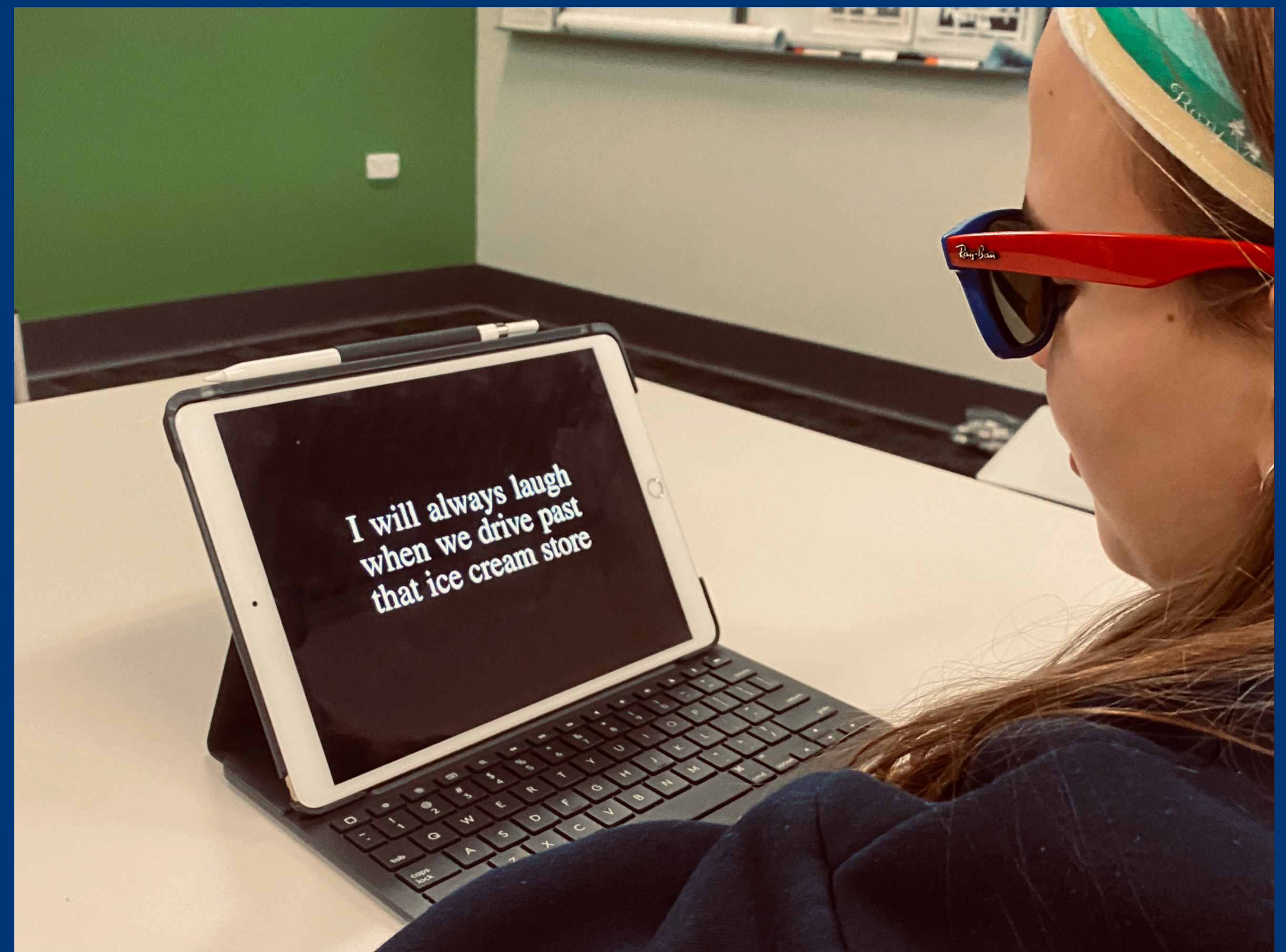


# Improving Educational Outcomes for Children with a Vision Impairment

Lynne Loh, Mallika Prem-Senthil, Paul A Constable  
Caring Futures Institute, Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia

## 1. Background

- In South Australia over 230 vision impaired children, aged 5-18 are supported through the Education Departments Statewide Support System (2).
- Vision impairment can have a significant impact on a child accessing the curriculum within school (2).
- Support is based on visual acuity or visual fields (1).
- Visual acuity, although still widely used as an outcome measure by doctors and support organisations, is not representative of vision function.
- Early intervention is crucial to optimise the development of children and young adults, both academically and socially (3).

