Education, Learning and Development Services

Choice, Control & Confidence: Adults with intellectual disabilities experience literacy success in a post-school learning environment.
Endeavour Foundation’s post-school education programs provide adults with Down syndrome and other intellectual disabilities the opportunity to continue their learning in a specialised teaching environment. Using pedagogical methods that promote choice and control, students are able to experience genuine literacy success, building their confidence and encouraging them to take risks in their writing and learning. A demonstration of particular activities and teaching strategies will highlight success experienced in these programs. The presentation also aims to challenge the limited post-school literacy opportunities for adults with intellectual disabilities, encouraging education institutions, employers and the wider community to consider expanding their products, services and activities to include people with disabilities.
OVERVIEW

- Education, Learning and Development Services (ELDS)
- Our education philosophy
- Curriculum:
  - Projects
  - Skill builders
  - Teaching techniques
- Results
- Future directions
- Questions
The disability sector

• A brief history
• Where we are today
• Moving toward NDIS
• Education, learning & NDIS
### Intellectual disabilities

**Down syndrome**  
**Generalised intellectual impairments (IQ <70)**  
**Global developmental delays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of strength</th>
<th>Areas of difficulty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Expressive language difficulties</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative</td>
<td>Comprehension difficulties</td>
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<td>Socialisation</td>
<td>Difficulties with self-awareness</td>
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<td>Learning daily living skills</td>
<td>Audio-visual working memory deficits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to keep learning</td>
<td>Difficulties with syntax and vocabulary</td>
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<td>Sense of humour</td>
<td>Structural differences</td>
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<td>Receptive language</td>
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Education, Learning and Development Services

ELDS

ELP (EDUCATION & LIFESTYLE PROGRAM)

COMMUNITY LEARNING HUB

CLUE (CONTINUED LEARNING)
Our values

• Employing Universal Design for Learning principles
• Building confidence and self-awareness through choice
• Having high expectations
• Teaching applicable life skills
• Valuing the individual
• Providing age-appropriate instruction
Curriculum - starting out

• Goal setting

• ACSF mapping
Project work – “Life” project

I try to get to ELP on time. I leave for ELP at ________

ELP starts at ________

I get to ELP by...

[Icons for different modes of transport]

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Project work – NDIS readiness
Skill builders

Reading
Comprehension
“I can’t see”
Thematic sight words
Reading aloud

Oral communication
“How are you?”
Visual analysis
“I can’t remember”

Writing
Self-editing
Journaling
Mud maps
“Same work”

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Teaching techniques

- Relating everything to their study lives
- Role plays
- Students choose to participate
- Short sentences
- Support & encourage
- Immediate feedback
- Use of visual reinforcements
- Count to 10
- Accessing existing
- Consistency and encouragement
- Making content enjoyable – laughter = attention
- Nice environment!
- Being honest
- Visual cue cards
The students and their success

• Pride in their work
  • e.g. Having a desire to share their work with important people in their lives.

• Independent application of skills
  • e.g. e-mailing family members independently

• Transferring learning across environments
  • e.g. bringing things to class that relate to subject matter

• Talking in public
  • e.g. introducing themselves to others in the community.

• Taking risks
  • e.g. “I feel like I can get a job now.”

• Mentoring program
“I have found that giving students encouragement and being patient with them usually empowers them. Empowerment gives confidence and encourages the students to address challenges and not accept defeat – ‘I can’t do it’ belief. I see this happening in the 9am activities where the students ask me for the activities to be set at a higher level.”
Parents

.....increased vocabulary in speech, enunciation, will look at you when speaking to you, not down at the floor as he tended to do during high school; he now has the confidence to shop, ask for service and liaise with the people serving him! He would never have done this before. He has read the paper beforehand without someone being with him.....but now happily looks at people he hasn't met before as in stores, happy to go and buy himself a hotdog at the football.....

"He never would tape running ahead.....how on earth do you get her to talk??"

...her literacy continues to improve so much so that on a day to day basis she very rarely has difficulty with everyday reading. "...she sends me reading and writing tasks to family members, and accesses a valued friend and student with a purpose, is going to college ‘just like everyone else.’"

I have seen an amazing improvement in confidence and language and understanding has improved in leaps and bounds."
Future directions

• 2016 course offerings
  • Accredited courses
  • ASDAN curriculum
  • Co-design programs
• Work readiness
• Research
• Advocacy
SUMMARY

- Education, Learning and Development Services (ELDs)
- Our education philosophy
- Curriculum:
  - Projects
  - Every day activities
  - Teaching techniques
- Results
- Future directions
QUESTIONS

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(As my slides are very light, please feel free to e-mail me with questions or to get a copy of the presentation.)


Buckley, S. Families and schools influence academic achievements. *Down Syndrome Research and Practice, 12*(2), 92.


Chapman, R.S. Language learning in Down syndrome: The speech and language profile compared to adolescents with cognitive impairment of unknown origin. *Down Syndrome Research and Practice, 10*(2), 61-66.


