



Scouts Victoria

# Building the Resources For Victoria's Future Leaders



# Stronger communities through Scouting

For 110 years Scouts Victoria has helped more than one million young Victorians explore their potential.

And Scouting in Victoria is growing: by 30% in the past 10 years, with 15 consecutive years of growth.

The Scout program is active, outdoor learning in small teams. It develops resilience and positive mental health.

Uniquely, the Scout program is structured so every child has an opportunity to develop leadership, at age 7 or 10 or 13 or 16 or older, as they progress through the five Sections spanning the ages 5-25.

The outcome of the Scout program is happy, confident, young people who have responsible independence – to care for themselves and to help others.

This benefit extends to more than 400 Victorian communities with Scout Groups.

Young people get to plan their own adventures - from hiking and camping, to large national and international events.

They are busy, active and engaged in real, rather than virtual, lives.

We are proactive in striving to ensure that our Scout Groups reflect the broad spectrum of contemporary Victoria. We value the diversity of our members, including gender, sexuality, race, religion and ability. Scouting welcomes all.

We won't let finance be a barrier to participation for any young person. This year we waived fees for over 300 families including those from newly arrived, humanitarian and CALD communities. We keep our costs as low as possible with weekend camps to the beach, bush or snow from as little as \$50.

With your help, Scouts Victoria can do more to build stronger communities and partnerships.





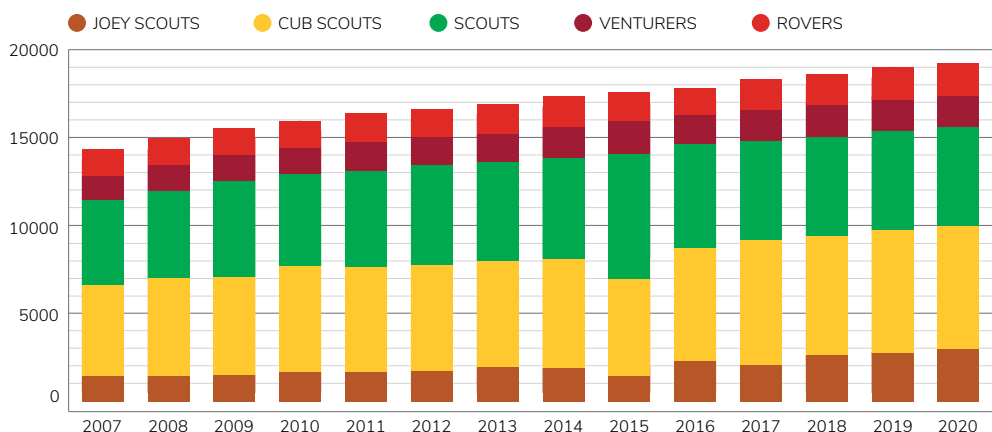


# Scouts Victoria

## 15 consecutive years of growth

(up 30% in 10 years)

With 300,000 members on our current records



The State scarf of Scouts Victoria

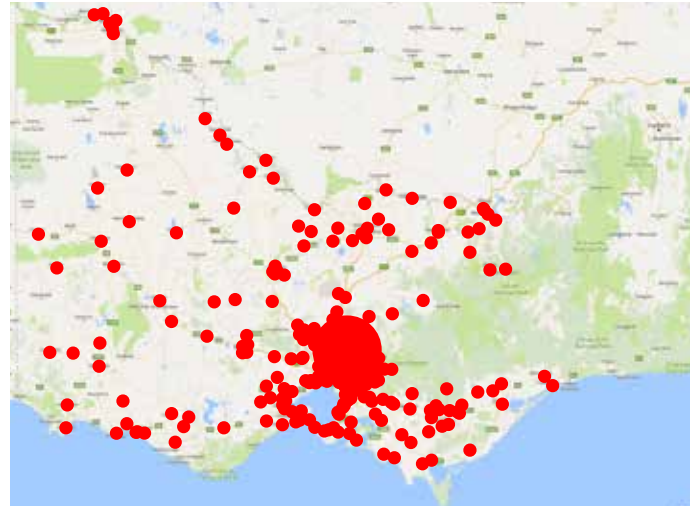




**Enjoyed by more than one million young Victorians and their families since 1907**



**Contributing to more than 400 local communities, plus managing and sharing 600+ community halls and campsites**



**Open to all - regardless of gender, sexuality, race, religion or ability**



**Co-ed for more than 40 years  
(35% female, 65% male)**

**1.5 million volunteer-hours per year by adults in Scouting**





# Scouting At Home

2020 presented a raft of challenges for a movement that bases its program in adventure and the great outdoors; these challenges presented an opportunity to try something new and keep youth members engaged.

Wonderful teams of youth and Leaders set out to find innovative ways to run a weekly Scouting program in a virtual setting, while the State Leadership team and staff produced a fantastic series called Scout Quest to replace their normal major events calendar. These online events were attended by up to 20,000 young people weekly!

Scout Quest events covered a broad range of Interests, with Robert Irwin presenting an Animal extravaganza and Consentino taught everyone a little magic, to Anabelle Smith and Kirstie Marshall regaling their Olympic journeys; each event delivered new learning opportunities aimed to captivate and inspire the states next generation of leaders.

Scouts Victoria suspended membership fees until March 2021 at a cost of \$8m to ensure that young people stayed connected to each other at a time when most community activities had ground to a halt.







“It is truly such a privilege to promote the amazing work Scouts do across the globe as a true force for good. This past year with the global pandemic has really highlighted the importance of Scouting values, whether it be community spirit, being kind to your neighbour or learning new skills and adapting to change. Thank you for your faith in all we can do together!”

**Bear Grylls,**  
**Chief Ambassador of World Scouting**





# Embracing Diversity



Scouts Victoria have had their 'All Sections' brochure translated into Mandarin, Arabic and Vietnamese.



Scouts participating in this years Pride March. Scouts Victoria is proud to celebrate diversity and creates inclusive environments for young people.

