

EDITORIAL NOTE

let's be <sup>vi</sup>~~cov~~id



*daniela*

**D**uring these days working from home I find myself trying to look for techniques to help me concentrate and focus. I tried various things, retreating to a silent room, coffee, comfort eating but nothing compares to what music can offer!

A pair of headphones and a good playlist which drifts me away on its notes. However, at one point I found myself humming **goodbye cruel world, it's over, waiting for the worms to come....**wait, I said, I need to revamp my playlist.

Music relates to our actual state of being and at the moment many of us are waiting for that day when things return to normal. But as we wait, time is passing by and we are doing nothing but waiting in silence!

**Silence and I, we'll find a way to work it out!** You wait and see!! It is true **you might**

**be a thousand miles apart** from the ones you love but you can still **live with no regrets** and start **colouring a life** and you will see **that's turning bright!** But how can I do that? I imagine you asking. **If you smile through your fear and sorrow, maybe tomorrow you'll see the sun shining through your eyes.** Isn't **every drop that falls in the Sahara desert....a miracle?**

So, let's all look at our future, when we will **go out to sea again, the sunshine filling your hair and dreams hang in the air. It is not impossible, if you just believe it there's nothing to it. So live for every moment as the world keeps turning round, the smiles returning to the faces, and it's all right....It's a wonderful life.**

Let's be vivid and keep on passing your positive vibes to the ones you love! Hope you'll enjoy the playlist I shared with you today 😊

# Social distancing

Social distancing is becoming a normality that we need to start accepting in our lives for the time being. No matter how hard one tries, it surely comes along with a baggage of repercussions which cannot be ignored. Children with a language disorder may find this new state of living more challenging than other children. Social distancing also means physical distancing and consequently meaning less opportunity for language stimulation and to practice social skills with a variety of communicator partners. In her article, **10 ways children with language disorders can maintain both physical distance and social connection**, Diane Paul, ASHA director of clinical issues in speech-language pathology, highlights important tips that Speech rLanguage Pathologists can share with their clients to help families deal with new situation.



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## Covid-19 advice to the public



**Most of the people who catch COVID-19 can recover and eliminate the virus from their bodies.** If you catch the disease, make sure you treat your symptoms. If you have cough, fever, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early – but call your health facility by telephone first if possible. Most patients recover thanks to supportive care.

Malta Helpline: 111 or 21324086



**#Coronavirus #COVID19**

## FACT:

**You can recover from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Catching the new coronavirus DOES NOT mean you will have it for life.**





# Members Corner

New to this issue is our 'Members Corner' where we invited members to contribute to our newsletter. We are receiving interesting contributions varying in nature....thank you and keep them coming!

We would like to remind you ASLP members that ASLP members may submit your contributions on [info@aslpmalta.org](mailto:info@aslpmalta.org) and they will appear in the coming Let's be Vivid issues. So, here is the first one.

This positive poem is being shared by Priscilla Cassar. Ms. Cassar is a Speech Language Pathologist who is currently one of the SLPs working at MDH. In her free time, Priscilla loves to read and write poetry. She shares with us a poem, which is very relevant to these times, by one of her favourite poets, Derek Mahon, an Irish poet.

## *Everything is going to be all right*

*How should I not be glad to contemplate  
the clouds clearing beyond the dormer window  
and a high tide reflected on the ceiling?  
There will be dying, there will be dying,  
but there is no need to go into that.  
The poems flow from the hand unbidden  
and the hidden source is the watchful heart;  
the sun rises in spite of everything  
and the far cities are beautiful and bright.  
I lie here in a riot of sunlight  
watching the day break and the clouds flying.  
Everything is going to be all right.*

*Derek Mahon*



# Just to say Thank You

In the previous issue, we started showing our gratitude to those professionals giving their all on the front line. We started with our colleagues SLPs at Mater Dei Hospital, and today we turn our thoughts to the sign language interpreters who have been faithfully committed to continue delivering their service to the deaf community from the very early days of this pandemic. So here we are sending our thank you, we are **grateful for it all!** 

Sign language interpreting community service in Malta is offered mainly by Agenzija Sapport. Professional sign language interpreters provide interpreting into (and from) LSM (Lingwa tas-Sinjali Maltija); recognised by law since March 2016, to the Maltese Deaf community in various spheres of life including (but not limited to) educational, social, medical and legal settings just to mention a few.

Sign language interpreters have also been affected by COVID-19, but their commitment to provide accessible information and communication to the Deaf community has not. This commitment also entails providing accessible health authority press conferences daily. Most of you are now familiar with the interpreter whilst Professor Charmaine Gauci is giving the brief update. If anything, this pandemic has surely increased awareness.

