



## THE INTENSIVE INTERACTION NEWSLETTER



Visit our webpage [http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our\\_services/ld/intensiveinteraction](http://www.leedspft.nhs.uk/our_services/ld/intensiveinteraction)

### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### NE Regional Support Group

The Sunderland/Newcastle RSG has been running successfully for 2 years but would welcome new members or anyone from anywhere in the North East. For further information please contact Rachel on

Tel: 0191 565 5368, or via email at [Rachel.McMurray@ntw.nhs.uk](mailto:Rachel.McMurray@ntw.nhs.uk)

#### School I.I. Recording Forms

Can anyone help school teacher Bernadette Howlett who is trying to find 'some good recording sheets for intensive interaction' that would support her use of the approach in school. So can anyone who can help get in touch with Bernadette at [bernadette.howlett@googlemail.com](mailto:bernadette.howlett@googlemail.com)

to share any good recording formats

#### I.I. SaLTs in Shropshire?

Are there any SaLTs advocating I.I. in and around Shrewsbury – if anyone can help, either themselves or a contact of theirs, please get in touch with Katie Peacock at [katiepeacock@live.co.uk](mailto:katiepeacock@live.co.uk)

#### 1 year Teacher Exchange:

A teacher at Clifford Park Special School in Toowoomba, Queensland is applying for a teacher exchange to England in 2012, and she would ideally like to continue her work using Intensive Interaction. The exchange involves both the teaching job and the house for 1 year.

Anyone interested in such a possible exchange should contact:

Lyn Flowers at [lflow1@eq.edu.au](mailto:lflow1@eq.edu.au)

p.s. the application has to be completed by early December!

## Intensive Interaction 'DownUnder' 2 International Conference

The I.I. 'DownUnder' 2 Conference:  
**'Exploring the Plateau'**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2011  
At the **Education Development Centre**  
Hindmarsh Adelaide, South Australia

(An invitation below adapted from the IID2 conference brochure)

The inaugural 'DownUnder' conference in Brisbane in 2009 gave us a chance to realise that there was in fact an 'us'. This second international event's focus on 'Exploring the Plateau' was inspired by a phrase in one of Graham Firth's publications. When you roll the phrase round in your head, it can have many possible interpretations.

So what is the 'plateau'? Is it a Nullarbor\* like plane of aimless repetition, or is it a place where apparently regular routines and conversations begin to elaborate and interconnect? Is it a jump-off for new and uncharted exploration?

So many of you asked that Graham Firth should come back to Oz, that I had to invite him to be our keynote speaker, knowing he would get the warm welcome he deserves. It will be interesting to hear how our perceptions complement his.

It's amazing how far we have come in 8 years of Intensive Interaction in Australia and New Zealand. Frankly, I don't think I'll ever get used to the thrill I get when I watch people come together to explore ways to engage and celebrate the achievements of a group of learners who for so long have been either overlooked or excluded. I've had an amazing journey meeting you all – 'plateau'? What 'plateau'?

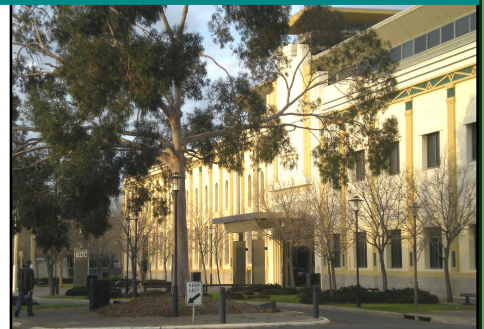
We invite you to attend!!

#### Mark Barber & Edwin Durance

For more information or to register online visit <http://www.amp.com.au/iid2>

Email: [iid2@amp.com.au](mailto:iid2@amp.com.au) or Phone: 03 9372 7182 (International callers: +613 9372 7182)

(\*The Nullarbor Plain, the world's largest single piece of limestone, is an area of flat, semi-arid country in southern Australia – wow! Ed. – there is even interesting stuff here for the closet geologists amongst us!)



The Education Development Centre, Hindmarsh Adelaide, South Australia

*If you can't make Adelaide, don't forget:*

#### The UK Intensive Interaction Conference

On **June 21<sup>st</sup> 2011** at **The Oxford Centre** – a beautiful, spacious building with plenty of parking!  
(Hosted by Ridgeway Partnership NHS Trust)

Chaired by Cath Irvine, the theme in 2011 is *'supporting the use of intensive interaction across the lifespan.'*

Melanie Nind will give a keynote address on Positive Risk Taking and Intensive Interaction, and there will be presentations on sustainability issues in residential services and within a school, working with someone with Acquired Brain Injury, working with people with autism and a workshop with parents talking about using Intensive Interaction with their children (the sessions will be repeated after lunch). Also planned is an inclusive, interactive drumming circle. P.s. there are some free places for parents... but they are going fast!