## Scouting Welcomes All

### Deng Shan



Deng with his mother, Governor Linda Dessau and Anthony Howard.

Deng Shan, Victoria's first Sudanese Queen's Scout, was among 91 Queen's Scouts presented with their certificates by Governor Linda Dessau AC on February 8 2020.

Deng came to Australia with his family in 2006, and for the past two years has been an active member of the Venturer Scout Unit at Catholic Regional College, Sydenham.

For his Queen's Scout award, he pursued canoeing and driving, plus camps and badges.

A highlight was a hike on French Island: "The weather wasn't the best but we made the most of it," says Deng. "We had a sook every now and then, but had a good laugh about it afterwards."

Deng has six younger brothers and sisters and hopes they will follow him into Scouting.

In 2020 Deng will study property/construction management at RMIT, aiming to work in real estate.

"My goals are to be successful in life and to help others," says Deng. "There isn't anything else to me really - just a dude trying to make good use of this thing we call life."





2nd Glenroy Scout Group attending this years Cuboree.

## Scouting Welcomes All

Tyler



Tyler with his construction project while Scouting from home.

Tyler is a Scout at 1st West Waverley Scout Group with Hemiplegia Cerebral Palsy, his mother ... sent us an article to let us know how much he was enjoying our Scouting at Home program.

For Anzac Day, Tyler earned his 'Their Service our Heritage' badge by making Anzac cookies, researching and reading a book with our help and making lanterns and paper poppies for our driveway.

During lockdown Tyler's good deeds were to help our neighbour take her bins out and bring them back in. Tyler was keen to help us out around the house, doing lots of chores and painting our fence. He also sanded a chopping board for his friends mum and had a lot of fun baking bread, kneading and punching was his favorite part!

He earned his World Scouting badge with his Troop online and helped me tie a friendship knot. He enjoyed seeing a Venturer talk about his World Jamboree time and had a lot of fun doing a quiz on logos, he got a few right too!

Tyler attended 1st West's ISO-Straddy. We held Zoom meetings over two weekends and then did a Covid-Safe practical session at the Scout hall garage. The Scouts set up a kitchen and built their construction projects. Afterwards, Tyler and I built a washing stand and laundry line with dowel sticks and string. It is hard for him to tie knots as he can only use one hand properly while the other hand supports. Have you ever tried to tie a reef knot with one hand?

Tyler has really enjoyed Scouting at Home, but can't wait to go back into the hall!



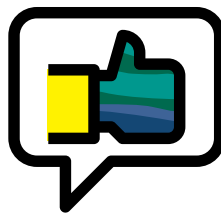
# The Scouting Effect



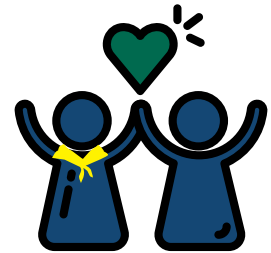
Scouts Australia partnered with Resilient Youth Australia to conduct the Scouts Australia Resilience Survey to investigate the impact of Scouting on the resilience of its youth members.

A sample of current youth members aged 8-18 years old across all States and Territories took part in the survey. Their results were benchmarked against the Australian norm dataset of 350,000 young people aged 8-18 years.

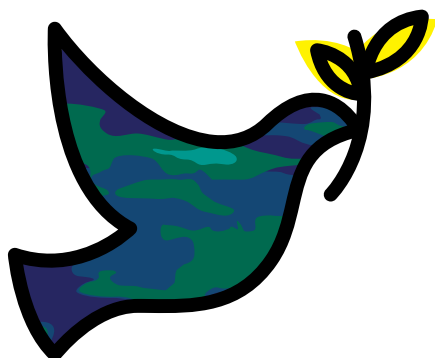
Through this survey, we have found that Scouts have an overall better life satisfaction than their non-Scouting peers, and that the longer they stay in Scouts, the more resilient they are likely to become.



Scouts report have an overall better life satisfaction than their peers by 5.2%.



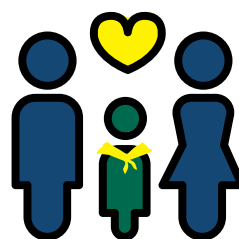
Scouts are 13% more likely than non-Scouts to trust others.



Scouts are 9.4% more likely than non-Scouts to hold more hope for a positive future.

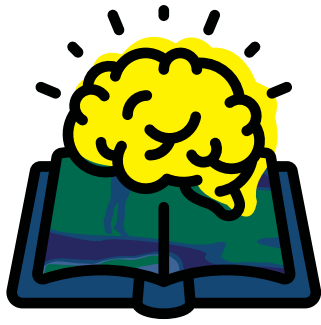


Scouts are 6.3% more likely than non-Scouts to forgive others who are mean to them.



Scouts are 6.8% more likely than non-Scouts to report they have adults who set good examples for them.





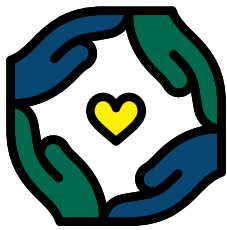
**Scouts are 8.1% more likely to know they can solve a problem, rather than quit.**



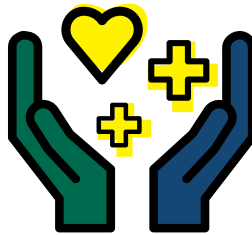
Scouts are 12.1% more likely to be selected to help with tasks at school.



Scouts are 6.2% more likely to enjoy school.



Scouts are 5.2% more likely than non-Scouts to get along with people who are different to them.



Scouts are 15.4% more likely than non-Scouts to feel they make a positive contribution to their community.



Scouts report to have better social skills than non-Scouts by 5.6%.



Scouts are 6.5% more likely than non-Scouts to feel they can talk about things that are upsetting them.



