforward" the PECS exchange seemed to be when viewing on the video, but how the physical, hands-on experience of exchanging a picture symbol to request an object highlighted the need for regular training and practice!

Our aim is to continue with these much needed training sessions for parents of our school. It is most rewarding to observe how the use of AAC strategies enhances the lives not only of our learners but also of their families.

*Ilze Pansegrouw
Speech Therapist
Unica School*

Tech Talk

GIGABYTE

The Gigabyte Touch Note T1028 (M1028) looks and functions like any other normal laptop, but it is small, portable and has some extra features that most laptops do not have.

The touch screen of the T1028 (M1028) is convertible to simulate a Tablet PC.



Basically the whole screen swivels around 180 degrees, and then folds over the keyboard. As such, it makes for an ideal hardware option for AAC software such as The Grid 2 or Speaking Dynamically Pro, as the user can access directly using his/her finger or a stylus, rather than having to navigate the cursor with a mouse or mouse alternative.

*Simon Sikhosana
CAAC*

JOYSTICK PLUS

A Joystick plus is an Input Device that has been specifically designed to improve computer access where the user may have difficulties with a conventional mouse.

In not so many words, it is a direct mouse replacement and its use should relate predominantly to the computer handbook section on using a mouse. Included with the unit is a USB to PS2 adaptor that can be used to plug directly into any computer that has either a USB or PS2 mouse port. The unit comes with three optional handles which can be fitted and removed by applying a firm push and/or pull.

1. The T-bar
2. The Joystick knob
3. The 70 mm latex free foam ball

How to operate the joystick plus

The Joystick plus has six switches (buttons) and a cursor control.

The Cursor Control

The cursor is moved around the screen by moving the joystick in the direction you wish the cursor to go.

1.Speed Control (bottom button)

This switch gives five cursor speeds. Each time the switch is pressed, the cursor slows down until after the slowest speed, it then reverts back to the fastest speed and the cycle is repeated.

2.Left Mouse switch (top left button)

This switch takes the place of the left mouse switch and it is used for single and double click operations.

3.Right Mouse switch (top right button)

This switch takes the place of the right mouse switch.



4.Double click switch (middle left button)

If difficulty is experienced when 'double clicking' with the left mouse switch, a single press of this switch will execute a double click operation.

5.Drag switch (middle right button)

When this switch is pressed once 'dragging operations' can be executed.

6.X-Y switch (top middle button)

Pressing this switch once gives up/down cursor movements only, pressing again gives left/right movements only. To cancel this function the switch should be pressed a third time.

This product is designed and produced by: TRAXSYS. Their website can be found at : www.traxsys.com. The product can also be purchased from Inclusive Solutions (www.inclusivesolutions.co.za).

Simon Sikhosana, CAAC

USER FORUM

The role of a Personal Assistant to a person with disability

According to the encyclopaedia, a personal assistant is someone who *assists in daily business and personal tasks*.

The role of personal assistant is to provide personal assistance to a person with disability to enable him/her to live independently. It is a job that requires an approach which is considerate of the other person and the effect of one's actions on that person. It is a job where a person with disability is not patronised or seen in a negative way.

Since one personal assistant position will be different from another, a job description needs to be constructed which indicates the functions required, such as assisting with preparation of food, eating, drinking, dressing, washing, bathing,

toileting, transfers, mobility in the house, mobility outside the house, specific medical procedures, setting up the communication device, charging the communication device daily, change bedding when necessary and answering phone calls and relaying messages.

Both the personal assistant and the personal assistance user are dependent on each other, as fundamentally one cannot survive without the other.

Due to the close working of personal assistance there has to be communication, understanding and respect from both sides for the relationship to succeed.

I personally believe that the right qualities are more important than qualifications as far as personal assistants are concerned. A personal assistant should be reliable, punctual, efficient and have a willingness to learn, common sense and an open minded attitude. Confidentiality and discretion are vital qualities in such a working relationship.

Simon Sikhosana
Personal assistant
CAAC



Lost without you... My experience of a broken device

In January 2008 my Pathfinder (dedicated device with Minspeak) developed problems. At first I thought that it was related to the battery pack age.

The battery pack was 3 years old. After 2 months of struggling with the device, I bought a new battery pack for R4700.00. It had to be imported from overseas.

