

NEiTA 2009 ASG Inspirational Teaching Awards

State and Territory Award Recipient



Carolyn Galbraith

Bachelor of Arts, Diploma of Education (Special Education)
Lifestart Nepean, St Marys, New South Wales
Nominated by: Lifestart Cooperative, parents

Position: Early childhood, special needs teacher • Category: Early Childhood • Level taught: Transition to school • Years teaching: 13 years • Years at this school/centre: 6 years • School type: Independent • Town/Suburb: St Marys • State: New South Wales • Postcode: 2760

Why teaching?

My love of young children inspired me to enter the teaching profession, and the challenge and rewards of working with young children with developmental disabilities led me to choose Special Education.

Every new child and family I meet is an inspiration to me in their courage and tenacity.

Employing the very latest techniques in Special Education teaching

Lifestart is an early childhood intervention program for children with Down syndrome, autism and developmental delays. It is a family-centred organisation where the children and their families learn everyday skills to improve their quality of life. At Lifestart centres, families enjoy together activities such as singing, stories, play, outdoor activities and mealtimes. As a Lifestart Special Education teacher, Carolyn Galbraith shows families how to embed into these activities the skills that their children need to practice, such as taking turns or sign language.

Carolyn has a passion for early intervention work. Before she became a paid staff member at Lifestart, she worked at the centre on a voluntary basis. She has worked in all seven branches of Lifestart at various times over the past 12 years, and at each branch she has built on her skills in all aspects of trans-disciplinary early intervention. She has worked closely with speech pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists to develop her trans-disciplinary skills so as to be able to offer families advice in a wide range of developmental areas.

Carolyn is constantly reviewing her learning, undertaking professional development to enable her to keep abreast of the most up-to-date programs in her field. Her continuing research into best practice has enabled her to introduce the Teaching Reading to Teach Talking program, which has led to better reading and communication outcomes for students with Down syndrome. Carolyn funded her own travel to the United States to learn about Relationship Development Intervention, a program that offers a new approach to working with children with autism. She has now become the first certified Relationship Development Intervention consultant in Western Sydney, and has been able to offer relationship-based intervention for children with autism and their families.

Carolyn is a gifted, passionate and inspiring person. She cares deeply for the participants in the Lifestart program, and she dedicates herself to achieving the best possible outcomes for both the children and their families.

Contact details:

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