

Scouting Ireland
National Office
Larch Hill
Dublin 16

T +353 (0)1 495 6300
F +353 (0)1 495 6301
questions@scouts.ie



Our Ref: **BOD-OUT-08-2020**

Date: 11.03.2020

Re: COVID – 19 (Coronavirus)

Dear Members and Parent,

We are aware that this continually evolving situation is causing a lot of anxiety among our youth members, parents and volunteers. We are monitoring this situation daily, taking our guidance from the official government and WOSM channels. Further, we continue to do our best to provide support and guidance to all our members.

Our national team is continually reviewing the full schedule of activities and events here and abroad that SI are involved in for the months ahead. We will continue to review daily and should advices change we will advise members of this immediately.

In our mailings, we are providing the up to date HSE and NHS advices and are highlighting the useful and relevant elements for Scout Groups. [Click here](#) for our latest update. We will continue to support everyone as much as possible and see value in continuing to offer Scouting while we can and while it is still safe to do so.

While we are saddened to hear about the cancelling of all St. Patrick's Day Festivals, which we know many of our Scout Groups use as an opportunity to be seen in our communities, let us now consider how we live our Scout Promise during these unprecedented times - *to serve my community, to help other people* and the daily good deed ethic that we as Scouts practice worldwide.

We are looking for your ideas as to what we can do to support those more vulnerable in your community at this time. If you are already doing something or have an idea worth sharing, we would love to hear about it so we may share your good work as an example for other Scout Groups to follow if they wish.

Here are some examples of scouts taking action to support their communities:

- In Singapore, thousands of Scouts and Guides wrote letters of encouragement to frontline health staff who are working around the clock to contain and manage the spread of the virus in the country. This simple act uplifted the spirits of many health workers, many who are putting themselves at risk as they care for those who have been infected.
- In Haiti, Scouts set up hand washing stations to highlight the importance of hand hygiene in the face of the current COVID-19 situation. Scouts also encouraged their communities to set up their own hand washing stations for public use.
- In Indonesia, a Rover Scout unit learned more about infectious diseases and discussed actionable ideas to respond and raise awareness on COVID-19 in their community.

Scouting Ireland
National Office
Larch Hill
Dublin 16

T +353 (0)1 495 6300
F +353 (0)1 495 6301
questions@scouts.ie



- In the United States, a local Scout Group hosted a training on responding to large-scale humanitarian crises such as natural disasters and public health emergencies, with a focus on COVID-19. Close to 100 Scouts are now ready to actively raise awareness and lend support in mitigating risks with COVID-19 in their communities.

So now that we can see that Scouting around the world are beginning to mobilise to assist their communities, what could we be doing in Ireland?

It is important to remember that the safety of young people and adult volunteers comes first while carrying out activities. Scout leaders should ensure that everyone, including the beneficiaries of their actions, are always safe from harm, e.g. Scouts should also refrain from engaging in direct care or transportation of sick persons without proper training.

In worrying times such as these, scouts can provide leadership and be a positive influence in our communities. This can be achieved even through the smallest gestures and simple ideas at local level. A good start is reminding our members to link in with their elderly relatives or neighbours who may be alone at this worrying time. A kind word at such a time can go a long way.

So, let us know what you think or any initiatives you are considering or have already started. You can reach us by using our email at questions@scouts.ie.

We, as always, will keep you informed as matters regarding regular section and Group meetings, events and camps evolve. In the meantime, take care of yourselves, your families and your fellow Scouts. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours in Scouting,

Adrian Tennant
Chairperson
Gasóga na hÉireann/Scouting Ireland

Anne Griffin
Chief Executive Officer
Gasóga na hÉireann/Scouting Ireland