15 February 2018

Sir/Madam

Notice is hereby given that a Meeting of the **LIBRARIES AND TOURISM COMMITTEE** is to be held in the <u>**Council Chambers**</u> on the 2nd Floor of the Council Administration Building, 45 Roderick Street, Ipswich commencing at **11.30 am** *or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Conservation and Environment Committee, whichever is the earlier* on <u>**Monday, 19 February 2018**</u>.

MEMBERS OF THE LIBRARIES AND TOURISM COMMITTEE	
Councillor Pahlke **(Chairperson)** Councillor Ireland **(Deputy Chairperson)**	Councillor Antoniolli **(Mayor)** Councillor Wendt **(Deputy Mayor)** Councillor Pisasale Councillor Stoneman

Yours faithfully

ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

LIBRARIES AND TOURISM COMMITTEE AGENDA

11.30 am *or 10 minutes after the conclusion of the Conservation and Environment Committee, whichever is the earlier* on **Monday,**
19 February 2018
Council Chambers

Item No.	Item Title	Officer
1	15th Annual Ipswich Poetry Feast	LSM
2	First 5 Forever Family Literacy Project	LSM
3	Ipswich Libraries – Customer Service Charter and Response and Recovery Plan	LSM
4	Redbank Plains Library Repurpose and Establishment of Logisitics Hub	LSM

** Item includes confidential papers

LIBRARIES AND TOURISM COMMITTEE NO. 2018(02)

19 FEBRUARY 2018

AGENDA

1.   15TH ANNUAL IPSWICH POETRY FEAST

With reference to a report by the Library Services Manager dated 30 January 2018 concerning the delivery of the 15th Annual Ipswich Poetry Feast held in 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and the contents noted.

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2.   *FIRST 5 FOREVER* FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

With reference to a report by the Library Services Manager dated 30 January 2018 concerning the impact of the First 5 Forever Family Literacy project.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and the contents noted.

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3.   IPSWICH LIBRARIES – CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER AND RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PLAN

With reference to a report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017 concerning the development of two new documents in response to a Library Audit.

RECOMMENDATION

A.   That the document titled *Ipswich Libraries – Customer Service Charter,* as detailed in Attachment A to the report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017, be noted.

B.   That the procedure titled *Ipswich Libraries Response and Recovery Plan,* as detailed in Attachment B to the report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017, be noted.

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4.   REDBANK PLAINS LIBRARY REPURPOSE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF LOGISTICS HUB

With reference to a report by the Library Services Manager dated 31 January 2018 concerning the repurposing of the existing Redbank Plains Library and the co-location and establishment of a Logistics Hub at the Redbank Plains Library, in preparation for the July 2018 opening of the Springfield Central Library.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and the contents noted.

** Item includes confidential papers

and any other items as considered necessary.

30 January 2018

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
                    (ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

FROM: LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

RE: 15TH ANNUAL IPSWICH POETRY FEAST

INTRODUCTION:

This is a report by the Library Services Manager dated 30 January 2018 concerning the delivery of the 15th Annual Ipswich Poetry Feast held in 2017.

BACKGROUND:

The Ipswich Poetry Feast is an initiative of Ipswich City Council and originated as part of a celebration of the 1891 Henry Lawson poem, *The Babies of Walloon* and the rejuvenation of the Henry Lawson Bicentennial Park, Walloon project. The aims of the inaugural Ipswich Poetry Feast, launched on 17 November 2002, remain those of the program today:

- Developing and promoting poetry and poetry writing skills across all age groups;
- Encouraging and rewarding excellence in poetry writing;
- Offering emerging poets the chance to showcase their work;
- Raising community awareness of the creativity and skills in poetry writing and performance;
- Showcasing Ipswich as a culturally rich City.

The central focus is a poetry writing competition with student and open age categories, culminating in an Awards Presentation evening. The competition began with a national focus but has developed an international aspect due to overseas interest. Other key annual events that form part of the Poetry Feast program include the Official Launch/Poets' Breakfast, Poetry Writing Workshops in local schools and an online poetry writing workshop open to schools throughout Queensland.

The Ipswich Poetry Feast continues to gain in strength and prestige. Direction and ideas for the program are provided by the Ipswich Poetry Feast Committee, which is a community-based committee chaired by Councillor David Pahlke. Coordination and administrative support is provided by Ipswich Libraries.

Again in 2017, the Ipswich Poetry Feast also received valuable support from the following:

Patrons:

International Patron   Joy Chambers
National Patron   Hon. Matt Foley

Sponsors:

Platinum   Joy Chambers Grundy
Gold   Ipswich Teacher Librarian Network, River 94.9, Rosewood Green and
                       The Queensland Times
Silver   Metro Hotel – Ipswich International

The 2017 Ipswich Poetry Feast program included the following events with total attendance exceeding 2,600:

- **Official Launch/Poets' Breakfast** – Held at Henry Lawson Bicentennial Park, Walloon.

- **International Poetry Writing Competition** – School and open age categories with a total prize pool of more than $6,500. This year's competition attracted 1,319 entries and included entries from all Australian states, the ACT and international entries from Indonesia, New Zealand, Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand, USA and Zimbabwe.

- **Online Poetry Workshops with Lorraine Marwood** – Open to primary schools throughout Queensland with more than 400 students from 15 schools participating.

- **Poetry Writing Workshops in Local Schools** – 20 free workshops conducted by professional poets with Councillors contributing $1,700 toward this program. More than 600 students participated.

- **Special Poetry Events – Australian Dream Re-release** - a Queensland Poetry Festival 2017 Event co-presented by Ipswich Poetry Feast and held at Studio 188 in August 2017. This event featured refugee poet Mohsen Soltany Zand who was supported by Saba Vasefi.

- **Awards Presentation** – Held at the Metro Hotel, Ipswich International and attended by more than 170 guests including the overall winner, Vanessa Page. This was preceded by a pre-function event for sponsors, project partners and other special guests.

Attachment A provides a full listing of Ipswich Poetry Feast events and attendance figures for 2017. These figures include participating schools in both the local student workshops and the online workshops for schools across Queensland.

In 2017, the fifth highest number of entries in the competition's history were received, demonstrating continued support and solid growth in interest in the Ipswich Poetry Feast. A new category highlighting the proud history of Ipswich was introduced to replace the previous mentorship award. The new *Open Age Picture Ipswich* theme required entries to reflect on an image from the Picture Ipswich digital image archive and carried a $600 prize pool for placegetters. The inaugural Picture Ipswich category received 16 entries and, as each poem focussed upon a different image, it effectively showcased the digital archive. Table A below provides a comparison of entry numbers over the past five years:

Table A: Entry numbers by category 2013-2017

Category	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Primary 5-7 yrs	86	30	61	86	92
Primary 8-10 yrs	267	330	323	402	436
Primary 11-12 yrs	203	305	211	254	219
Secondary under 16 yrs	134	71	43	60	93
Secondary under 18 yrs	141	90	41	52	55
Open - Bush	100	99	90	59	118
Open - Other	206	206	190	110	228
Open - Local	56	50	46	47	62
Open – Picture Ipswich Theme					16
Totals	1193	1181	1005	1070	1319

Table B below provides a comparison of events and attendance over the past three years:

Table B: Events figures 2015 – 2017

	2015		2016		2017	
Events	No.	Atdce	No.	Atdce	No.	Atdce
Awards Presentation Pre-function Event	1	52	1	68	1	56
Awards Presentation	1	203	1	201	1	117
Official Launch/Poet's Breakfast	1	61	1	100	1	100
Online Workshop	1	908	1	775	2	414
Workshops in Schools	18	522	20	613	20	668
Written Poetry Competition	1	1,005	1	1,070	1	1,319
Slam Poetry Competition	1	37	1	29	0	0
Slam Poetry Workshop	1	12	1	4	0	0
Special Poetry Event – Qld Poetry Festival	1	27	0	0	1	18
TOTAL EVENTS	**26**	**2,827**	**27**	**2,860**	**27**	**2,692**
General Meetings	**6**	**45**	**5**	**46**	**3**	**28**

Attachment B provides a snapshot of images from a selection of the 2017 Ipswich Poetry Feast events.

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMERS:

The Ipswich Poetry Feast encourages and rewards excellence in the literary arts. It offers aspiring poets of all ages the opportunity to gain experience and skills in poetry writing and performance, to showcase their talents and have their work published. The many facets of the festival offers cultural and economic benefits for the community, whilst raising awareness of the art of poetry, showcasing Ipswich, highlighting the city's proud history and encouraging new visitors to the region.

The Ipswich Poetry Feast contributes to the strategies and outcomes of Council's Advance Ipswich and Corporate Plan 2017-2022 in the following areas:

Provide a full spectrum of life-long learning opportunities, from early learning through to schooling, vocational training and tertiary education that aligns skills and education with emerging employment opportunities.

- Promote whole-of-life learning opportunities, particularly early learning and adult learning.
- Increased participation in learning opportunities across targeted community groups.

Create a city that values its past and embraces opportunities to work together for the betterment of the community.

- Greater engagement with targeted communities.
- Increased community access to learning.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Funding for the 2017 Ipswich Poetry Feast is scoped as part of the Public Programming service stream of Ipswich Libraries and funded in the 2017-18 financial year budget allocation.

A further $7,500 in funding was received from sponsorship and $2,700 from Divisional Allocations.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Ipswich Poetry Feast has developed into a respected and prestigious annual festival with international participation. Its calendar of events offers opportunities for aspiring poets of all ages to gain exposure, skills and experience in poetry writing and performance. The competition also highlights Ipswich's local history and the Picture Ipswich archive.

With participation in 2017 events exceeding 2,600, the Ipswich Poetry Feast is a tangible demonstration of the positive interaction of Ipswich City Council and local literary artists to achieve a community-based outcome and continues to promise an exciting future of creative initiatives and partnerships.

ATTACHMENTS:

Name of Attachment	Attachment
Attachment A – Ipswich Poetry Feast – 2017 - Events	Attachment A
Attachment B – Ipswich Poetry Feast – 2017 - Photographs	Attachment B

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Sylvia Swalling
LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

I concur with the recommendation contained in this report.

Caroline McMahon
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
(ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

DATE	EVENT	VENUE	NO	ATTDCE
**2017 IPSWICH POETRY FEAST - PROGRAM OF EVENTS**				
26-Mar	IPF Official Launch/Poet's Breakfast	Henry Lawson Bicentennial Park	1	100
16-May	IPF Online Workshop - Lorraine Marwood	Queensland Schools	1	346
16-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	Ipswich Central State School	1	31
16-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	Ipswich East State School	1	63
17-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	St Peters Lutheran College	1	33
17-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	Springfield Central State High School	1	33
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	Churchill State School	1	28
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Ipswich Junior Grammar School	1	36
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Angela Peita	St Augustine's College	1	42
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Harry Laing	Ipswich West State School	1	26
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	The Springfield Anglican College	1	33
18-May	Workshops in Schools - Angela Peita	Kruger State School	1	33
22-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Bellbird Park State Secondary College	1	33
22-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Sacred Heart Primary School	1	33
23-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Ipswich Girl's Grammar School	1	20
23-May	Workshops in Schools - Angela Peita	Esk State School	1	33
23-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	St Joseph's Primary School	1	33
23-May	Workshops in Schools - Angela Peita	Toogoolawah State School	1	29
24-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Walloon State School	1	33
24-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Serviceton South State School	1	31
25-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Blair State School	1	33
25-May	Workshops in Schools - Josh Donellan	Bundamba State Secondary College	1	32
20-Jun	IPF Online Workshop - Lorraine Marwood	Queensland Schools	1	68
1-Jul	Poetry Writing Competition	International	1	1,319
27-Aug	Satelite Event - Australian Dream Re-Release	Studio 188	1	18
13-Oct	IPF Awards Presentation - Pre-function Event	Metro Hotel Ipswich International	1	56
13-Oct	IPF Awards Presentation	Metro Hotel Ipswich International	1	117
GRAND TOTAL			**27**	**2,692**

QUEENSLAND SCHOOLS - PARTICIPATION IN ONLINE POETRY WRITING WORKSHOPS			
Date	School	Location	NO OF STUDENTS
16-May	Agnes Water State School	AGNES WATER	33
16-May	Banana State School	BANANA	7
16-May	Brisbane College of Distance Education		18
16-May	Hillview State School	HILLVIEW	27
16-May	Kings Christian College	REEDY CREEK	33
16-May	Kings Christian College	REEDY CREEK	27
16-May	Kruger State School	BELLBIRD PARK	29
16-May	Mirani State School	MIRANI	54
16-May	Thangool State School	THANGOOL	19
16-May	Walloon State School	WALLOON	24
16-May	Waterford State School	WATERFORD	62
16-May	Winfield State School	WINFIELD	13
20-Jun	Banana State School	BANANA	7
20-Jun	Lockrose State School	LOCKROSE	23
20-Jun	Brisbane School of Distance Education		34
TOTAL PARTICIPATION			410

IPSWICH POETRY FEAST 2017

OFFICIAL LAUCH AND POETS BREAKFAST MARCH 2017

AUSTRALIAN DREAM RE-RELEASE EVENT

SCHOOL WORKSHOPS WITH HARRY LAING AND ANGELA PIETA

15TH ANNUAL POETRY FEAST AWARDS PRESENTATION

30 January 2018

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
               (ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

FROM: LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

RE: *FIRST 5 FOREVER* FAMILY LITERACY PROJECT

INTRODUCTION:

This is a report by the Library Services Manager dated 30 January 2018 concerning the impact of the *First 5 Forever* Family Literacy project.

BACKGROUND:

First 5 Forever is a Queensland Government funded family literacy initiative aimed at building stronger language and literacy environments for young children aged 0–5 years. This four year project is being coordinated by the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) and delivered through Public Libraries across the state. Each year, since the project commenced in 2015, Ipswich City Council has received funding of $171,810.00 (ex GST) per annum which fully funds the delivery of this program by Ipswich Libraries.

In 2017 SLQ contracted the Digital Media Research Centre at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to evaluate the *First 5 Forever* initiative. The resulting report, *Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative,* was published in January 2018 (refer Attachment A). This report examines the impacts of the initiative, provides data and examples of the initiative's impact and offers suggestions to guide future library-based literacy programs.

The *First 5 Forever* project is designed to provide strong literacy foundations for children from birth and, over time address Queensland's significant literacy issues, which include:

- 46% of adult Australians cannot function effectively in a knowledge-based economy, due to poor literacy.
- 15.9% of Queensland children identify as being developmentally vulnerable on two or more Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) measures in their first year of school.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are considered more developmentally vulnerable in each of the AEDI measures than non-indigenous children, with a higher proportion of children living in very remote areas considered developmentally vulnerable in each of the AEDI measures.
- 50% of 15 to 24 year olds are unable to read to an adequate level.
- 50% of our language is learned by three years of age.

(*Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative*, 2018)

The report assesses the First 5 Forever initiative's impacts on society, based on criteria from the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework and reveals positive results in all targeted areas:

- Provides access to resources – very strong impact.
- Helps to build ideas – very strong impact.
- Connects people to civic engagement – strong impact.
- Supports the development of community – very strong impact.
- Aids cultural participation – very strong impact.
- Supports health and wellbeing – very strong impact.
- Provides for educational attainment – very strong impact.
- Encourages economic productivity – strong impact.

(Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative, 2018)

These results were based on an extensive review of data collected from Libraries across the state as well as feedback from State Library of Queensland staff and a sample of Public Libraries.

Below is a summary of the key ways in which Ipswich Libraries is addressing each of the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* criteria:

Criteria	Ipswich Libraries Context
Provides access to resources	- Sessions are primarily held in community venues, not library spaces. - Families receive *First 5 Forever* Toolkits containing a selection of early literacy resources or 'buggy books' depending on the program attended. - Membership is encouraged at all sessions. - A Pop-Up Library Finale at a different Branch Library. Each team provides a soft entry point for families to explore library venues, meet library staff and access the full range of resources available.
Helps to build ideas	- All sessions expose participants to stimulating and fun literacy learning concepts. - Sessions explore different ways of immersing children in language and literature and alternative ways to share stories including (but not limited to) Story Time sessions. - Staff are challenged to consider new ways to deliver early literacy messages. - Ideas have been generated and shared through the *First 5 Forever* network, professional development days and partnership or collaboration opportunities with groups and individuals across the Ipswich community.
Connects people to civic engagement	- The high visibility of the *First 5 Forever* program across the community has raised the profile of Ipswich Libraries and challenged traditional views of the role of government at a local level. - This shift in attitude has been recorded through feedback at a local and state-wide level.
Supports the development of community	- Programs have been developed in response to identified needs in the community. - Sessions held at locations such as Bunnings, Queensland Health and Shopping Centres such as Riverlink have facilitated contact with families who may not be library users. - Scheduling fortnightly visits to the same venue or group for a term as well as, ongoing programs at venues such as Bunnings and Shopping Centre's assists in the development of relationships with other local families and staff. - Since May 2017 Ipswich Libraries and *First 5 Forever* have partnered with Playgroup Queensland to deliver a facilitated playgroup at Ipswich Central Library.

