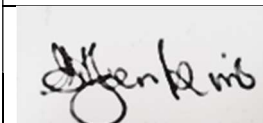


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Previous titles	Toy Library Operations Policy, Toy Library Membership Policy
Previous versions	2018

Signature by Management representative	
	Chairperson, Suzanne Jenkins



TOY LIBRARY POLICY

Internal ECS References

<i>In S:\0 CURRENT POLICY & PROCEDURES:</i>	<i>In S:\1 CURRENT FORMS:</i>
<i>ECS Structure</i>	<i>Team Worker Information Form and Team Agreement</i>
<i>Toy Library Membership Policy</i>	<i>Toy Library Client Information Form</i>
<i>Financial Management Policy</i>	<i>Toy Library Membership Terms and Conditions Form</i>
<i>Bullying & Harassment Policy</i>	<i>Toy Library Feedback Form</i>
<i>Volunteer Recruitment Policy</i>	<i>S:\0 current data base</i>
<i>WHS Policy and Safe Work Procedure: Items on high shelves</i>	<i>In H:\volunteer JDs</i>
<i>Complaints Policy</i>	<i>ECS Job Description: Lead Volunteer, Toy Library</i>
<i>Duty of Care Policy</i>	<i>ECS Job Description: Toy Library Volunteer</i>

External References

<i>Child Safe Standards at https://ocq.nsw.gov.au/resources</i>	<i>Data Exchange Protocols Manual at https://dex.dss.gov.au/</i>
	<i>Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988</i>

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Engadine Community Services (ECS) aims to support children and families through the provision of a Toy Library a lending pool of safe and accessible toys that is financially viable and accessible. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the management, monitoring and promotion of this resource.

1.1 Definitions

toy library = a collection for members to borrow that has been designed to support children’s skill development and imagination, to support families and encourage togetherness with quality time spent playing with children

1.2 Acronyms

ECS = Engadine Community Services
 PPE = Personal Protective Equipment eg. masks or gloves
 TEI = Targeted Early Intervention Program

2. GENERAL POLICY

The Toy Library is part of ECS Child and Family Services and Volunteer Program. It is managed by a Lead Volunteer and the ECS Building Communities Coordinator, via processes described below and in the Financial Management Policy; the latter role is part funded by the NSW Targeted Early Intervention Program (TEI). Membership is open to parents, grandparents and guardians, as well as specified community groups and corporates [see Toy Library Membership, below] who can join the Toy Library, browse the catalogue, select toys for borrowing and reserve toys using an online catalogue system, called Mibase

The Toy Library operates at set times when ECS is open:

Day	Time
Mondays	1 pm – 4 pm
Thursdays	11 am – 4 pm
2 nd and 4 th Saturday each month	9 am - 12 pm

ECS workers must not process toy exchanges outside Toy Library opening times, as the toy library volunteers [hereafter ‘librarians’] have a key role in quality control and safety. Borrowing privileges will be suspended for members who do not respect these rules. Members are informed of their rights and responsibilities during the application process described in this document.

3. BACKGROUND

There are many benefits of toy libraries for both families and the broader community:

- ◆ The Toy Library enables children to play with a variety of toys without the need for families to purchase toys – toy libraries save money.
- ◆ The Toy Library gives access to a wide selection of toys to families with limited space in their homes.
- ◆ Parents have an opportunity to ‘test’ toys with children to help them decide which toys would be worth buying as birthday and Christmas presents.
- ◆ The Toy Library has a wide variety of puzzles and games as well as toys, many of which are of educational and developmental value. Some of the toys are particularly beneficial for children with special needs or learning difficulties.
- ◆ Use of the Toy Library helps reduce the number of plastic toys being purchased, ultimately reducing the amount of plastic going into landfill.
- ◆ It enables children to be part of their community by using a shared resource and learning about responsibility, respect and diversity.

ECS also recognises that the Toy Library provides an opportunity for community members to volunteer. In keeping with the services that ECS provides to local communities, Sutherland Shire Toy Library welcomes community members of all ages, cultural and ethnic backgrounds and abilities to apply for volunteer roles.

Sutherland Shire Toy Library began as Treasure Chest Toy Library Inc, which was formed by a group of parents and children’s service providers in 1996. It was officially opened in Oyster Bay on 6 March 1996, with the financial support of Sutherland Shire Council. In May 1998 the Toy Library was relocated to a room at the rear of Engadine Library, under the auspices of Engadine Community Services (ECS). In 2018, Council notified ECS that they needed to use the room for other purposes, and ECS successfully applied for a grant for renovations and relocations of the Toy Library to the Community Centre at 1034 – 1036 Old Princes Highway, Engadine. Also in 2018, as part of a review of operations, ECS introduced an online system for the Sutherland Shire Toy Library, known as Mibase online, to replace the manual paper-based record of borrowing.

