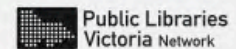




READING AND LITERACY FOR ALL:

A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR VICTORIAN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

2015-18



Questions

- ✦ Who is a member of a public library?
- ✦ Who uses a public library? What do you use it for?
- ✦ Who knows what public libraries offer to support adult literacy?
- ✦ Who links their organisation or students to the library?



Who are we?

- ✦ There are 272 permanent library branches and 29 mobile library services in Victoria
- ✦ There were more than 46 million items borrowed in 2014-2015
- ✦ There were more than 7 million Wi-Fi and PC bookings
- ✦ Almost 2 million people attended programs at libraries across Victoria
- ✦ And there were over 29 million visits to Victorian public libraries in 2014-2015



Collaborative partnership

- ✦ State Library Victoria's partnership with Public Libraries Victoria Network
- ✦ Public Libraries Victoria Network (PLVN) is the peak body for Victoria's public library managers
- ✦ Heart of the partnership is strategic projects to improve library services to all Victorians
- ✦ The *Reading and Literacy for All* suite of projects is just one of projects delivered through this partnership



A focus on literacy

- ✦ In 2012 the ABS reported 46% of Victorians did not have adequate prose literacy skills
- ✦ Only 18% of 3 year old Australians participate in early childhood education, compared with an OECD average of 70%
- ✦ AEDC results indicate that 16% of Victorian preschool children are developmentally “at risk” in language and cognitive skills
- ✦ Public libraries support literacy and reader development through services, programs and collections



Strategic Framework

- ✦ Provides an overview of current library programs supporting literacy and reader development
- ✦ Advocacy tool for public libraries to articulate unique role and key contributions to literacy and reader development
- ✦ Identifies shared priorities for action to support improvement in reading and literacy outcomes



Our vision

Reading and literacy for all. All Victorians deserve the opportunity to develop and maintain their reading and literacy skills. Every Victorian has a right to be informed, enriched and inspired through reading. Communities with strong levels of readership and literacy are more creative, more productive and more resilient, and libraries are the ideal community destination for people to come together to read, to learn, and to learn to read.



Our guiding principles

Victoria's public libraries have agreed on five guiding principles to underpin the *Reading and literacy for all* strategic framework.

- ✦ equitable and inclusive
- ✦ community-centred
- ✦ collaborative
- ✦ evidence-based
- ✦ sustainable



Our goals

To make our vision a reality, Victoria's public libraries will work together to strengthen our contribution to national and state education agendas and improved literacy outcomes.

- ✦ alignment
- ✦ transformation
- ✦ collaboration
- ✦ evaluation
- ✦ advocacy



Our actions

Victoria's public libraries will adopt a consistent and outcome-focused approach to evaluating reading and literacy development activities.

Early years literacy

- ✦ Quality indicators for libraries
- ✦ Assessment of current programs
- ✦ Professional learning
- ✦ Impact evaluation measures

Adult literacy

- ✦ Strategy – public libraries to examine its approach
- ✦ Service - public libraries to continue formal and informal support through collections programs and online access
- ✦ Partnerships – every public library to seek collaborative partnerships



Adult Literacy focus

- ✦ There are many challenges for Victorian public libraries
 - ✦ Demand for adult literacy services in every municipality
 - ✦ Push to eGovernment and impact on libraries
 - ✦ Capacity of public libraries to deliver adult literacy programs and services
- ✦ There are also many opportunities for Victorian public libraries
 - ✦ Incidental literacy learning during family programs
 - ✦ Approaches for digital literacy help can lead to access literacy services
 - ✦ Free targeted collections (online and in print) as well as facilities such as community spaces
- ✦ Opportunities to partner & collaborate with local organisations providing adult literacy services



Questions

- ✦ Is anyone in the audience currently involved in a partnership with public libraries?
- ✦ Tell us about the partnership, how did it start, what are the benefits/outcomes?
- ✦ What do we need to know about partnering with adult literacy agencies to be better partners?



