



# Media Release

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## **Stories in Chinese kicks off in Cockburn in first for WA**

Sharing stories has a way of bringing a community closer.

With the City of Cockburn's help, the newly formed Cockburn Chinese Community Association (CCCA) will this month begin regular Chinese language story times at Success Library.

In what is believed to be a WA first, Stories in Chinese will be for people of all language abilities and backgrounds.

The rhymes and games will mean that children who don't speak Mandarin or Cantonese will have something they can take home and practise, and children and families of Chinese background will have a chance to meet and share their culture at their local library.

City of Cockburn Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Officer Meski Ashagrie [said](#) residents from a Chinese background were the top culturally diverse community in Cockburn, comprising about 3.5 per cent of our population.

While developing Cockburn's Cultural Diversity Strategy last April, Ms Ashagrie reached out to the Chinese community to host an inaugural consultation.

It was attended by 120 members of Cockburn's Chinese community and identified their needs, interests and strengths.

A strong interest in maintaining culture by passing on heritage to younger generations was identified as part of the consultation, and reading stories for kids in Chinese language was one community suggestion.

CCCA chairperson Carol Zhang said the City of Cockburn had listened to the local Chinese community which was striving to help some of its members feel less isolated, more confident and involved in daily life.

"We approached Success Library to ask if we could have more Chinese books in the



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library and then we talked about doing a story time. They were very receptive,” Carol said.

“We now have 36 women registered to volunteer at the story times, with three leading the sessions every month.

“Lots of our young mums are eager to find something useful to do, to give to their community and this will be great for them.”

The City’s Community Development and Cultural Diversity team organised a workshop to set up a vision for the group to help it establish a leadership committee, develop a constitution and support the costs of incorporation.

Cockburn Library Services Manager Linda Seymour said the library service, which included three libraries, was responsive to the City’s culturally diverse community.

“Cockburn Libraries have books and magazines in the collection that are written in a number of languages other than English,” Ms Seymour said.

“These include 300 Chinese language books, a number of which are junior bilingual editions written in Chinese and English.”

The monthly story time sessions will run on the third Monday of the month, beginning on 21 January at 3.45-4.30pm, with volunteers from CCCA featuring a mixture of books, rhymes and games.

The sessions are aimed at children aged 2-10 and all are welcome.

ENDS

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