The new battery arrived in May 2008. I immediately tested it to only discover that the same problem kept showing up.

In June 2008, I had it send to the agents in Kwa-Zulu Natal. They repaired it for R3000.00 and sent it back to me in July. It worked fine till September 2008.

In September 2008, I was hospitalized with pneumonia. I was in hospital for 6 weeks. Not very pleasant because my device had broken down in the first week there. I had to use my cell phone and alphabet board to communicate when not too feverish.

My device repairs had to wait till I was strong enough to give some thought to it. In December 2008, I again sent it to Kwa-Zulu Natal where they assessed the problem in January 2009. They couldn't repair it due to technical reasons.

The agents recommended that I send it to the PRC's head office in the UK. They quoted me R4000.00 courier costs. As I was still struggling from hospital bills, I told the agents to wait.

Luckily a friend heard about my dilemma and, via various contacts, managed to find a person who took it to the UK when traveling there from SA. Within a month's time the device was repaired at a cost of R2200.00. The device was delivered back to me via another person coming to SA for work. The total courier cost that was saved was thus R8000.00.

With the device back, I can now do my job again! I'm in the retail business and any businessman would tell you that communicating to existing clients and new clients can either make or break your deal!!

And, needless to say, after the hospital bills and repair costs I need to bring in the bucks! Check out my business out at www.kwikwap.co.za/zach.

*Zach Joubert
AAC user*

CAAC News

Speaking up and speaking out: A workshop on violence and crime experienced by people with disabilities



Dr Diane Bryen is already part of the CAAC family here in South Africa as this was her 3rd visit to the Center. She presented a 2-day workshop on "Speaking up and speaking out: Reducing the risk of becoming a victim of crime and a victim in times of emergency", which was well-received by a diverse audience as this is a pertinent topic in South Africa, especially now that we become more aware of victimisation of people with disabilities.

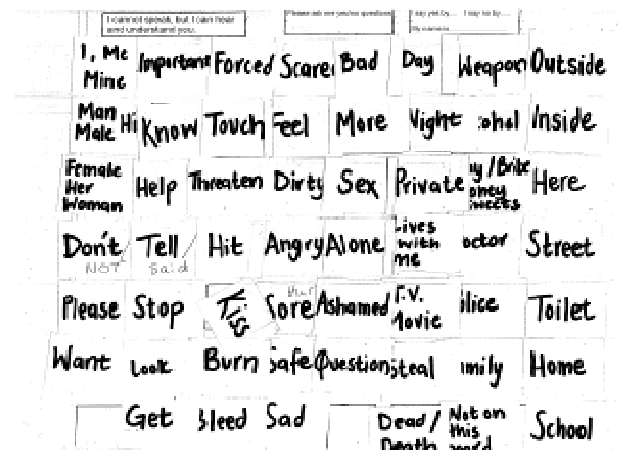
Victims with disabilities are frequently invisible because they cannot report their offenders due to their inability to speak out about the topic— or the fact that people do not take them seriously when they do speak out.

Like a victim personally known to Diane stated: "They ain't gonna believe you anyway... Who do you tell? Nobody!"

The lecture focused on how we could end the silence by preparing those 'respondents' who will be told about these incidents and who need to listen to people with disabilities. These include all service providers as well as professionals

in the justice and law enforcement system. It is up to people working in the field of disability to provide training opportunities and create awareness.

As people with little or no functional speech often do not have the vocabulary or tools to communicate about abuse or crime, Diane Bryen concluded the workshop by helping us to create our own context-relevant communication boards that we can distribute freely after completion.



This is still an ongoing process as the CAAC is collaborating now with Temple University in compiling and completing these communication boards. The boards will be available in English, Afrikaans, Sepedi and IsiZulu.

After these boards become available, we need to focus our training on the people who will have to use it. Herewith the English version after the workshop with some of the relevant words identified.

Prof Kitty Uys, CAAC



It's a new week at CAAC, an important one too. It's FOFA time. The program FOFA is a programme created by Prof. Erna Alant and Prof. Kitty Uys. I feel this programme

gives the people with disabilities a chance to get out of the closet where they were hiding. On Sunday evening all the participants met again. We had a lot to share because we all come from different provinces with different exposures.

