



THE INTENSIVE INTERACTION NEWSLETTER



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BRIEF POINTS

Phoebe Caldwell receives Honorary Doctorate.

Many congratulations to Phoebe Caldwell who is due to receive the award of DSc (HC) – an honorary Doctor of Science – from the University of Bristol for her work around autism and communication.

I.I. and Acquired Brain Injury

Helen Heer, a SLT working with adults with acquired brain injury, would like anyone else who has any relevant experience, or knows of any useful literature or information resources on Intensive Interaction and ABI to get in touch and share anything useful they have.

Helen can be contacted via helenwray@sky.com

Translation of I.I. literature into French

Christine Howland, who is working in France using Intensive Interaction with adults, would like to know if anyone has experience of translating any of the current Intensive Interaction literature into French in a way that stays original to the meanings embodied in the approach.

If you think you can help her, then please contact Christine on reelqueen@yahoo.fr

Inaugural Scottish I.I. Conference 2011 'Conversations Without Words' Friday 7th October 2011

The Scottish Intensive Interaction Network* is delighted to announce the inaugural Intensive Interaction Scottish Conference. This conference, whose general theme will be 'Conversations Without Words' will be on:

Friday 7th October 2011

at: **The Royal Hotel,**
55 Henderson Street,

Bridge of Allan (just north of Stirling)

As well as SLTs **Nicola Wightman** and **Helen Beltran** (NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde) the speakers will include:

Dr Dave Hewett (author, trainer and Intensive Interaction originator),

Dr Suzanne Zeedyk (Senior Lecturer and Research Psychologist, Dundee University)

Cath Irvine (specialist SLT & UNICEF Consultant for Intensive Interaction) and,

Graham Firth (Intensive Interaction Project Leader, Leeds PFT NHS Trust).

The delegate cost of the conference will be:

Early bird rate (book by 29 July): £125

Family rate (one place per family): £95

Normal rate: £145

If you attend this conference it is envisaged that you will leave with: greater insight into the role Intensive Interaction can play in



Claire Brown from Ridgeway NHS Trust receives an 'Intensive Interaction Practitioner of the Year' certificate at the 2011 UK conference

improving a person's communication, relationships and emotional well-being; ideas of how to promote Intensive Interaction so that it becomes established within an individual's daily life; knowledge of the growing evidence base supporting the approach; and opportunities to develop stronger links with other Intensive Interaction practitioners in the region.

If you need further information on the conference then please call 01505 616022.

For more information and downloadable application forms go to:

www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk/conferences/

(*The Scottish Intensive Interaction Network is an excellent example of health, social services, education, voluntary organisations, service users and their families all working together in the best interests of the people we support.)

'Quote of the Month'

'There is great potential... to provide a better quality of life for the person with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities, if staff are helped to build on the foundation of a good relationship with the person they support by using person-centred approaches, such as intensive interaction and person-centred active support'

by **Professor Jim Mansell** (2010) in

Raising our sights: services for adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities DoH: HMSO



UK Recognition and Endorsement of Intensive Interaction (just some!)

The National Curriculum, England: Intensive Interaction is referred to and referenced as standard practice within the **National Curriculum Guidelines for Learning Difficulties**. Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2009) *Planning, teaching and assessing the curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties* – pages 5, 20 & 45.



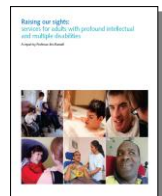
Intensive Interaction appears in the Welsh Assembly Curriculum and Assessment Guidance, **'Routes for Learning'**, a booklet for assessing the early communication and cognitive skills of learners with profound learning difficulties and additional disabilities.

Northern Ireland Curriculum: Intensive Interaction is recommended and described in detail in the Northern Ireland Curriculum **'Quest for Learning'** (2009). Dave Hewett was a keynote speaker at the 'Quest for Learning' launch conference in Belfast (2010).