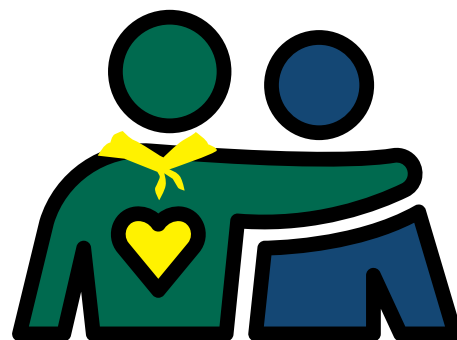
Scouts report to have a healthier mental state than non-Scouts by 13%.



Scouts report they have a healthy body 11.6% more than non-Scouts.



Scouts are 8.1% more likely than non-Scouts to give time to help others.



**Scouts are 11.8% more likely to feel good about themselves.**

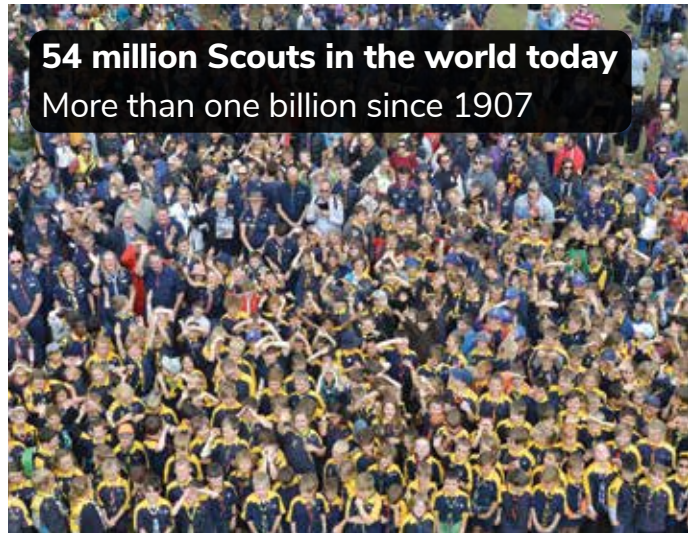


# The World Of Scouting



**In 169 countries**  
(But not China, North Korea, Cuba, Laos or Andorra.)

**54 million Scouts in the world today**  
More than one billion since 1907



**An ethos of helping others**

**1 billion  
Service Hours**

**6,327,171  
Service Actions**



**Messengers of Peace**





**Everyone gets to learn and develop their own leadership skills**

## Building positive mental health



### Be(ing) prepared: Guide and Scout participation, childhood social position and mental health at age 50—a prospective birth cohort study

Chris Dibben,<sup>1</sup> Chris Playford,<sup>2</sup> Richard Mitchell<sup>3</sup>

Additional material is published online only. To view please visit the journal online (<https://doi.org/10.1136/jech-2016-207980>).

<sup>1</sup>University of Edinburgh, Institute of Geography, Edinburgh, UK

<sup>2</sup>University of Edinburgh, Administrative Data Research

**ABSTRACT** Mental health is a major concern in many countries. We explore whether youth participation in the Scouts and Guides could protect mental health in later life and in particular whether it might reduce inequalities in mental health associated with early life socioeconomic position.

**Methods** Using the 1958 birth cohort National Child Development Study, we tested whether Guides/Girls

programmes which enable an individual to develop capabilities and resilience are known to have a positive effect on outcomes in youth, particularly those focused on "positive youth development" aimed at developing social, vocational and cognitive competence; self-confidence; connection to others; respect for societal and cultural rules and caring and compassion.<sup>1</sup> It is plausible that the

**A method that is still progressive and evolving after 110 years**

Learning by doing

Learning in the outdoors

Learning in small teams

Youth-led, adult-supported

**Conclusions:** Participation in Guides or Scouts was associated with better mental health and narrower mental health inequalities, at age 50. This suggests that youth programmes that support resilience and social mobility through developing the potential for continued progressive self-education, 'soft' non-cognitive skills, self reliance, collaboration and activities in natural environments may be protective of mental health in adulthood.



**Recognised by UNESCO as the largest provider of non-formal education**







# Appreciation

An investment in local Scouting deserves great community recognition. Scouts Victoria can manage professional and friendly events and media relations to mark project milestones, involving the Minister or their delegate and local Government MPs.

Scout Groups receiving an investment will also invite the local Government MP to speak at each of their annual report events to the community, and they might even like to join the kids on an abseiling activity or to be 'scarfed up' as a member of the local Scouting supporter community!

**Scouts can organise professional media and campaign events for any milestone:**

- Local MPs or candidates campaigning for funding
- Artist's impressions
- Announcement of funding
- Sod turn on construction commencement
- Opening of new premises
- Signage
- Promotion through social media



Minister for Youth, The Honourable Ros Spence MP visiting Cuboree.

Recognition of a Government investment will also extend into the communities that share Scouting facilities such as service clubs and educational groups.

As a non-partisan organisation worldwide, Scouting will always work collaboratively with all major parties to achieve community outcomes, and Scout Groups will maintain connections with MPs and Councillors across the spectrum who have supported them. This is consistent with providing professional and friendly recognition of a Government investment in Scouting.



Nina Taylor MP opening 4th Caulfield Scout Hall.



Michael Sukkar MP at the 1st Heatherdale Hall opening.



Jason Wood MP at the 1st Ferny Creek Hall opening.



# Preserving the Past and Creating the Future

## 1st Ferny Creek - \$260,000



## 1st Baranduda - \$300,000





## 1st Alexandra - \$935,000



## Red Cliffs - \$165,000



# Priority Projects

## Scouts Victoria community development opportunities

### The model: Scouting is a great manager of shared community facilities

Scouting has some facilities requirements that deliver great multi-purpose community assets.

- The Scout program is active and physical both indoors and outdoors, so facilities are robust enough to handle a ball game or other vigorous indoor activities.
- Scouting provides a sense of belonging for young people, so facilities include the ability for young people to display their achievement and be proud of their identity. Scout facilities become places where young people feel comfortable, supported and engaged.
- Scouting needs time and space available to grow and so is able to share excess capacity with other community groups.
- Scouts are experienced property managers, able to provide asset management and upkeep with little administration or management overhead.