But, who are the interpreters?

Our team is made of only five ladies. It is not easy to work from home (the appointments we used to have in person, are mostly being done remotely) as well as being present everyday for press conferences including weekends and public holidays. Appointments are mostly fixed by third parties and different people/entities may use different communication platforms so you can imagine it's no easy task juggling availability around those needs. All in all we can surely describe it as a steep learning curve which at the end of the day is what makes life interesting. We all have our own families to take care of and most of us are also coping with homeschooling and/or very young children. However we feel that this situation gives no one a choice and this is the least we can do. Agenzija Sapport also plays a fundamental part as it supports us as a profession and provides the necessary working conditions and resources. April 2020 For more information about Agenzija Sapport services, one may visit [www.sapport.gov.mt](http://www.sapport.gov.mt) and follow us on social media.



**Kristjana:** 'This situation is very new for all of us but good team work, flexibility and love for what we do has helped our team to move forward and carry on with our work even though we have had to

adapt to new software, procedures and a new normal. The positive aspects of this pandemic is that I now appreciate more the support I have from my colleagues, managers and family and it is very gratifying to see people becoming more aware of sign language and sign language interpreting as a profession.'

**Rita:** 'Being a strongly knit team who goes along very well and who is used to working in flexible conditions is extremely helpful...However we are also extremely fortunate to have a supportive working environment and supportive families; otherwise we would not be able to cope so well...we often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude..'



**Sharon:** 'I guess no one is ever ready for crisis management, I mean we haven't studied for anything-which makes me even more proud to be part

of this extremely flexible team I also call my friends. We couldn't do it without each other, our families and Agenzija Sapport's continuous backup. Going through this while also studying at postgraduate level has not been easy but now that we are settling in to this 'new normal', I appreciate the lessons we are learning each day.'

**Maris:** 'With Covid-19 we had to adapt to new technologies, systems and routines. It wasn't easy at first. However, with the support we had from each other as a team, from our managers and from our families made this change an easy one.'



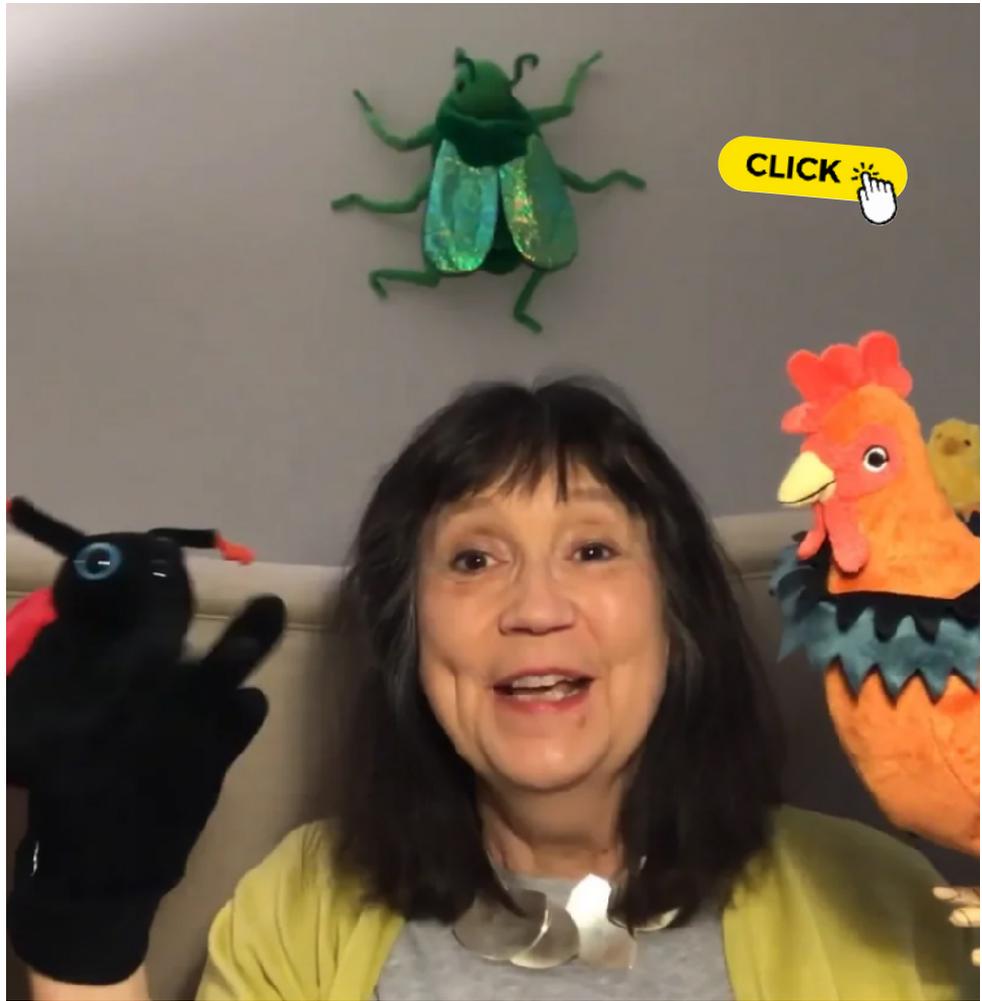
**Alison:** 'Working as an interpreter means you're often in situations which require you to be flexi-