HM Government White Paper: Intensive Interaction is referred to as good standard practice and described in some detail in the government white paper for adult services, **'Valuing People Now: A new three-year strategy for people with learning disabilities'** (2009; HMSO)

... and in the Central Office of Information Review Report by Professor Jim Mansell **'Raising Our Sights: services for adults with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities'**. (2010; HMSO)



Intensive Interaction comprises recommended practice in a Factsheet on the **British Institute of Learning Difficulties** website. The Intensive Interaction organisation is also presently providing training services for and on behalf of the British Institute of Learning Difficulties (BILD). www.bild.org.uk

Intensive Interaction comprises recommended practice in 'Communication Resources' on the **MENCAP** website including a downloadable guide. www.mencap.org.uk



Intensive Interaction is recommended as good practice for teaching communication by the **National Autistic Society (NAS)**. www.autism.org.uk

Also Intensive Interaction has now become widely and frequently referenced across the special education and special needs literature. There are now literally hundreds of results given in a **'Google Scholar'** search listing citations of the Intensive Interaction books, papers and research articles.

Intensive Interaction is now regularly taught across many UK university courses (at graduate and post-graduate levels) in: health care studies (learning disability Nursing degree courses), Speech & Language Therapy degree courses, doctorate courses in clinical psychology, and in a wide number of teaching, education and particular 'special needs' or 'special education' courses. Intensive Interaction is now even recommended reading on some courses not directly related to special needs (Manchester University Faculty of Humanities, Course module – Communication and Presentation Skills).



The UK Intensive Interaction Conference 2011

Workshop Summaries

Adventures in Positive Risk-Taking: Intensive Interaction and Creativity

The conference Keynote address by **Melanie Nind**, Professor of Education,
School of Education, University of Southampton.

'Positive risk taking is not about being reckless. It is about creating a supportive environment in which it is safe to take risks, to explore, to find out who we are and what we can do'

Professor Nind's keynote address explored the practical applications of theoretical concepts around risk and positive risk taking for those involved in Intensive Interaction work. Implicit in her presentation was a message of encouragement to carers, support staff and professionals to think positively and creatively about the possibilities inherent in Intensive Interaction work.

Although Melanie confessed to having withdrawn somewhat from the front line of hands on Intensive Interaction work some years ago, she continues to be involved in terms of advising students on methods of effective Intensive Interaction research. However she did state that she continues to be reminded of her Intensive Interaction work when confronted with some difficulties for learners, and feels on familiar territory when looking to support learners by starting *'where they are, not where we wish they were'*.

Melanie then talked about concepts, concepts being *'helpful, practical tools'* which either consciously or unconsciously *'facilitate our identification and handling of problems'*. The concept she then addressed was that of **Positive Risk-Taking**. She went on to talk about Gary Butler, a young man with learning disabilities who, when thinking about situations that presented some potential risk, wanted people to ask questions like: *'what if none of the problems happen?' and 'what if things go right – what then?'* So, as well as concerning ourselves with potential harm and safeguarding vulnerable people, we should look at the potential for opening up new opportunities, and we should *'look at what may be over the horizon'*.

Melanie took this opportunity to draw our attention to the work of Alaszewski & Alaszewski (2002) who discussed the role risk has played in shaping policies and services for people with learning disabilities: the dominant discourse of risk being that of 'danger' or an individual being 'at risk' or in need of protection, rather than a the discourse being equally focused on entitlement and enabling. This discourse has led to services adopting *'risk averse policies and practices'*. Melanie argued that this risk averse approach is *'often more about protecting staff – from accusations, misinterpretations, fear of being sued, than it is about protecting people with learning disabilities'*. Such a risk averse approach also stems from a fear of things going wrong and having low expectations of success.

