



Student Voice Matters: My Say My Way

Implementation of a modified Tell Them From Me survey for students with complex learning needs at St George School

Background – Tell Them From Me



In line with the NSW DET Inclusive Education Statement (2020) principles and the elements of the School Excellence Framework our school recognised a need for change to enable continuous improvement and respect for student voice based on authentic feedback from students.



2020-21: St George School was involved in the trial run by **Dr Bryden Lenne** (Senior Project Officer from the Disability Strategy) and **Professor Iva Strnadova** from UNSW to develop a modified Tell Them From Me survey which became My Say My Way.

2021: Dr Bryden Lenne and Professor Iva Strnadova presented their work at the SEPLA conference.

The **My Say My Way** surveys aim to make sure that all students in SSPs and support classes can participate in and have a voice about their own school experience, education and wellbeing.



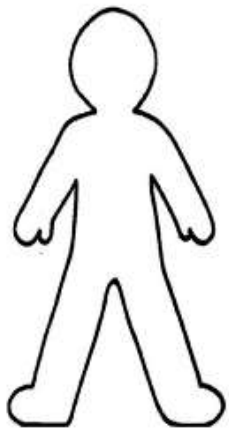
My Say My Way - @ St George School

2022 - Development of a professional learning and resource package for all staff at St George School to enable the implementation of two My Say My Way surveys in 2023.

2023 – Across school implementation.

This workshop will present the work and resources we developed on two My Say My Way strategies:

Body Mapping & Photovoice





Important: Link between Behaviour and Communication



What we sometimes see as
a failure to **BEHAVE**
properly,
is actually a failure to
COMMUNICATE
properly.
www.notjustcute.com

Teach kids the skills to communicate effectively and we may just see many challenging behaviours decrease...





My Say My Way @ St George School

Aim: To have all students in all classes K-12 completing one of two

My Say My Way surveys:

Body Mapping OR Photovoice

Surveys were completed as part of our 'First 5 Weeks' program.

Both surveys pose the same questions:



What do you like at school?

What do you **not** like at school?



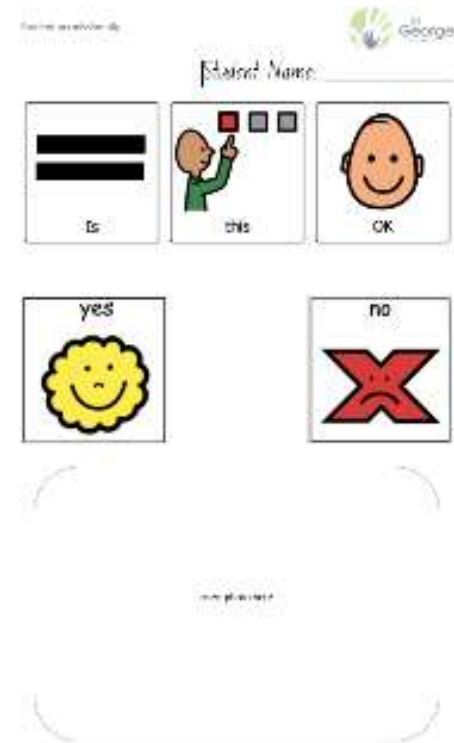
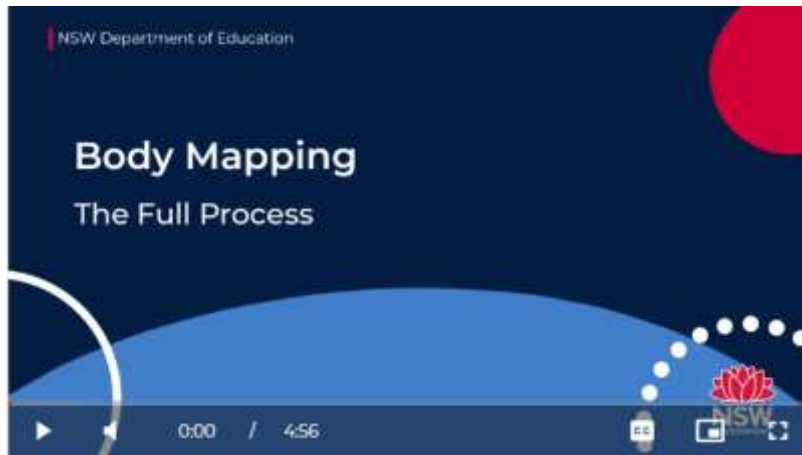


Body Mapping @ St George School

Video:

Demonstration of Body Mapping activity @ St George School.

