**Project Title:** Literacy Learning through Signed English.

**Description:** Students at Hunter River Community School have a moderate to severe intellectual disability with the majority of students having an additional diagnosis of, autism, physical disability or sensory impairment. The vast majority of students are non-verbal and use alternate systems, such as signing and symbols to convey their needs and wants.

The project provided training for all staff, interested parents and community volunteers in basic key word signing, through a series of sessions aimed at promoting enhanced communication exchanges between staff and identified students.

The project also assisted staff to convert a selection of classroom reading materials into signed text or symbol text.

**Person Responsible for project:** Ian Hughes (Principal), Tracey Rapson (AP)

**School, region, diocese:** Hunter River Community School, Hunter/Central Coast Region.

**Number of students, teacher, parents, and other community members directly involved:** 10 teachers and 8 SLSO’s, 3 parents, 2 community volunteers.

**Intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:**
- to develop a core vocabulary of signed English for all participants
- to enhance communication exchanges between staff and students,
- to enhance the skills of community volunteers through communication exchanges with identified students
- to support literacy development by converting appropriate reading materials into a signed English or symbolic text.

**Evidence of achievement of intended literacy and/or numeracy outcomes:**
- staff, parents and volunteers motivated and engaged throughout sessions
- increased awareness of resources available to support literacy acquisition for non-verbal students
- staff and volunteers using signing consistently across all settings
- playground activities supported with signed English icons.

**Other Information:**

See sample material below:
Dog In, Cat Out

Written by Gillian Rubinstein

Illustrated by Ann James