However, in the 2005 Mental Capacity Act the implication is one of *'presuming competence rather than incompetence'*, but with the concept that it is okay for people to sometimes get things wrong, and getting a balance between protecting people with a learning disability and allowing for some risk-taking is *'a part of everyone's life'* (VPN, 2007). However, Melanie did think that it was still not clear how such policy statements might effectively be turned into action.

Applying risk-embracing approaches was very much what Melanie thought Intensive Interaction was all about. It involves *'letting go somewhat and sharing in exploring the unknown'*. We should conceptualise people with learning disabilities as being *'at-promise'* rather than just *'at-risk'*, and then jointly and creatively venture into the unknown by *'working in the moment'* and creatively responding to them.

Summing up Melanie, taking a role she defined as *'a critical friend'*, asked the audience to engage in some 'what if thinking' about Intensive Interaction as an approach, and whether we should be prepared to take positive risks in taking it *'to new groups, to define and talk about it in new ways, and to practice in different ways'*, and ask *'what if we can do even more with the approach?'*

Further reading on Positive Risk-Taking:

Alaszewski, A. and Alaszewski, H. (2002) 'Towards the creative management of risk: perceptions, practices and policies', *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 30: 56-62.

Butler, G. (2010) 'I'm in control', in Seale, J. & Nind, M. (eds) *Understanding and Promoting Access for People with Learning Difficulties*, Routledge, Oxon.
Dept of Health (2007) *Valuing People Now: from progress to transformation*. HMSO, London.

Searle, J. & Nind, M. eds. (2009) *Understanding and promoting access for people with learning difficulties*, Routledge, Oxon.



The UK Intensive Interaction Conference 2011

Workshop Summaries

Workshop 2: Using Intensive Interaction with a person with an Acquired Brain Injury

Faye Arnold (Specialist SLT) and **Jeanette Williams** (SLT Assistant), Dame Hannah Rogers Trust, South Devon.

This presentation featured a case study of a young man who has an acquired brain injury. Will was involved in a car accident seven years ago when he was only ten years old. Will's brain injury resulted in severe physical and cognitive disabilities, Will is unable to speak, has difficulties with comprehension and many of the fundamentals of communication such as attention, eye contact, turn taking and interacting with others.

The case study featured information and videos of Will over a period of around one year. Videos showed him before Intensive Interaction was initiated, and during early sessions - workshop participants were able to identify many of the difficulties described above. As sessions progressed participants were able to see changes in Will's behaviours, particularly facial expressions, attention skills, turn taking and vocalisations. More importantly Will made it clear how much he enjoyed and valued his Intensive Interaction sessions. We discussed some of the challenges and solutions of using Intensive Interaction in the school / residential environment and talked about the model of training we are using at Dame Hannah Rogers Trust.

There is very little documented evidence in this area, although it does seem that people are using Intensive Interaction to support people with acquired brain injuries. If you have any experiences of working in this area, please contact the Intensive Interaction Institute to share information and help us to build our knowledge!

Workshop 4:

Sustaining the use of Intensive Interaction

Lucy Harrison (Creative Communication worker), **Madeline Cooper-Ueki** (Development Manager) & **Mara Mendes** (Support Worker)

For Intensive Interaction to be sustained within an organisation there needs to be input on 3 levels:

- Support worker
- House manager, Intensive Interaction co-ordinator/ speech and language therapist
- Senior manager/ organisational level.

We divided ourselves into these 3 groups according to our job. We acknowledged that at each level certain habits need to be integrated, to sustain the use of Intensive Interaction. We discussed how habits are formed – repetition, reward, attitudes and values, context, having someone to support you, making a public commitment, having the end in mind and making a plan.

Then we talked about the various habits that are useful for each level to integrate to sustain practice in Intensive Interaction, the following are designed for support workers,

Empathy – knowing how it feels to not be able to communicate using words, transitions – getting in the right frame of mind for doing interaction work.

Awareness of own and shared cultural library - what is normal?

Observation Skills - this is getting the distinction between what you see and what you think 'what you see' means.

