

STATE LIBRARY QUEENSLAND

MEDIA RELEASE

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Ash Barty visits Ipswich as First 5 Forever Ambassador

Sporting superstar Ashleigh Barty AO visited Ipswich Children's Library today to celebrate World Children's Day with local families.

The First 5 Forever Ambassador brought her star power to Australia's only dedicated children's library to promote State Library of Queensland's successful play-based learning initiative.

"I love nothing more than being a Mum and playing with my two little ones Hayden and Jordan," Ash said.

"As First 5 Forever Ambassador, I understand the importance of play in creating happy, healthy families.

"It is wonderful to be in my local community to promote the importance of talking, reading, singing and playing with children in everyday places," she said.

In her role as First 5 Forever Ambassador, Ash is the influential face of a series of resources and monthly tips that help families lay strong foundations for their children in the first 5 years. Visitors to Cairns City Library were thrilled last year when she made a guest appearance for Story Time, and the Ipswich community greeted Ash with similar enthusiasm.

First 5 Forever helps families throughout the state discover ways to support their children's development in the first 5 years. Last financial year, over 895,000 visits were recorded for First 5 Forever sessions at public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres throughout the state.

Launched in 2015, First 5 Forever is an initiative of the Queensland Government, coordinated by State Library and delivered in partnership with local government, through 325 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres across Queensland.

Quotes from the Honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, Minister for Education and the Arts:

"World Children's Day is about our youngest Queenslanders and making sure they have a happy and healthy childhood," Minister Langbroek said.

"We know creative play is central to every young child's development and wellbeing, and that's why the Crisafulli Government is proud to deliver \$5 million for First 5 Forever.

“It’s wonderful to have our homegrown sports star, Ash Barty as Ambassador to help raise awareness of the importance of reading, singing and play for our children in their earliest years.”

Quotes from State Librarian and CEO Vicki McDonald AM:

“The needs of our youngest Queenslanders are prioritised through State Library’s First 5 Forever initiative and our valued partnership with public library network.

“First 5 Forever encourages all caregivers to give children the very best start in life, by helping to build healthy brains and bodies through play.

“The early years matter, which is why it is great to have Ash Barty in Ipswich promoting this important statewide initiative as First 5 Forever Ambassador.”

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