The shared community facility of the future is one that is built with Scouting in mind, managed by Scouting as a proud custodian of community infrastructure, and actively utilised by a range of community organisations to provide a vibrant hub.

This model benefits greatly from a key daytime tenant which is why partnering with the schools has been so successful and a model to replicate. Scouting has successfully created and delivered active, practical education to Year 12 level and beyond in lock step with schools' academic programs.

**Scouts Victoria is seeking \$24.5 million across four years to upgrade and maintain ageing facilities, as well as establish a presence in growth communities.**

### Economic Benefit

The delivery of these Scouts and Community Centres – based on a total construction value of \$24.5m over four years - Scouts Victoria estimates that this will provide potential economic benefits including:

- Total Employment of 337 jobs (100 direct)
- Flow-On output impact of \$56m and Total Output Impact of \$80m
- Total Value Added impact of \$32.5m
- Management and stewardship of facilities at no cost to the community

These estimates need further validation based on final construction value and locations of projects.

Scouts Victoria is a willing co-contributor to these projects, alongside contributions leveraged from local partners for each project.





# Minor Refurbishments

\$150,000 and below

These projects are smaller in nature and generally include a combination of kitchens, floors, painting, disability access and bathroom upgrades. Many of these halls also require many safety improvements including exit door hardware, fire extinguishers, and installation of safety switches.

More detailed scoping is available upon request.

## Minor refurbishments

[Sorted by State electorate]

1st Altona	Altona
Leopold Scout Group	Bellarine
5th/6th Moorabbin Central	Bentleigh
Scouts Victoria Heritage Museum	Bentleigh
9th Brighton	Brighton
1st Hurtsbridge	Eildon
1st Lilydale	Evelyn
2nd Footscray	Footscray
5th Footscray	Footscray
10th Footscray	Footscray
1st St Albans Park	Geelong
Mount Beauty	Gippsland East
Deer Park	Kokoroit
Legana Street - Mt Waverley	Mount Waverley
Noorat	Polwarth
Creswick	Ripon

Sunbury  
Mt Clear  
2nd Werribee

Sunbury  
Wendouree  
Werribee

## Refurbishments to Scout facilities across Victoria

Most Scout Groups in established areas are responsible for managing and maintaining the Scout hall where they deliver youth program. These local Scouting communities commit to the long term future of this building as their home and raise funds for maintenance costs from membership dues and broader community support.

Nevertheless, some of the building stock is getting to an age where larger investments are required to update facilities to meet the expectations of families today, and to ensure that Scout halls are a suitable venue for a vibrant hub of community activity. This means universal access, it means high standards of safety and amenity, and an inviting 'shopfront'.

Our experience has been that a targeted upgrade of an existing Scout hall revitalises the Group, leads to five times faster membership growth, and has positive effects on the surrounding community. We can work with the incoming Government to identify a package of improvement projects that are aligned with their priorities for renewal of youth and educational facilities.

The following indicates areas of current need, and further information can be provided.

## Urban Renewal

Like schools and other organisations, Scouting declined in inner suburbs in past decades.

But now the tide has turned, and old Scout Groups are reopening for new families in inner Melbourne.

1st Alphington, 2nd Clifton Hill, and 6th Melbourne (at Kensington) have long been popular and successful in their local community.



With 2nd Clifton Hill's recent all renovation, the Group is more popular than ever, with over 130 members. As well as Carlton, Port Melbourne, and Fitzroy (based in the Atherton Gardens housing estate). More are planned.

Scout Groups like Fitzroy are helping migrant and refugee families to build vibrant, resilient, self sustaining communities with engaged and active youth.



# Major Refurbishments

\$150,000-\$500,000

These are larger projects and in addition to the minor projects can include roofing, restumping, asbestos removal, lighting, safety switches and external cladding.

## Major refurbishments or extensions

[Sorted by State electorate]

1st Albert Park	Albert Park
Beechworth	Benambra
Echuca	Benambra
Norm Anderson	Essendon
1st Wantirna South	Ferntree Gully
1st Barwon Heads	Lara
2nd Lara	Lara

Norlane West Scout Group
5th Mildura
1st Sandown
Caringal
Warragul - New facility
Wangarrata
1st Bannockburn
4th Preston
Rowville
Corryong
Warrandyte
1st Tulla Park

Lara
Mildura
Mulgrave
Narracan
Narracan
Ovens Valley
Polwarth
Preston
Rowville
Upper Murray
Warrandyte
Yuroke





# New Scout Halls

> \$1 million

The population of Victoria is continuing to grow. Until recently, Scouting had not built new facilities that allow services to be delivered to young Victorians in growth corridors. Over the last few years Scouts Victoria has built and/or purchased new Scout Halls in Doreen, Caroline Springs, Clifton Hill, Point Cook, Carrum Downs, Alexandra, Sebastopol, Avoca and Myrtleford.

There are a series of halls in progress including Pakenham, Kalkallo, Narre Warren South, Ballan and Port Melbourne.