For more information contact **Jules** at [jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk](mailto:jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk)

#### 'Quote of the Month'

*'When we actively seek progress through Intensive Interaction we do not systemically work through a hierarchical checklist of skills, but rather explore a network of interconnected abilities with all kinds of inbuilt possibilities'*

**Kellett, M & Nind, M (2003) Implementing Intensive Interaction in Schools p.123**



***Autism and Intensive Interaction:***  
Using Body Language to Reach Children on the Autistic Spectrum  
A new DVD by Phoebe Caldwell

This DVD is the latest publication of Phoebe Caldwell. Phoebe believes passionately that everyone, especially family members, should be aware of the simple ways (of which Intensive Interaction is one) in which they can interact with people considered difficult to reach. The DVD pack contains well filmed examples of Phoebe and staff at a school for children with autistic spectrum disorders and learning difficulties in classroom settings. Included in the pack is a simply written leaflet giving background and a guide to the film. The DVD itself is broken into three parts, each with further sub sections, easily navigated on screen by the menu – very useful for use in training sessions.



Section one is a conversation about sensory differences between Phoebe and Dr Matt Hoghton, a GP with a special interest in learning disability. It is illustrated with clips of the children in the school. There are also short clips illustrating how Phoebe uses observation to identify elements of body language to use to make contact. This reinforces importantly that Intensive interaction is not a set of techniques, but important principles to be used creatively with individuals. Several of the clips are very moving to watch – both from the evident pleasure of the children and the reactions of staff who know them well and have not seen this level of engagement and response from them before.

Section two is a conversation between Phoebe and Penny Mytton, a teacher at the school. The issues of age appropriate behaviour and the use of touch are debated with some useful practical strategies given. The third section is probably to me the most interesting and powerful part of the DVD. It is an unedited piece of film following a young child, Jamie, move from apparent disinterest in interacting into a delightful exchange with Phoebe using a range of non verbal interactions. It demonstrates the patience needed and illustrates Phoebe's determination (in her words) not to "frog march them into our world" but to meet children where they are, using a 'language' they recognise to make important emotional connections. There is a lot to learn from this clip and it bears watching several times, as each time I did this, I saw more and more from which I could reflect and learn.

Watching this DVD, the overriding message that came across to me was the mutual joy experienced by both children and adults when there is that moment of connection. Attending courses or reading about Intensive Interaction is not as powerful as experiencing it. For many people seeing its use on DVD can be a helpful first step. This DVD is to be welcomed as a useful addition to a range of DVD material now available and one I shall refer to in my own work in promoting interactive and creative approaches to communication for those we find 'hard to reach'. Everyone has the right to 'be communicated with in ways that are meaningful, understandable and culturally and linguistically appropriate'\*. This DVD will be of interest to anyone interested in the emotional and communicative well being of people with complex communication needs.

**Sue Thurman**  
Communication Concerns  
Speech and Language Therapist and freelance consultant and trainer  
May 2010

\*Guidelines for meeting the communication needs of persons with severe disabilities: ASHA 1992



## How Rapidly Does Intensive Interaction Promote Social Engagement for Adults with Profound Learning Disabilities?

By Zeedyk, S, Caldwell, P. and Davies, C (2009)  
in *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 24 (2) p.119-137.

The majority of published empirical investigations focus on *long-term* outcomes of Intensive Interaction, which, although important, can detract from questions regarding the rapidity with which Intensive Interaction begins to yield improvements in communication. This study investigates levels of engagement in individuals with profound learning disabilities (PLD) participating in their *first* Intensive Interaction session.

The authors had two specific aims: to determine how quickly observable increases in engagement behaviours take place, and to investigate individual differences in patterns of change across the sample i.e. does engagement show a linear or fluctuating pattern of increase and how do such patterns of change differ between individuals?.

**Participants:** Ten non-linguistic individuals with profound learning disabilities took part (6 female, 4 male, aged late teens to early 60s). No formal diagnoses were available; however, informal reports from staff indicate diagnoses of autism, cerebral palsy and global intellectual delay were likely.

