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Know It. Live It. Log It. - Putting Youth Safety First

Dear all

This month, during **National Child Protection Week**, we are taking youth safety activities up a gear, asking you to make a commitment to youth protection to make sure our youth members feel safe, secure and empowered.

Building a strong child safe culture is a team effort and we all have a role to play.

We know that every one of you who is involved in Scouting - whether as a leader or a supporter - understands the importance of that role and agrees with this year's National Child Protection Week theme, **Putting Children First**.

We also want to make sure that every adult - all those over 18 at Scouts NSW - understands how to put that into practice. Today we're launching a campaign to equip you with the knowledge you need, to do your part, to keep our youth members safe.

Let's start by asking ourselves if you have ever thought or heard any of these statements at a Scouting event or activity;

"I've never bothered to read the Code of Conduct."
"What's a Youth Safe Advocate?"
"Two-deep leadership can't really be done at Scouts."
"I'm not going to dob someone in."
"We don't need to worry about child protection in my Group."
"I don't know how to log an issue."

It's important that you understand that **none of these statements is acceptable at Scouts**. As volunteers who are responsible for the safety of the young people we mentor, we all have a responsibility to take youth protection issues seriously and to speak up when we feel that something is not right.

Why are these statements not acceptable?

Youth protection is fundamental to who we are in Scouting. It is a foundation on which our organisation is built and is key to making sure that all youth members experience our program in an environment in which they can flourish and thrive.

We all know the devastating consequences of child protection issues. As the Scouts Australia representative for matters relating to the Royal Commission into child sexual abuse, and for the National Redress Scheme, I have first-hand experience of meeting child survivors and hearing their stories.

It is simply heart-breaking and I will never forget what has been shared with me.

This is why Scouts NSW has made a clear and strong commitment to effect change and to develop and strengthen our resources and knowledge in the area of youth safety.

This includes providing knowledge and information to all of our members about how to recognise and react to potential youth protection issues as they arise.

"The standard you walk past is the standard you accept."

What should we be doing?

Today, as part of that commitment to youth safety, we are launching a youth safety education campaign:

Know It. Live It. Log It. Safe fun for All

Know It. Live It. Log It. gives us practical steps and reminders on how to safeguard the youth in our care. There are three 'musts' in this campaign.

Each Leader and adult member in Scouting in NSW must:

- **KNOW** our Code of Conduct
- **LIVE** by our Code of Conduct
- **LOG** anything that breaches our Code of Conduct

As adults, we are all expected to abide by our Code of Conduct. This is a personal commitment to protect all members of Scouting. If we see, hear or are told about something that isn't in line with our Code of Conduct - we should log it.

We want everyone to think about youth protection in the same way you think about safety. If there was an accident or injury during one of your activities or meetings, you already know what to do. You know how, when and where to report it, who to talk to, and what to say.

In the same way, if you see something that doesn't look or feel right at Scouts - you should log it. If another adult does the wrong thing at Scouts - you should log it. It's not difficult. But it needs to become a reflex.

How to log an issue

It doesn't matter how big or small the issue is - just log it.

All reports go to the Scouts NSW Youth Protection Team which are very experienced in dealing with every type of matter. They know what to do. They know what to ask, what to look for, how to spot patterns of behaviour, and how to follow up appropriately.

There are two ways to report a youth protection matter:

1. Use the online Youth Protection form, otherwise known as the 'log it' form: www.nsw.scouts.com.au/youthprotection/log-it/
2. Call the Scouts NSW Youth Protection Team on 02 9735 9000 or email: youthprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au.

You can also talk with another adult in Scouting (a Region Commissioner, a District Commissioner, your Group Leader) and ask them to log it for you.

A Behavioural Management matter or a breach of the Scouts NSW Code of Conduct is reported in the same way, but there's a slightly different [form](#) to complete online.

What else can you do?

- **Know what you're looking for.** Become familiar with our expected standard of behaviour by reading the [Code of Conduct](#). All behaviour at Scouts of adults over 18 is measured against the Code. Read it, understand it, post it on the wall of your Scout Hall.
- **Stay informed.** Display posters, banners, leaflets about Youth Protection around your Scout Hall, as a constant reminder. We have created some great ones you can use [here](#).
- **Listen to youth voices.** Children feel safe in organisations where adults value them and listen to them. They know they will be taken seriously, be involved in decision-making and have their concerns responded to. Discuss Youth Safety with youth members at your meetings. Make it a standing agenda topic at Troop Council meetings, adult Committee or Council meetings.
- **Meet an expert.** Invite a [Youth Safe Advocate](#) to talk to your Group.
- **Get all adults involved.** Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Ask the parents of your youth members if they know how to log an issue. Talk to them at the end of a meeting or send them a leaflet.

Finally, it's important to understand that sometimes, we have to make tough decisions about individuals who are volunteering with Scouts. Where child safety is not prioritised and monitored, the likelihood of abuse increases. To create a child safe environment we sometimes need to take strong action.

We need to ensure we are not an organisation where allegations of harm are not reported; where adults are automatically being believed over children or where leaders deny an allegation could have happened. All adults involved in Scouting must know how, when and to whom issues can be raised and they must understand that there will be consequences where our expectations are not met.

We know that child-safe cultures develop over time. They need consistent effort and action by everyone and I ask that you join with me in making a commitment to doing our part to make Scouts NSW a safe and supportive place to be.

Over the coming months, we will be sharing a range of materials with Regions, Districts and Groups to support our campaign of **Know It. Live It. Log It**. Please look out for the materials. They have been created over the past 12 months thanks to a highly collaborative approach in consultation with representatives from our Youth Members, Youth Safe Advocates, State Commissioners, Region Commissioners and District Commissioners, as well as Group and Section Leaders.

In the meantime, you can learn more about **Know It. Live It. Log It** by reading this [information sheet](#) or visiting our website [here](#).

Youth protection is everyone's responsibility. Building a strong child safe culture is a team effort and we all have a role to play to champion these messages and to speak to each other about how we build a child safe environment - together. It's our job to look out for one another and when something isn't right, to say so.

Make sure you know what to do.

Yours in Scouting,

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

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.

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