



## ***Girl Guide Connections***

*This month's news:*

*March 2020*

- [Guiding activities continue at home](#)
- [Volunteers needed for COVID-19 admin](#)
- [St Patrick's Day celebrated in new and novel ways](#)
- [Help us keep going with #MishonMoon!](#)
- [Girls develop leadership skills at Brownie Sixer and Seconder Day](#)
- [#EachforEqual on International Womens' Day](#)
- [Science Foundation Ireland Discover Award is helping us develop an Engaging Space project for girls and young women](#)
- [IGG scoops FOUR awards at FIRST LEGO League All Ireland Final!](#)
- [Senior Branch cheque handover to Women's Aid and Focus Ireland](#)

Dear Irish

We hope you and your loved ones are keeping safe and well at this challenging time. Despite the difficulties and worries we are facing with the impact of **COVID-19**, it is important that we all find ways to **keep positive** and to mind our physical and mental well-being as well as taking steps to **reach out to others**, especially those who may be feeling particularly vulnerable and isolated.

## MANAGING CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19) ANXIETY

**For You**

- Avoid excessive exposure to media coverage
- Connect through calls/text/internet
- Add extra time for daily stress relief
- Practice self-care
- Focus on your mental health

**For Kids**

- Reassure them that they're safe
- Let them talk about their worries
- Share your own coping skills
- Limit their news exposure
- Create a routine & structure

**For Quarantine/Isolation**

- Keep in contact with your loved ones via social media, texts, and phone calls
- Create a daily self-care routine
- Keep yourself busy: games, books, movies
- Focus on new relaxation techniques

All of our members, like you, are experiencing this **new reality** in different ways. To those on the frontline working phenomenally hard, we salute you; to those back room teams supporting them, we thank you; and to those who are ill and unwell, we send warmest wishes to get well soon.

We know many of our members are helping others locally and carrying on the Girl Guide tradition of doing Good Turns for others in their communities. **Guiding** hasn't stopped although for the time being, of course, we cannot hold any face-to-face meetings or group activities.

We are, however, encouraging our youth members to keep up their Guiding activities and we are regularly posting on our **social media** ideas for crafts, games and other activities they can do at this time. Check out our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) if you or any of your friends and family are looking for educational, fun ideas for children and teens at this time.

**Senior Branch** (ages 14-30) are posting #seniorbranchboredombusters suggestions regularly on their [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) too. These are aimed at young people aged 14+. It's hard to keep enthusiastic IGG members down and some are now holding virtual meetings!



So many of our members are offering to do shopping for their elderly neighbours, to walk people's dogs and are **reaching out to others** in various ways, like writing letters and drawing pictures for elderly people in nursing homes who are not currently permitted visitors.

It is hugely important, of course, that we are mindful of **older people** at this time and, for this reason, we are encouraging children and young people to keep in touch with grandparents or other relatives via phone or video services, just like An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar suggested in his [Ministerial Speech](#) last week.

In line with Government advice, our **National Office building is closed until further notice**. We will continue to follow the advice of the Government and the Health Service Executive and will be closely monitoring developments as they unfold.

However, **we continue to support our members and supporters** in every way we can with staff working remotely from home. All our email addresses are on [our website](#) and calls to our National Office number - 01 6683898 - are being re-directed to a mobile and will be answered, as usual, between 9am and 5pm Monday to Friday.



An urgent call has gone out for volunteers to help with the admin side of COVID-19 testing. If you are available and interested please register asap at [i-vol.ie](http://i-vol.ie).

**St Patrick's Day 2020** will be remembered for years to come by children and adults alike for the time we celebrated our national holiday in new and novel ways. We were greatly impressed with the many different ways our members came up with to mark the day. Some people made crafts and some baked Paddy's Day goodies while others sang, danced or played Irish instruments. A few of our enthusiastic Leaders came up with the idea of car parades, which saw people in Bandon and Athlone taking to the streets in their cars (thus ensuring suitable social distancing was observed).

Check out our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to see lots of other ways our members joined in the **Virtual Patrick's Day Parade**.



