



The Champion Centre
TAMARIKI TOIORA

The Dublin Street Trust

Computer Supported Learning Program

Term 2 2014

The computer supported learning programme at the Champion Centre came about through the energies of **Hilary Stock**, whose love of computers and what they can do for children started many years ago. Hilary's infectious enthusiasm and creativity has allowed the programme to develop into a core part of so many children's therapy programmes and she is tireless in looking for new applications to help children. (She also has a fine critical

eye and will not shrink from telling parents or other staff when she feels a programme or app is not useful!)



Freddy's story

No one is entirely sure what four-year-old Freddy (not his real name) can see and hear. They know there is nothing structurally wrong with his eyes, but he does not seem to be using them to discover and learn about his world, and because his disability means he cannot tell others what he understands they have to be detectives to work out how to connect with Freddy and encourage him to connect with the world around him.

When Freddy first started in the Computer Supported Learning Programme, one thing the team did know was that he loved to watch a video called "Hooray for Fish" on his iPad at home. So, Hilary decided to use that to try to enter Freddy's world. She downloaded the video and cut it up into segments and put each segment into a different Powerpoint slide. Then she set up the transitions in the slide show so that Freddy would have to touch the screen to make the next slide come

up. He watched the first part of the video with avid attention, as usual. But then it stopped! He showed his surprise. Then someone gently took his hand and touched it to the screen and the video started again. After a few goes, he 'got it'. He could make the next section of the video come up by touching the screen. He had learned the beginnings of cause and effect. A huge positive milestone for Freddy!

From there, Freddy moved on to using other programmes with clear moving figures on a black background. He learned how to touch a screen that was empty in order to make a picture he liked appear and he increased his ability to track images that moved across the screen. He has now begun to follow the pictures in a book his mother reads to him.

Freddy's team and family are learning more and more about what he can process and how to extend his abilities.

At the moment, the team is trying to exploit Freddy's love of classical music, particularly classical piano which his family knows he likes to listen to. Hilary has made a slide

show of pictures of his family members (his mum, his dad, his sisters, his grandparents) and put a piece of classical piano music as a backing to see if it will grab his attention enough that he will look at the photos of his family and show that he has recognised each person.



Little by little Freddy is learning that his eyes will give him information he wants and he is beginning actively to seek out information on the computer either by touching the screen or pressing a large switch that is the first step towards using a computer mouse.

Respectfully submitted by Dr. Susan Foster-Cohen, Director on behalf of the computer supported learning team: Hilary, Leanne, Penny and Jackie.