



Victoria's public libraries offer CALD communities a vast range of collections, programs, spaces and outreach opportunities to engage, support, and celebrate a culturally-aware, inclusive, and welcoming community for all. Public Libraries encourage early literacy in CALD communities by engaging with families and children at the earliest possible stage in their development, and supporting ongoing interaction and engagement with Victorian Public Libraries.

Collections

Victoria's public libraries provide their communities with access to LOTE and bilingual collections in the form of print material, online databases and audio/visual resources.

Picture books in languages other than English provide CALD communities with opportunities to share literacy and literature in their first language with their children, and bilingual picture books assist in supporting English proficiency in both the child and the carer.

Eastern Regional Libraries recently participated in the translation of two of Jeanette Rowe's picture books into Hakha Chin, which are distributed to the local community and are available in the library for borrowing.

Programs

Through a range of regular early years programs designed to model play based literacy and numeracy strategies for carers and their pre-school children, CALD communities are welcomed and encouraged to participate in regular early years programs held in public libraries across the state.

Individual library services across the state offer LOTE, bilingual and even trilingual storytime sessions with languages reflective of the diverse community they serve.

Some of the languages offered include Arabic, Assyrian, Bengali, Burmese, Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Greek, French, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Karen, Malayalam, Nepalese, Pakistani, Portuguese, Samoan, Sinhalese, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.

Victoria's public libraries offer and work with local community groups and members to deliver special events, displays and festivals for cultural events to promote a culturally-aware, inclusive, and welcoming community for all. Some of these events include Mid-Autumn Festival, Lunar New Year, Diwali, Harmony Day, Ramadan and more, and are fantastic opportunities for the whole community to come together to celebrate and appreciate Victoria's diverse and multicultural community.

Hume Libraries offers innovative programs to encourage participation and engagement for the Hume community including:

- *Chatterbox – a play based activity designed to promote conversations and imaginative play between child and parent, language practice and communication skill development*
- *STEAM sessions for our early years some with specific language for example Assyrian/English Bee-Bots and Arabic/English Bee-bots*

Spaces

Public libraries are some of the first social spaces available to young children and their families and carers where they can learn to share, play, read and interact. CALD communities particularly find public libraries to be welcoming and inclusive spaces for them to access resources, connect with community and support the literacy development of their children in the early years and beyond. Community Playgroups are encouraged to gather and meet at Libraries across the state, with diverse cultural and language groups meeting and gathering to connect with each other and the wider community.

Partnerships and Community Groups

Some of the organisations and groups libraries work with to provide training for staff, to engage with CALD communities outside of the library buildings, and to partner with to provide specialist programming and services for CALD communities include:

Health and Wellbeing organisations, such as Maternal and Child Health, Cohealth, etc.

Non-profit organisations, such as Community Centres, Community Houses, Housing Estates, Brotherhood of St Laurence, Berry Street, The Smith Family, etc.

Centre for Multicultural Youth

Migrant Resource Centres

State Library Victoria

Playgroups Victoria

Local Playgroups

Libraries Change Lives

"My 20-month-old daughter loves to sing and dance, as well as book reading thanks to our Wednesday library visits (as well as Tuesday visits for Chinese storytime). Our life would be boring without the library."

[#LibrariesChangeLives](#) by supporting young families with literacy building activities and by providing a safe and fun place to play. This mother and daughter visit Warrandyte Library at least once a week.



Casey-Cardinia Libraries runs the 'Library has Legs Cranbourne' program – this 'Communities for Children' outreach program runs many programs focused on CALD communities. With a dedicated 'Library has Legs' Librarian, CCL host the Women's Friendship Cafe, Cranbourne (partnership program with Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition and Cranbourne Information & Support Service), as well as offering monthly outreach to the Carlisle Park Supported Playgroup (mostly CALD families, many Dari-speaking), quarterly outreach to 4 other supported playgroups with mostly CALD families, weekly outreach to two Aboriginal playgroups, multilingual storytime program (recent storytimes include Dari & Farsi, Arabic, Oromo and Punjabi), as well as a resource kit program that has produced multiple resource kits on the topics of diversity and supporting home languages.

I now read well enough to share stories with my kids

When nearly half of all Victorians aged 15-74 are struggling with literacy

Libraries Change Lives

I learn English at the library with friends

When 40% of libraries offer English language classes

Libraries Change Lives

I need free Wi-Fi to get my homework done

When 1 in 8 Victorian households don't have internet

Libraries Change Lives

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