Criteria	Ipswich Libraries Context
Aids cultural participation	• Stories from different cultures are included in Story Time sessions. • Where appropriate participants are asked to share words and rhymes in their own language. • Families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities frequently attend Story Times at Queensland Health immunization clinics and have enjoyed using the books provided by the *First 5 Forever* team to retell the story or focus on particular words in their own language. • Ipswich's Korean Playgroup submitted an Expression of Interest and participated in the *First 5 Forever* playgroup visit program. • Families from CALD communities have participated in photo shoots and featured in our marketing materials.
Supports health and wellbeing	• Staff visit Ipswich Health Plaza and the Goodna Community Health fortnightly to share stories with families while they wait for their child to be immunized. • All *First 5 Forever* sessions model positive communication and promote healthy lifestyle choices (including snack foods, leisure activities and entertainment).
Provides for educational attainment	• Programs have targeted children 0 – 5 years and their parents in venues beyond the Library in order to reach those families who are more comfortable in less formal settings. • Sessions emphasize the important role parents play as their child's first teachers. • Locating programs in community venues such as Shopping Centres has assisted in reaching families who may not feel comfortable accessing more traditional educational settings.
Encourages economic productivity	• Benefits to the Ipswich economy include partnerships with local businesses, increased use of community facilities, upskilling of library staff and across-community capacity building. • Collaborations with other sections of Council and organizations have assisted in amplifying the impact of program delivery and the *First 5 Forever* messages.

The *Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative* report identifies high levels of participation across the state as being a major factor in its success with participation nearly doubling from 2015 to 2016. Participation in the *First 5 Forever* initiative across the Ipswich community is growing each year.

This is reflected in attendance figures for the Ipswich community as shown the table below:

	July - December 2015		2016		2017	
Activities	Sessions	Attendance	Sessions	Attendance	Sessions	Attendance
Community Events	1	31	8	303	2	707
Pop-Up Library Fun	0	0	16	579	16	990
Pop-Up Finale	0	0	1	39	4	306
Story Time - Bunnings	5	77	25	487	35	1000
Story Time - Qld Health	15	210	52	561	48	688
Story Time - Riverlink	0	0	15	292	18	565
Story Time - Other	0	0	19	136	5	128
Auslan Story Time - Ipswich Libraries	0	0	6	389	1	125
Toddler Time - Ipswich Libraries	0	0	35	579	62	1897
Toddler/Story Time - Playgroups	46	672	96	1599	69	1334
TOTALS	**67**	**990**	**273**	**4964**	**260**	**7740**

Anecdotal and survey evidence collected from families across the Ipswich community supports the findings of this state-wide report. As the report outlines, partnerships with other organizations are an important factor in the project's success. They have the potential to enhance family relationships and encourage a more participatory culture with a focus on lifelong learning.

Ipswich Libraries is committed to continuing to provide leadership across the community in the provision of early literacy programs. Our *First 5 Forever* team plays a crucial role in ensuring families are supported in the time before their children reach school. This includes the delivery of early literacy messages as well as supporting families to access health services and other community organizations as needed.

In providing recommendations for future programming the report suggests the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* criteria be used as a strategic development and planning tool. This framework aligns with our existing planning strategy and will assist in ensuring we continue to build connections with organizations and groups across the community to meet the needs of families.

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMERS:

The *First 5 Forever* family literacy initiative supports Queensland parents and primary caregivers, as the child's first and most important teacher, by enhancing their understanding of the value of early language and providing increased access to resources that support language, reading and literacy through public libraries.

The *First 5 Forever* program has increased the capacity of Ipswich Libraries to develop and deliver family literacy programs that support parents and caregivers in:

- Understanding the importance of the first five years in establishing literacy skills which provide the basis of later success at school and beyond.
- Providing a language and literacy rich environment from birth which includes sharing books and stories.
- Developing skills in sharing stories, songs and rhymes through modelling by library staff.
- Increasing the confidence, self-esteem and knowledge of parents and carer's to empower them as they assist their child in the transition to school.

The *First 5 Forever Family Literacy* project contributes to the outcomes of Ipswich City Council's Corporate Plan 2012–2017 in the following strategic priority area:

Community Spirit and Wellbeing:
- fosters the unique sense of community that defines Ipswich for both residents and visitors;
- residents of Ipswich are valued and active in informing and participating in local decision making processes that shape and improve the quality of life in Ipswich;
- residents of Ipswich communicate and demonstrate a sense of pride and belonging to their community that acknowledges and celebrates their culture, its contribution to community and well-being and equitable access to cultural facilities; and
- Ipswich is home to a vibrant and healthy community.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATION:

This project is funded by the Queensland Government with $171, 810.00 (ex GST) per annum being committed across the four year funding cycle 2015 – 2018. The continuation of this Project is subject to a renewal of the funding agreement between the State Government and the State Library of Queensland; it is due to expire December 2018.

CONCLUSION:

The *First 5 Forever* Family Literacy project offers further opportunities for Ipswich Libraries to deliver family literacy programs that build connections between the library, community agencies, the early childhood sector, parents and carers, building stronger language and literacy environments for young children aged 0–5 years across the Ipswich region.

ATTACHMENTS:

Name of Attachment	Attachment
Attachment A – QUT - *Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative*	Attachment A
Attachment B – 2017 Ipswich *First 5 Forever* Photographs	Attachment B

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>:

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Sylvia Swalling
LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

I concur with the recommendation contained in this report.

Caroline McMahon
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
(ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

Evaluating the Impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative

QUT Digital Media Research Centre

Jean Burgess, Kirralie Houghton & Michael Dezuanni

NOVEMBER 2017

Contents

1. Introduction

Executive Summary

First 5 Forever is an early and family literacy initiative coordinated by State Library of Queensland (SLQ) and first implemented in 2015. It is delivered in partnership with local councils, the network of Queensland public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres, and other government and non-government agencies throughout Queensland. SLQ has commissioned independent evaluations of the initiative, which have indicated positive outcomes in terms of reach, participation levels, and overall effectiveness (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2017).

The aim of this report is to identify and evaluate the broader societal impacts of the initiative, building on the existing *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework. Drawing on a contextual review, existing First 5 Forever data and evaluations, as well as interviews with First 5 Forever and public library staff, the First 5 Forever initiative was evaluated in terms of the framework's eight primary criteria. It was found to have achieved impacts in every category:

- ▶ Provides access to resources – very strong impact
- ▶ Helps to build ideas – very strong impact
- ▶ Connects people to civic engagement – strong impact
- ▶ Supports the development of community – very strong impact
- ▶ Aids cultural participation – very strong impact
- ▶ Supports health and wellbeing – very strong impact
- ▶ Provides for educational attainment – very strong impact
- ▶ Encourages economic productivity – strong impact

The report breaks down these primary criteria into sub-criteria, providing evidence for each, and uses case studies to further highlight examples of best practice. The report demonstrates that public libraries are highly appropriate vehicles through which to support, facilitate, and lead early literacy development programs. While primarily built around promoting and improving early literacy, the First 5 Forever initiative is also a community facilitator and connector, supporting families and children through a culture of participation and lifelong learning.

The First 5 Forever initiative has enhanced families' connections with health professionals and community organisations, and has provided a safe space to learn about parenting, connect with other families and discuss issues. The initiative encourages and inspires innovation and the support of local economies through skills development, engagement with local providers and the use of locally sourced materials. The partnerships facilitated by public libraries through First 5 Forever with other service providers from childcare, to health and community organisations create additional efficiencies and enhance community connections for families.

Future development of First 5 Forever could enhance and amplify these impacts by building activities explicitly around the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework.

Objectives

The objectives of this report are to:

1. Identify and evaluate the existing and potential societal impacts and benefits of the First 5 Forever (F5F) family literacy initiative;
2. Situate, critically analyse and provide clear evidence of this impact, building on the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework; and
3. Articulate the opportunities to enhance this impact in future library-based family and early literacy programs.

Context and Background

First 5 Forever is a family literacy initiative coordinated by SLQ, and first implemented in 2015. The primary aim of this initiative is to provide strong literacy foundations for the 317,490 Queensland children aged 0-5 (ABS, 2017) and the more than 61,000 babies born in Queensland each year (ABS, 2016). *The SLQ Libraries for Literacy Strategy 2011-14*[1] identified and responded to a number of key issues for literacy in Queensland:

▶ 46% of adult Australians cannot function effectively in a knowledge-based economy, due to poor literacy
▶ 15.9% of Queensland children identify as being developmentally vulnerable on two or more Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) measures in their first year of school
▶ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are considered more developmentally vulnerable in each of the AEDI measures than non-Indigenous children, with a higher proportion of children living in very remote areas considered developmentally vulnerable in each of the AEDI measures
▶ 50% of 15 to 24-year-olds are unable to read to an adequate level
▶ 50% of our language is learned by three years of age

The First 5 Forever initiative was developed and delivered by SLQ in partnership with local councils, the network of over 320 Queensland public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres, and other government and non-government agencies (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2017) covering 97% of the local government areas of the State.

First 5 Forever has been supported with $20m in Queensland State Government funding over four years. It is grounded in and responds to the ALIA *Early Literacy Framework and Strategy for Australian Public Libraries* report (ALIA, 2014), which focuses on the special leadership role for libraries in early development, and in particular for family-based activities in early literacy, as well as in connecting families with other services and benefits associated with the library's role as a community connector.

SLQ previously commissioned a two-phase evaluation of the First 5 Forever initiative covering the first and second years of delivery (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2015 and 2016). The evaluations draw on participant feedback to highlight the individual benefits of participation for families, as

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1 http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/202043/Literacy-Framework.pdf

well as providing guidance in relation to suggested improvements to the delivery and management of the initiative.

The resulting reports indicate strong levels of participation with nearly 452,200 attendances at 21,500 in-library sessions in 2016 and 445,000 attendances at 17,400 in-library sessions in 2015. Given the total population of children under five in Queensland is around 317,490, this represents very high levels of participation.

As part of the First 5 Forever Initiative, 8,000 outreach sessions (in locations such as parks and childcare centres) were held in 2016, building from 1,100 in 2015. The estimated number of participants engaged through these sessions nearly doubled from 2015 to 2016 to reach 87,400. In addition, 25,700 parent and caregiver toolkits were distributed in 2016, up from 18,982 in 2015.

The initiative also involved training and capacity-building for First 5 Forever library staff. To this end, a series of 17 workshops at 13 locations with a total 617 participants from 151 organisations was delivered in 2015; and in 2016, 20 workshops in 14 locations across the State delivered professional development to 673 participants. Feedback from the workshops was very positive.

This report seeks to map the broader societal impact of First 5 Forever. It aims to identify how the positive impacts of the First 5 Forever initiative and similar early and family literacy programs can be amplified and extended beyond the individual level when situated in the context of the modern public library. In doing so, it builds on SLQ's previously commissioned research on the impact of libraries as creative spaces (Light et al. 2016). The resultant report provides a framework to evaluate the broader societal impact of the First 5 Forever initiative, and to identify most significant areas of potential future investment in library-based family literacy programs, including but extending beyond those focused around traditional knowledge-based library activities.[2]

The report also highlights the ways public libraries collaborate with other cultural, health and early childhood service providers to amplify and embed these benefits in the community.

Methods

The research was conducted in two phases over a six-week period.

The **Contextual Review** involves a focused review of Australian and international literature which maps the impact of contemporary family and early literacy programs in library settings. We identify best-practice examples of practical strategies implemented by libraries and demonstrate how these activities are accessed and utilised by the community, paying attention to activities for children and families focusing on family literacy and digital literacy. Given the increasing prevalence of digital media in young children's lives, and within library programming activities, we also explore the relationships between digital media technologies and early or family literacy. This literature was sourced through the deployment of a systematic scholarly and 'grey' literature

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2 The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces report and detailed evaluation framework can be accessed at the SLQ website: https://goo.gl/vomzHJ

search based on relevant keywords, surveys of benchmark library websites, and additional guidance provided by SLQ staff based on their sector-specific knowledge.

Case Studies of First 5 Forever funded activities implemented in Queensland libraries were identified, and analysed both critically and qualitatively with reference to the pre-existing *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework criteria for impact evaluation (Light et al. 2016). Each of the case studies can be mapped onto at least one of these criteria. The selection and analysis process involved extensive engagement with First 5 Forever project staff based at SLQ, access to data already collected by SLQ on First 5 Forever activities around Queensland, as well as the collection of further details and materials from local libraries identified through background data analysis. Coordinators from Logan, Moreton Bay, Livingstone, Sunshine Coast and Brisbane libraries provided specific examples of activities within their regions and other specific examples were gleaned from report data from 2015 and 2016.

2. Contextual review

Early and Family Literacy Initiatives in Australian Libraries

Early learning participation in Australia is among the lowest in the developed world. In 2015 Australia ranked 26th out of 42 OECD countries with 68 per cent of three-year-old Australians participating in early childhood education. This compared with an OECD average of 78 per cent (OECD, 2017).

> Parents and caregivers are the first teachers. The more stimulation they provide by talking to their babies, singing to them, and sharing rhymes and stories, the better the outcomes for their children. Economic and life-changing benefits can be achieved if parents or caregivers introduce their children to books at home, facilitated by sessions at their local libraries. (ABS, 2012)

Public libraries are perfectly positioned to support reading and literacy development through universal access to books and resources (State Library Victoria, 2016). Libraries are places for learning, promoting and encouraging a culture of reading for people of all ages and interests, providing free access to information that can support and improve literacy, knowledge, language and digital literacy skills. The combined power of these factors underpins the strength of the public library network as an agent for improving reading and literacy outcomes in ways that other organisations or networks cannot (State Library Victoria, 2016).

Storytime sessions have a long and well-established place in the public library, helping connect young children to literature (Campana et al. 2016). While they were originally focused on supporting a love of reading in young children, it was in the mid-1950s that library staff began to purposefully focus on supporting early or emergent literacy skills (Campana et al. 2016, Albright, Delecki, and Hinkle, 2009). Today, libraries continue to focus on supporting children's early

literacy skills with targeting programs and parental supports designed to reach children from the ages of birth to school. The *Libraries as Creative Spaces* report identified 73% of programs in Queensland libraries that had some focus on children, with 40% of those catering for children under school age, equating to 2786 early childhood programs across Queensland in the two-month period of data collection on this aspect of the study (Light et al. 2016).

> Reading is an essential foundation for learning. The ability to understand written language is a basis for all education, and affords access to employment, rights, and services (Save the Children, 2016)

In 2011, the ALIA Public Library Advisory Committee produced an early literacy framework and strategy (updated in 2014) for Australian public libraries to establish standards and encourage libraries to act as 'active connectors' that bring together people, early literacy programs and resources (ALIA, 2014). Establishing and maintaining partnerships with the early childhood sector provides a context for libraries to act as the catalyst and support for parents and children in these early literacy years (ALIA, 2014). The framework recommends active involvement of public libraries and describes the nature of this involvement at both a basic and an optimum level:

At a basic level, every public library should:

- ▶ Carry out a local family needs analysis
- ▶ Provide resources — e.g. picture books, parenting books
- ▶ Enable professional development access for appropriate staff
- ▶ Hold regular storytimes
- ▶ Bring community partners together
- ▶ Record and report early literacy achievements
- ▶ Include responsibility for early learning in at least one staff member's role statement

At an optimum level libraries could:

- ▶ Include early literacy features in every library plan
- ▶ Offer professional development to other agencies
- ▶ Have library staff attend other agencies' professional development sessions
- ▶ Promote resources and make them widely available e.g. bulk loans for kindergartens
- ▶ Conduct outreach to include vulnerable, hard-to-reach, non-library users
- ▶ Actively create programs for baby bounce, rhyme time, and storytime activities
- ▶ Provide parenting support and programs such as connection and education for teenage mums
- ▶ Participate in academic and other research
- ▶ Collaborate with other libraries (locally and/or nationally) about the development of resources and programs
- ▶ Be proactively involved in the reading and literacy debate
- ▶ Participate in the provision of early literacy incentives (free DVDs, books, other materials) as a public library membership bonus

ALIA has continued to advocate for and support the development of early literacy programs within libraries (Campana et al. 2016). Libraries have further built an evidence based foundation for conducting early literacy programs with quantified benefits for emergent literacy skills (ALIA, 2014, Campana et al. 2016, Henry 2004, State Library Victoria, 2016). Storytime sessions and other preschool activities can be tailored to support eight early literacy concepts collated and listed here:

- ▶ Awareness of print (being excited about and interested in books)
- ▶ Relationship of print to oral language (noticing print everywhere, knowing how to handle a book, and following words on a page)
- ▶ Understanding the structure of texts
- ▶ Letter knowledge (knowing the difference between how letters look, their names, and their sounds)
- ▶ Ability to use decontextualized oral language
- ▶ Phonological awareness (playing with the sounds in words)
- ▶ Narrative skills (telling stories and describing things)
- ▶ Enriched vocabulary (knowing the specific names of things)[3]

(Campana et al. 2016, *An Overview of Child Development and Early Literacy Skills*)

There is solid evidence of the First 5 Forever initiative's benefits for early literacy skills for young Queenslanders. The initiative has been evaluated in terms of its benefits to children for early literacy (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2016) using the *Early Literacy Framework (2011-2015)*.