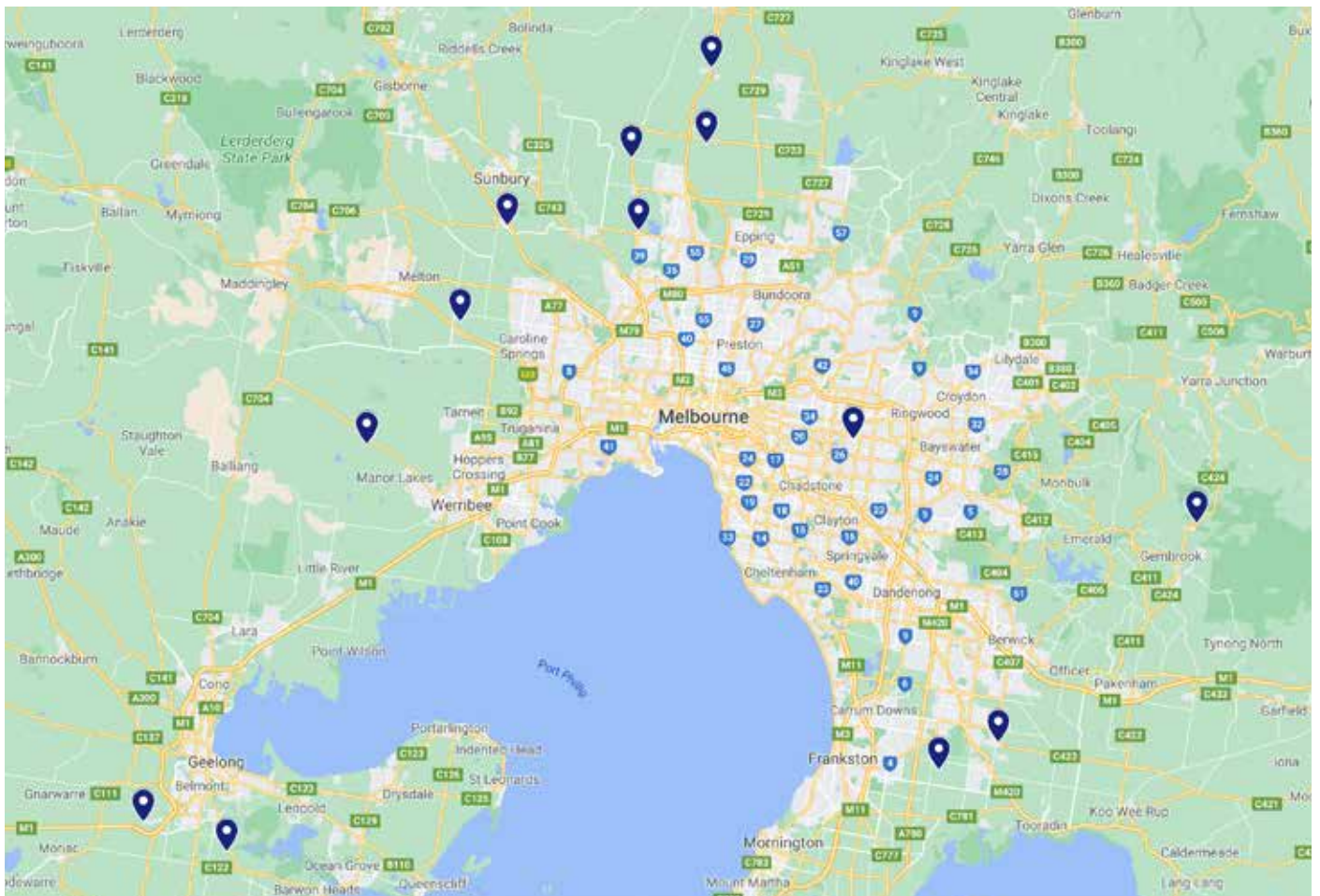
Analysis of projected population data and our current stock of halls have helped us to identify the following priority locations for new Scout facilities:

## Growth Corridors

### High priority new Scout halls

*[Sorted by State electorate]*

Clyde Hall	Bass
Cranbourne South	Hastings
Aintree	Kororoit
1st Doreen	McEwen
Waurm Ponds	South Barwon
Armstrongs Creek	South Barwon
Diggers Rest	Sunbury
Quandong	Werribee
Donnybrook	Yan Yean
Beveridge	Yan Yean
Greenvale	Yuroke
Mickelham	Yuroke
State Performing Arts Centre	Forest Hill
Gilwell Park Adventure Centre	Gembrook



# Strategic Growth and Development

As Victoria population continues to increase our goal is to ensure that Scouting continues to be accessible and relevant to all Victorians regardless of which community they are living.

Our Growth Strategy includes a particular focus on:

- Metropolitan Growth Corridors
- Rural and Regional Participation
- Partnerships with Education Providers
- Regions of Socio-Economic Disadvantage
- Cultural diversity
- Access for those with disabilities
- Financial affordability for families

We achieve this through:

- Delivering an engaging Scouting Program
- High Quality Leadership Training and Professional Development
- Improved Leader Recruitment strategies
- Promotion of program achievements to the community
- Online Engagement for young people to sustain engagement through lockdowns
- Providing Fee Relief where necessary
- Ensuring appropriate insurances are in place
- Reviewing and Evaluating the outcomes achieved for young people

This growth requires planning, coordination, evaluation and reporting which is overseen by our Strategic Growth Manager.

Since 2016, Scouts Victoria has received \$250k per year to continue to grow Scouting in disadvantaged communities and to align our work with priority areas of the Victorian Youth Policy. This contract has been administered by OFY, DHHS, DPC and DFFS.

This Youth Participation Program is a lapsing program that was extended by one year in the State Budget to December of 2022. A new three-year plan is in development in consultation with DFFH. This program is not currently represented in the forward estimates.



## Scouts Victoria's Property Team

Scouts Victoria employs a Property Team comprised of licensed builders, real estate and project management professionals who provide support and oversight to construction projects from planning through to completion. This team works closely with our Board Property Subcommittees for governance reasons.

These supports include:

- Planning and group engagement.
- Engagement with Council for Planning and Building permits.
- Documentation of project scope.
- Overseeing competitive tender processes.
- Appointment and contracting of builders.
- Project support, administration and management.
- Defects review and practical completion.
- Financial oversight and management of reporting requirements.
- Arranging signage and promotional opportunities.

**Scouts Victoria is seeking a three-year extension to this contract to allow us to continue this important work in disadvantaged communities and to align with the Victorian youth policy objectives.**



**Continued access to the VMIA CSO Program is a key component of this support for Scouting in Victoria.**



# Scouting Highlights

A snapshot of Scouting excellence throughout 2020/2021

Scouts Victoria has been able to run two COVID-Safe major events and will be running a third over the 2021/22 school holidays.

## Kangaree 2020

March 2020 saw over 1800 Joey Scouts, Leaders and adult helpers get together at Lardner Park near Warragul for three fun packed days! Joey Scouts are our youngest Section at 5-8 years old and it was a fantastic experience in a difficult year for our youth members.