Due to the reduced space, children and their parents are not permitted to enter the Toy Library to select toys. This can only occur in the courtyard to test the outdoor toys now; families must order their toys online and make an appointment to collect them.

4. CATALOGUE OF TOYS

4.1 Contents

Sutherland Shire Toy Library caters for families with children in the 0 to 5 years age group [ie. up to school age] and has over 600 toys in the collection. The toys are categorised as follows:

- ◆ Baby toys
- ◆ Transport
- ◆ Science and learning
- ◆ Role play
- ◆ Activity
- ◆ Construction
- ◆ Sport
- ◆ Games
- ◆ Outdoor (eg tents, tepee, climb and play)
- ◆ Ride-on
- ◆ Puzzles (regular, knob, picture, floor)
- ◆ Music
- ◆ Water and Sand

4.2 Registration & Cataloguing of Toys

The Mibase online system has a catalogue of toys held by the Toy Library. The listing includes:

- the name of the toy (from the former Libratu catalogue or Mibase toy catalogue)
- a photo (from the Mibase catalogue, existing Toy Library photo catalogue, web search or a photo is taken)

In order to track borrowing, each toy and each individual piece of a toy set [eg. a puzzle] is identified by a barcode. In addition to the barcode, a toy box also has a label that provides a description of the toy and lists the contents.

As new toys are purchased, the toy and all parts will be bar coded by the Lead Volunteer, and the toy will be entered onto Mibase, along with the purchase date and cost of the toy (provided by the Lead Volunteer) by the ECS Communications Officer or delegate.

5. MEMBERSHIP SYSTEM

5.1 Issuing Membership

Prospective members are required to agree to the *Toy Library Terms and Conditions* and complete the *Toy Library Membership* form, which contains a series of questions, including:

- Name of individual joining [whether parent, carer or corporate contact] and their phone numbers
- Postal and email addresses for correspondence
- The street address where the toys will be taken when borrowed
- Voluntary demographic questions to assist ECS to profile members and the children playing with the toys

New Members complete a *Toy Library Membership* form and read and sign the *Toy Library Terms and Conditions* form. The Membership form can be completed online [laptop available at ECS] or on paper. Photo identification is provided at the time the latter is signed. An annual fee must be paid online [bank transfer], or by cheque or cash before borrowing commences. There are two types of membership fee, which designate borrowing limits [see below]:

- General Membership is for parents, guardians or grandparents [one membership per family]
- Corporate Membership is open to family day carers and playgroups

There may be instances where a hybrid arrangement for membership and borrowing is required eg when a community organisation is providing a case management service to clients. This may entail individual families being registered on Mibase, as well as the community organisation with the latter selecting toys in consultation with families but physically picking up and returning the toys.

General Membership requires presentation of personal identification (ID) and, if relevant, a Centrelink pensioner card to access a 50% concession. Corporate Membership requires authorisation on letterhead [also for invoicing purposes]. The fees payable are detailed in the *ECS Schedule of Fees*.

ECS reception workers are responsible for receiving Toy Library Membership forms, payments and issuing of receipts on-site. Cash payments are placed inside an envelope, with member’s name, receipt number, amount of cash, purpose and date noted on the envelope. When an online payment is made by phone, the member needs to provide the receipt number to reception workers; the receipt number is obtained through bank payment statements printed by the Finance Officer. A list of proof of payments is provided to the Lead Volunteer weekly by the Finance Officer.

In all instances, the completed membership form is inserted in a folder and placed in the tray on Desk 5 (desk of Lead Volunteer). Office staff enter details in Mibase along with confirmation of payment. Once this is completed, Mibase generates a unique Toy Library Membership number.

5.2 Proof of Membership

Toy Library volunteers must confirm a current Toy Library Membership number by sighting the membership card, ID, or looking up the Member’s details in Mibase before processing a loan [see *6.3 Process for Checking Toys Out*, below]. In the event of online payment, where processing has been delayed, borrowing may be permitted if the individual can provide proof of payment [eg. email].

5.3 Borrowing

Toy Library members can select toys from Mibase and contact ECS to arrange a time to collect the toys.