Findings from the review focused on the impact of the First 5 Forever Initiative in relation to:

- ▶ Increasing access to emergent literacy experiences
- ▶ Reaching all families with children under five
- ▶ Collaborative partnerships and coordination
- ▶ Family and community awareness campaigns
- ▶ Workforce capability and standards
- ▶ Backbone organisation and collective impact initiative

The review's focus meant that there was limited information captured about the additional benefits that the initiative offered, although some of the quotes provided some promising indications of this broader impact:

> [First 5 Forever has] enabled us to look outside the box of what we would normally do within the library and start looking at what we can do out in the community.' --- Stakeholder interviewee (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2016)

At the Australian National Early Literacy Summit 2016[4] a clear message about the need for a strong evidence base for early literacy programs was articulated. With the Australian Early Development Census providing a snapshot of literacy for five-year-olds every three years, the need for longitudinal studies for a specific cohort was established.[4]

The summit drew together specialists from a number of fields including early education, medicine, and neuroscience, confirming the following factors as being vital in early childhood development:

- ► The first five years last a lifetime
- ► Good nutrition, health, and exercise are critical
- ► Children are born ready to learn
- ► The best learning happens in nurturing relationships
- ► The brain develops through use
- ► Children's wellbeing is critical to brain development and learning
- ► Children learn through being engaged and doing
- ► Children learn from watching and copying
- ► Children's self-control is critical for learning, responsibility and relationships
- ► Children learn language by listening to it and using it
- ► Children are born ready to use and learn mathematics.

The Early Literacy Summit considered the storytimes and other activities that are common in most libraries around Australia. Acknowledged as having a significant impact on learning outcomes at school, these programs target pre-literacy or early literacy skills (ALIA, 2011).

Their management and delivery vary significantly among Australian States and Territories, reflecting the different state-level organisational structures and priorities across the country. The following section summarises these programs, and gives details about their evaluation processes where available.

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4 https://www.alia.org.au/australian-national-early-literacy-summit-2016

Australian Library-Based Early Literacy Initiatives

STATE	PROGRAM NAME	DETAILS	EVALUATION & RESEARCH
Victoria	1,000 Books Before School	Launched in 2016 across Victoria, this was an expansion of a program developed at Hume Libraries. Using a passport style approach, parents keep track of the books that have been read to kids, and there are prizes to collect from the local library along the way.	See Shoghi et al, 2013.[5]
Western Australia	Better Beginnings	More than 10 years' duration, originally funded by Rio Tinto and conducted in partnership with Edith Cowan University to conduct evaluation and longitudinal research.	Research conducted by Edith Cowan University evaluated the program in 2012 five years after commencement interviewing and surveying parents, healthcare workers and librarians. The evaluations assessed the program in terms of early literacy skills outcomes.[6]
Northern Territory	The Walk to School	Establishing a model of early literacy programs for Indigenous Knowledge Centres in the NT, this program successfully gained funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The program was evaluated in 2005 and 2007.	The Evaluation Report and the Language, Literacy and Learning for Life Policy provide the framework for Northern Territory Library's Indigenous Early Years Literacy strategy.[7]
South Australia	The Little Big Book Club	More than 10 years' duration, now operated by Raising Literacy Australia.	Longitudinal study by University of South Australia of kids participating in the Little Big Book Club (Hill, Forster & Ward, 2014).[8]
New South Wales	Early Words Let's Read – Smith Family NSW; 10 minutes a day – Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation; non library driven programs e.g. Paint the Town Read)	While there is no overall State Library based program, there is a number of early literacy programs within public libraries in the state.	There is a current research project being conducted by the Institute of early childhood, Macquarie University Including a survey of all NSW public libraries, a comprehensive review of research on early literacy development and practices; and close observations and analysis of 24 NSW public libraries.[9]
Australian Capital Territory	ACT offers a range of Territory-wide library-based services	Offers common library programs for 0-2 years and 3-5 years and their parents.	Evaluations not available.

5 https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/live-learn/1000-books-school
6 https://www.better-beginnings.com.au/research/research-about-better-beginnings
7 http://www.territorystories.nt.gov.au/bitstream/handle/10070/172810/Walk_to_School_A4.pdf
8 http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/
9 http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/sites/thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/files/files/raising_literacy_australia_strategic_plan_2015-20_0.pdf

Tasmania	Rock and Rhyme in library programs Launch into learning (based in local schools) - not specifically library-based as libraries and schools in the same government portfolio	The whole island of Tasmania is served by a single public library service (LINC) under the Department of Education.	Evaluations not available.

This table is limited to library-based initiatives and does not include early literacy initiatives based within childcare, health or preschool programs, such as the New South Wales Early Start preschool initiative for children from low socio-economic backgrounds. A common theme in all states was the provision of Storytime and exposure to books and stories, along with the addition of rhymes and songs. The provision of books to have and use at home was valued and fits strongly with public library values. Giving parents access to lists and recommendations was evident in the South Australian, Western Australian, and Queensland models. Western Australia demonstrated the role of private sector sponsorship and the Northern Territory acted as an exemplar for meeting the specific cultural needs of an Indigenous population. First 5 Forever has a strong component of education and professional development for library staff delivering the program and demonstrates leadership in the cross-sector collaboration among health, education and local government organisations in the initiation of conversations in early literacy and education.

In 2016, the Victorian State Library launched its initiative 1000 Books Before School. It was an expansion of a pilot project commenced in Hume Libraries. The program encourages families to record the books they read to their children and win prizes for targets along the way (e.g. 100 books, 250 books, and so on). As this is a relatively new program, there have been no formal evaluations to date.[10]

The Reading and Literacy for All[11] initiative established a set of performance indicators for the Victorian Public Library system to track the impact of early literacy programs and assist with decision making processes. The following table shows the four indicator areas (quality, uptake, reach and impact), with ten corresponding measures for assessment. These performance indicators appropriately focus primarily on early literacy skills and participation indicators.

Table: Performance Indicators, Victorian State Library

INDICATOR	MEASURE
Quality	1. Percentage of Victorian public library services with early years literacy services that meet the minimum standards described by the quality indicators
	2. Average number of hours of early years literacy programs delivered in

10 https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/live-learn/1000-books-school
11 http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/Reading-and-literacy-for-all-early-years-quality-indicators.pdf

	Victorian public libraries each week
	3. Feedback from family members and carers and satisfaction with libraries' early years literacy programs
Uptake	4. Average number of children participating in early years literacy programs in Victorian public libraries each week
	5. Average number of adult family members or carers participating in early years literacy programs in Victorian public libraries each week
	6. Turnover rate (loans per collection item) for board books, picture books and e-books for pre-school-age children
Reach	7. Percentage of pre-school children aged 0 to 6 years who regularly participate in early years literacy programs in Victorian public libraries
Impact	8. Percentage of children aged 0 to 6 years who are read to every day
	9. Percentage of children who start school 'at risk' or 'developmentally vulnerable' in the domains of language and communication
	10. Percentage of Foundation (Prep) students whose literacy levels on school entry are assessed as being at or above standard

Source: State Library Victoria Reading and Literacy for All Report 2016

The Northern Territory has a library-based program called The Walk to School, with a specific focus on early literacy skills for Indigenous children.[12] This program is about helping support Indigenous parents, carers and young children themselves, as they begin their journey into formal education. Based in public libraries and knowledge centres across the Territory the program has won awards for access to learning from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in 2007 recognising its innovative approach in the delivery of appropriate library services for Indigenous communities. The program was evaluated in 2004 and again in 2007 through surveys and interviews with parents and library staff demonstrating significant impact in the provision of early literacy skills, information literacy and learning for life for the children and caregivers who participated. The 2005 evaluation presented key findings suggesting that the Northern Territory Libraries and Knowledge Centres model could be a "key infrastructure element for building capacity in Indigenous communities".

There were 39 key findings relating to literacy, information literacy and learning for life presented. Highlighting two here that relate to broader community impacts, the evaluation found that:

▶ Children's services are an important area because they encourage the development of literacy as a social practice, associating reading with pleasure, leisure, and personal interests rather than the set curriculum and performance demands of formal schooling. Lap sit and toddler sessions also necessarily involve parents and so develop parental skills and understanding about early reading behaviours.

▶ Early childhood activities are designed to encourage return visits and establish a culture of library engagement that can progress through childhood. They do not need to replace traditional early learning activities, but provide an additional layer that has important implications for future educational success.[13]

In Western Australia, the Better Beginnings early literacy program has been run for more than ten years. Initially established as a partnership between Rio Tinto and Edith Cowan University, the

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12 http://www.territorystories.nt.gov.au/bitstream/handle/10070/172810/Walk_to_School_A4.pdf
13 http://www.ntl.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/4680/nakata_finalreport.pdf

program was established with public libraries as the appropriate access point for preschool-aged children.[14] Longitudinal evaluations demonstrated significant impacts, including:

- ▶ 85% of parents surveyed reported that they read to their child after receiving the Better Beginnings reading packs (only 14% of these parents reported reading to their child beforehand)
- ▶ 88% of parents reported that their confidence in sharing books with their child had increased after being involved in Better Beginnings
- ▶ The average number of books in the home suitable for reading to children increased from 15 to 125
- ▶ Children's library membership increased from 4% to 65%. Parents indicated this had been influenced by Better Beginnings

The evaluations also demonstrated four further findings:

- ▶ Better Beginnings have provided books and literacy activities to more than 250,000 Western Australian families since 2005
- ▶ The program has delivered almost $2 million worth of literacy materials each year to families
- ▶ It has connected families with agencies in the community that offer support at many levels
- ▶ It is a proven successful program with an independent evaluation that shows how it is helping families and the community

This extension of additional support beyond the literacy programs hints at the broader impact of early literacy programs in libraries, potentially extending their benefits beyond individual children and families, and even to whole communities.

The South Australian Library also has a program for early literacy called The Little Big Book Club, which has been running since 2005. The Little Big Book Club provides resources to parents and library staff for the implementation of the program, including a range of appropriate e-books. The program focuses on supporting parents and caregivers to get the most out of sharing books and starting the literacy journey with their children as early as possible. The program identifies reading, talking, singing and playing as all important ways in which children learn. To this end, the program includes reading packs, featured stories and reading activities, workshops and community libraries (providing picture books in communities with limited literacy resources in partnership with other community groups).[15] In 2011, a longitudinal study by the University of South Australia involving over 500 families including four surveys and qualitative interviews demonstrated the positive impacts on foundational literacies, indicating readiness to start school (Hill, Foster & Ward, 2014).

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14 https://www.better-beginnings.com.au/
15 http://www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au/

The study aimed to:

1. Explore the impact of the Little Big Book Club and a range of family literacy programs on the reading and language practices of families of young children aged birth to two years;
2. Understand the changing reading practices of diverse families with children from birth to five years; and
3. Explore what may contribute to the sustainability of family literacy programs for families of children birth to five years (Hill, Foster & Ward, 2014).

The study found that the program was effective in encouraging habits of reading to children, and over time these habits became embedded in family life. 98% of parents of children at 12-18 months were reading to their children twice a day. By the time the children had reached two years old, 100% of participating parents perceived reading to children as having some long-term benefits for their child. 70% saw lifelong learning benefits; 30% saw wellbeing benefits (Hill, Foster & Ward, 2014).

The study also discussed child development at various ages, especially as their awareness moved from the reader and speech to the book, and as they became more involved with the story (Hill, Foster & Ward 2014). The surveys also indicated that the website was a useful resource for parents. The use of the local library by participants increased as a result of the program. 66% of parents were using the library to attend community sessions and 80% were using it to borrow books (Hill, Foster & Ward, 2014).

While the State Library of New South Wales does not have an overall State-based program, individual libraries do offer a range of programs for early literacy skill development, and smaller collectives participate in a number of localised and philanthropy-led early literacy programs like Early Words, Let's Read, and Paint the Town Read. The State Library of NSW has a current research partnership with the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University which will include a survey of current early literacy programs and practices across the state with a detailed review of 24 libraries to form the basis of a context-sensitive framework for evaluation. The findings of this research are due in 2018.

Situating First 5 Forever in the Australian Context

Overall, First 5 Forever is a leading example of Australian library-based early and family literacy programs. It demonstrates the impact of targeted funding, skills development for library staff, collaborations with other early childhood organisations, and effective media engagement.

The initiative clearly aligns with the ALIA guidelines for early literacy programs in libraries. The existing independent evaluations of the initiative have provided strong positive feedback, particularly in terms of its development of additional directed early literacy programs, training support for library staff, as well as community awareness, partnerships and funding. First 5

Forever has raised the profile of early literacy programs in the state's public libraries as well as improving their quality through professional development supporting capabilities and standards.

The following table taken from the evaluation report summarises the initiative's achievements in terms of its stated objectives.

CORE DELIVERABLES	KEY STATS
Increasing access to emergent literacy experiences: more places at public programs including Baby, Toddler and Storytime sessions.	An estimated 17,400 library sessions for children under 5 years and their families in 2015, and 21,500 in 2016. In total there were nearly 445,000 attendances at First 5 Forever activities held within libraries in 2015, and 452,200 in 2016.
Reaching all families with children under 5: outreach strategies and information toolkits for parents / caregivers of young children that support their role as their child's first educator.	Parents' toolkit endorsed by several peak industry bodies. 1,138 outreach sessions held in 2015, growing to 8,000. The estimated number of participants engaged through these sessions went from 38,500 (2015) to 87,400 (2016), which represented a 195% increase in attendance rates. 18,982 toolkits distributed in 2015; 25,700 in 2016.
Collaborative partnerships and coordination: local steering or advisory groups and enabling library staff to partner with local early childhood sector workers to create consistent key messages and long-term strategies.	Approximately two thirds of participating councils engaged in at least one reference group. 565 community partners engaged by libraries through program delivery in 2016, 73% of which were new and attributed to First 5 Forever.
Family and community awareness campaign: a state-wide awareness campaign aimed at parents and primary care-givers.	39,200 First 5 Forever website sessions and 983,000 Facebook impressions in 2016; 29,600 users and 77,500 views of the campaign in 2016.
Workforce capability and standards: professional development and emergent literacy workshops for the regions.	In 2016, the First 5 Forever team provided workshops to 673 participants, with 134 agencies and organisations represented.
Backbone organisation: collective impact initiative: SLQ central funding, resources, guidance, support and evaluation.	$4.5m of funding and support made available to 72 councils in 2016. 42 of 56 participating councils submitted acquittals, representing approximately 98% of the Queensland population. SLQ has designed and implemented data capture tools used at workshops and professional development sessions during the implementation period.

Source: Evaluation of F5F Program 2016 (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2016)

International Early and Family Literacy Programs

There are several noteworthy international examples of early and family literacy programs, many of which incorporate a leadership role for libraries.

International early and Family Literacy Programs

Program	Country	Description
Book Trust (not exclusively a Library program)	UK	Umbrella program incorporating several projects and initiatives that aim to bring books and people together.
Bookstart (not exclusively a Library program)	UK	One of the initiatives associated with Booktrust. Focuses on early literacy. Aims to reach every 6–9 month-old baby in England. Currently being extended to include all the preschool years.
Talk to your Baby	UK	UK National Literacy Trust campaign to encourage parents and carers to talk more to children from birth to three. Resources include research, tips for parents, and advice for those wanting to develop similar programmes.
The early years library network	UK	Seeks to raise the quality of library services to pre-school children and their families. Provides national support for specialist early years library staff and spreads good practice across the whole public library sector, including library authorities with no specialist staff.
Storysacks	UK	UK library/social services initiative, based on using a sack with soft toys and props to support the telling or reading of stories. It has become a popular, non-threatening way of encouraging parents and carers to start sharing stories with their children, especially for parents with little positive experience of books. Particularly successful with multicultural communities, including traditional stories. Linked to the government's Surestart Initiatives.
Reading is Fundamental (not library-based)	UK	A comprehensive website with the aim 'creating a nation of lifelong readers', suitable for both professional educators and parents. One of the initiatives of the National Literacy Trust (above). The site has downloadable tip sheets for parents on choosing books for your child, and helping children to read.
Involve Me	TAIWAN	A pilot project targeting family (intergenerational) learning and interaction through information and communications technology in public libraries. The program focuses on early literacy, parental learning, sharing and community building within the public library context. The project involved using information and communications technology (ICT) for developing stories and literacy skills.
Readers for Life (incorporating Early Read initiative and Reading is Fun: Start Now!)	SINGAPORE	Readers for Life is an overall strategy for reading at all ages with a specific program for each age - early literacy comes under the Early Read initiative or Reading is Fun foundation programs. Reading is fun includes 'Early Read', 'Kids Read' and 'Fun with Tots'. There are also workshops for parents addressing literacy skills and activities to encourage reading.
Storytelling in Public Libraries	ZIMBABWE	Zimbabwe utilised public libraries as a key element in a national strategy to improve literacy rates (from 75% in 1980 to 92% in 2011). Their evaluation study noted the importance and provision of materials in local language and that the public library is also using storytelling sessions to restore to life folklore and oral communications of the past. Storytelling sessions are also noted for their support of intergenerational learning.
Consejo Puebla de Lectura (CPL)	MEXICO	CPL houses a library open to the public with more than 18,000 books, comprising fiction, nonfiction and textbooks for children, youth and adults. The library houses four service areas: non-narrative, literacy, kids books and a Bebeteca. A Bebeteca is a special room dedicated to babies and their families. Clean foam mats allow babies and infants to crawl around and discover the baby library, a collection of books geared towards babies and placed on the floor, so that the children can discover the books themselves. Activities such as singing together, rhyming, reading aloud and consulting parents complement this service. There are also mobile Bebetecas which can be installed on the roadside in areas without suitable rooms, for instance for a Saturday morning session for kids living in the neighborhood.
Read to Me	USA Idaho	Idaho State library website with information on brain development, books and babies and early literacy skills. Contains links for further information.
Reach out and Read (Not primarily library-based)	USA and Canada	Used throughout North America, this successful initiative is based on supporting children's literacy when they visit the doctor with parents or carers.
Read.Talk.Play	CANADA Edmonton	Read.Talk.Play. is an umbrella designation used to promote various early literacy development programs run in the library including: Storytime Station and its video production program; Welcome Baby - a package for new babies; and 100 Great Books to Read Together - a book list for parents and caregivers (The Edmonton Public Library, 2011).
BoekStart	NETHERLANDS	BoekStart is an early literacy program that promotes early reading, storytelling and nursery rhymes with very young children. The program encourages parents and children to experience the pleasure of reading books together. The aim is to give young children a jump-start for school as well as to strengthen the bond between parents and children. The results of this program are being monitored via an annual questionnaire. Results so far indicate that: more parents start early reading; parents who read to their baby before eight months old have children with better language skills; the positive effects from the program are strengthened over longer periods of time; more active babies benefit the most from the program, and; parents visit the library more often and are more familiar with baby books.
Mobile early literacy program (Rovaniemi)	FINLAND	While libraries within the regional library service run programs for preschool aged children, the Rovaniemi city library service also extends to daycare centres, playgroups and other community locations.