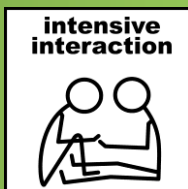
Engaging the people around you – find a way to engage with the other people around you to keep the subject of Intensive Interaction on the agenda.

Recording – create easy to use record keeping forms and video your sessions.

Lifelong Learning – make a habit out of checking the relevant websites, reading journals, books on Intensive Interaction. Write up your own experiences for the newsletter, or for journals.



The conference delegates listen attentively to the afternoon presentation at The Oxford Centre, in Oxford



More Intensive Interaction News

The Australian Psychological Society:

Evidence-based guidelines to reduce the need for restrictive practices in the disability sector

Guideline: Clinicians working with people who have disabilities should have appropriate training in the psychological intervention techniques applicable to this population.

Page 25: 'There is a variety of non-aversive approaches and programs for which there is evidence of effectiveness in bringing about behaviour change. These include: multi-element systemic interventions (e.g. active support); low arousal techniques (e.g. moderating interaction styles... minimising demands and situations of potential conflict); early development techniques (e.g. **Intensive Interaction**); mindfulness techniques; functional communication and behavioural-based training; and modified cognitive behavioural therapy'.

Page 35: *Intensive interaction*: 'I.I. was first described by Nind and Hewitt (1988), and has since been subject to a series of systematic evaluations (e.g. Watson & Fisher, 1997; Watson & Knight, 1991). It is now a recognised evidence-based technique and has been incorporated into the English school curriculum for students with learning disabilities.

Studies have found beneficial outcomes from intensive interaction. These include children's increased ability to initiate and maintain social contact and improved pre-verbal communication skills (Kellett, 2000; Nind, 1996; Watson & Fisher, 1997). Improved behaviour and communication have been observed for adults with severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities (Elgie & Maguire, 2001; Lovell, Jones, & Ephraim, 1998). In addition, intensive interaction has helped to build positive relationships between clients and their employed carers (Elsworth, 1999; Samuel, 2003; Watson & Knight, 1991). This last point is important given the critical influence of staff regard for their clients in both their interaction style and the effectiveness of the support they provide to clients exhibiting behaviours of concern'.



New Master's Degree Level Unit of Study about Intensive Interaction (in Oz)

Beginning in January 2012, Melbourne's **Deakin University** is starting a new Master's Degree Level 'Unit of Study' about I.I. From January there will be a Master's Degree level 'unit of study' on Intensive Interaction. Taught through lectures and other learning activities, the unit has three 'on campus' phases of 3 days each, culminating in a final assignment.

The unit will explore theoretical and practical aspects of Intensive Interaction, such as observation, responding interactively, recognising progress, self evaluation and video analysis. The unit also examines the critical perspectives in psychology and learning that underpin the approach, and will look at how to embed Intensive Interaction in a school, or service setting

For further information contact Dr Mark Barber at drmarkbarber@hotmail.com

PMLD LINK **Speaking Up - Being Heard**

The Spring 2011 issue of PMLDLink is called '**Speaking up, Being heard**' and this issue has some very informative, interesting and at times quite moving articles, a number of which focus on the use of Intensive Interaction.

This issue is 'overflowing with insights and ideas to move us to make a difference in what we do. What is striking about many of the articles is the bond between practitioners, carers and people with profound differences. It is this mutual support that has provided opportunities for all contributors to speak with such strong voices'.

To find out how to subscribe please visit the website! www.pmlmlink.org.uk .





