**Webinar: Unlocking Literacy and Numeracy with Reach & Match**

**About the Presenter: Mandy Lau**

Mandy Lau is an award-winning designer with a background in industrial design, engineering, research, and special education. She has received prestigious awards such as the OpenIDEO Global Education Challenge, Zero Project Award, Good Design Award, Red Dot Awards, and Samsung Talents Award. Mandy is a Westpac Social Change Fellow 2023 and Zero Project Scaling Solution Fellow 2024, focusing on promoting inclusion and accessibility in education.

Mandy developed Reach & Match from her postgraduate research to address the challenges faced by children with blindness and low vision. Her innovative, multi-sensory tools are designed to support literacy, cognitive skills, and social interaction, benefiting children with visual impairments and other disabilities. The Reach & Match program now is supporting tens of thousands of children worldwide.

**About the social enterprise: Reach & Match, Melbourne Australia**

Vision: To create an inclusive world where every child, irrespective of their abilities, has access to quality education and the opportunity to thrive.

Mission: To provide evidence-based, adaptable, and durable learning kits, that facilitate inclusive education across diverse cultural contexts. By promoting multisensory learning and social inclusion, we aim to equip educators with effective tools and training, while fostering significant improvements in children's learning outcomes, engagement, and emotional well-being.

**Reach & Match Program Summary**

[**Reach & Match**](http://www.reachandmatch.com/) is a multi-award winning[[1]](#footnote-1) wholistic learning program that was designed through focused research and user testing[[2]](#footnote-2) to support early childhood learning outcomes and the inclusion of children with vision impairment or disabilities in mainstream Early Childhood Education (ECE) services and preschools. Reach & Match ensures that the most vulnerable children are provided with inclusive quality pre-primary education that will prepare them for school and a successful education journey, giving them a fair chance to reach their full potential and for the world to fulfil its commitment to leave no child behind.

The Reach & Match program is an innovative, inclusive play-based learning program for children of all abilities. It enables children with disabilities to play and learn alongside their peers and to build the foundational physical, cognitive, language and social-emotional skills that support a child’s wellbeing and learning journey. The Reach & Match program consists of four key components:

1. **The Reach & Match Learning Kit**, which consists of four large double-sided sensory play mats, 26 braille and print alphabet double-sided sensory tiles containing four sounds, a cushion and portable bag. The play mats can create 2D and 3D configurations that provide distinct ways for individual and group learning through play.
2. **Over forty play-based individual and group learning activities** that focus on seven core foundational learning outcomes: Braille and print literacy, cognitive skills, sensory integration, sense of satisfaction, language enrichment, body movement and social interaction. The education activities are adaptable and easily integrated to support national curricula learning outcomes.
3. **Training of educators** through a comprehensive teacher professional development (TPD) activity manual, program videos and lesson plans focused on developing the capacity of educators to create an inclusive learning environment and promote play-based teaching and learning for children of all abilities.
4. **M&E tools** using globally recognised standards in inclusive education and pre-primary learning outcomes.

**Webinar Learning Objectives**

1. **Understand the Unique Features:** Explore the unique features and educational benefits of the Reach & Match Inclusive Education Kit and Reach & Match Light.
2. **Identify Differences:** Learn to identify the differences between Reach & Match and Reach & Match Light.
3. **Promote Literacy and Numeracy:** Discover methods to promote literacy and numeracy, including the use of Alphabet Tiles and Number Tiles to support Braille literacy and numeracy skills.
4. **Explore Practical Applications:** Explore practical applications for classroom and therapeutic sessions using the kits.
5. **Integrate into ECC:** Find ways to incorporate these solutions into the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC).
6. **Support Inclusive Education:** Discover how these adaptable tools can revolutionize your approach to inclusive education and support the unique needs of every learner.

**Reach & Match Learning Kit**- **Key Features and Benefits**

* **Inclusive & Multisensory Learning:**
  + Fun for all abilities with tactile, auditory, and visual activities.
* **Evidence-Based and Adaptable:**
  + Supported by rigorous research, meets global educational standards.
* **Empowering and Education-Focused:**
  + Enhances cognitive, motor, and social skills through accessible training materials and enriching teaching methods.

#### Introduction to Reach & Match Light

* **Compact and Portable Design:**
  + Ideal for smaller spaces and personalized learning environments.
* **Components:**
  + Sensory play mats, alphabet tiles, portable case, and carrying bag.
* **Comparison with Original Kit:**
  + Smaller and more portable, suitable for home use, traveling, and one-on-one therapy sessions.

**Reach & Match Learning Outcome framework**

**Braille and Print Alphabet Tiles**

* **Components:**
  + 26 double-sided tiles featuring Braille and print letters and 1 zip bag
  + Includes 4 patterns, 4 shapes, 4 colors, and 4 sounds.
* **Benefits:**
  + Supports Braille literacy and letter recognition.
  + Provides a multi-sensory learning experience.
  + Enhances tactile and visual learning.
  + Versatile for spelling and extending play.

**Braille and Print Number Tiles**

* **Components:**
  + 26 double-sided tiles featuring numbers in both UEB and Nemeth Braille codes, and 1 zip bag
* **Benefits:**
  + Supports Braille numeracy skills.
  + Engages multiple senses through tactile, visual, and auditory elements.
  + Suitable for counting, basic arithmetic, and number recognition.
  + Designed for inclusivity in learning environments.

#### How Reach & Match Supports ECC

* **Literacy:**
  + Supports pre-braille and Braille literacy skills.
* **Orientation and Mobility:**
  + Develops spatial awareness and body concepts through sensory play.
* **Social Interaction Skills:**
  + Group activities encourage interaction, cooperation, and communication.
* **Sensory Efficiency:**
  + Enhances sensory integration through tactile, auditory, and visual stimulation.
* **Recreation and Leisure:**
  + Offers fun and engaging activities that promote leisure skills.
* **Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills:**
  + Activities focused on sorting, matching, counting, sequencing, and memory training.

#### Practical Applications and Activity Examples

* **Classroom Integration:**
  + Daily routines, sensory exploration, literacy, and numeracy centers.
* **Therapy Use:**
  + Sensory integration sessions, fine motor skills development, and personalized therapy plans.
* **Home Use:**
  + Homeschooling activities, interactive learning environments, and easy setup and storage.

**Access Academy APH webinars about Reach & Match:**

* Using Reach and Match to Engage and Educate all Children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YEON_TL18U>

* Creative Learning to Meet Educational and Therapy Goals Using the Reach & Match

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJNARIfylec>

**Contact Information**

For more information, visit [www.reachandmatch.com](http://www.reachandmatch.com).

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1. Reach & Match has received a number of prestige awards in assistive technology, education and social inclusion, including the 2018 OpenIDEO MIKTA Education in Emergencies Challenge, the 2016 Good Design Award and the 2012 James Dyson Award for design engineering. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Reach & Match was developed by founder Mandy Lau through her Master’s research for children with sensory impairment and multiple needs to develop braille and print early literacy and social skills through tactile strategies and play-based activities. Research into braille literacy, early intervention and inclusion in education informed the design of the Reach & Match learning kit and was developed with a range of educators and specialises utilising a user-centric methodology and co-design approach. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)