In addition to those captured in the table above, studies and research-based evaluations have been conducted on a number of other leading international early literacy initiatives. In the United States, the Valuable Initiatives in Early Learning that Work Successfully (VIEWS2) is a research project designed to evaluate early literacy programs in libraries by testing new ways to measure the effectiveness of early literacy programs for young children from birth to kindergarten (Campana et al. 2016). The two-year research project leveraged a mixed methods approach, quasi-experimental design conducted across 40 libraries in Washington State. VIEWS2 utilised two established tools for evaluation and developed a further tool to support these frameworks. The tools considered a number of early literacy skills and assessed evidence of children achieving and learning these skills. The research conducted by Washington University was supported by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (Campana et al. 2016).

The American Library Association's program, Every Child Ready to Read (ECRR), supports parents and guardians in the role of early literacy educators (Ash & Meyers 2009, Stolz, 2013). The ECRR provides tools and resources to public libraries that are shared with families to support early literacy skill development. Now in its second iteration, which was released in 2011, it has evolved through reflection on in-depth evaluations and extensive literature reviews.[16]

Canadian public libraries also have a long history of providing storytimes and other early literacy programs. McKend (2010) conducted research for the Provincial and Territorial Public Library Council, into early literacy storytimes for preschoolers in public libraries. The purpose of the project was to concentrate on early literacy storytime programs for preschoolers aged three to five years in order to develop a framework of best practices to support the planning, development, and delivery of effective services. The report included two stages: a literature review, and a comprehensive telephone survey of library practitioners providing storytimes. Participants were identified by their respective local government or library managers. 35 individuals were interviewed, these represented the practices of 400 libraries and 11 jurisdictions (McKend, 2010).

The interview data showed that 346 out of the 400 libraries had adopted the ECRR program (either formally or informally). The research highlighted that Canadian public libraries play a critical role in supporting early literacy, recognising that public libraries are the only nationally consistent public institution responding to the learning needs of the pre-school child. The evaluation and recommendations of the report focus on an understanding of the impact on early literacy skills and do not consider the broader impact of storytimes and other pre-school programs on the community or relationships.

Stooke and McKenzie (2011) presented findings of an observational study of library and community programs for babies and toddlers in eight libraries in two Canadian provinces. The findings demonstrated that the programs supported or promoted early childhood literacy, positive caregiver-child relationships, and social support. Library programs provided a foreground to literacy work. The study further contended that a rigid commitment to program rules could undermine educational and social support outcomes. Instead, the study's findings

supported a flexible approach that utilised improvisation in program delivery and leaders' active involvement in the informal components of programs (Stooke and McKenzie, 2011).

Singapore's *Early Read* initiative has three key objectives or approaches: educating the educators (parents and carers); providing tools and resources; establishing a foundation of literacy skills from a young age; and creating a sustained interest in literacy for a lifetime (Rajaratnam, 2013). Singapore also has a one-stop Early Literacy library specifically designed to service the needs of under school-aged children focused at embedding a love for reading and exploration of literacy concepts.

Summary

The development of early literacy programs within Australian libraries has occurred within an international library practice context. Examples from UK, US, Canada and beyond help to shape and progress Australian programs. The 2006 UNESCO report *Literacy for Life*[17] values and supports the development of early literacy programs for skill development and education attainment within communities.

The Role of Digital Media Technologies in Early and Family Literacy

The integration of digital media into everyday work and family life raises the question of new, multi-modal literacies, including for very young children; as well as social anxieties about the impact of these technologies on early development. Initially, the use of digital media has been linked to early literacy through parental (and guardian) support programs like READY4K (York & Loeb, 2014), which uses digital media to message and support parents, or the use of digital resources like e-books for Storytime (Collen, 2006). A second area of focus is the impact of parental or children's own use of digital media on early literacy skill development; projects like MakEY[18] work with children as young as three to develop digital literacy and creativity in connection to digital skills.

The London School of Economics' Parenting for a Digital Future project[19] addresses key questions about the relationship between parenting and digital media:

- ▶ How do parents and carers approach the task of bringing up their children in the digital age?
- ▶ What is their vision of their children's future and that of the wider society?
- ▶ What risks or opportunities do they see opening up for them and their children?
- ▶ How do they conceive of being a 'good parent' and how do they evaluate the resources available to their children?
- ▶ And how do their children view and respond to their parents' hopes, fears and values regarding digital media?

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17 http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001442/144270e.pdf
18 http://makeyproject.eu
19 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/

The development of early and family digital literacies would seem to be integral to the exploration of these questions.

Hill, Foster & Ward's (2014) research into the Little Big Book Club in South Australia identified seven myths about early childhood language, literacy and technology (Plowman & McPake, 2013), and offered some countering arguments to these myths. These include:

1. Childhood and technology shouldn't mix – NO but a balance is needed.
2. Young children are 'digital natives' – NO parents, educators and siblings teach them.
3. Technology hinders social interaction – NO it can enhance social interaction.
4. Technology dominates childrens' lives – NO parents report that family activities are varied.
5. Play equals learning – NO not all play is learning and some technology can extend play possibilities.
6. If it's interactive it must be educational – NO educators, adults are central to learning.
7. Children need to get tech savvy for the future – NO broad knowledge and skills are important. (Hill, Foster & Ward, 2014 p119).

Collen's (2006) research compared behaviour and reactions in relation to two books (one in print form and one in digital form) among 32 four-year-olds divided into two groups. The books were read in storytimes in their traditional form and in digital form. These sessions were videotaped with the dialogue and behaviour of the children during the sessions being later transcribed and coded. The research findings encouraged combining the best features of digital communication with the best features of paper and print books, concluding that digital picture books hold a positive potential for developing Storytime and early literacy skills for children. She suggests enlarged images on screens assist children to more effectively see and result in more interactive sessions with increased understanding of the stories (Collen, 2006).

Further research in Aotearoa New Zealand (Goulding Shuker and Dickie, 2017) considered the impact of using digital storytimes as a mentoring session for parents and guardians in appropriate use of digital media with children. It discovered that library staff can provide specific information about sharing time and creating positive early literacy outcomes from digital media for children.

Swaren (2014) investigated the use of mixed media to support early literacy skills in a public library setting. The project known as "Storytime station" was developed by the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) in 2011. The project aim was to take the library's early literacy programs out of the physical library via a range of channels to reach children.[20]

The combination of digital media technologies and children consistently provokes anxiety and public debate around the potential value, harms, and benefits of engagement with these

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20 The animated videos can be viewed on EPL's website at http://www.epl.ca/StorytimeStation or on its YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4og3ttkKss&list=PL6667A6522073986E

technologies and media practices. For instance, the American Academy of Paediatrics (AAP) makes the following recommendations:[21]

▶ A personalised family media plan, including rules for children and their parents, and designated 'media free' times – the AAP provides an interactive online tool to help create this.[22]

▶ Rather than policing or controlling or monitoring their children's media use, parents should think of themselves as their child's 'media mentor'.

▶ Infants and toddlers should be 'unplugged,' and from 18 months old, high quality television content is also OK as long as a parent watches with them.

▶ For 2-5year olds, screen time should be less than one hour per day, again with parents watching alongside to interpret and discuss what they're watching.

▶ Children from 6+ need a media use plan, with limits to ensure screen time doesn't displace sleeping, playing, conversation and physical activities.[23]

However, there is significant debate among experts about the value of such recommendations. Research from Dr. Dimitri Christakis (2014) with Seattle Children's Research Institute suggests that there is a lack of understanding about the impacts and the benefits in particular for interactive touch screen technologies and shared time in a learning capacity (Mills et al. 2015). Livingstone (2016) re-enforces the view that there is a range of digital media types with varied impacts on and uses by children, particularly related to early literacy and education.[24]

The DigitLitEY project[25] is a European Cooperation in Science and Technology project that is investigating young children's digital literacy and multimodal practices. The project involves researchers from 34 EU countries and focuses on the use of technologies by children under eight. It aims to understand how children access and use digital technologies and how productive digital literacies might be developed for this age group. One aspect of the project includes a focus on the use of digital media in home and community settings such as libraries and parents' role in assisting digital literacy development.

Exploring the place of 'maker' culture in the development of children's digital literacy and creative design skills, MakEY is a collection of European (Denmark, Germany, Finland, Iceland, Norway Romania, UK) and US based research projects. Staff working in makerspaces (including Fab Labs) and academics collaborate to identify the benefits and challenges of running makerspace workshops in both formal (nurseries and schools) and informal (museums and libraries) educational settings. Working in partnership with academics in Australia, Canada, Colombia, South Africa and the USA, the project involves ongoing research and evaluation to further understanding of the role of makerspaces in developing young children's digital literacy and creativity.

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21 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mediapolicyproject/2016/10/24/new-screen-time-rules-from-the-american-academy-of-pediatrics
22 https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.asp
23 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/2016/08/16/the-screen-what-does-it-mean-for-our-kids-and-how-can-we-help/
24 http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/mediapolicyproject//
25 http://digilitey.eu/

Summary

The impact of digital media on literacy should be noted for future iterations of First 5 Forever. While there is debate about the amount of screen time children should experience, and at what age, the findings and recommendations of authoritative research projects suggest that children should have meaningful and guided experiences with digital media from a young age; and libraries have an obvious role to play here. The US-based Association for Library Services to Children recognises the valuable role library staff play in media mentorship supporting digital literacy and digital skills.[26] The role of digital media in the future programming, organisation and considerations for First 5 Forever could be further investigated, but is beyond the scope of this report.

3. Applying the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* Impact Evaluation Framework to Early and Family Literacy

Background and Rationale

The Impact of Libraries as Creative Spaces (Light et al. 2016) was a research project conducted by QUT Digital Media Research Centre in partnership with SLQ between 2014 and 2016. The project investigated the community impact of libraries understood as both physical places and distributed creative spaces, considering the full range of library activities and community support features offered. The project developed a new, evidence-based framework to evaluate the impacts of these spaces and the activities programmed within them.

This framework was built on an extensive literature review and tested in four varied case studies across Queensland. The framework includes eight high-level criteria for evaluating the impact of library-based creative spaces and activities:

1. **Provides access to resources:** Providing assistance and enabling access to information and materials such as craft supplies, historical records and digital media.
2. **Helps to build ideas:** Exposing the public to new ideas and facilitating the development of curiosity, experimentation and risk taking.
3. **Connects people to civic engagement:** Engaging the public in democracy, citizenship, rehabilitation and collaborative work with other public and private institutions.
4. **Supports the development of community:** Providing a place for community development to happen by encouraging cultural diversity, equality, equity and social capital.
5. **Aids cultural participation:** Facilitating public culture by organising and delivering formal and informal events that allow people to participate in diverse ways.
6. **Supports health and wellbeing**: Providing relaxation, entertainment and leisure activities that promote physical and mental wellbeing.

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26 http://www.ala.org/alsc/media-mentorship-libraries-serving-youth-primer

7. **Provides for educational attainment**: Making possible, through creative practice, continuous learning and informal approaches to education that offer an alternative to formal institutions.
8. **Encourages economic productivity**: Enabling access to mentoring and networking for business and occupational purposes, and generating income through creative practice (Light et al. 2016).

The *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework is used here as a tool for evaluating the wider social impacts of family literacy initiatives, because it helps us evaluate the specific role of libraries within the community; additionally, it enables us to consider impact beyond individual children and families and to identify wider community benefits and connections (which may in turn further benefit children and families). It may also prove useful in guiding strategy for future iterations of the First 5 Forever initiative.

Based on the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework, we began this project by hypothesising that the broader individual, family, and community benefits of library-based family literacy programs might relate to the following eight elements of the framework:

1. **Accessing resources:** Access to a range of resources, including information, picture books, early literacy materials, toys, e-books, and digital technologies.
2. **Idea building:** Exposure to new ideas, developing curiosity, and a culture of discovery.
3. **Civic engagement**: Participation in discussion around issues (for parents) and connection to government at the local level (for families).
4. **Community development:** A sense of belonging and social cohesion for children and families.
5. **Cultural participation:** Involvement in cultural learning, celebration, performance and cultural events.
6. **Health and wellbeing**: Relaxation, self-expression and enjoyment, emotional and physical health (for children and families), and access to health information (for parents).
7. **Educational attainment**: Significant impacts on early literacy skills (for children), but also the acquisition of knowledge about early literacy (for facilitators and parents).
8. **Economic productivity:** Parent networking, inspirations and shared local product knowledge as well as the development of skills and literacies for a future workforce.

For example, the original research included a case study of Baby Rhyme Time at Helensvale Library, Gold Coast Libraries. Baby Rhyme Time demonstrated impacts beyond educational attainment, which, has generally been the principal criterion used for evaluating the impact of library-based early literacy programs.

This activity registered impacts across each of the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework criteria. It generated educational development for children; access to information and idea-building for parents; as well as enhancing cultural participation and local belonging for families. Establishing trust with the library and council as the service providers were additional benefits;

with the ancillary benefit of adult conversations leading to various economic benefits through new connections or networks (Light et al. 2016).

The evaluation graphic that represented Baby Rhyme Time in the original report highlights educational attainment (including early literacy skills) along with Idea Building, Community Development, Cultural Participation, and Health and Wellbeing. The other strong criterion was Accessing Resources. While Civic Engagement and Economic Productivity had weaker representation (understandable given the principal cohort), they were evident to some degree.

BABY RHYME TIME

Accessing Resources 3.7
Idea Building 5
Civic Engagement 1.4
Community Development 5
Cultural Participation 5
Health and Wellbeing 5
Educational Attainment 5
Economic Productivity 0.5
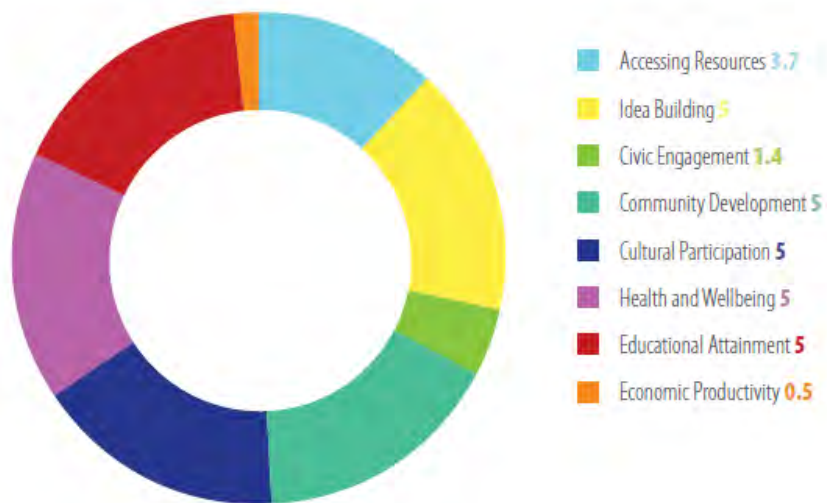
Mapping First 5 Forever's Impacts Against the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework

The *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework built on an extensive literature review of the ways libraries are evaluated, with specific reference to their creative programming (Light et al. 2016). It was developed, piloted and tested through existing programs implemented at libraries around Queensland. First 5 Forever exemplifies the kinds of creative and innovative programming that the framework was designed to capture, where the impacts go well beyond common public perceptions about the purpose of libraries. The framework divides these impacts into eight criteria or categories for evaluation, with further levels of detail underneath each. These categories allow for the evidence-based evaluation, comparison, and development of library services to meet specific goals and to measure or assess the full extent of their impacts. The use of this framework therefore allows for the capture of benefits that are secondary or ancillary to the primary benefits of the First 5 Forever initiative, especially as it builds on and amplifies the library's reach into and connections with the community.

In this section, the ways that First 5 Forever has generated impacts relating to each of the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework criteria will be illustrated using case studies, examples, anecdotes and observations from library staff drawn from a diverse sample of Queensland libraries.

