

Library Services

The 'Connections Project' consultations and surveys attracted a myriad of comments across a range of topics. Comments about the Library were top of the list! Strong interest and concern emerged with regard to our library services and future changes. Interestingly, a large number of people have membership with the Association for the primary purpose of accessing Library services.

Our talking books were commented on throughout the 'Connections Project' community consultations and survey. Thank you for your feedback, it is encouraging to know what a vital resource talking books are both to people living in regional areas of WA and those living in the Perth metro area.

Many people were open to moving to new technology, however we observed that there is still confusion around the change from cassettes to digital format.

Cassettes? DAISY players? What is happening?

What do the changes mean to me?

The Association will continue to keep a small selection of large print books in the library but is gradually phasing out the use of cassettes to be replaced by digital audio. Library users will receive updates on any changes through the Association's 'Library Link' newsletter, so stay tuned or let us know if you want a copy! We acknowledge that for many, cassettes are familiar and therefore easy but at the end of the day, our cassettes are deteriorating and are outdated technology. Cassettes and cassette players are being manufactured less and publishers no longer produce books on cassette. We need to progress to meet the needs of everyone.

"I understand 'Talking Books' is moving to a new style. Is it going to be very simple?"

- Library User

For those who indicated their uncertainty about the library, please be reassured that we will support people through these changes. We are currently working on a simple way of delivering audio files to library users to make the process as friendly and accommodating as possible.

We will continue to consult regarding the planning and trial of the changes and hope that this contributes to our smooth and successful transition to digital audio.

We are currently exploring ways to assist people to acquire a recommended player. For those who wish to buy a unit now, we have identified two "preferred" DAISY players for which library staff will be able to provide operational support and guidance.

What do all these technical terms mean?

DAISY

DAISY stands for Digital Accessible Information System. We are continuing to research the DAISY units that have the best accessibility for people with a vision impairment and are simple to use. We are also working on solutions to make DAISY players widely available. There are many book and music players available from standard retail outlets that will be suitable to play our books (ie: iPods) but not all will offer all the additional features of a DAISY player. If you do choose to purchase a DAISY unit yourself you can access a limited number of books immediately, but be sure to confirm with the salesperson that it has a USB port.

iPod technology

The Association and Curtin University have been working together to make new technology available to members. DaisyWorm is a simple yet powerful DAISY audio book reader application for the Apple iPhone supporting the 2.02, 2002 and 2005 formats with full or partial audio. It costs approximately \$5 and will play non-protected DAISY full audio and full text/ full audio books on the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch. This will be effective for books from the Association's talking book library, the Vision Australia library and many more.

“Your ‘Talking Books’ make a great difference to my life.”

- Library User

Did you know that, particularly in a couple of regional centres, local libraries have been playing a wonderful role in making audio material available to our clients and the broader community? We will continue to collaborate with these libraries and extend our reach to new ones!

We also heard your feedback regarding the need for improvement to the children's library resources. We will work on improving the children's collection to keep the library relevant to our youngest readers.

How can I get library materials?

If you haven't used the library before you can visit or contact our Library Resource Centre (located on the ground floor at the Perron Centre in Victoria Park). People or organisations wishing to use the library need to become members of the Association and we can assist you with this. The library collection currently contains Braille, talking books on cassette / CD / MP3, audio described films, children's books, toys and games.

Call the Association on (09) 9311 8202 to make further enquiries. Country callers can contact the Association on 1800 847 466.

What we will do next

- We will provide ongoing updated information about the introduction of digital audio to our library system through both our 'Library Link' newsletter and on our website.
- We will help library users to learn any new technology introduced and provide guidance regarding equipment needs.
- We will work collaboratively with libraries around the State to promote local accessibility of audio material.
- We will continue to research the most accessible and affordable DAISY players so that we can make recommendations to you about what will suit your needs and lifestyle.