Importance of Consent particularly with students with very high support needs.





Body Mapping @ St George School

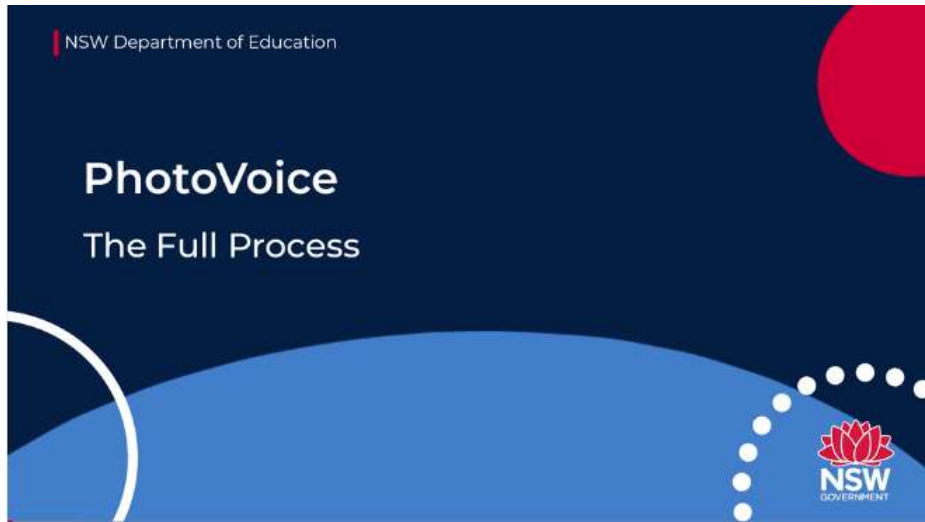




Photovoice @ St George School

Video:

Demonstration of Photovoice activity
@ St George School.





Photovoice @ St George School





Teaching Resources – Body Mapping and Photovoice

A set of implementation resources for every class which includes:

Detailed lesson plans

Detailed instructions

PCS Questions

PCS possible responses

Generic set of labelled Photovoice visuals

Staff were required to:

Cut and Velcro each PCS

Prepare any other PCS/photo responses relevant to your student cohort.





Feedback from Staff - What worked well?

Staff said:

“Training of all staff, including SLSOs was great as everyone knew the expectations and the process” ...
“hands-on demonstration was very clear and concise” ... “valuable insights, resources and practical strategies...”

“In-class support from Instructional Leader was invaluable” ... “guidance and assistance greatly facilitated the process...”

“Detailed lesson plans” ... “well-structured framework” ... “provided clear guidance about how to go about it and what to do if consent was removed or no consent given (Body Mapping)” ... excellent for new teachers...”

“Having all the resources pre-prepared and ready to go was helpful” ... “clear visual aids supported student comprehension and engagement in the task...”

“The inclusion of ‘sometimes’, ‘not sure’ and ‘don’t know’ allowed students to feel empowered to describe how they actually feel and not be restricted by their responses” ... “were more comfortable to answer in an honest and reflective way” ... “stopped us making inaccurate assumptions about what the students liked and disliked about school...”



Staff said:

Feedback from Staff: What can we improve upon?

“Challenges associated with younger students’ knowledge and understanding of unfamiliar activities, places and items in the school” ...”had to physically experience each activity before being able to make a comment about whether they liked/disliked it which made it a lot more time consuming....”

“Some students struggled with saying ‘no’... needs a lot of teaching that it’s OK to say ‘no’ or ‘don’t like’...”

“Was difficult knowing where to start with so many options of activities and places” ...”overwhelmed by available choices!”

“Highlighted a need to teach the vocab from the surveys so that students have a better understanding...could also include Key Word Sign...”



Where to from here?



From initial feedback...

- Plan to develop a Prowise program to support the implementation – enlarged visuals and interactive features to facilitate engagement.
- Develop a suite of videos for a wide range of activities to further facilitate understanding and support student memory when unable to visit different places in the school.
- Use of IL to support staff to teach and embed the vocab – ‘sometimes’...‘not sure’...‘don’t know’, into all classrooms so that students become familiar and comfortable with these responses.
- Provide each student with a folder for their responses which will travel with them throughout their schooling and can be referred to, reflected on and added to as the years go by.
- *Using the data to inform school planning – highlighting areas of need for our students that require more attention eg. playground*
- ***Recent discussions with staff from CESE who are exploring how the next phase of the My Say My Way project can build on the codesign process with schools to deliver tools that are useful and valued for schools catering for complex learners.***

Any Questions or Comments?

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