Once again, the eight criteria for evaluation are:

1. Provides access to resources
2. Helps to build ideas
3. Connects people to civic engagement
4. Supports the development of a sense of community
5. Aids and encourages cultural participation
6. Supports health and wellbeing
7. Provides for educational attainment
8. Encourages economic productivity

1. Provides Access to Resources

The First 5 Forever initiative provides access to library and other resources for families with young children. One of the key features of First 5 Forever is the supply of toolkits which are distributed to parents. They include a book and a puppet, as well as other resources (for example, postcards and invitations to library sessions to encourage new parents in the support of their child's pre-literacy education and skill development). Library staff found that the toolkits provided a starting point for conversations with parents, enabling them to refer families to library programs. The toolkits were also disseminated as part of other outreach activities – for example, in conjunction with visits to health care providers in pre-natal or perinatal sessions, and these sessions include a mini-storytime to demonstrate the types of activities that happen in the storytime sessions. The toolkit includes resources for parents learning to connect with their young children. It also acts as an introduction and an invitation to connect with other early literacy resources at the library. These resources include toy libraries, creative programs and digital tools.

Many of the libraries use these first interactions with parents to encourage them to sign up with their children as library users. This provides them with access to resources such as books, toys CDs/DVDs which can be borrowed to support their continued early literacy practices such as home storytime reading to their children or interacting with them using a toy, or singing along to a CD or DVD.

Case Study

'Something from nothing' - Sunshine Coast Library Service

Public libraries provide access to resources for people from a range of social-economic backgrounds and demographics. Sunshine Coast Library Service developed an approach to their craft and extension activities that is economically inclusive, and therefore avoids creating further barriers to ongoing participation for families. In their activities, they demonstrate to parents how even the simplest everyday items like cups or spoons, and found objects like pine cones, twigs and leaves, can be used to encourage language development, letter recognition and other relevant early literacy skills. A ramble in the park can crate meaningful interactions and benefits for learning. In this way the library helped to redefine what 'counts' as early learning resources and make them more accessible to all families.

Image source: Phoebe Houghton

Image source: Philippe Ceulen

In parallel with the First 5 Forever initiative, a number of libraries have started creating pop-up libraries in the park, taking the resources to the community. For example, Brisbane City Library Service runs regular pop-up library services, rotating locations fortnightly to ensure a predictable sequence. In these pop-up libraries a significant proportion of First 5 Forever activity is made available in parks, with a baby bounce or storytime session at each. They also include a stand of information materials and books, which are available to their visitors. Some locations like the Gold Coast Book Box have turned the pop-up library into a more permanent fixture, with these structures providing flexibility for program delivery outside of the larger library buildings and taking the resources to the community.

Sessions held within libraries offer children, parents and carers access to library collections, specifically including picture books, throughout libraries. Ipswich and Toowoomba libraries provide access to a range of e-books and other digital materials for children, including under-5s. Information about the availability of these resources is shared with their First 5 Forever participants at storytime or rhyme time sessions.

Gympie Library Service reports that they have "incorporated robots, iPads, musical instruments, science, Claymation, origami, lantern making and a host of other elements to our storytelling sessions that can provide immeasurable support for 0 to 5 year olds on their journey to fulfilment" (2016 reporting).

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Access to Resources criterion, with evidence drawn from across a number of Library Services.

Image source: Barcaldine Library

ACCESS TO RESOURCES - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Access to creative resources	First 5 Forever storytimes are often extended or supplemented through the use of craft-based activities. Each of the libraries sharing their experiences of First 5 Forever for this report included a variety of craft sessions giving children and parents access to craft materials and creative resources. At Sunshine Coast, First 5 Forever activities are helping parents find resources for early literacy learning with their children using ordinary objects they can find around the home or in the local park. First 5 Forever provides important resources that library services use to develop their early literacy programs and storytelling kits. This support in direction and program models is highly valued by First 5 Forever co-ordinators.	✓	✓	✓
Access to toolkits and First 5 Forever packs	The handouts or toolkits that are made available to parents participating in First 5 Forever have provided inspiration and resources, such as a book and bath puppet to new parents.	✓	✓	
Idea storage and archive	Ideas are shared across the initiative among staff within library services across the State. For example, Brisbane City Council produce a regular newsletter for First 5 Forever which goes to branches and shares examples of ideas and practices that work.			

Heritage History and Legacy	Local musicians from Logan, Mad Mike and Junior created their own legacy for First 5 Forever when they wrote and produced a song specially for the initiative. These local connections and creations provide a legacy for the future. Sharing of Indigenous stories and history based stories create some of the first connections for history and heritage for young children and can reconnect adults. The Livingstone NAIDOC week in 2017 focusing on Our Languages demonstrates the connection to heritage and legacy for parents and children.	✓	✓	✓
Access filter and sort information	First 5 Forever activities help parents sort through what can seem like a sea of information about parenting, and demonstrate simple ways to connect to their children; at the same time supporting and educating them in the development of pre-literacy or early literacy skills. The reasons for singing, talking and reading to young children are explained, and parents are empowered with knowledge about why making these connections is developmentally important. First 5 Forever also supports parents in providing links to other organisations such as health care to address their young children's or their own needs. Storytime or Baby Bounce sessions are often conducted in collaboration with health care professionals and agencies for this purpose. Livingstone Library Service have regular visits from health nurses to their sessions, where they mingle and casually connect with new parents. State Library of Queensland provides information and resources for the First 5 Forever teams in local libraries. Their professional development sessions provide carefully researched and curated sessions with the information staff need to enhance their roles and provide appropriate support to parents and children.	✓	✓	✓
Access to digital technology	Queensland libraries such as Gympie, Roma and Logan use e-books, tech for toddlers and other digital resources (such as video clips) in First 5 Forever storytimes, emphasising not only that sharing reading time with children is important, but also that e-books, smartphones and tablets can also be useful tools for sharing the reading experience. As part of First 5 Forever activities, parents can access the libraries' collections on information about technologies available and their effectiveness as tools for parents and children.			

2. Helps Build Ideas

First 5 Forever has supported communities, families, and children to generate and build on ideas. The creative and comprehensive nature of the initiative instigated idea-building amongst staff and partner organisations, who were motivated to seek out and develop partnerships and opportunities to enhance programming and outreach. The program has invited staff to think about the role of the library in new ways, such as providing pop-up libraries and rhyme-time sessions at learn-to-swim programs, in parks, childcare centres, at community groups, as part of festivals and cultural celebrations; and so moving away from the idea of the physical library as the sole location for library activities. This has facilitated a range of possibilities and provided the libraries with access to a much broader community; and these outreach activities demonstrate the innovative idea-building that has been integral to local First 5 Forever activities around Queensland.

Selected examples of the outreach activities that helped to build ideas and support creativity within the community were highlighted by interviewees and in materials that formed part of this research project include:

- ▶ Dirty Dinosaur Mud Play in the park – Logan City Library Service (and Wide Bay in 2017), a partnership between environmental and parks officers with library-based First 5 Forever initiatives
- ▶ NAIDOC week activities at Livingstone Library Service (also undertaken in Mackay and Cairns)
- ▶ Outreach to small communities who didn't have library services – Livingstone Library Service
- ▶ Childcare centre rhyme and storytime sessions at Logan, Livingstone, Townsville and Sunshine Coast
- ▶ Cultural Group connections at Logan City Library Service and Livingstone
- ▶ Sunshine Coast, Livingstone, Brisbane, and Logan connections with child health services. In these sessions there is an exchange and sharing of resources between the care service staff and library staff
- ▶ Splash and learn at the Whitsunday Regional Council, incorporating rhymes and songs and built around the principles of First 5 Forever
- ▶ Rhyme time at the local gymnastics club in Livingstone
- ▶ Artworx Toowoomba combines an orchestra concert and story-time sessions. In this activity, the Toowoomba Concert Orchestra and author Peter Carnavas bring his children's book 'The Great Expedition' to life in a combined live reading and performance.

Case Study

Child Led Craft - Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast library takes a different approach to their craft sessions where children are encouraged in their own creativity and idea building. They have moved away from adult-led craft to a philosophy where children respond to the stories in their own way. In some cases it may be to create their own robots, or work out how they would solve a problem. Children are asked questions to stimulate their own thought and to generate an authentic and creative response to a story. Craft materials and equipment are provided but it is up to the child what form the story response takes. In one instance, a boy spent half an hour creating his own monster. Children have also created and decorated their own alphabet letters, or crafted solutions to problems. This type of activity stimulates the children (and often their parents or carers) to generate their own ideas for the craft activity.

The following examples of story response tasks demonstrate how Sunshine Coast encourages children to come up with ideas developed from the concepts in the story.
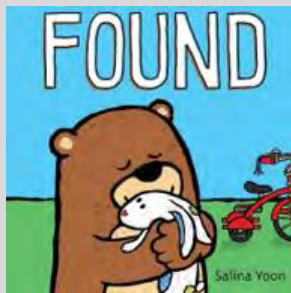
What have you lost before? How did you find it? Create a lost poster for something special to you. Where would you put it to help people find your lost treasure?

Go on a scavenger hunt around the library to find something that is lost. Create some clues and a drawing to help you find it.

What is your favourite stuffed animal or sleeping toy? How would you feel if you lost it? Draw a picture of your special toy and show it to one of your storytime friends.
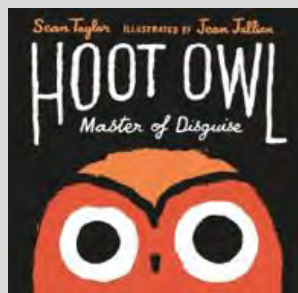
What other animals or foods do you think owls would like to eat? What would owl have to disguise himself as to try and catch them? Design a disguise for owl to catch this animal.

If you were going to disguise yourself as something or someone, who would it be? Create a mask for your disguise. What else would you need for your costume?

How do real animals disguise themselves in the wild? What are some of the different camouflages animals use? See if you can find a junior non-fiction book on animal camouflage.

Image source: Sunshine Coast Library

Case Study

An idea for a song – Logan City Council

The idea for the First 5 Forever song developed from the performance of local musicians and hip-hop artists Mad Mike and Junior performing at the Logan City of Choice Milestone event in 2016. They performed a song composed especially for the Logan community, sparking Logan coordinator Marnie's idea for a First 5 Forever theme song. Since much of the connection with children in the First 5 Forever initiative is through songs, there was a logical connection to the idea for a special song, enabling the initiative to reach more families through music.

The First 5 Forever team worked with Mad Mike and Junior, sharing stories of Logan and its families, and linked the song elements with the message of First 5 Forever objectives. Mad Mike and Junior took on the role of advocates for the community and promoted the message of supporting Logan's kids. Mad Mike and Junior created a relatable and memorable song that connects with listeners and invites them to join in. Including a shift to hip hop and rap, the song inspires children and the adults to get up and dance while carrying a message about the positive impacts of literacy, reading and engaging on the lives of children.

The First 5 Forever theme song is written and performed by Mad Mike and Junior Recorded by Music Cavern (Beenleigh, Logan).

Proudly funded and supported by the Queensland Government and the State Library of Queensland and Logan City Council.

Image source: Mad Mike and Junior

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Idea Building criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

IDEA BUILDING - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Exposure to ideas	For young children every idea is new, and First 5 Forever is exposing them to reading and books, songs, rhymes, relationships, laughter, joy, and entertainment. Every First 5 Forever session involves exposure to new ideas and supports their learning.	✓		
	For many parents this may be the first time they have been exposed to rhymes and stories since they were children themselves. The support that First 5 Forever gives them, encouraging them in effective ways to communicate with their children, are often encountered as new ideas, encouraging them to develop their own personalised ways of interacting with and relating to their children.		✓	
	A key achievement of the First 5 Forever initiative is the exposure of library staff to the importance of new methods of developing early literacy skills. The sharing of ideas and information about how to run the programs, how programs help children and parents, the roles and functions of other organisations within the childcare space are all added benefits of the First 5 Forever initiative. "One of the most amazing things about the program is the staff buy-in. They are keen to learn and develop their skill base" (First 5 Forever coordinator)			✓
Idea initiation, generation	Sunshine Coast Library service is working with a new approach to creativity, craft and play as part of their commitment to providing authentic, child-led, story response opportunities for children. The approach allows children to represent their ideas without the constraint or pressure of adult examples. In Logan, local artists Mad Mike and Junior have composed an original song to reflect the values of the initiative, and a music video for the song is being produced by SLQ. This type of activity connects the initiative to the local creative arts community and generates ownership and interest.	✓	✓	✓

Development of curiosity, interest and appreciation	Curiosity is developed through a range of craft, science and maker activities. The inclusion of elements such as science shows, robotics and tech for toddlers are all aimed at developing the participants' curiosity and interest in a range of subjects.	✓	✓	✓
Culture of discovery	Gympie library uses science, robots, tablets and other resources to extend children and expose them to a culture of discovery. Through learning about the impact of early literacy practices and new ways of assisting parents, library staff are being empowered and encouraged on their own journey of discovery within their workplace. Moreton Library staff in particular are moving to a mentoring approach to support and encourage further professional development by individual.	✓	✓	✓
Risk taking and experimenting	The Sunshine Coast library service has taken a risk in breaking away from traditional approaches to craft and allowed children to explore the concepts from stories in their own. Many of the First 5 Forever facilitators are finding themselves in new territory as they experiment with programming and interact with their communities in new ways.	✓	✓	
Repertoires of practice	The sharing of ideas for First 5 Forever has been a significant element of the SLQ involvement in the project. Blog posts and newsletter items featuring the types of activities being held in diverse locations have inspired other Councils to follow suit. For instance, the Cairns library will implement Making a Splash with First 5 Forever after hearing about the positive results achieved in the Whitsunday region with this activity. Within large library services like Brisbane, internal newsletters and staff movement around various branches enables the peer sharing of ideas and resources, building up a repertoire of practice as experience in delivering First 5 Forever accumulates.		✓	✓

3. Connects people to civic engagement

Civic engagement incorporates institutional trust, connection to community and involvement in democratic processes. While it is not explicitly an aim of the First 5 Forever initiative, clear examples of the development of institutional trust in libraries and Councils were evident. Reports of increased awareness and appreciation of the role of councils within the community beyond the other essential infrastructure and services they provide came out in interviews with coordinators. Feedback from and informal conversations with participants also demonstrated these shifting attitudes.

The outreach aspect of the First 5 Forever initiative was particularly supportive of connecting people with civic engagement. As part of outreach with marginalised, vulnerable and Indigenous communities, First 5 Forever supports building trust through relationships with local cultural community groups and refugee organisations. Examples of this are occurring in Cairns, Mackay, Moreton Bay, Logan, and Brisbane.

Internal partnerships between First 5 Forever and Council departments were demonstrated to build capacity and enhance outcomes within the community. For instance, in Toowoomba, First 5 Forever partners with the Regional Art gallery and Orchestra[27] to combine a musical journey with a story, building new collaborations and connections across organisations to develop programming.

Case Study

Dirty Dinosaurs Mud Play Event - Logan City Council

Logan City Council's brokering of connections between the First 5 Forever team and their Health, Environment and Waste department were integral to the development of the Logan Dirty Dinosaurs mud play event. This is another illustration of capacity-building and sharing opportunities used to get important messages to community, messages around literacy, outdoor spaces and activity, the care and enjoyment of parklands, and natural history. The event was themed around the book chosen by First 5 Forever to include in the toolkits, 'I'm a Dirty Dinosaur' by Australian author Janeen Brian. Sponsored by Logan Soils, the event was jointly co-ordinated by the Logan City Council Health, Environment and Waste department and library First 5 Forever staff. The collaboration combined the promotion of early literacy (distributing printed copies of the book around the event to encourage sharing the story) along with experiential learning about ways of utilising the park resources, caring for and sharing the common public spaces of the Council area, as well as getting out into the public spaces to enjoy physical activity and nature. The event helps the community to frame learning and parks in new ways and create awareness of Council departments and roles. Two sessions were held in the morning at 9:00 and 11:00 am with registrations required. The day was considered a huge success for its large attendance, and resulted in many muddy 'dinosaurs'.

Other ways that First 5 Forever connects with civic engagement include:
- ► Australia Day events and NAIDOC week celebrations
- ► The inclusion of First 5 Forever sessions at events like Sails festival Suttons Beach, Redcliffe and the Urban Country Festival

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27 https://artsworx.usq.edu.au/event/the-great-expedition-trctco-concert/

- Connecting community groups such as refugee groups in Logan to the broader community and linking to their special celebration events, in some instances with the support of translators
- The involvement of First 5 Forever staff on local reference groups and committees
- The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Civic Engagement criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT - EVIDENCE				STAFF
Democracy	The initiative supports civic engagement by connecting people into community networks either in the groups gathering to participate in sessions, within the libraries or within the outreach contexts in which First 5 Forever initiatives are operating.		✔	✔
Participation in citizenship	Being involved with larger festivals and community gatherings such as NAIDOC week, Sails Festival and Harmony Day allows First 5 Forever to support community citizenship. By working together event organisers can create bigger and more impactful events that reach across age groups and cultural differences.	✔	✔	✔
Crime reduction and rehabilitation	No strong evidence on this sub-criterion at this time.			
Institutional trust	In the words of one of our interviewees, First 5 Forever has significantly enhanced institutional trust, particularly in Council: "Families now know that Council is beyond rates, beyond animal management. F5F is able to showcase Logan City Council, what it is and what it stands for. What they are doing and how we deliver programming is all about community, what Council is doing is all about the people. For example, we have a number of McDonalds in Logan, […] Beenleigh, Logan Central and Marsden and we decided to do an outreach session at each of them. We didn't advertise or anything - we just went there because that is where the people are going, so we did a session and a we had activities and we got chatting with a parent there, and this mum said to me 'I just can't believe Council is doing stuff like this – it's just so amazing it goes beyond anything I ever thought about Council'. I got the feeling she is going to think about her community, the council differently." (Logan First 5 Forever Coordinator).	✔	✔	✔
Development of Capacity	The beneficial relationships that develop within the First 5 Forever initiative have developed further community capacity. For instance,		✔	✔

	in Logan the Health, Environment and Waste branch are working with library to extend its messages to families. Collaborative activities like Dirty Dinosaurs are set up to engage both parents and children in a fun way, building early literacy while also encouraging local residents out into the parklands and outdoor spaces of the city for health and leisure. Logan staff members are now looking for further ways to collaborate and build capacity within their communities for the future, with new ideas including a toddler colour run and other outdoor events.		
Societal Discussion	The First 5 Forever initiative is demonstrating leadership in service provision collaborations, across levels of governments and focusing on the specific needs of local communities. The inclusion of First 5 Forever coordinators on reference groups for community wellbeing brings libraries and councils into these discussions, enabling them to be part of the collective solutions to some of the pressing social problems within communities.	✓	✓

4. Supports the Development of Community

The First 5 Forever outreach programs have played a significant role in community development across the State. The initiative has the flexibility to allow programs to be tailored to the specific needs of the individual communities. It was noted that Moreton Bay aims to run programs outside of work hours to connect with working parents, while Logan has over 260 nationalities represented in their ethnic community groups; the First 5 Forever initiative is proving to be a catalyst for social connection and community development.