We are already in planning to the next Kangaree, which will be held in March 2022.



## VicJam 2021/22

Every three years a Jamboree is held in Australia and 2022 was Victoria's turn. With uncertainty on travel due to COVID, Scouts Australia made the difficult decision to cancel the upcoming Jamboree. But with planning already underway in Victoria, and not wanting the Scouts (ages 11-15) to miss out, Victoria decided to hold a Victorian Jamboree instead. We're expecting over 3000 Scouts to attend the eleven day event and it will no doubt be the experience of a lifetime for all.



## Cuboree 2021

After having to reschedule the original date in 2020, Cub Scouts were over the moon to be able to attend Cuboree in 2021. Cub Scouts are our second Section, between the ages of 8-11. Cuboree is an amazing experience, with the Cubs spending five activity filled days away from home. With over 3000 attending, it was a great success and a testament to our organising team for running a COVID-Safe event.



# The Street2Bay Project

## A Litter Survey of the Port Phillip Bay Catchment

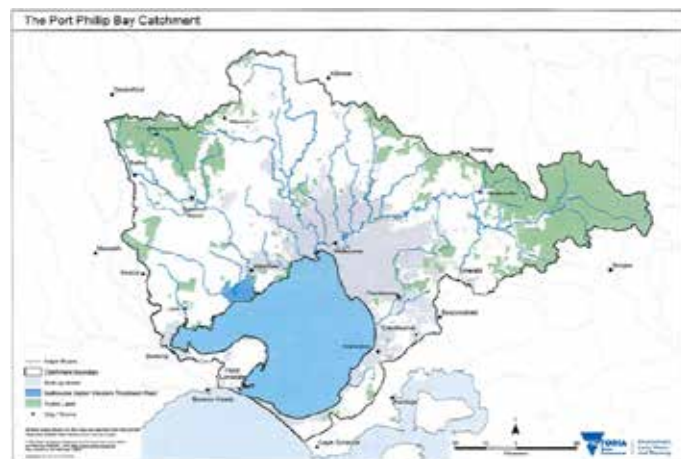
### What is Street2Bay?

The Street2Bay is a two-year research project to monitor and help combat the serious threat of microplastic pollution to aquatic wildlife by:

- Collecting data on litter distribution and types of litter in the Port Phillip Bay Catchment and developing a litter database.
- Providing results to Government and Councils.
- Providing information to lead to improvement in litter management strategies.
- Raising public awareness about the destination and harm of plastics and microplastics dropped on our streets.
- Encouraging youth to take action to address this environmental issue.



Tullapark Scout Group doing litter audit training with The Port Phillip Baykeeper, Neil Blake.



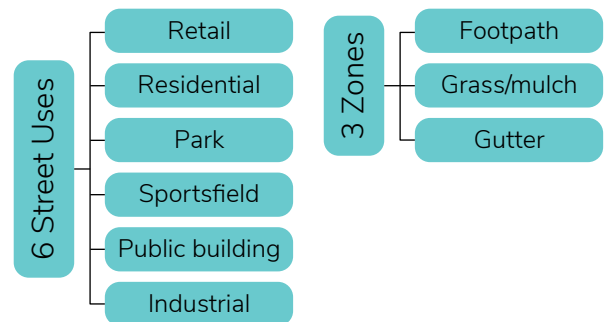
It's believed that 80% of litter in waterways comes from land-based sources. Microplastics and other plastic litter in the Catchment enter the Bay via storm water drains, rivers and creeks.

### Street2Bay Facts

- A Victorian Government funded research project, run by Scouts Victoria, the Port Phillip EcoCentre and 1st/14th Brighton Sea Scouts. The Project commenced in April 2018 and has been extended to December 2020.
- 25 Scout Groups undertook street litter audits within the Catchment every quarter. More than 500 Scouts and Leaders have been involved in litter audits.
- 127 audit sites across the catchment.
- 546 street audits completed. More than 3300 volunteer hours doing litter audits.
- 54,000 items of litter collected and categorized.
- 74% litter collected was plastics (40,160 plastics).
- 37% of litter was cigarette butts (20,190 butts).

### Study Design

Litter was collected quarterly and systematically from sites of different street usage and from three different zones.



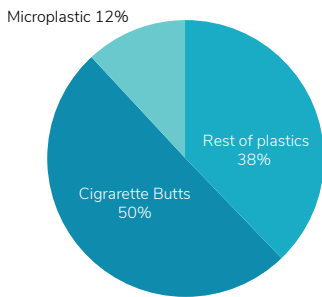
Audit sites were divided into 3 zones for collection of litter from the footpath, grass/mulch and gutter areas. Repeat audits were done on the same areas every 3 months for 12-18 months.



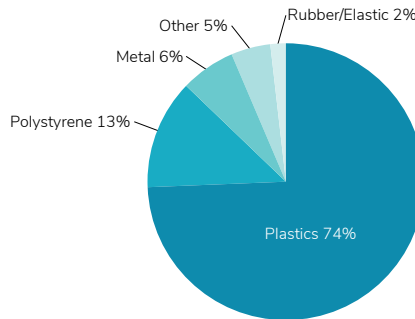
# Findings

The following data is the findings to date from all litter audits across the Catchment. The Street2Bay database enables extraction of data for specific suburbs, Council zones and water catchment areas; dependent on the location of participating Scout Groups.

Plastics found in the audits in the catchment  
(From 40,160 plastics)

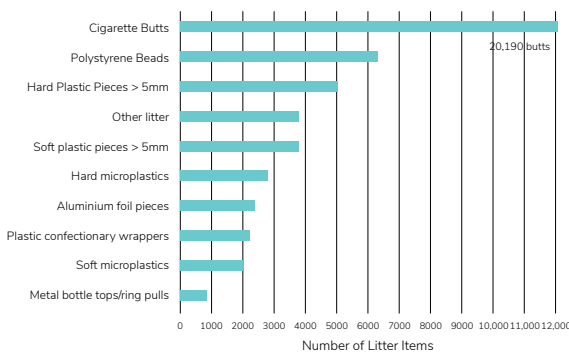


Types of litter found in the catchment  
(Total of 53,991 items of litter)



The majority of litter found in audits was plastics. Cigarette butts made up 50% of the plastics; microplastics made up 12%. The filters of cigarettes also contain thousands of microplastics.

