



2018-2019 CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAM ACTION PLAN

Department of Wisconsin

Patti Westpfahl, Department Chairman
W2065 Northwest Road, Green Lake WI 54941
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Children and Youth and the 2014-2019 Centennial Strategic Plan – By protecting, caring for, and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families, American Legion Auxiliary members fulfill our brand promise (Goal 5) of being community leaders and responsible American citizens while caring for military families. In doing so, we are building a future membership base (Goal 1) among our target demographic – military families.

What is this program and why do we have it?

The Children and Youth Program emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families.

What can we do?

1. Support Children and youth in your community.

- **“Star Spangled Kids”:** This is an ALA program to educate children and youth on the history of the United States from the aspect of Patriotism, Americanism and the U.S. Constitution.
- **Youth Hero Awards/Good Deed Awards:** This is an ALA program to recognize youth who demonstrate a heroic act of physical valor or who exemplify community service in action.
- **Josh dogs:** An American Legion Family alliance, G.I. Josh is a plush dog and accompanying storybook used to help ease separation fears for military children.
- **Badger Girls State/Badger Boys State:** Support sending youth to Badger Girls State and Badger Boys State
- **April is The American Legion’s Children and Youth Month:** Partner with your local American Legion Post. They often have events to honor children & youth in April.

Ideas:

Member:

- Contact your local schools and volunteer to do a “Star Spangled Kids” presentation. Invite American Legion Post members to inform students about their military service and how it defended the U.S. Constitution.
 - Refer to the: **How to Promote “Star Spangled Kids”** later in this program report for more information.
- Contact your local High School and ask them to encourage students to participate in the American Legion Oratorical Contest Scholarship Program to learn more about the U.S. Constitution and earn scholarship money.
 - Refer to www.legion.org for more information about the Oratorical Contest.
 - Check newspapers, TV and other local media for stories on children and youth who have performed a heroic act of physical valor, such as performing CPR, Heimlich, first aid, rescue from peril such as fire or water, help to evacuate, call 911 to help others in an emergency.
 - Contact local schools, churches and youth groups to inform them about the Youth Hero and Good Deed Awards. Provide them with unit contact information.

- Identify children in your local community who may be facing a stressful situation such as hospitalization or separation from a parent, where a G.I. Josh dog and book may help them.
- Work with local high schools and encourage them to select students to attend Badger Girls State and Badger Boys State.
- Work with local schools to promote the “Government Scholarship Testing Program” with the American Legion (more information at www.legion.org)

Unit:

- When a child has been identified as a Youth Hero/Good Deed applicant, complete the nomination form. See a copy of the form at the end of this program plan for more information. Application must be submitted to Department Secretary.
- Create a Unit Citizenship Award for children and youth who have learned the ideals of the U.S. Constitution.
- Plan a celebration of children during the month of April to honor Children and Youth along with the American Legion.
- Host a party to celebrate Constitution Day (Citizenship Day) on September 17. Involve the Local American Legion/Sons of the American Legion/Legion Riders to help plan and execute.
- Create and award a Unit Citizenship Award for children and youth who have participated in and learned about the U.S. Constitution.
- Donate funds and support sending youth to Badger Girls State and Badger Boys State.
- Use the local paper, unit newsletter and social media to share facts about the U.S. Constitution.

2. Support military children and youth

- **Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2):** This is a recognition program for military children who experience extended separation from their military parent or parents.
- **G.I. Josh:** This is an American Legion Family program administered by the Sons of the American Legion. G.I. Josh is a plush dog and accompanying storybook used to help ease separation fears for military children whose parent/parents are deployed.
- **April is the Month of the Military Child**

Ideas:

Member:

- Volunteer at a Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) camp program.
- Volunteer at a local Boys & Girls Club to support children in your community. Clubs provide a fun, safe and constructive environment for kids and teens during out-of-school hours. They offer programs and services to help young people succeed in school, develop leadership skills, and maintain healthy lifestyles.
- Find out more about local Big Brothers/Big Sisters Program. They have “Operation Bigs”, a program for mentoring Military Children.

Unit:

- Host a KDH2 celebration with recognition buttons/stickers to let military children know we appreciate their sacrifices.
 - Refer to “How to conduct a ‘Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2’ Program” at the end of this program plan for more information.
- Host an event to bring military and non-military families together, for example, a dinner, game night or event about a particular program.
- Support the G.I. Josh program along with the Legion Family. Identify military children who may have a parent who is or will be deployed.
- Plan an event in April to celebrate “Month of the Military Child” along with American Legion Family.

3. Support veterans' children and youth.

- Homeless veterans' children
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is affiliated with the American Legion Family.
- Along with the American Legion, participate in the Government Testing Scholarship Program.

Ideas:

Member

- Contact local churches, homeless shelters and food pantries to identify homeless veterans' children. Find out specific needs and offer your services as an ALA member.
- Contact your volunteer services representative at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Offer to help them meet the needs of children of homeless veterans who come to VAMC.
- Contact local schools to access their needs for supplies and extra clothes for homeless children and work with them to meet their needs.
- Volunteer at a TAPS camp program.