**Method:** The authors used an observational, multiple-case design to investigate levels of social engagement in clients participating in their first Intensive Interaction session. Videotaped material, randomly selected from an archive owned by Phoebe Caldwell, was analysed using microanalytic techniques.

The Intensive Interaction sessions in question took place in residential or day centres and lasted between 30 minutes and several hours, however, the present analysis focused on the initial section of the interactions: coding commenced when the session began and ceased when the first break in interaction occurred. Consequently, analysed sessions ranged from approximately 3 to 14 minutes.

Coding aimed to record three key behavioural indicators of clients' interest in their interaction partner:

- ♦ *eye gaze to partner* ([a] away from partner, [b] toward partner's body, [c] toward partner's face);
- ♦ *bodily orientation to partner* ([a] away from partner, [b] toward partner, [c] facing partner directly); and,
- ♦ *proximity to partner* ([a] far/beyond touching distance, [b] close/within touching distance, [c] touching).

The *emotional valence* of client's actions was also coded as either (a) neutral/negative; (b) positive; or (c) very positive. Inter-rater reliability of coding was assessed by having a second coder, who was blind to the hypothesis, code 20% of the footage. The mean intra-class correlation between the two raters was 0.89, indicating acceptable levels of reliability.



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**Findings:** Data analysis began by dividing the interaction sessions into four equal quarters. Next, an 'Engagement Index Score' (EIS) was calculated for each of the three key social behaviours to represent the extent to which a participant was socially engaged in that quarter of the session. The EIS scores ranged from 0 to 100, with a score of '0' indicating that the participant had spent the entire quarter of the session at the lowest level of engagement for that behaviour (e.g. for *eye gaze to partner*, '0' would mean eye gaze was oriented away from the partner for the whole quarter) and a score of '100', meaning that the participant was constantly at the highest level of engagement (e.g. for *eye gaze to partner*, '100' would mean that the participant looked only towards their partner's face in that quarter).

Comparisons were made between the EIS for segment one and segment four of the Intensive Interaction sessions to determine how many participants showed an increase in engagement over the session. It was found that index scores generally increased from section one to section four. Nine out of ten participants showed increased eye gaze, eight out of nine showed an increase in proximity to partner, and six out of eight displayed an increase in orientation to their partner. Emotional valence also increased in 9 out of ten participants. A non-parametric Fisher-Exact probability analysis was used to determine the probability that these increases in engagement occurred by chance. All tests were significant at the 0.005 level, indicating that the increases in engagement can be attributed to the intervention and that Intensive Interaction had an effect on all four of the behaviours measured.

A separate analysis was used to investigate the patterns of change for each participant in more detail. Engagement Index Scores were depicted graphically for each participant and each quarter of the Intensive Interaction session, revealing that the overall pattern of increasing engagement was subject to considerable variation. There was large variation in both the degree by which engagement increased between quarters and in the trajectory of change (i.e. linear vs. fluctuating increases). The secondary analysis demonstrated that all participants showed increases in at least some measures and that the majority (7/10) showed increases for all four measures.

**Discussion:** This study has shown that Intensive Interaction is an effective tool in promoting social engagement with key social behaviours showing increases in the first Intensive Interaction session. In order to investigate if the recorded increases in sociability were a product of Intensive Interaction *per se* or whether they would result from any form of attentive social interaction, future research must employ a design that compares Intensive Interaction with other forms of intervention, as well as with standard, non-intervention interactions. The authors also relate their findings to the existing literature, suggesting that further work may be done to investigate exactly what conditions are necessary for improvements in engagement and why Intensive Interaction seems to be particularly useful in creating these conditions.

This paper was kindly summarized by Ben Green, Ventures Activity worker, Leeds

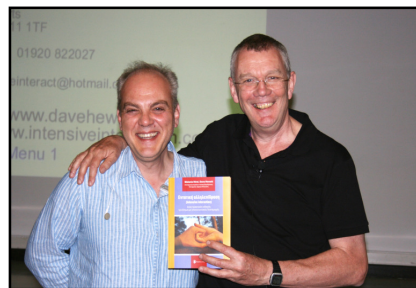


## More Intensive Interaction news and developments

An 'international' Intensive Interaction update from **Dave Hewett**:

### A Practical Guide to Intensive Interaction now available in Greek!

At the end of May I travelled to Thessalonika in Greece to present a two-day seminar on behalf of the Greek Society for the Protection of Autistic People. I also made various visits to establishments and families. The trip was organised by the amazingly energetic Dr. Yiannis Vogindroukas. The main event, a two-day seminar was in a hotel in the centre of the city, with about 140 people attending. Yiannis had organised simultaneous interpretation for those who needed it, handouts translated into Greek and, prior to the event, the translation of the 'Practical Guide' by arrangement with BILD.



