



Girl Guide Connections

This month's news:

April 2021

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Dear |FNAME|

We were delighted to be joined by families around the country for our **Easter Camp At Home**. Some brave folk, like these three sisters from Edenderry, bravely camped outside while others made blanket forts or piled up cushions indoors.



Everyone was kept busy with all the different fun activities in our [Easter Camp At Home activity pack](#).

There are lots more photos on our social media, which show what our members got up to during the camp.



The past year has been tough for everyone but we've been pleased to hear from our youth members and volunteers that they have found that the **resilience** and other **essential life-skills** they have gained through Guiding have helped them cope with the challenges we have all had to face due to the pandemic.

In this 10-minute video members share how their **Guiding skills and experience** have helped them.

We shared a **shorter version** of the video (2:30) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and we would encourage you to **share it on your social media** too, if you haven't already done so.





We were thrilled to receive a grant from the ESB Energy For Generations Fund to boost our **mental health** programme. The €10,000 grant is covering the cost of 3,000 **Healthy Mind** badges for our youth members, training for our volunteer Leaders and the recent [Healthy Minds edition of our magazine Trefoil News](#). We are hugely grateful to the ESB for supporting the mental health of our members at this time when young people need our support and engagement more than ever.

To earn the **Healthy Mind** badge, girls and young women participate in age-appropriate activities that help them develop **positive mental health**. These include identifying positive qualities in themselves, discussing feelings and learning how to express them appropriately. Also, identifying stress in their lives and learning helpful ways to deal with this, including mindfulness, yoga and other relaxation techniques.

In this video some of our youth members talk about what they learned while working towards their **Healthy Mind** badge and how these strategies have helped them during the past year.

You can also read more about our Healthy Mind programme in the [news section of our website](#).



We were delighted so many volunteers, parents and supporters joined us for our **Soul Sisters** event ahead of **International Women's Day** (IWD). This was our way of

saying 'thank you' to everyone for all they have done to support our youth members over the past year.

As well as taster sessions of tai chi and chair yoga, our **Ambassador Shirley McCay** shared some tips for keeping active and **Joanna Fortune** of Newstalk and the [15-Minute Parenting Podcast](#) shared some useful **self-care tips**.



If you missed Soul Sisters, why not [watch back on our YouTube channel?](#)

Some of our members took part in the global **#ChooseToChallenge** campaign to mark IWD, including Rachael (15) from Drogheda who chose to challenge the stigma surrounding youth mental health.

#ChooseToChallenge



"I am choosing to challenge the stigma of **mental health** issues facing teens. Many teenagers are having issues with their mental health through the trials and tribulations of Covid lockdowns. Many are suffering in silence. I want to find new ways to give them a voice and show them how to find resources to help. We are all in this together."

~ Rachael, Drogheda Senior Branch

#IWD2021



Congratulations to **Aisling Claffey** (who features in the Healthy Mind video above), on winning the **Cork County Mayor Individual Award** for South Cork in recognition of all her volunteering with IGG. Very well deserved!

The annual Mayor's Community Awards celebrate and acknowledge the volunteers and communities who work together across the county.





Congratulations too to our **Programme and Training Commissioner Jenny Gannon** on her appointment to the Council of **Gaisce - the President's Award**. Here she is pictured receiving a National Civic Merit Award for her contribution to volunteering with young people as a Gaisce President's Award Leader in 2019.

[IGG has been partnering with Gaisce](#) since 2017. The aims of the two organisations are very similar - encouraging young people to undertake challenges and activities that help them become **confident, active** and **responsible citizens**.

Jenny says, "Through my involvement in IGG, I have had the privilege of seeing numerous young women work on and achieve their Gaisce Award and no matter which level they attained - bronze, silver or gold - the experience has been a transformative one in some way for them. They have grown in **confidence** and **self-belief**, increased their **skill level** and oftentimes developed a new interest that they take with them into later life."

Many of our members took part in a virtual **St Patrick's Day** celebration. We were particularly impressed with **Ciara** from **Newbridge** who chose St Patrick's Day as the day for her Mum to cut her hair. She has donated her impressive pony tail to the **Rapunzel Foundation**, which will use it to make a wig for a child undergoing cancer treatment. By doing this, Ciara also raised funds for the **Irish Blue Cross**.



We are heartened to hear of acts of generosity like this continuing in homes and communities across the country.

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](#).