On 22 February Irish Girl Guides launched a new app called **Mishon**. We were filled with great optimism that this app would help us with both the outdoors aspect of our programme and allow us to do some crowd funding for our new National Training Centre. Less than a month later and our shared world has changed dramatically.



However, **what is a challenge except a call to action?** The Girl Guides have been around since 1911, always responding to the challenges the world faces. We are going to use the free outdoor adventure app Mishon to record the distances covered and provide a space for people to encourage and support each other's efforts.

**363,104 kilometres** - the distance of the earth to the moon - in the coming months.

**We believe we CAN still do it!**

The app was developed by **Irish tech entrepreneur Brendan Morrissey** and it features lots of fun outdoor challenges as well as the ability to post your kilometres, such as your daily steps/walks/swims/cycles/hike distances. It also has fun challenges for you as a Unit or a family to complete e.g. a daily dog walk or do the augmented-reality Daily Crate Challenge where the app drops Crates around your location for you to find (like Pokemon Go!). Inside each Crate is an activity – ideal for families who may be at home in the coming weeks and are eager to get out and about and collect as many Crates as they can each day!

**It's a great way to keep active and to have positive family time together!**

This [letter for parents](#) tells you all you need to know.

We would encourage you to **download the app from Google Play (android phones) or the App Store (iPhones)** and start adding kilometres by walking, running, cycling or undertaking adventure challenges. We would also ask you to **please spread the word to your friends, families and neighbours.**

Getting out and about and being active, while strictly observing social distancing, will be key to us all keeping physically and mentally healthy in the coming weeks. And we can try the **new indoor challenges** too (you can find these in the Challenge section of the app) and there are more to come!

**To add your kilometres to Mishon Moon, add a photo to create a post and in the description say how many kilometres you completed and use the hashtags #MishonMoon and #GirlGuidesWalktotheMoon. You can also tag Irish Girl Guides. We look forward to seeing you there!**

Before COVID-19 came along and turned our world upside down, over 100 Brownies (girls aged 7-10) took part in a **leadership development day** at Larch Hill in the foothills of the Dublin mountains. The girls explored different types of leadership skills and talents through various activities and challenges, which they were then encouraged to bring back and share with the other Brownies in their Units. By taking part in a giant relay race, they also developed valuable teamwork skills ... and had a lot of fun!



On 8 March many of our members of all ages took an **#EachforEqual** stance to mark **International Women's Day**. You can learn more about the Each for Equal call for **gender equality** [here](#).



We are hugely grateful to **Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)** for their support and funding to help us develop our Space Badge curriculum, which will be launched later in the year. Two members of Lucan Guides took part in a recent photo shoot to launch the **SFI Discover programme**, which encourages people from all communities, age groups and backgrounds to interact with and learn about Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM). This education and public engagement programme supports a diverse range of activities across Ireland.



We were so proud of our two teams who competed in the **FIRST LEGO League All Ireland Final** in the Crowne Plaza Hotel earlier this month. They completely wowed the judges and scooped **FOUR awards** between them!

The Munster Monsters (pictured below left) won the **Robot Knockout Award** and a **Special Judges Award** while the Sustainable Sisters (below right) from Dublin and Louth were named **Second Overall Champions** with Team Coach Katie Keogh receiving the award for **Top Coach**. The Sustainable Sisters have also been invited to compete at an international FIRST LEGO League event (although, in the current circumstances, they will have to wait a while for this to happen).



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And finally, it was lovely to witness three of our **Senior Branch** members hand over cheques to **Women's Aid** and **Focus Ireland**. This was as a result of the hard-working Senior Branch team who volunteered at last year's [Electric Picnic](#). They raised almost **€3,000** altogether, which was fantastic!

They look forward to being joined by even more Senior Branchers at this year's festival!



We hope you and your loved ones keep safe and well in the coming weeks.

Kind regards,

*Fiona Murdoch*

Communications Officer

Irish Girl Guides

**What we do ....** The **Irish Girl Guides** began in 1911 and continues today, as a registered charity, to offer girls and young women a safe space to develop life skills while exploring our inter-connected world and learning to become responsible global citizens. Learn more [here](#).