Dr. Yiannis Vogindroukas presents the Greek 'Practical Guide' to Dave at the seminar.

I was overwhelmed really by the enthusiasm, interest and hospitality of the people there. I was also impressed by how clearly knowledgeable my audience was on all matters autism and learning difficulty. We have plans to be doing much more work together. Thank you Yiannis.

Similarly, I am returning to Trinidad next March after spending a wonderful week there last March to do a similar sequence of events organised by the Autism Society of Trinidad and Tobago. As with Greece, the services there are still largely parent organised and funded. They are at an early stage of development generally, and Intensive Interaction work is commencing now as a result of this initiative. I'm hoping that we can get Intensive Interaction up and running and well-established there before they develop enough resources to look like an attractive market for some of the American behaviour-modification companies.

Intensive Interaction really is starting to reach other countries. I am presently in discussion with people in about six other countries for the organisation of trips in 2011 and 2012.

### **New Book:** *Using Intensive Interaction with a Person with a Social or Communicative Impairment*

by Graham Firth and Mark Barber (Jessica Kingsley Publishers)



**From the publishers:** This easy-to-use guide steers readers through the practical application of the approach, showing how positive results can best be achieved. The authors explain clearly how to prepare for, carry out and reflect on the use of Intensive Interaction with a client or family member. A multitude of key questions are addressed, including finding the right setting, evaluating progress and disengaging effectively at the end of a session. In the final section they consider some of the wider implications of the approach, such as developing confidence as a practitioner and incorporating Intensive Interaction into long-term care or educational planning.

This practical and accessible book is a useful resource for speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, special school or further education teachers, social care professionals and anyone else caring for or working with people with social or communicative impairments. It will also be useful to practitioners already using the approach.

### **The Intensive Interaction Archive**

To document the growing number of research papers and articles discussing Intensive Interaction I am working (as in volunteering!) as the Intensive Interaction archivist. As part of this role I am building an archive with the aim that one day it will become an accessible Intensive Interaction library. Future ideas include book and DVD review sections, and I'm also in the early stages of an Intensive Interaction image resource bank (more about that another time).

I have already started work on producing a list of published papers complete with useful summaries and individual reviews to act as signposts to those wanting to know more or searching for information in a specific area, and for students undertaking more formal study into the approach.

Although quite extensive, the current list is not yet as complete as I would like. This is where we really do need your support. To ensure the index is useful, current and informative I am asking that you will get in touch to let us know of any written material you feel should be included (possibly including unpublished material e.g. professional or academic theses, etc) or point us towards any new papers you are aware of. In addition to this anyone willing to read and provide written reviews would really help build a great resource.

If you feel you can help, have suggestions or want to know more please contact me [intensive.interaction.leeds@googlemail.com](mailto:intensive.interaction.leeds@googlemail.com)

Thanks in advance – **Alison Covey**



## Yet more Intensive Interaction News (including RSG contacts)

### Intensive Interaction Weekend Workshop

Sunshine, beautiful countryside, good food and drink (!), some extremely friendly people and ... oh yes, lots of talking about Intensive Interaction. That just about sums up the Intensive Interaction Weekend Workshop that took place in the Yorkshire Dales in mid-October. In a response to feedback from the annual conference that there was a demand for more time for networking and exchanging experiences with others, Nick Guthrie and Graham Firth from Leeds did a great job of organising an opportunity for Intensive Interaction Practitioners with varying levels of experience of the approach to come together from all over the UK in the surprisingly luxurious bunkhouse at Kilnsey.



The weekend workshop 'gang' outside Skiffare Bridge Barn in Kilnsey, North Yorkshire

There were formal slots for reviewing resources (DVDs, books, articles), looking at and giving supportive comment on practitioners' own video footage, reflecting on the achievements of the last year and the challenges for the next, and brainstorming what is and what is not Intensive Interaction (fuelled by a number of glasses of wine and fruit juice, this took a while!).

The downtime was just as useful and just as much fun - the chats over the kettle, in the comfy bunkrooms, out on the patio, as well as during the forays into the countryside and the local picture-postcard villages.

