



MEDIA RELEASE

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Toy Libraries Celebrate World Sustainable Toy Day on 18 November

Australia has seen a rise in the Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales in recent years. As the cost-of-living increases many families can feel drawn to these sales to make ends meet for Christmas. However, many of the toys purchased in these sales are not 'Toys that Last'.

Founders of World Sustainable Toy Day, New Zealanders Helen Townsend and Anthea Madill recognise the difficult position that families are in and created a day that empowers families to say no to consumption of non-sustainable toys, and to develop a community understanding of the alternatives that can enable play and promote child development without harming the planet.

Helen Townsend believes "toys shape how kids see and interact with the world. This gives us the opportunity and responsibility to help them become more climate confident".

Recent research by the Australian Toy Association and Sustainability Victoria¹ shows that 220 million toys are sold in Australia each year. Of these toys, 51% are thrown out as waste within 12 months of purchase. A UK survey found that, on average, a child loses interest in a toy within just 36 days².

World Sustainable Toy Day will be celebrated annually on the 3rd Friday of November (one week before Black Friday), which this year is Friday 18 November 2022. The theme for the inaugural World Sustainable Toy Day is 'Toys that Last'.

Toy libraries across Australia will be sharing on social media examples of durable toys from their toy library that have been enjoyed by hundreds of families over the years. Most toy libraries will have toys in their collection that date back to the 1990s, and at the Stonnington Toy Library there is a Happy Apple toy that was made in the 1970s!

Debbie Williams, CEO of Toy Libraries Australia, highlights the role toy libraries play in providing communities across Australia with sustainable play options. "Becoming a toy library member is a win for the environment as families share well-made durable toys" explains Ms Williams. "In communities with a strong toy library, over 15% of toys are donated to the toy

library after the family has finished playing with them, keeping the toys out of landfill. Further, toy libraries repair toys and repurpose incomplete parts, extending their life.”

Sustainability expert Erin Rhoads is supporting World Sustainable Toy Day and is a keen member of her local toy library. She says, “play is an essential part of a child's life and toy libraries provide a way to experience a diverse range of toys in a truly sustainable way with far reaching benefits.

“From an environmental perspective borrowing is one of the key solutions to overconsumption and helps reduce fossil fuel emissions. When we buy less new stuff and choose to borrow there is a reduction in environmental pollution and waste upstream that can be caused by manufacturing the toys, the production of packaging plus shipping.

“As a parent who uses toy libraries, I love that borrowing teaches children to truly care for things and how these spaces help create better connected communities.”

All families are encouraged to check out their local toy library this World Sustainable Toy Day. For a small annual membership fee, families have access to hundreds of high-quality toys, meaningful volunteering options and lots of fun with other like-minded members of their community. You can find your local toy library at www.toylibraries.org.au/find-a-toy-library.

We can facilitate:

- An interview with sustainability expert Erin Rhoads, the author behind The Rogue Ginger (one of Australia's popular zero-waste blogs) and the books Waste Not and Waste Not Everyday
- Video or photographs at the toy library with children
- Interviews with the adults and children who use toy libraries.

For media enquiries, please contact:

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  /toylibrariesaustralia/ #worldsustainabletoyday

¹ <https://austoy.com.au/sustainability/sustainability-project>

² https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/millions-of-toys-are-binned-because-kids-dont-play-with-them_uk_5cab5687e4b047edf95dadd8