The fun started the very next day on Monday. The lecturers from the CAAC gave us a welcome rap dance, and were very funny, they even dressed the same. The "older" guys had to prepare speeches which they had to present to the newer participants in the FOFA programme. Professor Bornman taught us how to write a speech with a joke or two in it to keep the audience's attention.

Tuesday we presented our speeches. Must say there were excellent jokes. Then we were given cameras to go take some pictures. Before that we were shown some great slides of how to take beautiful pics. We had to write a story about the pictures that we have taken to say what life feels like for a person with a disability. We were told we had to prepare these speeches well as the TV people from DTV would be there.

Wednesday came and went - we worked on our dreams for the future, took some more photos and prepared our speeches. We also had a disabled motivational speaker

that came to talk to us about how to move on in life.

Thursday another motivational speaker from Umzumvo Development Agency came to speak to us about our future plans and dreams. This helped us to finalise our dreams and pen it down on paper.

On Friday all the participants presented their speeches to a big audience and the camera crew from DTV was filming the whole event. This event will be broadcasted on DTV on 24 January 2010, 12h00. The day ended in a great lunch before everybody went on to their homes again.

What I have learnt again this week is: If you can't speak it doesn't mean you have nothing to say. My personal motto is: NEVER, NEVER, NEVER EVER GIVE UP!

A special THANK YOU TO OUR PEOPLE THAT MADE THIS WEEK HAPPEN.

Felix Visagie, AAC user



GOLDEN KEY INTERNATIONAL HONOUR SOCIETY

The Golden Key International Honour Society rewards excellence! It is an internationally recognized non-profit organization that was founded in the USA in 1977. Currently it is affiliated with 350 Universities throughout the world, including the University of Pretoria. Golden Key strives to enable members to realize their potential by connecting individual academic achievement and lifelong opportunity.

The Golden Key is awarded annually to

the top 15% of academic achievers at the University, which implies a lot of hard work and commitment on the part of the individual students. Membership is by invitation only and is based solely on academic merit.



Priscilla Kershaw

This year the Centre for AAC is proud that the Golden key was awarded to two of our students, namely **Gené Zwarts** (Masters in AAC) and to **Priscilla Kershaw** (BA Honors in AAC first year)!

Well done, Ladies! This means that they now join the ranks of other distinguished Golden Key members such as

- Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu (Nobel Peace Prize Laureate)
- Mr. Trevor Manuel (Former Minister of Finance)
- Justice Edwin Cameron (Supreme Court Justice)
- Dr Leon Wessels (Commissioner: Human Rights Commission)
- Mr. Tito Mboweni (Governor: SA Reserve Bank)



Gené Zwarts

We are very proud of these two students and hope that this is the beginning of many more students joining these ranks!

Prof Juan Bornman

CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR WORKSHOP

One often hears desperate teachers asking questions such as: *Why is this child so naughty? Is he trying to control me? What should I do when he behaves like that? Can a child like this change?*

Challenging classroom behaviour is not something new, it is not something that will disappear if one ignores it, and neither is it limited to

South African classrooms!

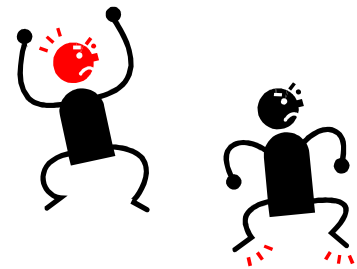
I was invited by the Windhoek SAALED Branch to give a one-day workshop on Saturday, 7 November, regarding what challenging behaviour is, how it can be assessed and how it could be managed.

One and all really enjoyed the presentation (and the Brötchen!) and the videos facilitated a lot of discussion and creative problem solving!

Challenging (problem) behaviour was described from a functional communicative perspective, and at the end of the day everybody agreed that all behaviour has a particular function.

Participants all felt enthusiastic and asked whether the workshop could be repeated next year, as they wanted to share their new perspectives on this topic with friends and colleagues. So watch this space!

Prof Juan Bornman



Research visit to Kimberly

In September I visited Kimberly, for the first time in my life. My hubby was kind enough to accompany to collect data for a research project on main stream teachers' attitudes and feelings of competence in dealing with children in need of AAC.

