



talk ★ read ★ sing ★ play
– every day



About First 5 Forever

First 5 Forever is an early literacy program delivered by public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres with the primary aim of providing strong early literacy foundations for all Queensland children aged 0-5 years.

First 5 Forever is an annual \$5m investment in early literacy and public libraries by the Queensland Government, and is coordinated by State Library of Queensland and delivered in partnership with local government.

It connects families to the information resources and support they need to build the best foundation for their child's future language and literacy development.

Why First 5 Forever?

In the first few years of life a human brain develops at its fastest. Family life and early experiences are important for healthy brain growth. Research shows that simple things like talking reading singing and playing with children from birth have positive impacts that can last a lifetime. That's why First 5 Forever uses the simple "Talk Read Sing Play" message to provide families with a range of activities that support early literacy and language development, and connect them to their local library for ideas and resources that can be used anywhere, any time.

First 5 Forever is integral to the Queensland Government's commitment to investing in children to give them a great start, as outlined in the [A Great Start for All Queensland Children, Early Years Plan](#). First 5 Forever also supports strengthening Queensland communities and driving social change with flow on benefits for the whole community through partnerships and supporting deeply local outcomes as highlighted in the [Creative Together Roadmap](#) for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland.



Why libraries?

Public libraries are ideally placed to work with their communities to bring about long-term positive change and address Queensland's performance in children's literacy as they offer a range of services to support literacy development in over 320 locations across Queensland.

Libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) form a large existing network that connects into every community. These organisations are major providers of free programs and provide a range of services which aim to support children's literacy development, foster an interest in reading and develop a love of learning.

How do we make a difference?

State Library of Queensland has developed a wide range of free resources that support both families and libraries to deliver the benefits of this program. The First 5 Forever webpages are a rich resource for families with a wide range of articles, videos, book reviews and ideas to support language and literacy development for children at any stage in their first five years. State Library also provides an extensive ongoing professional development program to build capacity and skills for those who deliver the program to families, so that local sessions support consistent quality language and literacy outcomes for Queensland communities.

With over 60,000 babies born each year in Queensland, First 5 Forever provides an amazing opportunity to change our children's story by providing free access to resources, practical strategies and meaningful support directly to families in the communities where they live.

Through a statewide network of over 320 libraries and IKCs, First 5 Forever is delivering:

Increased access to early literacy experiences for families

The capacity and reach of free library programs continues to grow and empower families to continue early literacy strategies at home.

Outreach for all families with children aged 0-5

First 5 Forever supports outreach to connect with families wherever they are (in the library, through outreach, at community events etc.).

Collaborative local partnerships

Putting early literacy and libraries on the local agenda through advisory groups and creative partnerships within each community working collaboratively to align strategies and extend the reach of First 5 Forever.

Family and community awareness of First 5 Forever and libraries

First 5 Forever is promoted directly to families and increases awareness of the value of local libraries. Libraries are also using their connections and channels within communities to share First 5 Forever with new families.

An informed and motivated public library network

First 5 Forever supports library staff to be confident and equipped to deliver their local early literacy programming in ways that best meet the needs of families in their communities.

How do we know it's working?

Now in its seventh successful year, First 5 Forever has proven the strong community need for innovative and accessible early literacy support in large cities, regional centres and rural and remote communities.

- 100% of eligible councils in Queensland now delivering First 5 Forever to their communities.
- Over 4.2 million attendances reported at early literacy sessions in libraries, and over 600,000 attendances at outreach events to date across Queensland.
- Strong buy in from a wide variety of local partners supporting First 5 Forever indicating the value of the program, and a strong investment in early literacy at a local level.
- Reported statewide success in raising community awareness of the importance of the first five years and an increase in access for children and families to programs and resources that support early literacy outcomes.

For more information on the First 5 Forever program visit the website slq.qld.gov.au/first5forever or your local library.

