

MEDIA KEY MESSAGES

September 2023



The purpose of this document is to list a range of key messages that can be used by Scouts NSW youth and adult members when engaging with the media.

Elevator Pitch

Active in NSW since 1908, Scouts NSW is an inclusive, youth-led, adult-supported organisation that ensures members are given the best platform to become constructive and responsible citizens.

Scouting activities range from physical and active activities such as abseiling, hiking, camping, canoeing, canyoning and sailing, to creative endeavours such as performing arts, and educational and problem-solving activities like coding and construction. Scouts are also dedicated to their communities – they develop an understanding of their responsibilities and are challenged to make their community a better place through creativity and commitment. For many Scouts, this includes attending and supporting Anzac Day ceremonies, including the Anzac Day March, or by tidying up their local parks for Clean Up Australia Day.

The primary purpose of Scouts NSW is to provide under 25s with recreational activities to boost their physical and mental health, develop important life skills, such as self-esteem and resilience, while building their leadership capabilities.

Stats

- Scouts NSW has almost 16,000 members, as of 31 March 2023
- We have more than 12,600 youth members
- We have more than 7800 Leaders and Adult Helpers
- Our members come from a range of cultural and religious backgrounds with varying abilities
- Scouts NSW has 10 Regions and 54 Districts. The number of Groups in each Region is:
 - 86 Sydney North
 - 81 Hunter and Coastal
 - 70 South Metropolitan
 - 56 Greater Western Sydney
 - 49 South Coast and Tablelands
 - 32 Hume
 - 25 North Coast
 - 23 Riverina
 - 14 North West
 - 12 The Golden West.



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Key Statements

- Scouts NSW Vision: Through fun and friendship, Scouts will inspire and create resilient young people and adults, by developing skills for life and contributing to our community
- Scouts NSW Mission: Scouting develops and empowers youth by gaining life skills and a value system, based on the Scout Promise and Law, building a better world and playing a constructive role in society
- Scouts NSW provides young people aged 5 to 25 with fun and challenging opportunities to grow through adventure
- Scouts is one of the world's largest and most successful youth organisations
- With a youth-led, adult-supported approach, our youth members are at the forefront of our program
- To find out more about Scouts NSW or to join, visit scoutsnsw.com.au

Benefits of Scouting

Through Scouting, we want to give young people the courage, positivity and resilience to keep going, through good times and bad.

For more than a century, Scouting in Australia has delivered skills for life, with outdoor adventures where young people learn by doing and learn by leading.

A 2019 survey conducted by Resilient Youth Australia confirms the positive impact Scouting has on young people's wellbeing and resilience.

The survey compared young people involved in Scouting to those who are not, across a set of skills, attitudes and behaviours associated with their life satisfaction.

Through this research, we have found that Scouts report to have an overall better life satisfaction than their peers, and this increases with each year they are involved in the Scouting program.

We give them opportunities to develop the skills they need to deal with what life throws at them – both now and into the future.

Age Sections

Joey Scouts – 5-8 – Discover Adventure

The Joey Scout section focuses on fun and friendship and is a gentle introduction to a world of adventures through Scouting. Joey Scouts try adventurous activities, discover new places and learn about the world around them.



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Cub Scouts – 8-11 – Create the Path

The Cub Scout section focuses on exploring the outdoors, setting challenges and encountering new experiences. Cub Scouts develop and use skills and ideas to make their program more adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive. Their diverse program of creative, outdoor, personal growth and community challenges promote Cub Scouts to be active, express themselves, build confidence and conquer fears.

Scouts – 11-14 – Explore the Unknown

The Scouts section offers an amazing variety of activities designed to teach important life skills to get Scouts social and active. The balance of leadership shifts from adults to youth as Scouts take charge over their direction with adult support. Scouts recognise themselves as part of something much larger than themselves and commit themselves to contributing meaningfully.

Venturer Scouts – 14-17 – Look Wide

Venturer Scouts have the space to have fun learning and developing their own character at their own pace. These teenagers learn about self-motivation and the courage required to overcome the challenges they face. Venturer Scouts learn the value of their support networks, as well as how these adapt and change with time and the pursuit of new interests.

