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Making a better world through Scouting

Dear all,
Generally, when we think about the issues that concern us we focus on what impacts our day-to-day lives.
Today's young people are most concerned about issues like climate change, job security, mental and physical health, and housing affordability.
When asked to nominate the most important issues facing the nation, young people set aside individual concerns and focus on collective, global issues like **building a better world**. Their interest in the greater good is a driving force for their involvement in causes, and their participation in activism – often through social media - is increasing.
As a leading youth organisation, it's therefore important for us to help harness this enthusiasm.
The World Organisation of the Scout Movement, known as **WOSM**, regularly brings representatives from the 170 National Scout Organisations together, and they explore ways in which Scouting can make an even bigger, positive impact around the world to improve the lives of young people.
Last year, Scout representatives launched **Scouts for SDGs** (Sustainable Development Goals) at the United Nations. It shows how Scouting is helping to deliver the UN's 17 Goals and it's our blueprint to creating a better future.

SCOUTS for SDGs

Our new Youth Program has taken the lead in adopting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. The Goals are used as a valuable resource to help young people work with their Leaders to design challenges and projects that fulfil a key Special Interest Area of our new program.

The 17 Goals illustrate how Scouting is listening to the voices of young people and leveraging the 50 million members of our world-wide organisation to make a difference. I think this work is an outstanding way to show how our combined contribution can make an enormous impact, both within our NSW communities, and beyond.
I am so proud that Scouting is the only organisation in the world delivering on all 17 of the UN's SDGs.

Here are some great examples of how our young people in NSW are making a positive difference to others.

Sustainable Development Goal One – No Poverty

Nearly half of the world lives in poverty today, and so many people struggle for basic human needs like adequate food and clean water. Eliminating poverty is about giving all people everywhere an equal chance at living fulfilled lives.

Homelessness is an issue that I've worked hard to help eliminate. I volunteer for a homeless shelter and I regularly raise funds through the annual St Vincent de Paul CEO Sleepout. I was delighted to see that last month, Venturers from 2nd Orange Scout Group ran a trivia night to raise money for the Orange Homelessness Service and donated two boxes of backpack beds purchased from Backpack Bed for Homeless, Australia. The beds provided shelter and dignity to local people in need.

Sustainable Development Goal Four – Quality Education

Education can be the key that opens the door to a lifetime of opportunity, but only if everyone has access to lifelong learning opportunities, whether inside or outside of school.

Our **Young Leader Development Program** helps those aged between 17 and 26 start their journey towards becoming a Leader, giving them a little extra support to complete the training. This means they also have access to SAIT National Accreditation when they complete our leadership training and skills program, alongside our other adult volunteers. Amongst the many qualifications on offer, past leaders have attained Certificates in Business, Leadership & Management and Outdoor recreation.

Sustainable Development Goal Ten – Reducing Inequalities

Everyone deserves to have the same opportunities to live a happy, healthy, and successful life, yet inequalities are rising between social classes, rural and urban populations, and people of different genders, ethnicities, and abilities. It's our responsibility to make sure everyone around us is treated with respect and is able to live a fulfilled life.

Some of our Scout Groups attended the Sydney Children's Festival in March to promote Scouting to thousands of young people and their families who visited the Multicultural Festival. As well as proudly flying the Scouts flag, our Leaders and youth members demonstrated to hundreds of Festival visitors how Scouting welcomes all young people, offering a safe environment to have some fun.

Sustainable Development Goal Eleven – Sustainable Communities

More than 1/2 of the world lives in urban areas, and by 2050 more than 2/3 of humanity will. We need to make sure that cities are safe, inclusive, and sustainable for everyone, especially for women, children, and disabled people. It's not just the responsibility of local governments and city planners, but of individuals to take care of their home neighbourhoods.

A large number of our active Scouting Groups participate in Clean up Australia Day to help clean up, fix up and preserve our environment.



Since it started in 1990, Clean Up Australia Day has devoted 33 million hours to cleaning up our country, removing the equivalent of more than 350,000 ute loads of rubbish.

Around half the volume of litter in NSW comes from beverage containers, so we've set up the **Scouts Recycling Scheme** to enable Groups to raise funds through the 10 cent 'Return and Earn' container deposit scheme. Some Scout Groups have set up a donation site at their Scout hall, where friends, family and the community can drop off their donated eligible drink containers.

I encourage you to visit the impressive **Scouts for SDGs** website, and find ways to get more involved in some of the issues that matter most to young Australians.

Earlier this month, Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, who is the Honorary President of the Korea Scout Association said at a Scouting event, "I have great confidence in today's young generation. Your role is much more vital than ever, both as rights holders and as agents of change. You are the agents to make changes for a better world."

Wonderful words.

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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