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Staying connected to Scouting through our updated COVID-19 response

The Federal and State Governments have now announced a series of new measures and recommendations to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19. They both share the view that only the most essential face-to-face interactions should continue at this time.

This means Scouts NSW will no longer continue any face to face Scouting. Instead, we are activating a series of new channels to enable adults and young people to stay connected to Scouting over the coming months.

At all times, we are guided by our priority to protect the health and safety of all our members.

Please continue to check the [Scouts Guide to Coronavirus](#) page on our website, which provides the most up-to-date advice and guidelines.

We are not closing down. We are moving to a new way of delivering Scouting.

It is important that we continue to offer Scouting because we know it helps build resilience and self-confidence in youth members to equip them with coping strategies when facing challenges. These are precisely the qualities that young people across NSW will need at this time.

Our initiatives

- We are creating Virtual groups through our Microsoft Teams platform to allow Groups and Sections to meet.
- The Youth program team is launching some alternative program suggestions, which will be regularly updated. They include a range of activities delivered through Project Patrols and aligned to the Special Interest Areas of our program.
- We are encouraging members to participate in the World Organisation of Scouting (WOSM) events including:
 - Scouts Earth Hour <https://www.scout.org/EarthHour> (28 March)
 - Jamboree on the internet: <https://www.jotajoti.info/> (3-5 April)
- Our NSW Scouts Lones Group will be making some of their programs, activities and worksheets available.
- A series of weekly challenges will be launched, which young people can complete together with family or friends, thereby introducing new people to Scouting activities.

Other developments

- The Federal Government has announced a package of measures designed to support both for-profit businesses and not-for-profit organisations. Many not-for-profit entities, such as Scouting, may be eligible to apply for a tax-free cash payment to enable them to deliver their voluntary services to members and recipients. We are actively reviewing this.
- Some of our remote and country members do not have readily available access to the Internet or wifi services, so we are working to expedite the use of grant money to purchase equipment, where we can.

We need your help

As we launch our initiatives, we will communicate primarily through email and our social media channels.

Where there are adult leaders who are able and willing to participate in our new initiatives, we will involve them in sourcing ideas and communicating them with their own Sections and Groups. We will also make our materials available to the wider community. We want to encourage members of the community to experience Scouting activities at a time when many are at a loose end.

We'd love your support for our new initiatives. Please let us know if you have ideas for weekly challenges and activities. Take a look at the UK approach to see the type of ideas we're seeking: <https://www.scouts.org.uk/the-great-indoors/>

Please send us your ideas, or let us know if you have any additional questions that have not been addressed by the information on the website via email to feedback@nsw.scouts.com.au.

Thank you for your support.

Yours in Scouting,

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

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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