Logan Library service chose locations such as McDonalds restaurants, where young families had already gathered to run a First 5 Forever session. This type of popup event extends the exposure of the library and draws in new members to the community. Similarly, Ipswich partners with Bunnings to run sessions on weekends.

Case Studies

Gymnastics and Storytime – Livingstone

Partnerships are key to community development, as they link various community members and groups across boundaries and generate surprising new relationships. One example of this is the connections that Livingstone Libraries are making with other service providers like the local Gymnastics Club. They have developed storytime sessions to run in conjunction with come and try gymnastics. The sessions provided for free give children a taste of gymnastics and then time to listen to stories and rhymes (and general First 5 Forever activities). Invitations to regular sessions of both gymnastics and storytime can then be offered to attendees, building and connecting them to either or both of the associated community networks.

Community Partnerships – Logan

Logan City Library has prioritised the development of partnerships, enabling them to extend their outreach through activating external groups, which is particularly useful in engaging underserved or marginalised communities. They work in creative ways with partners (as demonstrated by Mad Mike and Junior's song discussed in the Civic Engagement case study above). They emphasise the importance of making expectations and outcomes clear for partners and give them scope to share their ideas, experiences and cultural perspectives.

Through this approach to healthy partnerships Logan has been able to use First 5 Forever in its outreach capacities to build up communities and bring communities together. They have partnered with the local Indigenous community and diverse cultural groups to participate in first 5 Forever sessions, and over time to run sessions themselves.

Other Examples

The connection with steering committees and local community groups by Frist 5 Forever coordinators creates a leadership connection in the development of local community services to build and connect communities.

- ▶ The proactive collaborations between First 5 Forever, community groups and health services bring together the local community of parents and carers of young children (it is noted that this includes many grandparents and carers of all ages).
- ▶ The inclusion of First 5 Forever stalls and sessions within the context of other events such as Festivals and promotional days have proved to be an effective point of community connection, supporting overall community connections that lead to community development.
- ▶ The encouragement of parents and carers to continue after sessions to socialise and get to know each other, leading to the building of social support networks in communities.

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Community Development criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - EVIDENCE		CHILDERN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Community ownership, strength, and identity	Parents taking on the task of setting up for storytime and following coffee/refreshments, extending the welcome to new members demonstrates the ownership that they have gained in the program. Community groups taking on the storytimes for themselves, tailoring to their interests and cultural reflections.	✔	✔	✔
Cultural diversity and inclusiveness	Across Queensland there is a diverse range of socio-economic and cultural demographics. The customisations of the First 5 Forever initiative for each unique location is a strength of the program. There are diverse ways in which cultural diversity is acknowledged, celebrated, and embraced. Communities with highly diverse ethnic backgrounds have found that inviting families to share song, words and rhymes in their own language, may builds links and connections within their groups. They also include a child friendly version of acknowledgement of country in respect to the original Indigenous landowners, this sends a message to participants about reconciliation and inclusion. Within the Logan area, many of the minority cultural groups work with First 5 Forever to develop their own culturally appropriate sessions. Once confident in how they work, they eventually take ownership and the sessions become self-sustaining.	✔	✔	✔
Social Capital	First 5 Forever is developing a strong basis of social capital amongst partners and agencies, as well as between parents attending sessions who build networks and friendships in the social times after sessions.	✔	✔	✔
Social interactions and socialising	Important for children and parents – especially noted that this is a place new parents can safely come, and avoid being stuck at home alone with a new baby. Place for people new to an area to meet others in the area.	✔	✔	✔
Localised service provision	First 5 Forever activities throughout Queensland have been extended to areas that don't have regular library services and adapted for local circumstances.		✔	✔

Co-operation, coordination, collaboration, sharing and reciprocity	The elements of co-operation, coordination and collaboration are most strongly demonstrated in the networking and relationships being built between partner organisation, agencies, and local businesses. Developing a co-ordinated approach to early childhood and parenting resources is a hallmark of this program.	✔	✔	✔
Trust in community	Going to the people establishing bridge to library and Council Connecting with teenage girls through school setting to develop trust.	✔	✔	✔
Self-organisation	In Logan there are a number of community groups that take on the ownership of the storytime for themselves after several weeks instruction from library staff.		✔	
Resilience	Helping communities in time of need and providing stability when there are problems – for instance after a recent fire in Logan the library provided support within the community as the facilities were rebuilt.	✔	✔	✔

5. Aids Cultural Participation

Cultural participation involves cultural consumption (including via popular culture and entertainment), awareness of other cultures, and reflection on and active engagement with our own national identity and its diverse cultural influences. First 5 Forever has a special place in the development of an Australian cultural identity, whether it is celebration of our multicultural roots, sharing of language and cultural references or learning and singing Australian songs, rhymes and stories like Tiddalic the green frog (a Dreamtime story), Waltzing Matilda and Possum Magic. It promotes engagement with Indigenous culture as well as the history of European settler culture, and exposes participants to migrant and multicultural stories.

Case Study

NAIDOC Week Gathering – Livingstone Shire

Aunty Sally Vea Vea, a Darumbal Elder and spokesperson from the Capricorn Coast Indigenous Mob, along with Aunty Venita Mann, works each year with a support team to create the NAIDOC week celebrations. They gather in Gawula, one of the many sacred places in the Livingstone Shire. Partnering with organisations such as Livingstone Shire Council, Capricorn Coast Indigenous Mob, Closing the Gap, Bidgerdii Community Health Service, Gawula Aboriginal Land Trust and the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Partnerships. They aim to create a celebration for Indigenous culture as well as to share their culture with the wider community. This year Livingstone Shire Library Service's First 5 Forever team participated in the celebration by creating a specifically tailored program for under 5s and their parents. This connection to the annual Indigenous people's celebration as they come together to reflect on stories of their culture and local history is one example of the cultural connections that the First 5 forever initiative is making. Sharing stories, rhymes, facepainting and creating crafts within this specific context provides cultural links for families and children. Aunty Vea Vea described NAIDOC Week as

"that one time of year when we can get everybody together, no matter where they come from to celebrate our culture and traditions, and build that relationship with each other" (Livingstone Shire Council, 2017)

This year there was an emphasis on teaching the next generation of children the traditions, values and cultures of the local Indigenous people.

"These events teach the younger generations our culture, respect and the history of this place (Gawula), Because there's not many Darumbal elders left now" (Aunty Venita quoted in Northern Star, 2017)

Focused on the theme "Our Languages Matter" the emphasis was on celebrating the unique and essential role that Indigenous languages play in cultural identity, as well as linking people to their land and water and in the transmission of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture through story and dance.

Some other examples of Cultural Participation include:
- ▶ Links with community cultural groups in Logan to establish their own First 5 Forever story and rhyme times
- ▶ First 5 Forever has collaborated with local communities to develop nursery rhymes in local Indigenous languages
- ▶ Where appropriate, participants at Brisbane First 5 Forever sessions are asked to share words and nursery rhymes in their own language
- ▶ Introductions to storytime sessions incorporating welcome to country tailored to children at Brisbane City Libraries
- ▶ Inclusion of NAIDOC week celebrations for most libraries across the state
- ▶ Inclusion of Australian authors and stories in First 5 Forever sessions
- ▶ Mad Mike and Junior's development of a song specifically for First 5 Forever.

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Cultural Participation criterion with evidence from across a number of library services.

CULTURAL PARTICIPATION - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Audience	First 5 Forever activities provide children and parents with ample opportunities to experience cultural performances ranging from singing and orchestral performances to ethnic community group festivals and Indigenous storytelling.	✔	✔	

Artist/performer/ maker	First 5 Forever activities involve parents and children as artists or performers in every session; from singing and rhyming with babies to creative arts and crafts with children. First 5 Forever sessions are rarely quiet and involve a high level of audience participation.	✔	✔	✔
Sharing Public Culture	First 5 Forever is an ideal way to share our cultural context with the next generation. Each participant brings their own background to the sessions and one example of shared public culture is in Brisbane City sessions where they may ask non-English speaking background parents to share some of their language for familiar songs, rhymes or words. Another example is the Logan Council program where elders from various cultures (and particularly the Indigenous community) support sessions and sharing stories from their own culture or provide the appropriate context for stories such as "Tiddalick", a Dreamtime story.	✔	✔	✔
Emotional connection and experience	Evidence of emotional connection was strongly visible in the data gathered for this report. Participants responded to the question "What do you like most about this program?" with statements such as: "Seeing the parent-child engagement happening in sessions and hearing parents talk about the difference in language development … having people together and having lots of fun with their children" "Just the expressions on people's faces, their reactions to songs and rhymes - they love having their favourite song or rhyme or story".	✔	✔	✔
Play and leisure	Play-based learning is a feature of many of the First 5 Forever sessions, not all are led 'from the front', and there are many opportunities for children to play and socialise with other children.	✔	✔	✔
Celebration	First 5 Forever has involved a number of organisations to coincide with opportunities to celebrate cultural events, like the Gawula NAIDOC week event.	✔	✔	✔
Creation and dissemination	Craft activity sessions are built into many of the First 5 Forever initiatives.	✔	✔	✔

6. Supports Health and Wellbeing

As well as providing relaxation, entertainment and leisure activities that promote physical and mental wellbeing more broadly considered, the First 5 Forever initiative has developed strong partnerships with baby health services in their local areas. These partnerships work as reciprocal relationships with the library First 5 Forever staff attending child health sessions, and midwives and community nurses attending story and rhyme time sessions, in the libraries. Information about is shared and important health connections are made for the benefit of parents and children.

Case Study

Collaborations with Health Services – Moreton Bay

Moreton Bay works with Child Health Nurses to run weekly information sessions for parents of babies and toddlers following Baby Rhyme Time. Bribie Island Child Health Nurses are available to talk with parents following Storytime. First 5 Forever staff attend monthly post-natal connections classes at North Lakes Health precinct as part of the perinatal mental health and wellness project (commenced June 2016) in these sessions they talk to parents about the value of early literacy concepts and the importance of reading, singing and connecting with their babies. In these sessions the libraries will have a resource display, and make staff available to discuss the library's children's services along with the benefits of baby rhyme time with reference to brain development and the importance of responsive relationships. They will show the baby rhyme time video (to encourage families to attend) and hand out First 5 Forever parent toolkits.

Working with the Mater Parents Aide Unit, they support parents who might be suffering postnatal depression or they might have suffered trauma. They really want to support these parents and their relationship with their child. So, we have been working with them a bit and they have coffee catch up situations in parks, so we go along. The staff who are working with those groups have actually seen a difference in the ways those parents are engaging with their children…. Parents who were standoffish in the beginning are now engaging. From a mental health perspective attachment with baby and developing those relationships with their children I think are huge benefits (First 5 Forever Coordinator)

Some of the other heath-based partnerships that have developed are:

- ▶ Ipswich and Logan Library Services have immunisation clinics in libraries
- ▶ Lockyer Valley - Breastfeeding Australia
- ▶ Livingstone Shire library service partner with Capricorn Coast Women and Family Health Service whose health care workers attend First 5 Forever sessions
- ▶ Logan City Library Service are supported with pop-up health clinics at their sessions

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Health and Wellbeing criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Relaxation, entertainment and leisure	Parents and children alike enjoy and find First 5 Forever activities entertaining and generally relaxing. Seeing smiles and enjoyment on the faces of participants was noted by facilitators as a highlight of the program. Livingstone Library Service includes relaxation and mediation sessions with 0-5s, while several other libraries offer Baby Yoga as a relaxation technique.	✔	✔	
Self-expression	Craft sessions like Sunshine Coast's provide scope for self-expression and self-direction. Singing, dancing, moving and rhyming also provides lots of opportunities to involve self-expression. Baby Bounce sessions provide evidence of how freedom of movement and expression is afforded to children and parents.	✔	✔	✔
Emotional health	The first few years of parenting can be overwhelming and lonely. Feedback from parents indicates that First 5 Forever offered opportunities to get out of the house and be with people, enabling the social connection which is such an important aspect of emotional wellbeing. Partnerships with hospitals and health services also play a role in supporting parents at this often vulnerable time. Sessions are filled with laughter, which is important for both children and adults. Having fun and enjoying the sessions supports positive emotional health.	✔	✔	✔
Physical Health	Linking First 5 Forever sessions with healthy movement and sporting activities was a feature in several libraries. The inclusion of baby yoga and massage or the partnership with gymnastics businesses to provide a combination of storytime sessions and a trial run at gymnastics has worked well and this type of collaboration positively reinforces healthy habits.	✔	✔	✔
Access to health information	Partnerships with health agencies have helped support new parents to gain access to useful health information.	✔	✔	✔

7. Provides for Educational Attainment

The aims of First 5 Forever are based around early childhood. The initiative provides education for children and their parents in a non-institutional context, with few barriers to entry. Parents do

not need to be highly skilled in formal literacy in order to bring their children along to activities; and First 5 Forever also provides incidental opportunities for parents from non-English speaking backgrounds to learn or improve their English. In some library services the First 5 Forever initiative works particularly closely with teen mothers, with library staff attending their sessions and teach them how to share stories and rhymes with their babies. Outreach services help to break down any further perceived barriers to participation, allowing parents to connect with the library as a source of informal education and information seeking.

Image source: Sally Faulkner

Case Study

Talking Families – across Queensland

The Talking Families discussion forum is highlighted as an event that has supported further learning and educational outcomes for First 5 Forever library staff across the State. Establishing the fundamental elements of connecting children to early literacy skills and practices through expert advice and the sharing of ideas and best practice principles was considered beneficial by many attendees. On the day, examples from Cairns, Gold Coast, Logan and Mackay were presented. This day of shared practice gave time for reflection and growth for facilitators, extending to ideas for the future and best ways to get the most out of the initiative to achieve strong early literacy outcomes.

This professional development activity, including other sessions held throughout the duration of the initiative, had an empowering and personal growth impact which was highlighted by facilitators. There were comments that one of the most surprising and best outcomes was the "buy-in of staff as a result of the training." This buy-in generates enthusiasm amongst the staff to connect with families attending sessions and to constantly improve implementation and outreach.

Other examples of educational attainment

The learning developed in the First 5 Forever sessions extends beyond more narrow definitions of literacy. For instance, the Sunshine Coast ran sessions that developed spatial awareness and dexterity, involving the children picking up small plastic balls and putting them through a small hole in a box. The activity incorporated learning colours, counting, and the estimation of distance and size.

> ▶ Staff professional development has been a key element of the First 5 Forever initiative that has been well-received across Libraries. Reflections on the training suggested staff felt informed and empowered to plan sessions and to provide information about more effective ways to support children's skill development.

► The development of knowledge about the roles played by health providers and community-based support services was also identified as a benefit. With better awareness of these roles and services, better quality information can be provided to parents. Co-ordinators commented that staff know they are not the experts on early childhood education or issues, but that they now had a clearer idea of who those specialists were and how to access them.

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Educational Attainment criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Continuous education learning opportunities and enrichment	The First 5 Forever initiative strongly supports early childhood education as well as professional development for staff and facilitators. Staff have further developed their understanding of the importance of early literacy skills and how to encourage parents to achieve better results. For many of staff involved, this was not their core expertise initially. This also applies to the support network of volunteers who are also involved in the program, who are also increasing their skills and learning through training observation and direction from library staff and facilitators.	✔	✔	✔
Literacies	Early and family literacy is the dedicated focus of this program, and the bulk of its activities are designed around supporting parents and children in the development of the relevant knowledge, skills and capabilities. Digital literacy development is another benefit identified in programs that offer or refer to e-books and digital resources. Logan is looking to work with organisations like the Commonwealth Bank to introduce 'dollarmite' accounts for small children and start them on their journey to financial literacy.	✔	✔	
Address disadvantage	Because of its accessibility and outreach, the Public Library is a highly appropriate institutional vehicle through which to reach across socio-economic boundaries and address both economic and educational forms of disadvantage. Libraries like Brisbane and Moreton Bay also try to address the time constraints experienced by working parents by providing a range of sessions across most days of the week and at a range of times.	✔	✔	

Provision of alternative education space	The outreach capacity of the First 5 Forever initiative sees the use of a diverse range of informal and alternative spaces of education. In Livingstone Library Service the First 5 Forever staff support NAIDOC week at Mount Weller, connecting with the Indigenous community there. Other programs like the Logan storytimes based in McDonalds restaurants take the program to the places where the community are gathered rather than waiting for the community to come to the library.	✔	✔	
Exposure to different types of jobs and skills	The improved skill levels of staff and the training they have received as part of First 5 Forever have been noted and appreciate. Moreton Bay has adopted a whole of library approach to continuous improvement and staff development, and there is reportedly high levels of staff buy-in to the program and related skills development there.		✔	✔

8. Encourages Economic Productivity

Economic development is not an area of impact that at first glance would normally be attributed to early literacy programs. But on closer examination there are several rich examples of direct business development, along with networking, reducing costs, and increasing efficiencies, which all impact on the bottom line for economic productivity.

