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Helping your Group during the pandemic

Dear Scouting colleagues,

Greeting from Scouts NSW!

First, my thanks to the many Leaders who are showing amazing resilience and creativity during these challenging times. Across NSW our Leaders are engaging our youth members in the Virtual Scout Hall, promoting our [Scouting@Home](#)* initiatives, and devising new activities and programs to keep our members involved. At a difficult time, a little planning and positive spirit is making a big difference.

Speaking of 'difference' ... we are in a time like no other in our lives. So difference in our thinking is what will keep our Movement strong. We must harness different and new ways of approaching the challenges in front of us.

This Leader News is important for every Leader in NSW as it is devoted to helping your Group during the pandemic, above and beyond the Scouting@Home program we launched last month. The [information on our website](#) is some of what is available to help you continue to deliver Scouting and to remove some of the pressures on the Group, including:

- Membership and financial support from Scouts NSW
- Financial relief from government and service providers
- Grants available to help Groups – Community Building Partnership grants, bushfire related grants, COVID-19 related grants
- Opportunities to up-skill as a Leader

I know that many of you are struggling, like me, with juggling the new way of working and schooling – no matter how temporary – and your role in Scouts is something else that you need to do differently.

I want you to know how proud I am of every one of you who has made the effort to keep your Group going during this period of physical distancing. For 113 years, online was not the place Scouting happened. It's reassuring to see how so many of you have found ways to channel the energy of our youth members in such positive ways. But while many of you have been able to switch easily to a new delivery mode, it's understandable that there are others who have found it harder to adapt weekly programs or outdoors adventures so they can be run for youth members at home.

With the Federal and State Governments starting to relax some social distancing restrictions, I have asked our COVID-19 Task Force to closely monitor developments and to advise me when we might be able to resume face-to-face Scouting. I will advise you as soon as we can resume face-to-face Scouting and the conditions we will meet.

To find out what relief and support is available to your Group or Formation, visit [our website](#).

I hope you find this information useful – all designed to support our local Groups and Crews. Over the coming weeks, we will seek more ways to provide relief and support for your Group and our Scouting families.

Please let us know if you have, or know of, anything else that we can share with your peers.

With best wishes,

Yours in Scouting,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Tomkins'.

Neville Tomkins OAM JP
Chief Commissioner
Scouts NSW

* If you need some guidance on setting up your virtual Scout Hall or running your online Scouting program, please contact your District Commissioner or your Region Office so they can find the best person to help you.

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.

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