Rover Scouts – 18-25 – Beyond the Horizon

People looking to join Rover Scouts do not need any Scouting experience, just the ability to keep up with some adventurous people and their adrenaline-packed challenges. The Rover Scout section encourages each other to push their limits and enjoy a whole new level of adventure. Rover Scouts share their experiences with a network of peers within and beyond their section.

Training

The Scout Program exists to help develop young people in the areas of personal growth, to develop them as active citizens involved in their local, national and global communities.

This is achieved through a diverse program of activities that are adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive.

Today's Scouts can take part in an extraordinary variety of outdoor activities, from "traditional" Scouting skills, such as camping and bushcraft, to more extreme challenges, such as abseiling, overnight hiking, rafting, canoeing, canyoning, snow activities, rock climbing, sailing... even flying!



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Scouts offer Achievement Pathways for each section that encourage participation in the full range of activities available and provides recognition of individual achievement. Leaders are also afforded a thorough training program to progress their own skills and recognise expertise.

The youth-led, adult-supported approach allows Scouts to follow their interests and develop critical thinking and leadership qualities, all whilst being supported and guided by their Leaders.

Scouting in Australia provides one developmental program inclusive of ages 5 to 25.

History

- Scouting was founded by Lord Robert Baden-Powell on 1 August 1907
- Scout Groups started in Australia in 1908
- Females were allowed to join Scouts in Australia as youth members in 1973 in the Venturer Scout (aged 14-18) and Rover Scout (aged 18-25) sections. Cub Scouts and Scouts followed in 1988
- In 1990, the Joey Scout section was started, with all welcome
- The World Organisation of the Scout Movement (WOSM) is based in Geneva, Switzerland
- It provides unity amongst the 172 national Scouting organisations (representing more than 57 million members and volunteers)
- On 1 August 2007, the Scout Movement celebrated its 100th anniversary by returning to the UK for the 21st World Scout Jamboree.

Responses to Historical Matters

Generalised short response

Scouts NSW takes the issue of Youth Protection seriously and undertakes a multipronged approach to addressing the welfare of our youth members. We enforce National Police Checks and Working With Children Checks on adult members and Leaders; mandatory child safeguarding training must be completed by all adult members who have interaction with youth members; we educate our youth members on acceptable behaviour and how to report an incident or matter; and we encourage victims of child abuse to access the Federal Government's National Redress Scheme.

Minimum response – can be paired with extra information

Scouts NSW takes the issue of Youth Protection seriously.

Scouts NSW is a very different organisation to 50 years ago. The welfare of young people is at the centre of everything we do.



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Scouts NSW actively supports the reporting of abuse, no matter when it occurred, through our Know It, Live It, Log It program. We encourage victims of child abuse to access the Federal Government's National Redress Scheme, which helps people who have experienced institutionalised child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment, and is free of legal costs.

Scouts NSW continues to have a zero-tolerance policy towards abuse.

Extra information

We have made significant changes since the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Scouts NSW has a comprehensive national Child Protection Policy, which was developed in conjunction with Child Wise, a leading and nationally recognised not-for-profit child abuse prevention organisation.

All adult members in Scouting must undertake a National Police Check and hold a Working with Children Check. Multiple reference checks are also conducted as part of the Leader application.

All adult members are also required to complete mandatory online training courses in child safety, both prior to being actively involved with young people and a minimum of every three years thereafter.

One of the core controls put in place to ensure the protection of children is Scouts' "Two Deep" policy, which states no Leader, Helper, or staff member should be alone with a youth member, except in the case of an unavoidable emergency. This is standard practice, regardless of whether meeting at a Scout hall, or an overnight event.

Deflections when talking to media

In the event of media asking questions you do not feel comfortable or are not in a position to answer:

- I'm not the best person to speak to about that, but I'd be happy to pass your question on to the relevant team
- I'm not the best person to speak to, I would love to talk about [Subject related to the purpose of the interview]
- That's a good question, and I think it's important to remember that [insert relevant historical matters response that address the issue generally, without going into detail about the specific matter being asked]
- As that matter is currently before the courts, I am unable to answer at this time.