First 5 Forever has impacted on employment levels in libraries across Queensland with further opportunities for skills development through professional development training provided by SLQ and local councils. This has increased skills and workforce capability around early childhood education and parental support with a number of examples in Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, and Brisbane.

Through the First 5 Forever initiative libraries have also been able increase efficiencies and benefits in service delivery by collaborating in partnership with other agencies and organisations to increase impact.

Case Study

Becky's Place - Logan

Becky is a pony who connects with children in a very gentle and non-judgemental way. At Becky's Place, a pony-riding facility, Becky's owner Doreen works with small groups of children on the autism spectrum to help them connect with animals and enjoy the experience of riding. The business is based in Logan. Doreen finds that small groups work particularly well for these children and that they very much enjoy connecting and relating to the ponies.

Doreen wanted to offer something even more, so when she became aware of the First 5 Forever initiative she saw an opportunity to include storytelling in her sessions. Together with the help of First 5 Forever staff she tailored a number of sessions around the ponies and the needs of the children who visit. In doing so, Doreen developed her skills in storytelling and supporting the education needs of children. Now sufficiently experienced at storytelling, rhymes and songs to run these sessions on her own, she has also written a book especially for the sessions run with Becky. While she was providing sessions in partnership with First 5 Forever she was able to offer them at no charge, as she was supported by the initiative, just as other guest artists, authors or facilitators have been. Doreen's small business is now expanding to incorporate First 5 Forever-style activities, enabling her to offer enriched experiences that target particular children's needs.

The following chart analyses how the First 5 Forever initiative relates to the elements of the Economic Development criterion with evidence from across a number of Library Services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - EVIDENCE		CHILDREN	PARENTS/CARERS	STAFF
Business innovation	Becky's place provides an example of a simple business innovation to develop her business with the inclusion of the storytime element		✔	✔
Business incubation and mentoring	Indirect business mentoring through skills development in early literacy was provided by First 5 Forever staff as they supported and encouraged her with the addition of storytimes to Doreen's sessions to a point she could operate independently and run these herself.			✔

Employment levels and opportunities and skills	This will be a question for future longitudinal studies examining education attainment of this generation of First 5 Forever children. Skills and the development of library staff was a key benefit of the program, enhanced by the high level of buy-in, or commitment and passion that the program incites in First 5 Forever library staff.			✔
Networking	Library services like Moreton Bay bring in special guests to support their sessions – from face painters, to singers, storytellers and so on. Each of these small business people benefit from the engagement, the exposure and the network they can link into for providing the same services to other libraries.			✔
Partnership				✔
External resource investment	In-kind contributions to First 5 Forever implementation at the local level have been used to leverage the initiative's funding to expand the scope of activities and enhance their impact. This was evident in the Dirty Dinosaurs in the Park at Logan and many other partnership programs in Mackay, Moreton Bay, Sunshine Coast, Logan, and Cairns. The Moreton Bay library service connections and inclusion with the Urban Country Festival and the Sails Festival at Redcliffe show the involvement in large events which attract tourism-related economic activity to local communities.			✔
Generate Spending	While First 5 Forever does not directly fund the purchase of books for collections, recommendations are made from the First 5 Forever teams to purchasing departments or services within individual libraries.		✔	✔
Technology equipment support	unknown			

4. Conclusions and recommendations

Summary of findings

While primarily built around promoting and improving early literacy, the First 5 Forever initiative is also a community facilitator and connector, supporting families and children through a culture of participation and lifelong learning. The initiative encourages and inspires innovation and the support of local economies through skills development, engagement with local providers and the use of locally sourced materials. The partnerships facilitated by libraries through First 5 Forever with other service providers from childcare, to health and community organisations create additional efficiencies and enhance community connections for families.

Public libraries provide an ideal setting to support, facilitate, and lead early literacy development programs. The early years of parenting can be a vulnerable point in people's lives, with some

parents left feeling quite isolated. First 5 Forever facilitators noted that the programs help parents at these times, supporting in the early phases of parenting and helping them make important social and community connections. They help with parenting beyond early literacy by building or enhancing families' connections with health professionals and community organisations, as well as by providing a safe place to learn about parenting, to share stories and to meet and support each other, discussing issues and spending time with other families.

The findings of our analysis of the First 5 Forever initiative based on the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework are further summarised in the chart and table below. They indicate that First 5 Forever delivers benefits in every top-level category of the framework. However, sub-categories such as Crime Prevention (within Civic Engagement) and (Technology Equipment Support) within Economic Productivity received a lower score as there is limited evidence within the scope of this report's data and research materials for these subcategories.
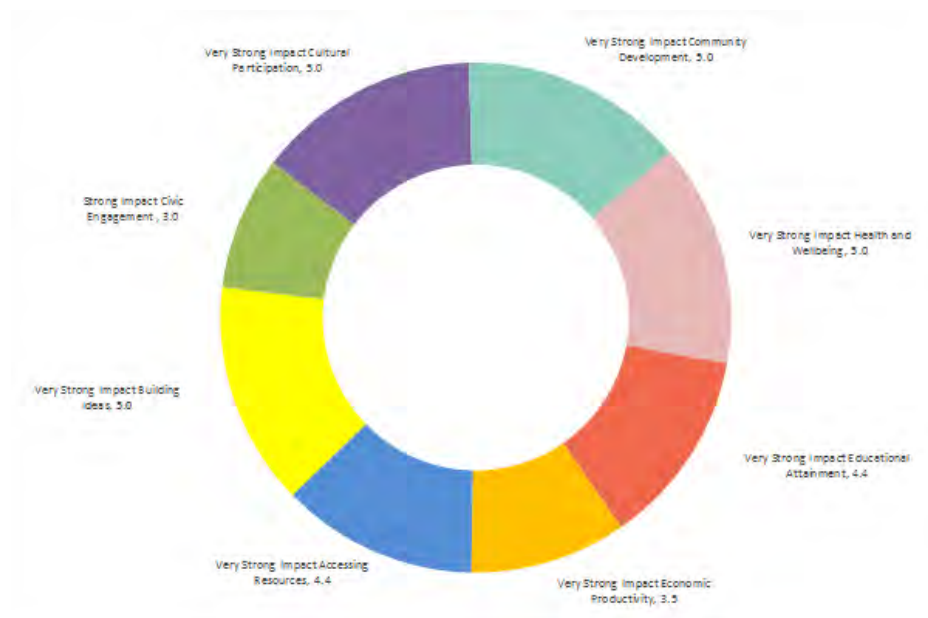
Table: First 5 Forever Initiative – Early Literacy Programs and Outreach

CRITERIA	Impact Indicators	RATING 0-5	AVERAGE VALUE	
Accessing Resources	1.1 Affording access to digital technologies	3	Average Accessing Resources	
	1.2 Affording access to creative resources	5		
	1.3 Idea storage/archive	4		
	1.4 Heritage, history and legacy	5		
	1.5 Access, filter and sort information	5		4.4
Idea Building	2.1 Exposure to ideas	5	Average Idea Building	
	2.2 Development of user curiosity, interests, appreciation	5		
	2.3 Culture of discovery	5		
	2.4 Idea initiation, generation	5		
	2.5 Risk taking and experimenting	5		
	2.6 Repertoires of practice	5		5.0
Civic engagement	3.1 Democracy	3	Average Civic Engagement	
	3.2 Participation in citizenship	3		
	3.3 Crime reduction/rehabilitation	1		
	3.4 Institutional trust in government due to perception of libraries	3		
	3.5 Development of capacity	4		
	3.6 Societal discussion	4		3.0
Community Development	4.1 Community ownership, strength and identity	5	Average Community Development	
	4.2 Cultural diversity and inclusiveness	5		
	4.3 Social capital	5		
	4.4 Social interaction and socialising	5		
	4.5 Localised service provision	5		
	4.6 Cooperation, coordination, collaboration, sharing and reciprocity	5		
	4.7 Trust (in community)	5		
	4.8 Self-organisation	5		
	4.9 Resilience	5		5.0
Cultural Participation	5.1 Audience	5	Average Cultural Participation	
	5.2 Artist/performer/maker	5		
	5.3 Sharing of public culture	5		
	5.4 Emotional connection and experience	5		
	5.5 Play and leisure	5		
	5.6 Celebration	5		
	5.7 Creation and dissemination	5		5.0
Health and Wellbeing	6.1 Relaxation, entertainment and leisure	5	Average Health and Wellbeing	
	6.2 Self-expression	5		
	6.3 Emotional health	5		
	6.4 Physical health	5		
	6.5 Access to health information	5		5.0
Educational Attainment	7.1 Continuous education, learning opportunities and enrichment	4	Average Educational Attainment	
	7.2 Literacies	5		
	7.3 Address disadvantage	5		
	7.4 Provision of alternative education space	5		
	7.5 Exposure to different types of jobs and skills	3		4.4
Economic Productivity	8.1 Business innovation	4	Average Economic Productivity	
	8.2 Business incubation and mentoring	4		
	8.3 Employment levels and opportunities/skills	3		
	8.4 Networking	5		
	8.5 Partnership	5		
	8.6 External resource investment (attract visitors)	3		
	8.7 Generate spending	3		
	8.8 Technology equipment support	1		3.5

Implications for future development

This report has focused on using the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework as a tool for the post-hoc evaluation of First 5 Forever activities. However, the framework is also designed to be used as a strategic development and planning tool for library programming, where the eight criteria are used to frame additional aims and objectives of activities, and to provide a framework for later evaluation of impact. With some modifications for the specific application to early and family literacy, SLQ may wish to consider whether future iterations of First 5 Forever could take this approach.

The existing User Guide, which is available as a supplement to the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework, steps through the process of using the framework to set goals, design and deliver, and then evaluate program activities that align to the criteria.[28] The long-term community impacts and benefits of the program could then be tracked over time in a longitudinal study. The integration of the framework into whole-of-initiative strategic planning would help validate and embed the existing commitment of library staff to outreach and community involvement in First 5 Forever.

Professional Development training sessions could include the use of the framework as a planning and reflection tool to ensure that potential impacts are maximised and realised, inspiring the further development of the program in the eight key areas. Evaluation reports could include reflections on the eight categories to capture a more comprehensive view of the impacts of the program. Areas that are underrepresented, or of particular interest to specific communities, can then be developed or enhanced as required. For example, if the specific area to be enriched was local service provision, the First 5 Forever staff could seek out local artists, writers and musicians to participate and connect with the sessions. Or, if the area of interest was to increase physical wellbeing, a library service could seek out partnerships with gymnastics or local swimming lesson providers, as Livingstone Shire has done. Ongoing publicity and knowledge exchange around how Councils are targeting particular areas of need can inspire further partnerships and collaborations. Finally, future iterations of the initiative will increasingly require a strategic approach to addressing the benefits and challenges of digital media technologies for early and family literacy, and the *Libraries as Creative Spaces* framework may help to provide additional structure around this.

28 http://www.plconnect.slq.qld.gov.au/manage/research/libraries-as-creative-spaces

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Ipswich *First 5 Forever* - 2017

Koroan Playgroup

Local families on the *First 5 Forever* van

Story Time at Bunnings

Pop-Up Library Fun at Goodna

Riverlink Story Time

Sharing stories with Dad

Baby Rhyme Time

15 December 2017

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
              (ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

FROM: LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

RE: IPSWICH LIBRARIES – CUSTOMER SERVICE CHARTER AND RESPONSE AND
              RECOVERY PLAN

INTRODUCTION:

This is a report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017 concerning the development of two new documents in response to a Library Audit:

- Customer Service Charter
- Library Response and Recovery Plan

BACKGROUND:

A recent internal audit of the Library resulted in a recommendation for the Library to develop and implement two further documents in order to fully comply with the State Library of Queensland recommendations.

Customer Service Charter
The *Ipswich Libraries - Customer Service Charter* (refer Attachment A) defines the Library's values and commitments in providing services to the Ipswich Community, as well as providing some ways in which Library customers can partner with the Library to ensure Library interactions are pleasant and meaningful for all.

The charter also provides options for customers to contact the Library with comments or suggestions.

It is proposed to make the *Customer Service Charter* available to the public online and in a variety of collateral that will be made available at all Library branches.

1

Disaster Recovery Plan

The Library audit recommended the Library develops and implements a Disaster Recovery Plan. After consultation with Council's Principal Officer (Emergency Management), the name of the document has been amended to **Library Response and Recovery Plan.** Under the *Disaster Management Act 2003*, disaster recovery / management and associated terms have very defined and specific meanings that may cause confusion with Council's existing policy and procedure. The intent of the document is to provide guidelines and procedures for Library staff in a critical event situation with an overriding priority of restoring normal services as quickly and efficiently as possible.

At present, Council does not have a framework for business unit level Business Continuity Planning, but Council's Corporate Risk team is currently looking to build this. Once the framework is in place, the Library will upgrade the document to comply with the developed framework for a Library Business Continuity Plan.

Ipswich Libraries recognises its responsibility to maintain a state of preparedness in the event of a critical event that threatens staff, customers, collections, or library buildings and facilities.

This response and recovery plan complements and supplements Ipswich City Council's well-established and documented emergency response procedures (including annual training) for emergencies including:

- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Threats to personal safety
- Medical emergencies

The *Ipswich Libraries Response and Recovery Plan* (refer Attachment B) has been created to be a 'living document' that will be reviewed annually, but regularly updated to reflect learnings from critical events that may occur.

The document does not seek to prescribe responses to every possible event, but rather provides a road map for priorities and actions that may need to be addressed for each unique set of circumstances.

The document defines the establishment of a Response and Recovery Team whose primary function will be to establish practices that help the Library to prevent foreseeable problems and to ensure that staff are suitably prepared and trained to deal with critical events.

CONSULTATION:

The Emergency Management Team (Works, Parks and Recreation) have been consulted in relation to the Response and Recovery Plan.

The Corporate Services and Risk Manager has been consulted in relation to the Response and Recovery Plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Name of Attachment	Attachment
Ipswich Libraries – Customer Service Charter	Attachment A
Ipswich Libraries Response and Recovery Plan	Attachment B

RECOMMENDATION:

A.   That the document titled *Ipswich Libraries – Customer Service Charter,* as detailed in Attachment A to the report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017, be noted.

B.   That the procedure titled *Ipswich Libraries Response and Recovery Plan,* as detailed in Attachment B to the report by the Library Services Manager dated 15 December 2017, be noted.

Sylvia Swalling
LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Caroline McMahon
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
(ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

IPSWICH LIBRARIES

Customer Service Charter

This charter outlines the standard of service we seek to achieve in all Ipswich Libraries branches. Our commitment is to provide services, resources and programs that are responsive to your needs. We welcome your ideas and suggestions so that we can continue to improve our service to you, the customer.

OUR VISION

Every single person is important and has the right to freely access information to gain knowledge, build understanding and experience enjoyment. This essential right builds great societies.

OUR PURPOSE

We provide a public Library service to those who visit, live and work in Ipswich.

We offer free access to a wide range of information, leisure and technology resources and programs in a welcoming environment.

We provide facilities that include spaces for meeting, studying and training, as well as opportunities for social interaction and lifelong learning.

OUR VALUES

Valuing people

We respect the diversity and individuality of all people.

We value and invest in the professional development of our staff.

Equity of access

We are committed to providing equity of access to our services for all groups and individuals.

Working together

We are committed to achieving better outcomes for our community by working together with other Council sections, government departments, community groups and service providers.

Learning and innovation

We seek out new ideas and opportunities, focusing on improving all that we do.

Good governance

We are committed to ensuring our practices are transparent and flexible. We accept accountability for our actions and results.

OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

Environment

Ipswich Libraries is committed to providing safe, comfortable, welcoming environments where you will feel at ease.

Services

Our services include:

- collections and resources that are well-maintained and easily accessible
- access to a wide range of information resources, both in the Library and beyond its walls
- professional assistance in using the Library's resources and services
- activities and programs for adults and children
- services for people with special needs, including people with disabilities, literacy needs, older people and multicultural communities
- personal computers, printers and photocopiers for your use

Staff

Library staff will:

- be helpful, friendly, courteous and approachable
- treat your needs with respect and in a culturally appropriate manner
- maintain your privacy at all times
- respond promptly to your enquiries, comments or complaints
- wear identification badges so that you can easily recognise them

Communication

We will aim to answer your telephone call promptly.

If you call when the Library is closed, a message detailing the Library's opening hours will be available.

If you write or email to us about any aspect of the Library service, we will respond within 5 working days.

We will keep you updated on the progress of your request.

Access

We will provide convenient hours of opening.

Book chutes are available for returning items when the Library is closed.