Top ten litter items found in the catchment  
(From 53,991 pieces of litter in 546 audits)

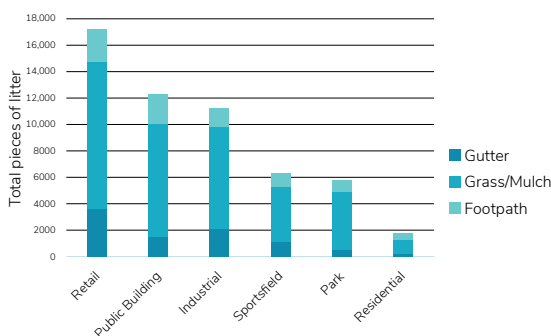


37% of all litter collected in the Catchment was cigarette butts. Scouts collected 20,190 butts. Concerningly, microplastics were also among the most abundant litter items, along with hard and soft pieces of plastic larger than 5mm and plastic confectionary wrappers.

\* Most of the polystyrene beads came from an Industrial site in Dromana and don't reflect the whole Catchment.

\*\* OTHER: items that didn't have an entry field on the datasheet. Mostly plastics and metals.

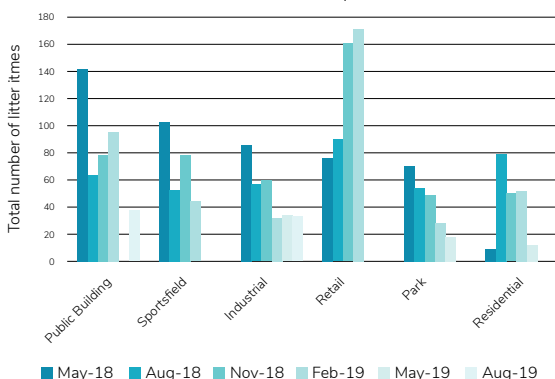
Total litter: by street use and zone  
(From 546 audits. Not adjusted for area)



The overall trend seen across the Catchment is large amounts of litter at Retail sites, followed by Public Buildings (such as libraries and schools) and Industrial sites. These would be good focus areas for litter reduction strategies.

The majority of litter was found in the grass nature strip and mulch areas at sites. This has implications for mowing of grass areas by councils; plastics can get shredded into smaller pieces, even producing microplastics. Removal of litter by councils prior to mowing would help reduce this problem.

1st/14th Brighton Sea Scouts  
Total litter found each quarter



Over the time of conducting their audits, Scout Groups found that litter was continuously being dropped on the ground, with just as much litter or more than the previous audit. The litter found by 1st/14th Brighton Sea Scouts at their audit sites per quarter, illustrates this.

The data from audit sites across the Catchment indicates that litter on the street is a constant problem and needs to be addressed.

**Scouts are keen to educate others and drive change. For further information on Street2Bay email: [street2bayau@gmail.com](mailto:street2bayau@gmail.com)**

# Meet Some Of Our Many Future Leaders

## 2700kms From Mt Kosciusko to Lake Eyre

By Kent Bennett, a Rover at 1st Beaumaris Sea Scouts.

On the conclusion of my university studies I knew that I had to take a break and go on a bit of an adventure. The idea of travelling from Australia's highest to lowest point first arose during a conversation at a Rover meeting as a bit of joke. But when some of the Crew remarked at how cool it would be, I didn't hesitate in starting to plan.

Over three years I developed my route, I would be hiking the first part, kayaking along the Murray and cycling through South Australia to reach my destination, Lake Eyre. This was a solo expedition, so I had to make sure that I was extra cautious when it came to safety, ensuring I was adequately prepared for all eventualities. I also put together all the equipment, undertook risk assessments, familiarised myself with emergency procedures and ensured I had all the knowledge for an undertaking of this scale. As you might imagine, some of my biggest concerns were fire and the availability of water.

The whole trip took me six months to complete and covered a total distance of approximately 2700kms of which 400kms was hiking, 1300kms kayaking and 1000kms of cycling. Each mode of transport had its unique advantages, from immersing yourself in the bush on foot. To having the opportunity to drift and ponder while kayaking and covering amazing distances by bike. I was averaging about 60kms a day on gravel tracks. Safety always being a priority. Cycling in the desert during winter means you wake up with very fresh mornings (-5°C) but would always have beautiful sunny days of about 25°C.

I am frequently asked: On such a long solo trip, did you ever get bored or lonely?

You can never be bored in the bush. There is always so much going on, so much around you. Sometimes you look at things up close and other times step back and see the whole picture. I am so intrigued by the natural sciences that I was always interested while on my trip. At times you would go a week without seeing anybody else, but I was comfortable with my own company and expected this. However, travelling solo also gave me some incredible opportunities; people were more inclined to invite me over to share a campfire with them or talk at the camp kitchen in the caravan parks, and I was inclined to reciprocate.

Everyone I met was friendly and eager to hear about what I was up to and the opportunities I had were incredible. I was invited to attend meetings by environmental action groups, invited to dinner by a celebrity chef, paddled with an adventurer who has summited the highest peaks on six continents and rowed the Atlantic, been given tours of timber mills and land used for conservation. It was fantastic talking to farmers and getting their perspective on environmental issues and seeing the power of volunteers in reviving a 100-year-old bakery in the middle of the desert. It was incredible how my story would sometimes travel ahead of me and at times I was expected at certain towns, with people looking forward to hearing more about my adventure.

Now I don't expect many people to be able to do a trip like this, but I hope that I have inspired some to experience outdoor recreation and what the Australian bush has to offer. My moto for this trip as been: 'Time, distance and difficulty are all just perceived barriers... If you are willing to commit, anything is possible.'