Yet more Intensive Interaction News (including RSG contacts)

department for
education and skills
creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study (DfES - Research Report RR516)

A Dept of Education research scoping exercise to review existing work in SEN 'with a focus on best practice'

by **Pauline Davis** (Faculty of Education, Uni. of Manchester) and **Lani Florian** (Faculty of Education, Uni. of Cambridge)

Key Findings: Research suggests the use of intensive interaction and/or a 'sensory' based approach are effective for children with communication and interaction difficulties associated with profound and multiple learning difficulties. (p.4)

Other extracts:

2.4.2 Children with communication and interaction difficulties associated with profound and multiple learning difficulties: Research has led to a more 'sensory' based approach being used in order to develop opportunities for exploration of and interaction with multi-sensory environments (Aitken and Buultjens, 1992; Ware, 1996; 2003), or for intensive interaction (see Nind, 1996; Hewett and Nind, 1998). (p.14)

2.5.1 Pre-school: A significant body of literature reviewed by Fraser (1998) indicates that success in this phase is related to early support to foster high quality forms of interaction between parent and child, e.g. Portage (Bluma *et al.*, 1976), Sure Start and Hanen Programmes (Manolsen, 1992), with the NAS Earlybird Programme (Hardy, 1999 and Shields, 2001), and intensive interaction (Nind and Hewett, 2001) not coming in until the child started at school. (p.15)

Intensive Interaction Regional Support Groups (II-RSGs)

For the latest dates of the increasingly UK wide Intensive Interaction Regional Support Group meetings please go to:

<http://www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk/regional-networks/>

If you would like more information about a particular Regional Support Group, then please use the contact details given below

Birmingham Contact: Penny Lacey at p.j.lacey@bham.ac.uk

Balham Contact: Lucy Harrison at lucy.harrison@mac.com

Buckinghamshire Contact: Jules McKim Email: jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk

Cambridge Contact: Shelley Lockwood at shelleylockwood@ntlworld.com

Derby Contact: Julie Pehl at Julie.Pehl@derbysmhservices.nhs.uk or Allison Woodhead at allison.woodhead@DerbysMHServices.nhs.uk

Essex Contact: Terri Crowdy at terri.crowdy@castledon.essex.sch.uk

Isle of Man Contact: Jan Gordon at Jan.Gordon@gov.im

Leeds Contact: Alison Covey at alison.covey@leeds.gov.uk

Macclesfield Contact: Katy Harrold at katyharrold@hotmail.com

Manchester Area Contact: Ruth King at ruth.king@oldham.gov.uk

Merseyside Contact: Jane Backland at Jane.Backland@sefton.gov.uk

Norfolk Contact: Laura Dick at Laura.Dick@norfolk-pct.nhs.uk

Nottingham Contact: Vicky Romilly at Vicky.romilly@nottshc.nhs.uk or Sue Pearson at sue.pearson@nottshc.nhs.uk

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Scotland/Glasgow Contact: Nicola Wightman at nicola.wightman@sw.glasgow.gov.uk or Lucie Sellar at lucie.sellar@sw.glasgow.gov.uk

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South West Contact: Steve Maris at steve.maris@mencap.org.uk or Dawn Graham at DSGraham@somerset.gov.uk

South Wales Contact: Sarah Barnes at SBarnes@cardiff.gov.uk

Sunderland Contact: Rachel Eaglen rachel.eaglen@ntw.nhs.uk

West London Contact: Lucy Harrison at lucy.harrison@mac.com

Wiltshire Contact: Jules McKim Email: jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk

Contact us!

p.s. The direct circulation of this *Intensive Interaction* Newsletter is now **over 1250** across **4** continents!
All back copies of this Newsletter are also available at: www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk

Do you want your own copy of this Newsletter: either paper or electronic? Or do you have any news or information that might interest others working in this area? If so, then please contact: **Graham Firth**, Intensive Interaction Project Leader, Leeds Partnerships NHS Trust, St Mary's Hospital, Greenhill Road, Leeds, LS12 3QE
Phone: 0113 3055160 or at graham.firth@nhs.net

p.s. why not visit our Leeds Partnerships NHS Trust Intensive Interaction webpage: http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our_services/ld/intensiveinteraction

Any views or opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the *Learning Disability Psychology Services* of Leeds Partnerships NHS Foundation Trust