- A family can borrow up to 4 toys, 3 puzzles, 3 games and ride on and 2 outdoor play sets
- The borrowing time is 3 weeks
- An extension can be sought, provided there is not a wait list for that particular toy
- Multiple outdoor items can be borrowed for a party on a short term loan of 1 week.

The MiBase system is used to record borrowing and returns, if the MiBase system is down, a communication book will be used to record borrowing and returns, whereby volunteers note the toys that have been borrowed by each family and the date, and when items have been returned.

Toys must be returned on time. A reminder will be sent for late returns, and if toys are not returned within 7 days of the reminder being sent, a fine of \$2 per item per week may be levied until item is returned or acknowledged as lost [see below].

If toys are lost or broken beyond repair, a replacement fee will be charged. Due to lost pieces eventually rendering some toys useless, ECS have to apply a charge for missing pieces. If the piece is found and returned to the library, the money will be refunded. If a missing piece renders the toy unusable [eg. the board of a board game], the Member may be asked to pay for a replacement item.

If the Member accumulates a debt to the Toy Library, the Member’s borrowing privileges may be suspended until the amount is repaid to the Toy Library.

5.4 Caring for Toys

The *Terms and Conditions* agreed to by Members includes the care of toys in their home environment. ECS recommends that toys only be used with children in a supervised play setting and put away out of reach of the child. once play is finished, so as to minimise lost pieces and damages.

Each Member and child has the right to borrow and play with a clean toy and it is each Member’s responsibility to ensure all returned toys are clean and ready for someone else to borrow. If a returned toy is deemed to be unsatisfactory, the Member will be asked to clean it.

Below are guidelines in the *Terms and Conditions* for the cleaning of toys.

Toy category	Cleaning
General	Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid and with heavy duty cleaners for more stubborn marks. Please remember to rinse and dry well.
Wooden toys	Should be wiped with a damp sponge — do not soak them.
Rattles and baby toys	Must not be immersed in water, as it can get inside and render the toy unusable. Wipe thoroughly with hot water or with a small amount of dishwashing liquid.
Ride-on vehicles and outdoor toys	Remove any dirt by wiping over before it is returned.
Puzzles and games	Clean wooden puzzles as per ‘Wooden Toys’ above. Cardboard should be wiped over with a very lightly dampened cloth.

5.5 Visiting ECS

ECS is a busy community centre providing support to people from different backgrounds, ages and vulnerabilities. All parts of ECS aim to provide a safe and fun place for clients, including seniors, children and their parents and carers.

Members may experience during the borrowing and returns processes, but it is essential to maintain the integrity of the library and children's well-being.

These rules are to ensure everyone has a great time and reduce misunderstandings:

- **All individuals and families are welcome at ECS;** we do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, disability, religion, sexuality or gender identity.
- **All ECS clients, workers and visitors will be treated with respect and dignity;** all backgrounds, experiences and ideas are valued.
- **All clients and visitors must treat** ECS staff and Toy Library volunteers with respect; they have a job to do, and processes to follow [eg. they are not permitted to be alone with a child].
- **All ECS venues and the surrounding areas are drug-free, alcohol-free and smoke-free environments;** members are encouraged to consider the comfort and health of people who have difficulty breathing when smoke fumes are in clothes.
- **All clients, workers and visitors consider the health and safety of others** [eg. do not attend if ill/contagious]; if/when changing nappies, members use the baby change table and disposal bin appropriately and clean and sanitise equipment after use.
- **Any parent/carer who brings a child to ECS is responsible for supervising the child/ren in their care at all times;** supervision is necessary for safety [eg. front doors opening and closing] and comfort of others [eg. noise]
- **All clients, workers and visitors use respectful language and refrain from using swearing and offensive language, even when talking with another adult;** we know that children learn behaviours by watching adults and often repeat what they hear and see.
- We, of course, accept that accidental damage may sometimes happen when a toy is in a member's home, but ask for an honest report prior to return that will allow us to remove the toy from the catalogue immediately and organise appropriate repair or replacement with a new one that is safe.

6. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF TOY LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

6.1 Work Health & Safety

All Work Health and Safety (WHS) policies and procedures of ECS apply to volunteers working for the Toy Library. These include:

- *WHS Policy*
- *WHS Statement*
- *Fire Emergency Evacuation plan*
- *Bullying and Harassment Policy*

Some specific WHS considerations for Toy Library volunteers are:

- As a general rule, volunteers will be rostered to work in pairs; if only one volunteer is on duty, staff in the office will be able to assist the volunteer
- Many of the toys are stored on shelves, with some toys being above general reach [see *Safe Work Procedure: Items on high shelves*]
- The Toy Library minimises use of plastic bags; as far as practicable, plastic bags should be removed from toy sets and replaced with fabric bags [*Toy Library Membership Terms and Conditions* also advise parents to keep plastic bags away from children]
- Cleaning of toys is the responsibility of families, who need to return the toys in a clean condition [see cleaning guide in *Toy Library Terms and Conditions*]; if toys are not returned clean, the volunteer needs to ask the parent to clean the toy
- The front entry doors to ECS automatically slide open upon approach from inside or outside the building, so whilst parents are responsible for their children while in the Toy Library, volunteers should also monitor the door so that children do not leave unaccompanied

6.2 Duty of Care

In addition to the Work Health & Safety responsibilities above, ECS has a legal and moral responsibility to keep children safe from harm whilst they are using an ECS service. This responsibility is known as 'duty of care' and is detailed in the ECS Duty of Care Policy that addresses the identification of, and response to, risk of harm – both in the community and within ECS services – to children.

Specific considerations for Toy Library volunteers are:

- They should never be alone with the child
- A parent or guardian should always be with the child
- If they have any concerns that a child may be at risk they should refer to the Duty of Care policy and then to the Building Communities Coordinator

6.3 Process for Checking Toys In

The process for checking toys in is:

1. Look up the name of the borrower in Mibase and record the toy that has been returned
2. Check that the toy has been returned clean, and if not, ask member to clean toy
3. For toys with multiple pieces, refer to the Content label to identify the number of pieces, and check that all pieces have been returned while member is in the Toy Library and before member leaves; if 50 or more pieces, fill out a slip to indicate date of check and confirmation that all pieces returned, and store slip with toy
4. Return the toy to its appropriate location in the Toy Library, using the step ladder to reach top shelves [see *SWP*].

6.4 Process for Checking Toys Out

The process for checking toys out is:

1. Look up the name of the borrower in Mibase and record the toy that is being borrowed
2. If toy has multiple pieces, count the pieces before member leaves (unless there is a slip to indicate pieces have been checked)
3. Check that the number of toys borrowed is consistent with the policy.

7. ANNUAL STOCKTAKE, CLEANING & REVIEW OF TOYS

The Lead Volunteer is responsible for the planning and implementation of annual review of the individual toys and records relating to the catalogue and borrowing patterns. The Building Communities Coordinator will oversee these processes to ensure quality control in the Toy Library, including the safety of toys, as well as notifying the ECS Manager and Finance Officer of the budget required each year.

7.1 Stocktake

Each November a stocktake should be undertaken by the volunteers working on a Monday (a quieter day). The process is as follows:

1. Lead Volunteer to print a complete list of the toys
2. Volunteers to tick off the existing toys, as they search the collection; for any toys that comprise a box or bag of many items, only check in the box or bag without doing a count of pieces
3. Check if any toys are damaged or have missing parts and notify the Building Communities Coordinator, with recommendation for repair, replacement or disposal
4. Once the stocktake is complete, the Lead Volunteer will print an up to date toy list and prepare a new folder
5. If any toy is not found, the Lead Volunteer will make a note in Mibase that toy was not found in Toy Library and record the date. If after the following 12 months the toy is not found, the record of the toy will be deleted
6. The list is then used by the Building Communities Coordinator in notifying the ECS Manager and Finance Officer of the final stock value for insurance]

7.2 Cleaning

From October, all toys should be cleaned by the volunteers working on a Monday (a quieter day), with the assistance of an office volunteer. The Lead Volunteer is responsible for printing a list of categories of toys, with each category to be ticked off as the cleaning is done.

Below are guidelines for the cleaning of toys.

Toy category	Cleaning
General	Most toys can be washed with normal dishwashing liquid and with heavy duty cleaners for more stubborn marks; rinse and dry well
Wooden toys	Should be wiped with a damp sponge — do not soak in water
Rattles and baby toys	Wipe thoroughly with hot water or with a small amount of dishwashing liquid - must not be immersed in water [as it can get inside and render the toy unusable]
Ride-on vehicles and outdoor toys	Remove any dirt by wiping over
Puzzles and games	Clean wooden puzzles as per 'Wooden Toys' above; cardboard should be wiped over with a very lightly dampened cloth.

7.3 Review of Demand for Toys

In order to better meet the needs of Toy Library members, once a year Mibase will be interrogated to identify the toys that are in high demand, and members and volunteers will be surveyed to identify any gaps in the Toy Library. The Lead Volunteer will then make recommendations to the Building Communities Coordinator as to disposal of toys or purchase of new toys.