Libraries and adult literacy

Across the Victorian public library network, there is both consistency and variability in how libraries support adult literacy.

Consistency

- ✦ Physical and digital collections for all ages and tastes – fiction and non-fiction books, magazines, newspapers and more
- ✦ Programs – opportunities to engage with one another in reading and literacy-related activities
- ✦ Free and accessible

Variability

- ✦ Book clubs – 75% of libraries provide book clubs where people share their reading experience
- ✦ Writing – 33% of libraries have creative writing events, competitions or workshops
- ✦ Literacy programs – 40% of libraries provide activities or programs aimed at improving reading and oral skills for adults with low literacy skills



Recommendations for libraries

It is recommended that in the short to medium term individual public libraries could best contribute to improving adult literacy levels in their communities through action in three key areas.

1. Strategy

- ✦ Every public library should examine its current approach to supporting adult literacy and be more explicit in what it chooses to do and why

2. Service

- ✦ Every public library should continue its current formal and informal efforts to support adult literacy through its collections, programs and online access

3. Partnerships

- ✦ Every public library should seek to establish collaborative partnerships that support the work of local adult-literacy providers



Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation

Case-study

About ERLC

- ✦ Three municipalities: Knox, Maroondah, Yarra Ranges
- ✦ 386,000 residents
- ✦ 13 branches and 2 mobile outreach services
- ✦ Up to 16% of adults have literacy levels in the lowest range

ERLC's adult literacy strategy

- ✦ Reflect understanding and best practice
- ✦ Engage with the community
- ✦ Building capability in the library workforce
- ✦ Aim for a collaborative approach
- ✦ Advocate to government and industry



Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation

Case-study

Key elements

- ✦ Network of regional service providers and community groups
- ✦ A dedicated literacy team
- ✦ Outreach programs
- ✦ Co-produced programs
- ✦ Partnerships

Challenges

- ✦ Reaching out and engaging with people
- ✦ Time and resources

Opportunities

- ✦ Incidental literacy learning during family programs and digital literacy programs



Melbourne Library Service

Case-study

About Melbourne

- ✦ One council library service
- ✦ 6 branches
- ✦ Great variety in population from quite privileged to very disadvantaged
- ✦ High population of recent migrants

The literacy and outreach team

- ✦ Team leader, three librarians and technical and support staff
- ✦ Lifelong learning and literacy initiatives with a focus on foundation literacy
- ✦ Report on need and demand for library outreach services in all Melbourne neighbourhoods



Melbourne Library Service

Case-study

Other key elements

- ✦ Partnerships with small local organisations
- ✦ Established volunteer program
- ✦ Literacy programs such as conversation groups and a buddies program
- ✦ Other library programs
- ✦ Partnerships

Challenges

- ✦ Building trust with a vulnerable group
- ✦ Time and dedication

Opportunities

- ✦ Incidental literacy learning
- ✦ Outreach



Greater Dandenong Libraries

Case-study

About GDL

- ✦ One council library service
- ✦ 2 branches
- ✦ The most culturally diverse community in Victoria and the largest area of asylum settlement
- ✦ Has the highest proportion of 15- 74 year olds with low literacy (Level One and below) at 26.2% compared to other Victorian municipalities

GDL's strategy

- ✦ Literacy Framework: 2012 – 2016 part of library strategic plan
- ✦ Focusses on literacy support and development at all stages of life
- ✦ Emphasises importance of improving literacy as a way of enabling people to engage meaningfully with society, services and employment
- ✦ Digital literacy is seen as driving the requirement for literacy skills
- ✦ Library staff trained to respond to the needs of those with low literacy/English language skills.



Questions

- ✦ How should we approach you to start talking about a partnership?
- ✦ What have you seen as best practice partnerships
- ✦ What makes it best practice?



Questions

- ✦ What can public libraries do to better support adult literacy?
- ✦ What do we all need to do to better support vibrant literate communities?
- ✦ How can libraries promote their services to with people with low literacy?



Questions

- ✦ Other questions and comments?

More information available at slv.vic.gov.au/read-program

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