

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Wednesday, 3 April 2024

VICTORIAN KIDS SET SUMMER READING RECORD

More than 16,000 children and young people across Victoria have set a new reading record in this year's Big Summer Read, backed by the Allan Labor Government.

Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne and Public Libraries Victoria are celebrating a 40 per cent increase in the number of kids who participated in this year's challenge, with more than 218,000 books read over the recent school holidays – a 63 per cent increase on last summer.

The Big Summer Read is held from 1 December to 31 January each year and aims to prevent a decrease in kids' reading during the longer summer school holidays.

Throughout the rest of the year, the Government's Premiers' Reading Challenge complements this effort by encouraging children and students to read books over the year and record their efforts online. Since it began in 2005, more than 4.3 million students have read more than 60 million books.

The Challenge is supported by the Government's Premiers' Reading Challenge Book Fund, which provides \$1.1 million for public libraries to purchase books and other materials.

Literacy is supported by free library services including internet and cyber safe education, and the Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program provides funding for libraries to improve their facilities.

The Labor Government has invested more than \$47.1 million over the last eight years into 120 library infrastructure projects, with a total project cost of \$345.8 million. These projects support libraries to provide services in metropolitan, regional and rural Victoria.

For more information about the Big Summer Read visit plv.org.au/projects/big-summer-read.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"Reading is so vital, and we're proud to support the Big Summer Read to encourage more reading in the summer school holidays."

"We love our public libraries and we are building facilities that meet the needs of all Victorians."

Quote attributable to Public Libraries Victoria CEO Dr Angela Savage

"Backed up with colourful materials, activities, and prizes, the Big Summer Read emphasises the joy of reading. We know that young people who read for pleasure do better at school in all subjects."