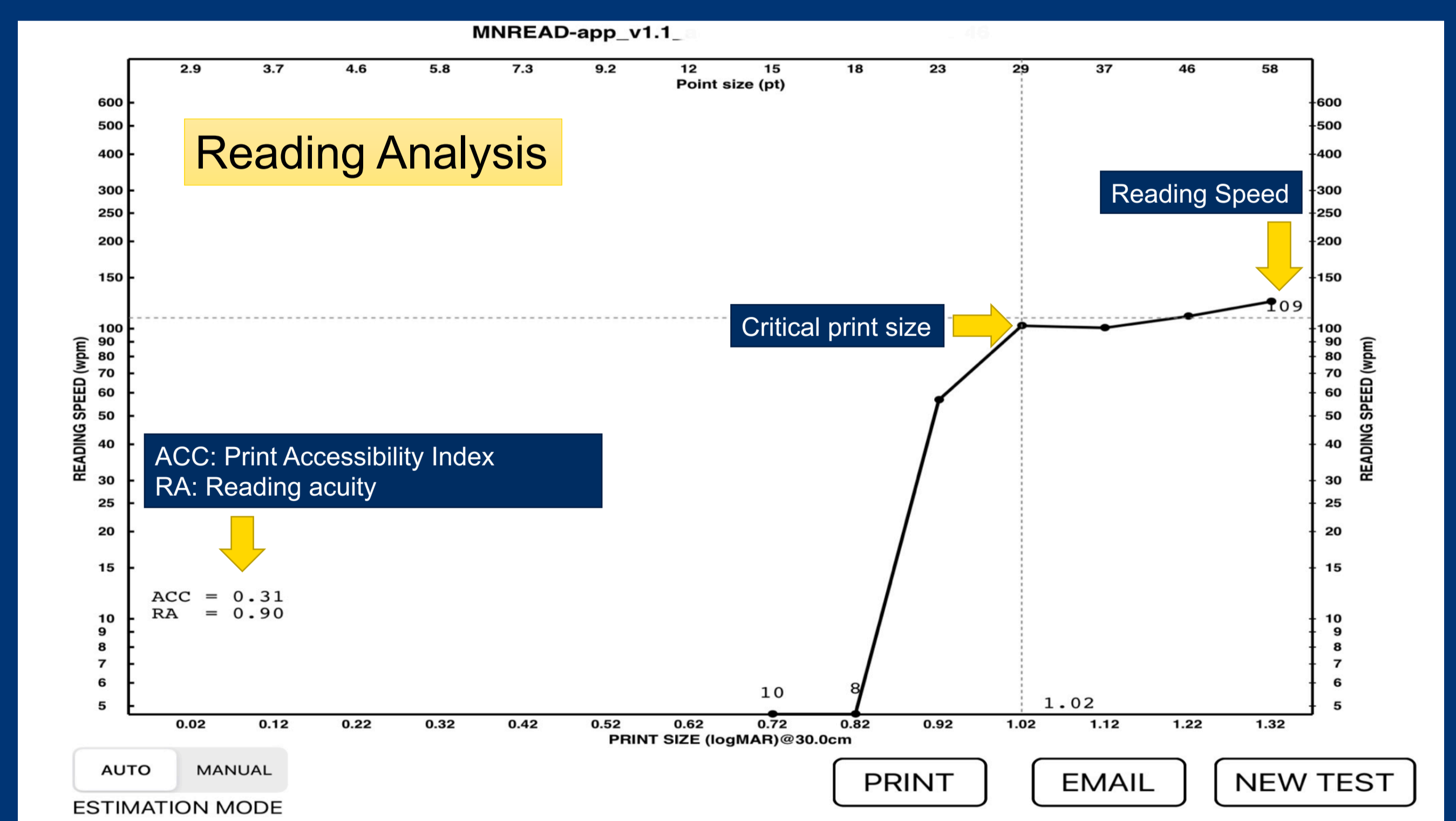


## 2. Objectives

- A comprehensive functional vision assessment with categorisation of functional vision ability, to provide a clearer picture to educators and parents.
- Support and targeted interventions to assist the child with specific areas of visual deficits.
- A vision framework to support a child's development, providing them with enhanced skills through their education years - resulting in them being better equipped to enter further education or the workforce.

## 3. Method

- Vision Impaired Children recruited from the statewide support system.
- A comprehensive functional vision assessment including standard vision tests in combination with functional tests of vision performance.
- Visual Impairment Ability Questionnaire: allows a child to identify aspects of classroom accessibility that their vision impairment impacts.



## 4. Expected Outcomes

Visual acuity is an inaccurate indicator of visual performance. Visual acuity groups will show a range of different visual abilities.

## 5. Future Implications

The reclassification of vision impaired children at a functional level and the development of a framework for support through education.

Lynne Loh: lynne.loh@flinders.edu.au

### References

1. Decarlo DK1, McGwin G Jr, Bixler ML, Wallander J, Owsley C. Optom Vis Sci. 2012 Sep;89 (9):1409-16. Impact of paediatric vision impairment on daily life: results of focus groups.
2. [https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/school\\_res\\_notes\\_2019.pdf](https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/school_res_notes_2019.pdf)
3. Dale NT, Salt A. Child Care Health Dev. 2007 Nov;33(6):684-90. Early support developmental journal for children with visual impairment: the case for a new developmental framework for early intervention.

