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The Kindness Month

Dear Scouting friends,

Kindness is a gift everyone can afford to give.

I've been humbled and moved by the incredible acts of kindness and courage I've seen across NSW and around Australia, in recent months.

While I've always believed that times of crisis bring out the best in us, when I see people coming together for the common good and thinking of others before themselves, my faith in humankind is renewed.

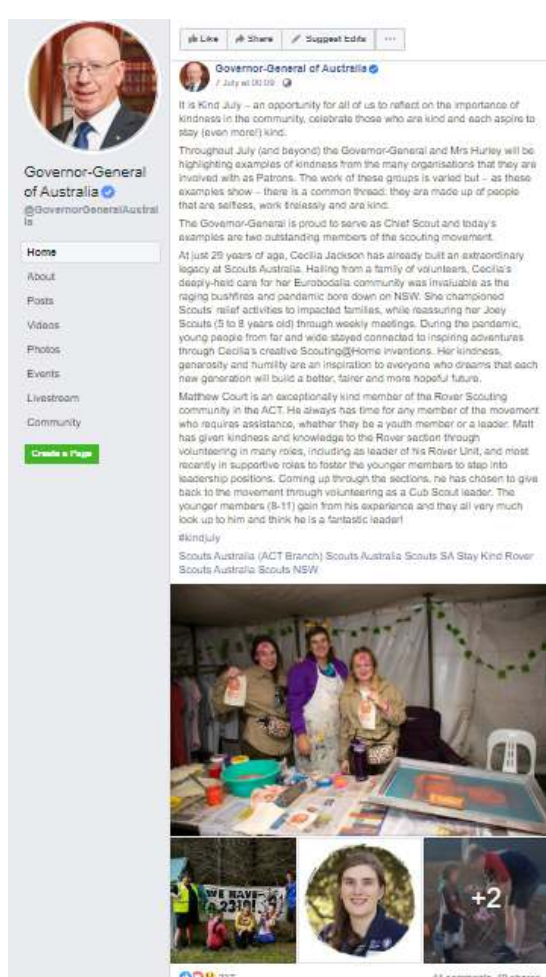
Helping others is what we do in Scouts. It's in our promise and it's in our DNA.

Our Scout leaders have shown courage, resilience and kindness by stepping up and doing their part to keep Scouting alive, despite the pressures many of them were facing.

Kind July

This month is known as **Kind July**, in support of *Stay Kind*, an organisation that promotes kindness to help young people who are facing personal challenges and who need our support. Psychological research has demonstrated a link between kindness and well-being throughout life, starting at a very young age. There is evidence that even by reflecting on having been kind in the past may be enough to improve teenagers' moods.

So I was delighted when the Governor-General of Australia took the time to recognise one of our NSW champion kindness-givers, Cecilia Jackson. She comes from a wonderful Scouting family, and deserves our sincere thanks for everything she does for our organisation. You can read more about Cecilia's kindness in his [post from 7 July](#).



One of the parents of Cecilia's Joeys Mob said, *"We knew well before COVID hit that we were very lucky to have such a dedicated Scout Leader. But let me tell you how blessed we were to have Cecilia and the other Leaders continue the Joeys program via FaceTime. That weekly connection provided normalcy and a break for kids during times of uncertainty."*

Cecilia is also one of the impressive volunteers who continues to deliver our [Scouting@Home](#) online activities. We're very pleased to see how well these ideas have been adopted.

The Scouting@Home web pages have already gathered 40,000 views, representing nearly 45% of Scouts NSW web traffic. Every day, over 150 people check out the content.

The weekly update is sent to all leaders as well as almost 200 additional users, and we can monitor the high click-through rates when the newsletter lands in people's inboxes!

My thanks to Cecilia, and all the other wonderful Scouting volunteers who continue to foster our great Scouting spirit of kindness and courage.

Being recognised for your kindness

If you know a young person who you'd like to be recognised for their kindness and their contribution to Scouting and the wider community, here's your opportunity.

The **2020 Scout of the Year Award** nominations are now open!



The award recognises our Joey Scouts, Cub Scouts, Scouts, Venturer Scouts and Rover Scouts who have created positive change in their community. We celebrate those who give their time to redevelop local bushland, welcome new members of the community, support disadvantaged kids, advocate for youth issues and so much more.

Together, let's celebrate our community heroes. To nominate a youth member, learn about the 2019 finalists and winners and for more information, please visit the [Scout of the Year](#) web page [here](#).

Kindness in our community

We're living through extraordinary times, and I know it can sometimes feel overwhelming with wall-to-wall media coverage about the pandemic. While I encourage you to practise good mental and physical health precautions, which may involve giving yourselves a break from the sensationalised media headlines, please remember to check the regular COVID-19 updates we're providing via our [website](#).

We've also agreed with **Bunnings**, that Scout Groups can contact their local store and receive a donation of up to two litres of hand sanitiser for their Scout Halls.

If you've not already taken up this wonderful offer, I encourage you to contact your local store and let them know you are a Scouts NSW Group. It would be a great way to build a stronger connection with your local Bunnings store, and have some photos taken of your youth members in uniform with their donation.



I hope you've been inspired to consider how your own acts of kindness are making a positive difference to someone's life. I'm sure we all know someone who would appreciate a kind word, email, phone call or virtual hug.

I'd like to dedicate this month of **Kindness** to the team behind Oz Venture 2021, which sadly had to be cancelled earlier this month. There's no doubt this must have been a terribly hard decision to make, but the courage of the team, and the kindness they're now showing as they work through the refund and closure process, is simply magnificent. My heartfelt thanks to each of them for their incredible perseverance over the past couple of years. We acknowledge their efforts and we thank them for their pioneering work to design an event that raised the bar for the future.

Finally, let's not lose this great spirit of collaboration, kindness and courage. At a time, when we've had to stay apart, this crisis has brought us closer together in so many ways. It's reminded us of the good we're capable of and the difference we can make when we work together.

As Henry James once said, *"Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind. The second is to be kind. And the third is to be kind."*

Yours in Scouting,

Neville Tomkins OAM JP
Chief Commissioner
Scouts Australia (NSW Branch)

To contact the Chief Commissioner, please email 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.

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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