ble and adapt quickly but these past few weeks have only amplified this. We're very fortunate to have a great team and the technology to allow the service to continue though it is undeniably more difficult to work solely remotely not only because of the prolonged screen time, which is straining on the eyes but also because I miss seeing my colleagues in person.'



# Fly a Hug by Louise Coigley

Directly from the UK, Louise Coigley, a Speech Language Pathologist, launched this very nice initiative around the world. Different Speech Language Pathologists worldwide have joined in this initiative and started flying hugs to their loved ones. The Covid-19 pandemic forced the world to a halt and lock itself down, stealing from all of us our social lives and all it entails. However, human kind is adapting to this situation and is creating different ways to remain in contact. Adaptation means hope. Hope means tomorrow is a brighter day than today. **Flying Hugs** is one way to show all this.



## RESOURCES FOR SLPs, PARENTS and KIDS



### Shadow Stories

Shadows are all around us and they can transform themselves into a very fun simple activity and imaginative stories!



### Sensory Scavenger Hunt

Take the opportunity of being at home and spend some quality time with the whole family. A very easy to do and interesting activity. All it takes is some creativity and imagination. Scroll down the link!



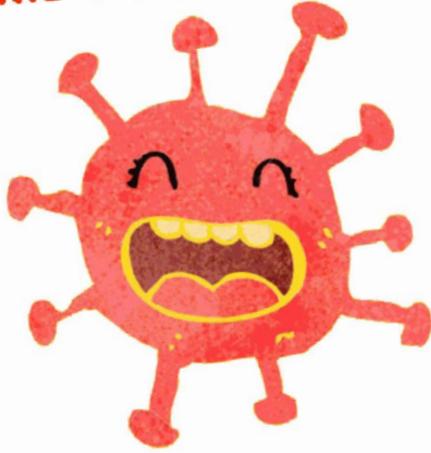
### Does it sink?

If you go for a walk in the countryside try this out when you go back home!



# HELLO!

I am a **VIRUS**,  
cousin with the Flu and  
the Common Cold



My name is **Coronavirus**

MANUELA MOLINA - @MINDHEART.KIDS  
WWW.MINDHEART.CO  
CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC LICENSE

# Storytime

Hello **My Name is Coronavirus**. This book was created by Manuela Molina of @mindheart.kids. It is a child friendly explanation of what is COVID-19. This book was created to create support and reassurance to children under the age of 7. It is a useful resource which can be also printed out and used as story but also to target other things such as emotions.

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## webinars

### Self-care & Wellness for professionals

Date: 25.05.2020 (Monday)

Time: 18.30 - 20.00

**Speaker: Cher V. Laurenti Engerer (Psychologist and Founder of Polaris Consultancy)**

Description: This webinar is being co-ordinated in collaboration with Polaris Consultancy - BrainGym & Well-Being Factory. The factory offers multidisciplinary health & wellbeing services. It will offer a series of practical tips for professionals to look after their own well-being and to manage stress levels.

### AAC goal setting: hAACKs

Date: 08.06.2020 (Monday)

Time: 18:00 - 19:00

**Speaker: Martina Zarb and Jamie Said (Speech Language Pathologists)**

Description: This webinar is mainly geared towards Speech and Language Pathologists who are following children with Complex Communication Needs and are using an AAC system to support their communication. This webinar assists therapists in successful AAC goal setting by delving into the AAC competencies. It will also present practical ideas and resources for encouraging the use of AAC in the clinic.

For bookings send an email on [info@aslpmalta.org](mailto:info@aslpmalta.org). Fee: Non-members €2, Members Free