The first school I visited is about an hours drive from Kimberly, just outside Jan Kempdorp. We drove past Flamingo pan and along the longest line of Poplar trees in the world; we measured 19,6km to be exact!

School is not for sissies!! At most of the schools they have a feeding scheme, and children attend school, mostly because of the food they receive.

One teacher mentioned that she had 58 children in her class...Many teachers are very aware of the fact that poverty and alcohol abuse are some of the main reasons for poor school attendance.

I met some dedicated teachers, teachers with a heart for children and teaching. They have a wonderful way of using the Afrikaans language to tell you exactly what things are like. They express themselves using rich descriptive language, simple in nature, but dripping with wisdom.....I learned.....



I copied this poem and hope you will enjoy it as much as I did....

*Priscilla Kershaw
CAAC*

Sommer net van een juffrou aan 'n ander...

Kimberley Psalm

Liewe God en Meester van die "highways"
en die besige "offramps" na die
grênd "office" geboue
"grant" my net 'n bietjie genade
om vandag kalm en stil te word...

EN in daai se stilte, *slat* my met jou se goedheid,
lat ek giggel van lekkerkry...
lat ek net vir 'n "single moment"
'n sorgvrye edel mensekind kan wees...

WEG vannie "highjacks", "gangs", "rape cases",
ennie "saddness"
dat ek ôk
die blink innie straatkind se ooge sien.

Leer my Jiire, Meester,
om jou ôk hier in Kimberley te dien!
om hierdie barre land se arm kinders,
deur Jesus se oë te sien

-ek bid Jirre-
maar askies, my se ooge bly oop!

*(Ek fluister saggies by myself —
hier steel hulle alles, hulle sal jou
ooge uit jou se kop steel en dan trug kom vir die gate...
ek hoop jy verstaan Jirre)*

Anoniem

The CAAC proudly presents.....our graduates!

Three doctoral candidates and one Master's candidate graduated in the spring graduation in September. They are (from left to right):

Michal Harty, who obtained her PhD. Michal's research involved the development of a parenting self-efficacy measure which can be used to determine how confident parents feel about their ability to parent. Parenting self-efficacy has a direct impact on parenting performance, thus intervention programmes aimed at helping parents to cope better with the parenting task would need to address parenting self-efficacy. This measure thus presents a tool with which to measure change in parents' level of self-efficacy pre- and post training. Michal is a lecturer at the Centre for AAC.

Karin Joubert also obtained her PhD. In her research she looked at the relationship between the deteriorating speech of persons with motor neuron disease and their marital relationship. Karin is a lecturer at the Speech Pathology and Audiology Department, Wits University.

Poppy Androliakos obtained her Master's degree in AAC. Her extended research proposal looked at the impact of aided language modelling on comprehension and production in preschoolers with autism spectrum disorder. Poppy is a teacher with a lot of experience in teaching children with autism spectrum disorders.

(insert) **Sadna Balton** obtained her PhD for her research into the activity settings which young children from an urban lower socio-economic setting engage in. This information is vital to devise intervention strategies that are culturally appropriate and practical for parents. Sadna is the Head therapist at the Speech Therapy and Audiology Department, Chris Hani Baragwaneth Hospital in Soweto.



Dr Michal Harty, Prof Juan Bornman, Dr Karin Joubert, Mrs Poppy Androliakos and Dr Sadna Balton (insert)

Kerstin Tönsing, CAAC

Building ECI capacity in the Western Cape

During September Kitty Uys and Alecia Samuels presented a 1-day workshop on Assessment and Intervention in ECI on behalf of the Western Cape Private Practitioners Group (WCPPG) in Cape Town organized by one of our current MECI students Chantell Griesel.



The response to this workshop was HUGE with a turnout of 77 private practitioners mainly from the fields of Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy and Physiotherapy.



Workshop participants were allocated to multiprofessional working groups and were given practical skills in conducting a transdisciplinary play based assessments as well as planning intervention within the typical daily activities of the child and family.

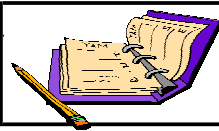
This was a wonderful opportunity to spread the collaborative philosophy and training techniques of Early Childhood Intervention especially amongst the private sector.

The practical and functional nature of this workshop was highlighted often in the feedback received.