Items may be borrowed from and returned to any of our Library branches.

Our catalogue will provide up-to-date information on the availability of items held in any of our branches.

Resources held in the Library collections will be clearly signed and easily located.

Free internet and email access is available at all Library branches.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We recognise that quality services can only be achieved in partnership with you, our customers.

We ask you to:

- Treat staff with respect and courtesy
- Respect the rights of other customers whilst using Library facilities
- Ensure children in your care are appropriately supervised while in the Library
- Treat Library facilities, equipment and property with due care
- Take care of the items you borrow and return them on time
- Participate in activities and services offered by the Library in a spirit of good humour and co-operation
- Comply with any directions or instructions given by staff

HAVE YOUR SAY

We will consult you on major issues affecting the service and keep you informed about changes and developments.

We will carry out a customer survey at least every 3 years and publish the results.

We will listen to your views about the Library service.

You can provide feedback on how we may improve our services, or how we can help to resolve a specific service problem:

- Discuss the matter with a member of the Library staff, who will assist you or refer you to the appropriate person
- Complete a customer comment form Comments, compliments and complaints
- Write, email or phone Ipswich Libraries:
  Library Operations Manager
  Ipswich Libraries
  PO Box 191
  IPSWICH QLD 4305
  Phone: 3810 6185
  Email: info@library.ipswich.qld.gov.au

	IPSWICH LIBRARIES **RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PLAN**	**Version:** **Document No.:**

1.1 Objective:

The objective of this Procedure is to provide the Library with a set of procedures, guidelines, and priorities for staff in preparation for and in response to a critical incident. The overriding priority is to restore normal services as quickly and efficiently as possible when safe to do so.

1.2 Regulatory Authority:

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- Library Services Policy
- Local Law No. 7 (Local Government Controlled Areas and Road) 2013
- State Library of Queensland – Operational Services Standard
- ICC ECO procedures

1.3 Scope:

The first consideration in any disruption event must always be the safety of staff and customers. A rapid and informed response may save lives and limit damage to valuable materials and facilities.

Ipswich Libraries recognizes its responsibility to maintain a state of preparedness in the event of an emergency or disruption that threatens staff, customers, collections, or library buildings and facilities.

This plan complements and supplements Ipswich City Council's well-established and documented emergency response procedures (including annual training) for emergencies including:
- Fire
- Bomb threats
- Threats to personal safety
- Medical emergencies

In the event of a major or catastrophic disaster, the Ipswich Libraries will take direction from Ipswich City Council's Local Disaster Coordinator.

Overriding Principles

The overriding principles guiding responses in all emergency or disruption situations are:
- Preservation of life has precedence over protection and/or removal of the collections, including material listed as historically significant
- Directives of emergency personnel are to be obeyed
- All response and recovery actions are to be coordinated and planned to achieve the best result
- Priority collection material must not be removed from the building without authorisation

1

from the Library Content Development and Fulfilment Coordinator.

- All incidents and actions are to be fully documented, according to existing ICC requirements and guidelines.

Essential components of effective responses include:

1. Clear communications hierarchy and pathways
2. Personnel who know how to respond in critical situations
3. Equipment that is in good working order
4. Ready access to supplies and services

Communications Priorities

In the event of a disruption, the following communications priorities will apply:

Priority	Name	Position	Contact	Action
1	Sylvia Swalling	Library Services Manager	3810 6767 0419 780 653	Phones COO – ASDCE Contacts Local Disaster Coordinator (COO – WPR), if appropriate Contacts Comms Coordinator, as needed Contacts LMT as appropriate
2	Caroline McMahon	COO - ASDCE	3810 6656 0417 616 418	Makes decisions about possible branch closure Phones Library Committee Chair Phones other relevant COOs, Councillors and CEO
3	Cheryl Pye	Library Operations Manager	3810 7432 0423 642 243	Depending on nature of event: Contacts relevant Facilities officers Contacts WH&S officers Contacts HSRS officers Contact LMT with instructions
4	Liz Cooper-Smith	Communications Coordinator	3810 6595	Based on discussions with LSM, sends out relevant comms to staff, customers etc.
4	Leanne Sherriff	Library Operations Officer	3810 6768	Contacts LMT
5	Library Management Team			Contact LSM for instructions Contact LOM for instructions Contact direct reports

Facilities Assistance

Depending on the nature of the event, assistance may be sought from the following Council staff:

	Responsibility	Title	Contact Details	Alternate Contact	Title	Contact Details
Lift	Neal Van Kerkvoort	Technical Officer Mechanical (Electrical)	0499 770 174	Rob Ketelaars	Coordinator (Electrical/ Mechanical)	0447 200 014

Air conditioning	Neal Van Kerkvoort	Technical Officer Mechanical (Electrical)	0499 770 174	Rob Ketelaars	Coordinator (Electrical/ Mechanical)	448 200 014
Electrical	Trevor Winters	Supervisor (Electrician)	0474 470 677	Rob Ketelaars	Coordinator (Electrical/ Mechanical)	0447 200 014
Plumbing	Danny Kelly	Supervisor (Plumbing)	0419 799 672	Michael Maxwell	Coordinator (Plumbing)	0477 006 373
ICT	Daryl Hickey	Asset Spatial Systems Team Leader	0419 797 341		Service Desk	3810 6716
Fleet (inc. Mobile Library)	Mark Sines	Principal Officer (Fleet)	0419 788 047	Brad Degen	Acting Principal Officer (Fleet)	0418 876 291

Personnel

In the event of a disruption, the following staff are designated as the Library Response and Recovery Team:

Name	Position	Contact
Sylvia Swalling	Library Services Manager	3810 6767
Cheryl Pye	Library Operations Manager	3810 7432 0423 642 243
Matt Pascoe	Business Services Manager	3810 7047
Liz Cooper-Smith	Communications Coordinator	3810 6595
Colleen Gagen	Client Services Coordinator	3810 6785
Donald Jeffrey	Library Content Development and Fulfilment Coordinator	3810 7407
Merindi Derrick	Library Digital Services Coordinator	3810 7538

Library Response and Recovery Team

The chief responsibilities of the Library Response and Recovery Team is the prevention of foreseeable impactful events and/or mitigation of risk caused by a critical incident. The Library Response and Recovery Team will:
- Meet annually to review the plan
- Update the plan at least biennially
- Arrange annual training for staff in being prepared for disruptions
- Ensure that supplies are checked at least annually
- Ensure that WH&S hazard and risk surveys are completed and outstanding items actioned, as per Council guidelines.

In a major disruption event, the team shall convene as soon as practicable to establish a clear chain of command and assign tasks and duties in response to the specific conditions of the event. Key areas of coordination are:

Team Leader:
- activates the plan
- coordinates all recovery activities
- consults with and supervises all members of the Response and Recovery Team
- establishes and coordinates an internal communications network
- reports to the COO or Council as appropriate

Communications:
- coordinates all publicity and public relations, including communication with the media and the public
- provides regular updates of information to the media and the public

Administration/Supplies:
- tracks personnel (staff and volunteers) working on recovery
- maintains in-house event response supplies
- coordinates supplies, equipment, and services with other team members
- authorizes expenditures
- liaises with Council's Insurance and Risk Officer

Documentation:
- maintains a list of the priorities for recovery
- keeps a written record of all decisions
- maintains a written and photographic record of all damaged materials for insurance and other purposes
- tracks collections as they are moved during salvage and treatment

Building & Security
- assesses damage to the building and systems
- decides on recovery/rehabilitation strategies for the building
- Maintains security of collections, building, and property during response and recovery

Collections Recovery:
- keeps up to date on collections recovery procedures
- decides on overall recovery/rehabilitation strategies
- coordinates with administrator regarding collections related services/supplies/equipment, such as freezing and vacuum freeze drying services
- trains staff and workers in recovery and handling methods
- Assesses damage to the collections
- decides what will be discarded and what will be salvaged; assigns salvage priorities among collections

Work Crew Coordination:
- coordinates the day-to-day recovery work of library staff and volunteers

Technology:
- works with Council's ICT Branch to
  - assess damage to technology systems, such as hardware, software, telecommunications
  - decides on recovery/rehabilitation strategies;
  - sets priorities for recovery

RESPONSE

It should be noted that disruption events can take many different forms necessitating the adjustment of response and recovery procedures to suit the situation. Events may occur with uncertain combinations of wet, mouldy, smoke damaged and physically impacted resources and facilities. Every disruption has its own impacts requiring a variety of assessments, decisions and

timely actions.

Typical actions after a disruption event may include:

No one may enter the building until it is declared safe by the City Maintenance Branch and Council's Workplace Safety and Wellbeing Manager or delegate.

Once it is safe to enter the building, the Library Response and Recovery Team will arrange to
1. Secure the area, cordoning off affected areas to prevent possible injury to staff and patrons.
2. Stabilize the environment by working with relevant internal and external organisations to address environmental impacts such as standing water, wet carpets, smoke damage, mud etc.
3. Survey the extent of damage
   - Make notes describing the scene, including approximate number of items affected, condition of shelving etc.
   - Photograph or videotape the damaged areas before any clean-up has begun
4. Formulate plan of action and determine immediate supply needs and action priorities.
   - Delegate responsibilities
   - Appoint a staff member to meet and direct arrivals of off-site supplies and personnel
   - Appoint a staff member to secure the perimeter from sightseers
   - Set up a central command post
   - Identify and undertake necessary communications to staff and library users
   - Establish a work area to receive salvage material
5. Contact Council's insurance manager to arrange for an assessor
6. Determine what supplies and services are needed, and arrange for procurement
7. Make arrangement for additional staff to assist with necessary work
8. Keep careful records of any damaged items that are removed, including barcodes and titles.

Collection Priorities

By their nature, disruptions often occur without warning, and damage to a collection can continue unchecked even after an event has passed. The first 48 hours following an event may cause more destruction to a library's holdings than the initial event. Unfortunately, the most common disruption for Library collections is water – either by inundation or resulting from fighting fire. Books, photographic and film-based materials and other items can begin to mould within a very short space of time, especially during hot or humid weather. It is therefore crucial that recovery operations commence as soon as possible - within 48 hours to minimize collection losses.

The aims of all immediate, short and long term actions relating to the collection are to:
- Stabilize events affecting collection material
- Salvage and restore collection material, where appropriate
- Rehabilitate affected areas
- Return collection material to shelves or storage
- Restore Library lending and reference services as soon as possible

Environmental Monitoring
In the event of an inundation event, steps will be taken to stabilize the temperature at 21° Celsius and the humidity under 50% to reduce the likelihood of mould forming.

Carpet, furniture and computers

- Damage to furniture, fittings and equipment will be assessed in partnership with Council's Facilities and Maintenance Branch.
- Computer equipment will be assessed by Council's ICT Branch for repair or replacement.

POST-EVENT PROCESS

After first response works have been completed, the Library Response and Recovery Team will work towards restoring services.

Restoration of Services

SHORT TERM GOALS
- Restore phone and electrical services.
- Restore online services
- Communicate effects of event and the anticipated impact on Library services to Library customers.
- Clean affected areas.
- Restore library services in unaffected areas if possible.
- If complete facility is damaged, open library at a new site.

LONGER TERM GOALS
- Implement plans to restore collections.
- Arrange for facility repair and/or reconstruction.
- Re-establish normal library services.

Library Response and Recovery Team Review Meeting

After any disruption event, the Library Response and Recovery Team will:
- Review cause of the event and revise prevention measures.
- Review recovery process:
    - what went right/wrong
    - changes in response and recovery plan
    - changes in personnel involved
- Issue formal letters of gratitude to persons involved in recovery.

1.4 Roles, responsibilities and actions:

This plan is a "living document," subject to review annually and changed as needed in response to emergency drills, changes within the Library, and post-event assessment.

1.5 Definitions:

The terms *Libraries, library facilities, branch/es* are used interchangeably.

Emergency is defined as any situation posing a threat to the building, its occupants or the environment, which is beyond the ability of the building occupants to safely control.

A *disruption* in the Library context refers to a sudden, calamitous event that seriously disrupts the functioning of the Library that may cause human, material, and economic or environmental losses that exceed the Library's ability to cope using its own resources.

1.6 Procedure Author:

The Library Operations Manager is responsible for reviewing this procedure.

Date of approval

Title of Manager:

Date to be reviewed:

31 January 2018

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)

FROM: LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

RE: REDBANK PLAINS LIBRARY REPURPOSE AND ESTABLISHMENT OF LOGISTICS HUB

INTRODUCTION:

This is a report by the Library Services Manager dated 31 January 2018 concerning the repurposing of the existing Redbank Plains Library and the co-location and establishment of a Logistics Hub at the Redbank Plains Library, in preparation for the July 2018 opening of the Springfield Central Library.

BACKGROUND:

A recommendation by the Library Working Group for the transition of the Redbank Plains Library facility was presented to the City Management, Finance and Community Engagement Board at the meeting held on 20 June 2017, which was approved by Council on 27 June 2017. The actions from this recommendation were:

A.   *That Council approve the following outcome of the working group meeting held on 29 May 2017;*

      i.   *That the Redbank Plains Library be transitioned to form a collections logistics hub (approximately 50% of the existing internal footprint) and a multi-purpose space for community use, to include formal and informal meeting spaces, PC access and library technology installations (including Smart Lockers).*

B.   *That Council note the following outcomes of the working group meeting held on 29 May 2017;*

1

i. That the timing for transition of the Redbank Plains Library be extended for as long as possible, while still facilitating cost efficiencies associated with the future opening of a Library at Springfield Central.

With the library deployment at Springfield Central Library scheduled to occur in June 2018, the recommission of the existing Redbank Plains library collection must take place in March. The collections logistics facility is required to support this process. Timing for the re-purposing works at Redbank Plains Library has therefore been set for February / March 2018.

Works at the Redbank Plains Library will take place in two stages. Stage 1 includes:

- The removal of the existing circulation and enquiries counters and make good carpet and paint etc.
- Construction of a wall between the atriums.
- Construction of a wall with a swipe access door between the library and the logistics hub areas.
- Repositioning booths etc.
- Unpack total collection, breakdown shelving and reposition to optimal stack layout.
- Refit the library workroom for logistics layout.
- Establish new Marketplace shelving and collection.

To ensure public safety during the implementation of Stage 1 it will be necessary to disrupt service provision at the facility from 12.00 pm Saturday, 3 March 2018 and reopen to the public at 10.00 am Monday, 12 March 2018.

Stage 2 will include:

- Installation of access control and monitoring technology to facilitate out of hours access.
- Creation of additional secure access meeting spaces.
- Delivery of disability access from the library space into the meeting room spaces.
- Creation of a secure outdoor space using a portion of the existing veranda space.
- Creation of internal secure access to the outside toilets for public use out of hours.
- Modification of the kitchenette / cleaners area.

It is anticipated that Stage 2 will be completed before the end of June 2018.

Within stage 2 works, there will be a continuation of the existing opening hours and staff presence. Once access control and monitoring technology is installed and fully operational, a review of the staff hours will be undertaken.

Library public programming will continue to be provided to the Redbank Plains community with digital literacy training delivered at the existing Library location and other programming delivered in outreach mode at locations that will include the new Redbank Plains Community Centre, local parks and other partnership based locations.

A detailed Communications Plan including key messaging, collateral, mail-outs, media releases, social media posts, website updates and community information sessions has been developed. This will be implemented from February to inform the catchment population of the planned changes and the new services that will be delivered at the new Springfield Central Library.

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY AND CUSTOMERS:

The creation of a multi-purpose space that will facilitate out of hours access by community to a tailored collection, meeting spaces and computers / internet will significantly benefit community and customers and will allow ongoing provision of digital literacy training opportunities. This amended service offering, in addition to the new state-of-the-art Springfield Central Library, will ensure equitable access by the Redbank Plains community to quality library services into the future.

CONSULTATION:

During the public consultation phase when developing the options for Library Working Group consideration it was identified in feedback from the current users that they:

- *Wanted to have more meeting spaces.*
  - the new layout will have additional bookable meeting spaces
- *Wanted to have longer hours of access.*
  - the access control and monitoring technology is anticipated to provide out of hours access to members
- *Wanted to have weekend access.*
  - the access control and monitoring technology is anticipated to provide weekend access to members
- *Requirement for secure outdoor space.*
  - creation of a closed in area on the veranda to address this need
- *Need more public access computers.*
  - it is anticipated that we will increase the number of public access computers with online booking capability
- *Need to maintain a collection onsite.*
  - a new 'Marketplace' style collection will be installed.

During this phase, there was consultation with Councillors Pahlke, Ireland and Silver which included Community Information sessions at Redbank Plains and Redbank Plaza, consultation with the Friends of Ipswich Library Service (FOILS), Library staff, Community Development staff, Works, Parks and Recreation staff and Health, Security and Regulatory Services staff including Safe City staff.

CONCLUSION:

The establishment of the Library Collections Logistics Hub and, by association, the repurposing of the Redbank Plains Library are strategic business requirements to ensure the future provisioning and operational development of Ipswich Libraries. The delivery of this project is time bound to the delivery of a collection for the Springfield Library which therefore determines the schedule of works. The transition process will commence in February 2018, with Stage 1 works requiring a public closure from 12.00 pm, 3 March 2018 and reopening at 10.00 am, 12 March 2018.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be received and the contents noted.

Sylvia Swalling
LIBRARY SERVICES MANAGER

I concur with the recommendation contained in this report.

Caroline McMahon
**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
(ARTS, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT)**