There were queries and concerns but these were balanced by celebrations of great moments, lessons learned and ideas for the future. Everyone was happy both to ask for help and to give it. The unanimous verdict was '*More of the same, please*'. With numbers limited to around 20, more weekends in different parts of the country would allow more practitioners - parents, teachers, support workers, coordinators, health professionals - to benefit from the opportunity to have quality network time with other people interested in Intensive Interaction. Scottish practitioners enjoying a weekend in North Wales, London practitioners on the banks of Loch Lomond, the possibilities are endless. If you are interested in organising a similar weekend in your area, have a word with your local regional II network. Well done, Nick and Graham!

**Helen Beltran and Fiona Tanner**, SLTs, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

### Intensive Interaction Regional Support Groups (II-RSGs)

The current contact details for the groups are:

**Manchester Area** Contact: Ruth King at [ruth.king@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.king@oldham.gov.uk)

**Merseyside** Contact: Jane Backland at [jane.backland@alderhey.nhs.uk](mailto:jane.backland@alderhey.nhs.uk)

**South East/Essex** Contact: Liz Platt at [lplatt@chs.org.uk](mailto:lplatt@chs.org.uk) or [lizplatt@googlemail.com](mailto:lizplatt@googlemail.com)

**Leeds** Contact: Alison Covey at [alison.covey@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:alison.covey@leeds.gov.uk)

**Scotland/Glasgow** Contact: Nicola Wightman at [nicola.wightman@sw.glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.wightman@sw.glasgow.gov.uk) or Lucie Sellar at [lucie.sellar@sw.glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:lucie.sellar@sw.glasgow.gov.uk)

**Oxford** Contact: Jules McKim Email: [jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk](mailto:jules.mckim@ridgeway.nhs.uk) Anna Goodall [anna.goodall@ridgeway.nhs.uk](mailto:anna.goodall@ridgeway.nhs.uk)

**Nottingham** Contact: Vicky Romilly at [Vicky.romilly@nottshc.nhs.uk](mailto:Vicky.romilly@nottshc.nhs.uk) or Sue Pearson at [sue.pearson@nottshc.nhs.uk](mailto:sue.pearson@nottshc.nhs.uk)

**Isle of Man** Contact: Jan Gordon at [Jan.Gordon@gov.im](mailto:Jan.Gordon@gov.im)

**Birmingham** Contact: Penny Lacey at [p.j.lacey@bham.ac.uk](mailto:p.j.lacey@bham.ac.uk)

**South London** Contact: Lucy Harrison at [lucy.harrison@mac.com](mailto:lucy.harrison@mac.com)

**West London** Contact: Lucy Harrison at [lucy.harrison@mac.com](mailto:lucy.harrison@mac.com)

**Sunderland** Contact: Rachel Eaglen [rachel.eaglen@ntw.nhs.uk](mailto:rachel.eaglen@ntw.nhs.uk)

**South West** Contact: Steve Maris at [steve.maris@mencap.org.uk](mailto:steve.maris@mencap.org.uk) or Dawn Graham at [DSGraham@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:DSGraham@somerset.gov.uk)

**Derby** Contact: Julie Pehl at [Julie.Pehl@derbysmhservices.nhs.uk](mailto:Julie.Pehl@derbysmhservices.nhs.uk) or Allison Woodhead at [allison.woodhead@DerbysMHServices.nhs.uk](mailto:allison.woodhead@DerbysMHServices.nhs.uk)

**South Wales** Contact: Sarah Barnes at [SBarnes@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:SBarnes@cardiff.gov.uk)

**Essex** Contact: Terri Crowdy at [terri.crowdy@castledon.essex.sch.uk](mailto:terri.crowdy@castledon.essex.sch.uk)

**Macclesfield** Contact: Katy Harrold at [katyharrold@hotmail.com](mailto:katyharrold@hotmail.com)

### Contact us!

p.s. The direct circulation of this *Intensive Interaction* Newsletter is now over 1250 across 4 continents! and all the back copies of this Newsletter are now available at: [www.intensiveinteraction.co.uk](http://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@leedsaft.nhs.uk](mailto:graham.firth@leedsaft.nhs.uk)

p.s. why not visit our Leeds Partnerships NHS Trust Intensive Interaction webpage: [http://www.leedsaft.nhs.uk/our\\_services/ld/intensiveinteraction](http://www.leedsaft.nhs.uk/our_services/ld/intensiveinteraction)