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### One Day at a Time

Dear Scouting friends,

It's now been over 50 days that our country has placed tight restrictions on our daily activities, in order to minimise the devastating impact of COVID-19.

It has been an extraordinary challenge. For most of us, all aspects of our lives have been impacted - work, finances, socialising and travel. This has prompted some level of anxiety about whether we'll catch the disease, how our families and friends will cope, how we'll deal with the disruption to our studies and routines, and whether we'll still have a job or enough money.

Feeling stressed is an understandable response. But as hard as things are, it can sometimes be reassuring to know that you're not alone and that others share your feelings.

Please give yourself credit as you cope with this strange time and recognise that dealing with this challenge can make you more resilient. Just take it one day at a time.

I've found a few ways to alleviate my personal concerns. I've stayed connected with my family and friends and checked in on them regularly to ask how they're going. I've also been careful about which media sources and facts I choose to read, so that I can stay grounded in the truth, and avoid feeling overwhelmed by the constant coverage. Scouting-wise, each day I telephone at least two different Leaders and Supporters just to see how they and their family are doing, and to offer our assistance. These discussions continue to be an enormous source of comfort, pride and satisfaction.

It's always a little special to get some positive feedback about how we're doing. Today, I'm delighted to share a special message from the Chief Scout of NSW, the Governor of NSW, her Excellency the Hon Margaret Beazley.



She and her husband, Mr Dennis Wilson, offer a personal thanks to you all, for the resilience and versatility you've demonstrated over the past 50 days, and for the important role you continue to play in our local communities. They explain how proud they are to be connected to such an impressive youth leadership movement, who have continued to deliver programs by transitioning to virtual Scout Halls and Scouting@home adventures across the State.

To view the message from the Chief Scout of NSW, click [here](#).

#### What's going well

With more than a century of experience helping young people develop skills for life, we're determined that, in these challenging times, Scouting can help them to cope – and thrive.

Our virtual activities aren't just about having fun at home. We want to help equip a new generation with the skills they need to help them bounce back in the face of adversity.

Since we launched [Scouting@Home](#) on 2 April, we have generated a remarkable response and incredibly positive feedback from members. The [Scouting@Home](#) web pages now represent over 50 per cent of all visitors to our website, attracting over 30,000 page views.

The ANZAC Day Camp@Home experience was the most popular event in recent history for our Branch. It was deeply moving to see the photos and comments from Scouts across the State who found a way to mark ANZAC Day from their homes.



On 24 April, the web page had almost 3,000 views alone. During the entire event, the page received over 10,000 hits.

Then there's our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) social media pages, which have been even more popular, and have attracted viewers from all over Australia, with incredibly positive responses.

We know many of you are running virtual Scout Halls on a weekly basis, and there continue to be some wonderfully inventive ideas for our youth members.

#### We also have challenges

While [Scouting@Home](#) is the public face of our work, our organisation is also facing challenges at this time.

I've been working closely with our CEO and the Board of Directors to complete a deep analysis of the Scouts NSW operating model and budgets to identify opportunities to reduce costs while retaining services for our members.

We have now reduced the working hours of all our professional staff at State and Region Offices by between 20 and 30 per cent, which will continue to 27 September with monthly reviews. We have also applied for the Federal Government's JobKeeper allowance on behalf of all professional staff members.

Our financial situation is closely correlated to the major events we hold, the success of activity centres, and to a lesser but still important degree, membership fees.

While some youth organisations made quick decisions to close, we chose to move Scouts indoors. We faced into some critical voices, but we stood firm.

We now know we made the right decision. We did not close Scouts. And as a result, we have retained a good number of our members and we have demonstrated resilience, tenacity and creativity.



I'm eternally grateful to all the adult members who have kept delivering Scouts during this time.

While it's not been easy, this group of champions will give us a firm foothold from which to rebuild.

#### What happens next

We're continuing to carefully monitor the advice given by Federal and State health professionals. As always, the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved in Scouts is our number one priority. It remains at the centre of our decision making, helping guide how we respond.

Should there be modifications to the measures currently in place in the coming months, we will inform you about changes to the way Scouting will operate in NSW. Please be patient.

We want to be able to look back at the way we approached this pandemic and feel confident that we chose the right path for you, for our youth members and for our local communities.

For now, we'll keep taking it one day at a time. Looking forward. Being prepared.

Yours in Scouting,

Neville Tomkins OAM JP  
Chief Commissioner  
Scouts NSW

To contact the Chief Commissioner, please email [chief.commissioner@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:chief.commissioner@nsw.scouts.com.au).

#### Child Safety in Scouting

Scouts Australia NSW is committed to operating as a child safe organisation and implementing child safe policies and practices in accordance with the elements of a child safe institution outlined by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse report entitled Creating Child Safe Institutions.

#### Remember

All suspicions, concerns or allegations about criminal matters or child protection matters should be reported directly to the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner (Youth Safety, Compliance and Support), the CEO or the Child Protection Officer at the NSW State Office.

To make a report use the online [child protection form](#), call 02 9735 9000 or email [childprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:childprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au).

#### Imminent Danger

If a young person is in imminent danger, the matter should be reported directly and immediately to NSW Police on 131 444.

Where a report is made to the police, you should also subsequently notify the NSW State Office.

You've received this email as a member of Scouts Australia NSW, or through your email address being the contact email provided for a member of Scouts Australia NSW.

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