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City of Bayswater Library Service Censorship Guidelines

City of Bayswater's Library Service does not censor items held in its physical collections other than those items that are subject to State/Commonwealth government prohibition or restriction.

Library materials will not be excluded on the grounds that they are not suitable for children. It is the responsibility of parents and legal guardians to make a final decision on what is suitable material for their children.

In dealing with issues of censorship Library Service officers are guided by the Australian Library and Information Association "Statement on Free Access to Information" and the "Statement on Information Literacy for all Australians". Both statements have been reproduced below.

Australian Library and Information Association Statement on Free Access to information

Principle

Freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if individuals have unrestricted access to information and ideas.

Statement

There are several different levels at which the free flow of ideas can be impeded. At the societal level, legislative bodies of all kinds are expected to consider the legal and regulatory frameworks they put in place to support the free flow of information and ideas about the interests and concerns of individuals. At the institutional level, library and information services are expected to encourage the free flow of information and ideas within the scope of their roles and responsibilities. At the personal level, individuals are expected to make informed decisions in exercising their rights and responsibilities

The Australian Library and Information Association believe that library and information services have particular responsibilities in supporting and sustaining the free flow of information and ideas including:

1. asserting the equal and equitable rights of individuals to information regardless of age, citizenship, political belief, physical or mental ability, gender identity heritage, education, income, immigration and asylum seeking status, marital status, origin,

- race, language religion or sexual orientation; . adopting an inclusive approach in developing and implementing policies regarding access to information and ideas that are relevant to the library and information service concerned, irrespective of the controversial nature of the information or ideas;
2. ensuring that individuals have access to information from a variety of sources and agencies to meet their needs and that an individual's information needs are met independently of location and an ability to pay;
 3. catering for interest in contemporary issues without promoting or suppressing particular beliefs and ideas;
 4. protecting the confidential relationships that exist between the library and information service and its clients;
 5. resisting attempts by individuals or groups within their communities to restrict access to information and ideas while at the same time recognising that powers of censorship are legally vested in state and federal governments;
 6. observing laws and regulations governing access to information and ideas but working towards the amendment of those laws and regulations which inhibit library and information services in meeting the obligations and responsibilities outlined in this Statement.

Australian Library and Information Association Statement on information literacy for all Australians

Principle

A thriving national and global culture, economy and democracy will best be advanced by people who are empowered in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals. It is a basic human right in a digital world and promotes social inclusion within a range of cultural contexts. (Alexandria Proclamation 2005)

Statement

Information literacy can contribute to:

- learning for life;
- the creation of new knowledge;
- acquisition of skills;
- personal, vocational, corporate and organisational empowerment;
- social inclusion;
- participative citizenship; and
- innovation and enterprise.

Therefore, as a matter of priority, and at all levels, library and information services professionals embrace a responsibility to promote and facilitate the development of the information literacy of their clients. They will support government, and the corporate community, professional, educational and trade union sectors, and all Australians.