Charleville to open South West Queensland's first permanent community toy library

July 2026 | Media Release

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Media Release

Charleville to open South West Queensland's first permanent community toy library

Families in regional and remote Queensland will soon have greater access to affordable, educational and sustainable play resources, with the official opening of the Charleville Community Toy Library on Saturday 25 July 2026.

The new toy library, located at the Charleville Lions Club "Lion's Den" at 47 Hilda Street, has grown from the success of the mobile toy library operated by Kath Dickson Family Centre across the Darling Downs and South West regions.

The official opening will begin at 10am and all community members are invited to attend, explore the toy library and learn how the service works. Existing members are encouraged to bring toys to swap, while new families can join on the day and begin borrowing immediately.

Kath Dickson Family Centre's Toy Library Coordinator, Trish Mullins, said that the success of the mobile toy bus in Charleville helped identify the local champions, volunteers and community support needed to establish a permanent service.

"The mobile toy bus has had a wonderful reception in Charleville," Ms Mullins said.

"Two local parents in particular had dreamed of starting a toy library in Charleville for some time and became the champions for the project in their community."

"With local enthusiasm, commitment and a suitable venue, it became possible for us to secure the funding and establish a permanent community toy library."

The toy library will be operated locally by volunteers, with governance support provided by Kath Dickson Family Centre.

The service is expected to open twice monthly and will provide local families, distance education families and temporary workers with regular access to quality educational toys and resources without the financial burden of purchasing new toys.

The Charleville Community Toy Library has been made possible through support from local organisations including the Charleville Lions Club, which has provided the venue rent free, along with volunteers from the community and funding support from Toy Libraries Australia.

Local volunteer and Charleville parent Emma Wex said the toy library would create opportunities for families to connect through play.

"The biggest benefit to families is being able to connect through play with these beautiful toys without the burden of constantly buying new toys as children grow and interests change," Ms Wex said.

"Children will benefit from access to educational, age-appropriate toys that support their development. It's a win-win."

Local Lions Club secretary Olivia Taylor said the toy library would also help strengthen community connections in the region.

"We are a remote community and the toy library allows families to borrow toys for their children while helping build stronger community connections," Ms Taylor said.

"Reducing landfill is also incredibly important in our region."

The launch event will include opportunities for families to view the collection, learn about memberships, meet volunteers and explore ways to support the toy library through volunteering, toy donations and fundraising.

The Charleville Community Toy Library is significant not only for the local community, but also nationally, demonstrating how toy libraries can successfully operate in rural and remote communities.

According to Toy Libraries Australia, Queensland currently has the lowest rate of toy libraries in Australia, with just eight toy libraries per 100,000 children under five, compared to 38 in Victoria, 48 in Western Australia and 36 in South Australia.

The mobile toy library service has helped bridge that gap by reaching families across more than 400,000 square kilometres throughout the Darling Downs and South West health regions, including Roma, Cunnamulla, Eulo, Thargomindah, Quilpie and Cooladdi.

Ms Mullins said toy libraries offered significant social, environmental and financial benefits.

"Toy libraries across Australia are increasing in numbers because of the multiple and varied benefits," she said.

"Rotating toys enhances learning and curiosity for developing brains, while families save money, reduce clutter and connect with other families in their community."

For more information about the Charleville Community Toy Library, including memberships, volunteering and donations, visit www.kdfc.com.au/charleville-toy-library

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Event details:

Charleville Community Toy Library Official Opening
Saturday 25 July 2026, 10am
Charleville Lions Club "Lion's Den"
47 Hilda Street, Charleville
All welcome.

Media contact & interview opportunity:

Trish Mullins
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Kath Dickson Family Centre
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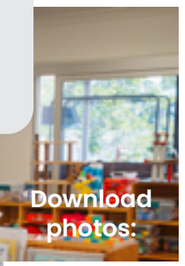
High-resolution images are available to dowload from here or via the QR code below.

Please note that the interior images shown are of the Kath Dickson Toy Library in Crows Nest, as the Charleville Community Toy Library is currently being finalised ahead of opening.



Newsletter Article

New community toy library coming to Charleville

Families across Charleville and surrounding communities will soon have access to a new community toy library, with the official opening taking place on Saturday 25 July 2026 at the Charleville Lions Club "Lion's Den".

The Charleville Community Toy Library has grown from the success of the mobile toy library operated by Kath Dickson Family Centre throughout South West Queensland.

The toy library will give local families affordable access to quality educational toys, games and learning resources, while also helping families save money, reduce waste and connect with others in the community.

Toy Library Coordinator Trish Mullins said the local response to the mobile toy bus had been overwhelmingly positive.

"The mobile toy bus helped identify the local champions, volunteers and families who wanted to see a permanent toy library established in Charleville," Ms Mullins said.

Hosted by the Charleville Lions Club and supported by local volunteers, the toy library is expected to operate twice monthly.

Local volunteer Emma Wex said the service would provide children with opportunities to learn through play while easing financial pressure on families.

"The biggest benefit is being able to access new play experiences without the expense or waste of constantly buying new toys," she said.

Local families are invited to attend the opening event at 10am on Saturday 25 July 2026 at 47 Hilda Street, Charleville. Existing members can bring toys to swap, while new members can join on the day and start borrowing immediately.

Community members can also support the toy library by volunteering, donating gently loved toys or helping spread the word.

For more information about the Charleville Community Toy Library, including memberships, volunteering and donations, visit www.kdfc.com.au/charleville-toy-library

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Questions & Answers

Q&A with Olivia Taylor

Olivia Taylor is a Charleville mum of two, a local high school teacher, and Secretary of the Charleville Lions Club. She played a key role in bringing the toy library to life by championing the Lions Club as the venue and supporting the idea from its early stages.

Q: Why is a toy library important for families in the Charleville region?

A: We are a remote community, and the toy library allows families to borrow toys for their children while building stronger community connections. It also helps reduce landfill, which is important given we don't have recycling locally.

Q: How has the community supported the project so far?

A: The response has been really strong, especially with great support from the Charleville Lions Club in providing the venue.

Q: What are you most excited about for the launch?

A: Having access to toys more regularly than just once every three months when the Toy Bus comes to town, and creating a space where families can come together and connect.

Q: What are your hopes for the future of the Charleville Community Toy Library?

A: That enrolments grow and more people feel comfortable using and enjoying it.

Q&A with Emma Wex

Emma Wex is a Charleville-based mum of two and a strong community supporter of the Charleville Community Toy Library. She works as a Flight Nurse/Midwife with the Royal Flying Doctor Service and is a Nurse Practitioner at the Charleville Health Clinic.

Q: What benefits will it bring to local families and children?

A: Families can enjoy new play experiences without constantly buying toys as children grow. It's a win-win. Children get access to educational, age-appropriate toys that support their development, and families save money and reduce waste.

Q: What would you say to families who've never used a toy library before?

A: Give it a go! It's an easy way to access new play experiences without the cost or waste. There's really no downside.

Q: What are you most excited about for the launch?

A: Seeing the toy library become a reality for Charleville families and watching people come together to share, connect and play.

Q: What are your hopes for the future of the Charleville Community Toy Library?

A: That it becomes a valued community hub that keeps growing; a place for play, connection, health, education and endless possibilities.

Interview opportunity:

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Interview opportunity:

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