

## Group Leader Update

Dear Scouting colleagues,

With so much taking place around the State, we thought it would be helpful to bring you up-to-date with a few developments and activities, so you are aware of where our priorities currently lie.

But first we want to start with a thank you.

Despite the uncertainty we are facing in our daily lives, we know that many of you have continued to deliver week after week inspiring programs for our youth members. You've continued to complete your training, support each other and help others in some of the hardest times we've ever faced as a Movement. When we say we have some of the most committed volunteers in the sector, we really do mean it. Great work, team.

Our priority remains the safety of our young people, our families and our volunteers, especially while a vaccine is not yet available and new cases are being identified every day.

The impact of COVID-19 has left many organisations in a precarious financial position. Scouts NSW is no different. Our financial situation, as you will be able to see from the [Annual Report](#), remains challenging.

We need your support to help us work through the coming months. You are the Group Manager of your local team, and we need your brains to think carefully about how you can preserve income to keep your Group and Scouts NSW afloat. Now is the time to focus on providing your members with value for their membership fee. This is the time to cut back on any non-essential spending; to think how you might focus some of your efforts on seeking out sponsorship or grants from businesses or local authorities, or talking with parents and youth members about fund-raising. If financial management or fund-raising isn't something you find easy to do, please talk with the other adults in your Group, or with your District or Region Commissioner, and we'll find someone to help.

### Activities

Despite the limitations being placed on camping and other group activities, there is still plenty happening across the State that will be of interest to you and your Group. For those Groups that have already rolled-out the new Youth Program, don't forget to visit [pr.scouts.com.au](http://pr.scouts.com.au) for great ideas. And if your Group is still enjoying Scouting under the old Youth Program, there is still plenty for your young people to enjoy, as well.

### Scout of the Year



Don't forget to nominate your amazing youth members for this annual Award. Nominations are due to close on 1 September. We've had a disappointing response to this youth-led award - no doubt there are other things on your mind at the moment. We'd really like you to encourage young people to self-nominate, or to persuade your Section Leaders to get involved. An application takes just 5 minutes to complete.

Simply visit our [website](#) to make sure young people from your Group are nominated. What a great opportunity to promote your Group in the local media or radio and profile the amazing achievements of your youth members.

### AJ2022



After the heartbreaking decisions to cancel Cuboree 2020 and OZVenture 2021, we are still very optimistic that the next big event will proceed.

You'll have seen that the NSW team is still making progress with plans for AJ2022 to be held in Elmore, Victoria in 16 months.

We anticipate that applications will open much later this year - most likely in November at the earliest.

Given the changing nature of this event, please keep in touch with the NSW Contingent team, and before you start doing anything in your local Group, we recommend that you check out the [NSW website](#) or email any questions to the team via [NSW.Contingent@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:NSW.Contingent@nsw.scouts.com.au).

### Sensory Kits

We have received 225 Oasis Sensory kits from the Saint Vincent de Paul Society (Vinnies).

There are 13 items in the kit which comes in a large suitcase: tepee tent, tangle therapy toy, fiddle cushion, spiky flashing ball, weighted turtle, water timer, ear muffs, 2 fun cushions, throw blanket, and 3 books.



The kits provide activities that stimulate senses through touch, smell, taste, movement, balance, sight and hearing. They help young people to retain more information by engaging their senses.

Sensory Play is crucial to brain development – it helps to build nerve connections in the brain's pathways.

If you'd like to secure one of the kits for your Scout Group, please contact [Mark Burfield](#).

Finally, we know many of you have already been able to get back to face to face meetings and activities. No matter how good our Teams calls may be, we know that many young people are missing meeting up in person and taking part in outdoor activities. However, we have a duty to manage this in a responsible way, following the NSW Government advice.

In these different times, we need to take a different approach across NSW Scouts than before. We've been refocusing our State teams to the areas where we can make the biggest and most positive impact on our program and on the experience of our members. Regardless of what Scouting role we have, we should all be led by the desire to create a great environment and help our young members on the path to success.

Please keep looking after yourselves, and your loved ones. We know you've pulled out more than all the stops during this crisis and not all of it has been seen or heard. We encourage you to stay clear of unnecessary and unhelpful speculation about COVID-19 on social media channels. Instead, keep talking to each other, talk to us, and ask us any questions on your mind. You can find anything you need on our [COVID-19 web pages](#). And if it's not there, let us know. We're guaranteed to give a more truthful answer than Facebook!

For all your efforts, both seen and unseen, we pass on a heartfelt thank you to you all.

Yours in Scouting,

Bel and Phil

### 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.

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