

Media Release

The Hon Harriet Shing MP
Minister for Housing
Minister for Water
Minister for Equality



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RAINBOW LIBRARIES TOOLKIT LAUNCHES ON WEAR IT PURPLE DAY

The Allan Labor Government is supporting libraries across the state to provide more inclusive spaces for Victoria's lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQ+) communities with a new toolkit.

Minister for Equality Harriet Shing joined Public Libraries Victoria CEO Angela Savage at Springvale Community Hub and Library to celebrate Wear it Purple Day and officially launch the Rainbow Libraries Toolkit.

Libraries are crucial safe spaces for LGBTIQ+ young people and the toolkit provides guidance for staff on topics including planning for inclusive library events, making library spaces visibly inclusive and how book collections can better meet the needs of diverse rainbow communities across Victoria.

The toolkit was established in response to a need for better information and training to support public library staff welcoming LGBTIQ+ families into public libraries, following a rise in the vilification of LGBTIQ+ communities and targeting of LGBTIQ+ inclusive events, including drag story time events for rainbow young people held at libraries.

The Allan Labor Government allocated \$14,020 through the Public Libraries Funding Program 2023-2024 to develop the toolkit in consultation with Switchboard Victoria.

Resources like the toolkit play a critical role in achieving the objectives of *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-2032* – a roadmap to ensure all Victorians feel safe, have equal rights and live wholly and freely.

Wear it Purple Day is an annual Day of Significance especially for LGBTIQ+ young people, based in Australia. The 2024 theme is *Your Passion, Your Pride* – celebrating LGBTIQ+ people openly and visibly achieving their dreams.

Victoria has led the nation in fostering inclusive communities where everyone can live safely and authentically, appointing Australia's first Minister for Equality in 2014, and first Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities in 2015.

The *Victorian Budget 2023/24* allocated \$22.5 million over four years to deliver key priorities including boosting the number of Rainbow Tick accredited community and mental health providers, funding to support LGBTIQ+ groups, events and organisations and delivering Pride in Ageing to address the needs of ageing LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Harriet Shing

"We will always back our LGBTIQ+ communities as we work to build a state where all people, regardless of their sexuality or gender identity, can live wholly and freely."

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"The Rainbow Libraries Toolkit ensures that all Victorians, regardless of identity, have a place in our public libraries – because libraries are a space that everyone should be able to access."

Quote attributable to Member for Mulgrave Eden Foster

"Our libraries should be places where everyone feels welcome – this toolkit helps make that a reality for LGBTIQ+ families."

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Quote attributable to Public Libraries Victoria CEO Angela Savage

“The Rainbow Libraries toolkit affirms libraries’ commitment to creating safe, welcoming and inclusive spaces for our diverse communities.”