

# Guidelines for Parents, Carers and Leaders of Young People Participating in “Nights Away at Home”

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In Scouting, one of the favourite activities of the young people who participate is going away to camp. Whenever we do this activity, there is always a team of leaders who work away in the background to plan the event, organise the campsite and keep things safe and secure for the participants. In these unusual times, while face-to-face Scouting is suspended, this is not always possible so we are pleased to have the support of many parents and carers who are actively helping young people to keep Scouting. With many now looking to participate in “Nights Away at Home” or camping at home, we have produced this short checklist of some simple and straightforward things that you may want to consider as you help your young people to prepare for their stay at home camping. For camping at home, parents and carers are the responsible adults for helping their young people to stay safe.

## Camping Inside

Many of you will be joining in with Indoor Nights Away by building a den in one of the rooms in your home. While it will be well set up for your everyday life, it may be worth just taking a moment to check for any items that may cause a hazard when an unusual den is constructed in the room. Check for things like:

- Electrical wiring that may cause someone to trip if they move around in the dark or that they may lie on inadvertently.
- The construction of the den is secure, you may have sheets or blankets placed over tables and chairs, for example. Is there anything that could accidentally fall from these or pull them over and cause injury.
- If you have any fragile objects that you value, you may want to make sure that they are moved to a place where they can't be knocked accidentally and broken.
- You might use a small pop-up tent indoors, is it possible to put it in a place where people will not end up tripping and falling over it.

## Camping in the Garden

If you are able to set up a tent in the garden of your home, there are some key things to consider:

- Is your garden a secure place to camp where young people will be safe from strangers who may be able to gain access? If not, you may want to consider an indoor camp.
- Are there any garden tools that you may need to put away so that they cannot cause an accident either during the day or in the dark? You might want to cut the grass before pitching your tent.
- How many young people will be camping in the tent? Normally, in Scouting we don't have young people sleeping alone in their tents.
- Will you and other of your family members be sleeping out too? How will the young person call you in the event that they need help or feel unwell?
- How will you manage access to the house overnight so that it is secure and the participants will have access to toilet facilities, etc?
- If you are also going to be doing any outdoor cooking as part of your camping experience, make sure that any cooking or equipment with a naked flame (such as stoves, candles or fires) are outside and well away from your tents. Take care with any hot liquids and flammable materials.
- Be mindful of any wildlife that may be out overnight looking for food for themselves. In an urban environment we can still find foxes, rats and mice who will love to find any free food left lying around. At this time of year we also start to be mindful and keep an eye out for ticks that love to hang out in long grass...
- If you have a pond, make sure that your tent isn't pitched too close to it.
- Make sure that your home first aid kit is close to hand to deal with any cuts and bruises that may occur.

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## Social Distancing

Camping out in your garden is still subject to the government guidelines on Social Distancing. If the positioning of your garden campsite brings you or your young people in to close proximity with other people from outside your home, then you may need to consider an indoor rather than outdoor camp.

## Social Media

Many will want to keep in touch with their friends and colleagues while having their camp at home. Remember to keep your social media posts appropriate by following our [guidelines](#) for online Scouting. You may also want to **avoid** things like:

- Posts that reveal your precise location
- Posts that show details of your personal lifestyle and valuables in your home
- Posts that detail the inside of the entry points to your home.

## Responsible Adults

For a young person to be camping at home, they will need to have talked about it with their parents or carers who will be giving their permission/approval of them doing it either overtly by saying so or simply by letting the camp or den to be set up. Not least because it may be taking up a large space in the home for a day or two. Remember, **parents and carers, you will be the responsible adult on the scene so the young person is dependent upon you for their safety and well-being while camping at home.**

## Activities Online

During the time that they are camping at home, participants may be trying out some of the many hundreds of activities that have been posted online. These can be found on the Scout Website at [The Great Indoors](#) among many others. Please make sure that they follow any safety advice that is given for these activities.

We hope that you find these guidelines useful. We will keep them updated with any new information we have from time to time. Remember to keep your Scouting Section Leaders updated with any Indoor Nights Away or Camps at home that you do so that they can track them against any badges they can award when we are able to restart face-to-face Scouting once more.

Keep yourselves and your young people Safe and have lots of Fun...