

It Happens Every Day - But Not in Guiding

By Kate Hill, Guide Guider, Pitt Meadows District Girl Guides

I was watching the news the other night and that got me thinking about what a positive difference Guiding is making in the world.

Every day our children are faced with many challenges. All around them are distractions that are less than positive; some are even dangerous. Every day they hear about drugs, bullying, eating disorders and crime in their schools and communities.

But not in Guiding. Every day in Girl Guides we are teaching girls about self-respect, positive self-image, confidence, safety, social and environmental conscience and positive values. Every day, Girl Guides is presenting girls with strong, enthusiastic and positive role models. Every day, Girl Guides is giving girls the strength, skills, confidence and empowerment to face the challenges that lay ahead of them.

Every day we see images of destruction, conflicts and wars, from all over the world. They are in every newscast, every newspaper; they are part of our culture, part of our everyday lives.

But not in Guiding. Every day in Girl Guides we are creating memories of smiling faces: girls and women climbing mountains, pitching tents, lending a hand, celebrating, giving back to their communities, helping those in need, singing songs, laughing, cheering, building, creating and learning how to be responsible citizens of the world.

Every day we hear of isolation, hunger and homelessness. It's so easy to look away, to shake our heads and say, "What can one person possibly do?"

But not in Guiding. Every day in Girl Guides we are 'lending a hand' in our communities and in our larger world. Service is a big part of who we are: it's written in our Vision, our Mission, our Values and our Promise. Every day, there are Units, Districts, Divisions and Areas getting together to participate in service projects at local, community, provincial, national and international levels; and every day, nations are extending hands in peace and friendship through the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Every day we see around us pollution, wastefulness and diminishing natural resources.

But not in Guiding. Every day in Girl Guides, we are 'using our resources wisely'. We are teaching our next generation to appreciate and steward our natural world, by camping, hiking, canoeing, kayaking and being a part of all sorts of outdoor adventures. We are teaching to 'leave no trace' and to reduce, reuse and recycle – and rejoice, because we are making a positive difference in the world.

Every day we see discrimination, division and exclusivity.

But not in Guiding. Every day in Girl Guides, we teach to 'share and be a friend'. We acknowledge, work together and celebrate our differences. It's in our program work, it's

in the way we work together with shared leadership, and it's one of the basic foundations of our Movement: *all girls and women are welcome.*

So the next time you feel depressed by all the 'bad news' around you, remember the good work we, as Guiders, are doing, and remember the words of Lady Olave Baden-Powell, World Chief Guide, who said:

In a world fraught with uncertainty and fear, our Movement shines out as a golden chain against a dark background. The links in the chain are forged out of the finest gold, our Promise and Law. Each has its special characteristic, to enrich and beautify the whole. The chain is getting longer with each new link, and stronger as each country increases in spirit and in numbers.