So get planning, go out and explore!





## A Scout cares for the environment

By Ariel, a Scout at 1st Nunawading Scout Group.

My passion for the environment was always in me somewhere. It was only at the start of 2018 when I brought my passion into Scouts and my Troop at 1st Nunawading. I started thinking about ways I could, firstly; help the environment and my community more and secondly, try to get my Troop, and possibly others involved.

We volunteered at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary, by weeding areas of the sanctuary and we participated at a tree planting day. We did a few tours and had a talk at Yarran Dheran Nature Reserve and we got someone to talk to us via Zoom about Calperum Station, in South Australia.

Since late 2017 I'd had an idea for a project in the back of my mind, but I didn't know how to pull it off, until early 2018.

My idea was to try and get a Container Deposit Scheme introduced in Victoria. So I decided to start writing letters to politicians. I wrote eleven letters, two got sent to Prime Minister Scott Morrison, I even got a response! But yet again, it was negative. I didn't tell my Troop that I was doing this, until I knew that I wasn't getting anywhere, but that didn't stop me!

I decided to tell my Troop what I was trying to do, to see if I could get their help. We decided the best thing to do was start a petition. I got heaps of signatures from the Troop, my friends and the Leaders. I also went around my school and family and ended up with a grand total of 151 signatures (weird number, but hey... it passed!). My Leaders had organised a visit to Parliament House, prior to me finishing my petition, because of this, I was able to personally hand in the petition to my local member, Dustin Halse MP.

After some nerve-wracking months I still didn't have any response. So I wrote follow-up letters, because I knew with these sorts of things, you have to be persistent. I was very excited to hear on February 2 2020, Parliament announced that Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme is coming in 2023!



Ariel presenting her petition to Dustin Halse MP.

## Hard work pays off!

By Lachlan, a Scout at 1st Ballan Scout Group.

After going up to Cub Scouts from Joey Scouts in 2017, I was amazed by how many badges there were in Cubs.

The event that all the Cubs wanted to go to was Cuboree. I went to Cuboree in 2017 and had the best time there! After Cuboree I came up with a challenging goal, to earn all the Achievement Badges. There are 34 badges in two levels, and I wanted to earn all 68 badges. I went to my Leader said, "Is it possible to earn all 68 achievement badges?" My Leader said: "Yes it is, but you have to have time to earn all 68 badges, and you have plenty of time."

So I thought about it for about one day. Then I said Yes to my personal challenge.

For the past three and a half years my Yellow Cub Book and I have been everywhere.

We have navigated the streets of Brisbane with Grandpa, to achieve my Traveller Badges. We photographed wombats at Wilson's Prom and ancient temples in Japan for my Photography Badges. We have made clay sculptures with the Cubs, to earn my Mask and Sculptures Badges. We built Lego and solar kits to earn my Engineer Badges.

Along with reading books for my Literature Badges, I also achieved my Lester Literature Badge.

I have also ridden more than 250km, canoed in Lake Catani at Mt Buffalo, the Glenelg River, Tidal River at Wilsons Prom and at Anglesea. In Canberra I went to a Cub Pack and performed magic tricks in front of their Pack. I sailed at the Guide and Scout Sailing Centre at Sandringham as well as at Mornington and Ballarat.

While canoeing down the Glenelg River I looked at birds and animals. I wrote letters to my penpal in England. His name is Ewan and in 2019 I got to meet him and his family, while travelling in England with my family.

As a family we are Camp Hosts at Mt Buffalo National Park, at Easter every year and I have worked on many badges with the Park Rangers.

Those were some things I did for some badges.

I really enjoyed achieving all of these different kinds of badges, learning so many different things along the way and having lots of fun.

My journey didn't just involve earning badges, along the way I helped raise more than \$2000 with my Pack for the KIDS Foundation in Ballarat to achieve our Messenger of Peace Award.

My journey at Cubs has taken me everywhere from adventures with my friends to overseas, including a Scout Group in Singapore where they do Scouts at School on a Saturday, sleeping in a hammock with my family on Brownsea Island, enjoying a fun night with Scouts all over the World at the International Scout Centre at Kandersteg in Switzerland, and visiting Úlfjótssvatn Scout Centre, the northernmost National Scout Centre in the world in Iceland.

I challenge all Cubs to do their best at anything, and achieve as many badges as they can.

Thank you to my Cub Pack, the Rangers at Mt Buffalo and Wilson's Prom, my penpal, my family and a big thank you to the 1st Ballan Leaders that helped me along the way.

Now I look forward to my journey as a Scout.





## Celebrating Diversity

Issa Chanzi is a proud Scout, who originally joined his local Scout Troop in Melbourne's north because his father was a Scout in Tanzania. His mother's heritage is Irish. Issa is of Islamic background, and identifies as queer.

Issa is a peer leader in Scouts and at school. He is a member of the production team of the annual Scout show Camberwell Showtime, and shines each year on-stage during Showtime's two week performance season. (Past members of the show include a young Steve Vizard, Andy Lee and super-model Jess Hart.)

In 2018 Issa completed his Queen's Scout award, which is the peak award in the Venturer Scout Section and often described as doing a second VCE.

In 2015 Issa started his school's robotic club ('The STEAM Team', for Science Technology Engineering And Maths) and is currently working to future proof its leadership so that it continues to be strong when he finishes year 12.

In 2018 he gained one of 30 places in the Education State Student Advisory Group to advise the government on education.

He's also prominent for wearing a rainbow flag to school for every day of the campaign over the 2017 marriage equality plebiscite. His statement led to one year 7 student seeking his advice on how to explain himself to his parents.

Issa belongs to many groups in Melbourne - including the Tanzanian community, Scouts Victoria, and as poster boy in publicity for the 2018 Minus 18 same sex formal.

He strives to live up to his strong values, and to make a positive contribution to his community.

Issa is a proud Scout, and Scouting is proud of Issa.



*Issa is already having an impact in Scouting, in his school, and in the broader community.*





born to expl









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