Congratulations to Chantell and her team from WCPPG for a well run event. If you are interested in a similar training please contact either Kitty (kitty.uys@up.ac.za) or Alecia (alecia.samuels@up.ac.za).

Alecia Samuels, CAAC

For your diary.....



- ◆ **Basic AAC training workshop** will be held on 19 to 23 April 2010 at the CAAC, Communication Pathology Building, Room 2-44 Lynnwood Road. To register please contact Liza at 012 420 2001 or email— liza@up.ac.za. Limited space is available and no bookings will be accepted without prior payment.
- ◆ **Advanced AAC training workshop** will be held on 15 to 19 March 2010.
- ◆ **The Bridge School** will once again be visiting South Africa in 2010. They will be hosting various workshops, including one at Ethembeni School in KZN on the 23rd - 25th March 2010.

The workshop will focus on communication skills and developing children's ability to communicate using AAC. It will be presented by well renowned presenters such as Dr Vicki Casella, Stephanie Taymuree, Caroline Musselwhite and AT Specialist Peggy Barker.

Topics to be covered will include literacy development, accessing AAC, developing social scripts for AAC users and much more! The workshop is aimed at Parents, Therapists and Teachers so there will be something for everyone. For further info please email Kirsty at pathwayskl@gmail.com. For more information about the Bridge School you can look at their website: <http://hyperrust.org/Bridge/>.

- ◆ **Screening of an insert on the FOFA project:** On Sunday 24 January 2010, 12h00 noon there will be an insert on the FOFA project on SABC 3. Deaf TV (DTV) filmed some group sessions during this year's FOFA programme, and also had interviews with Felix Visage and Daniel Ngcobo, as well as Prof Kitty Uys and Dr Diane Bryan. Don't miss it!!

Course applications are open for the following courses offered by the Centre for AAC:

- ◆ **Masters in AAC** (Course coordinator: Dr Michal Harty) michal.harty@up.ac.za
- ◆ **Masters in Early Childhood Intervention** (Course coordinators: Dr Kitty Uys and Miss Alecia Samuels) kitty.uys@up.ac.za or alecia.samuels@up.ac.za
- ◆ **Honours in AAC** (Course coordinator: Ms Gloria Ledwaba) gloria.ledwaba@up.ac.za
- ◆ **PhD in AAC, Early Childhood Intervention and Severe Disabilities** (Course coordinator: Prof Juan Bornman) juan.bornman@up.ac.za
- ◆ For further information you are welcome to contact the Centre for AAC at 012 420 2001.

Registration closes end January. Visit our website: www.caac.up.ac.za for online registration.



CAAC Mini Workshops and Consultations

Do you want to find out more about AAC? Need some practical skills in a certain area? Maybe a mini-workshop is what you need!

Following the example of Interface KwaZulu Natal, the Centre for AAC is looking into starting a series of mini-workshops in various topics of interest in the field of AAC.

We are hoping to include things like making switches, adapting toys, and giving introductory sessions on various devices and software such as the Grid 2.

Parents, AAC users, educators or therapists can attend at a minimal fee. Mini-workshops will probably take place on a Friday. For more information, please phone Liza Rossetti-Siefe at Tel 012 420 2001.

The Centre for AAC also offers **consultations** to persons with complex communication needs and their intervention teams (family and service providers).

In order to schedule a consultation, please contact Kerstin Tönsing (012 420 4729) or Liza Rossetti-Siefe (012 420 2001).

Interface Sponsorship and Membership

Yes, I would like to join Interface for a year

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Glenvista
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Hereby I include my INTERFACE membership fee or proof of deposit of

- _____ (please indicate amount) for the year 2010
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I would like to give a donation for:

- Interface (Awareness raising and AAC devices)
- Centre for AAC (Training in AAC)

REMEMBER
 Your gift is tax deductible
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 1962

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- Sponsor - a gift of R100
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Interface Western Cape	Cheques/deposit slips can be sent, together with this form, to:
Account Name: Interface Total Communication Bank: Standard Bank, Rondebosch Branch Code: 02-05-09-11 Account No: 071439269	Private Bag X18/ #39 Rondebosch 7701 Or fax deposit slip to: 021-8550582

Your contribution will assist Interface and the CAAC in helping parents, children and other AAC users to face the great many challenges encountered on a daily basis
Let's work together to make a difference.