Unit:

- Work with your local American Legion post service officer to help with the needs of children of veterans who need financial help. (The American Legion – Temporary Financial Assistance.)
- Contact local schools to access their needs for supplies and extra clothes for homeless children and work with them to meet their needs.
- Help raise awareness for the needs of homeless children in your community by sharing unit activities on the unit website, local newspapers, unit newsletters and social media.
- Purchase the book "Klinger, a Story of Honor and Hope" from TAPS with the companion plush horse for children who are grieving the loss of a military parent or loved one.

Children and Youth Reporting

Mid-Year Reports

Mid-Year reports reflect the work of units in the department. Each District Children & Youth Chairman is requested to submit a narrative report by **December 8, 2018** to the Department Children & Youth Chairman listed on the front page of the Program Plan. It may be submitted by paper copy via USPS or via email.

Annual Reports

Each District Children & Youth Chairman is requested to submit a narrative report by **April 13, 2019**, to the Department Children & Youth Chairman listed on the front page of this Program Plan. It may be submitted by paper copy via USPS or by email.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following question

- How did your units and district promote "Star Spangled Kids," educating children and youth about the U.S. Constitution from the aspect of patriotism and Americanism?
- How did your units and district promote the Youth Hero/Good Deed Award?
- What success stories do you have regarding support for military and/or homeless veterans' children?

National Children & Youth Contact Information:

Vickie Koutz, National Chairman
Department of Indiana
vkoutz@aol.com ♦ 812-305-5498

Lynda Lancaster, National Central Division Chairman
Department of West Virginia
lancasterl@aol.com ♦ 304-676-3979

National Children & Youth Committee Contact Information

children&youth@ALAforVeterans.org

Children and Youth Awards

- Youth Hero Award** – A national award for youth under 18 years of age who perform a heroic act of physical valor. The Youth Hero & Good Deed Nomination Form is to be completed and mailed to your Department Secretary (Bonnie Dorniak- PO Box 140, Portage WI 53901), who certifies and mails the application to National Headquarters. (Please do not mail applications directly to National Headquarters.) The award certificate, signed by the national president, will then be returned, along with a Youth Hero Award medal, to the unit to be presented on behalf of the national organization. The department Children and Youth chairman should be notified of the award by the unit. Coordinate your efforts with your department's Public Relations and Membership chairmen.
- Good Deed Award** - A national award for youth under 18 years of age who do not meet the Youth Hero Award criteria, but who are great examples of community service in action. The Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination Form is to be completed and mailed to the Department Secretary (Bonnie Dorniak-PO Box 140, Portage WI 53901), who certifies and mails the application to National Headquarters. (Please do not mail applications directly to National Headquarters.) The award certificate, signed by the national president, will then be returned to the unit to be presented on behalf of the national organization. The department Children & Youth chairman should be notified of the award by the unit. Coordinate with your department's Public Relations and Membership chairmen.
- April is Children & Youth Month** – During the month of April, the American Legion Family emphasizes its commitment to our nation's children. Search "April Children" at www.legion.org for a list of brochures that are available.

Please be sure to note if the narrative you submit for the department award is also to be used as your department year-end report.

Youth Hero Award

Type of Award: Youth Hero Medal and Citation

Presented to: Youth under 18 years of age who have performed a heroic act of physical valor

Materials and guidelines:

- Complete the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination form and mail it to the department headquarters office, attention Bonnie Dorniak (PO Box 140, Portage WI 53901), who will certify and then mail the application to National Headquarters. (Please, members/units, **do not** mail applications directly to National Headquarters.)
- The award certificate, signed by the National President and Youth Hero Award medal will be returned to the unit to be presented on behalf of the national organization.

Good Deed Award

Type of Award: Citation

Presented to: Youth under 18 years of age who are great examples of community service in action

Materials and guidelines:

- Complete the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination form and mail it to the department headquarters office, attention Bonnie Dorniak (PO Box 140, Portage WI 53901), who will certify and then mail the application to National Headquarters. (Please, members/units **do not** mail applications directly to National Headquarters.)
- The award certificate, signed by the national president, will be returned to the unit to be presented on behalf of the national organization.

Unit Award: Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program

Type of Award: Engraved Plaque

Presented to: One unit chairman in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and guidelines:

- Awarded to the unit in each division with the most outstanding Children & Youth program.
- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of how your unit worked the Children & Youth Program.
- May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.
- Attach an award cover sheet found at the end of this program plan, including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the unit Children & Youth chairman.
- Send to Patti Westpfahl, Children & Youth Chairman, W2065 Northwest Road, Green Lake, WI 54941 by May 1, 2019.

Unit Award: Supporting Military Children Unit Award

Type of Award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One unit chairman in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and guidelines:

- Awarded to the unit chairman in each division with the best program supporting military children
- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words.
- May include pictures, news article, news releases, etc.
- Attach an award cover sheet found at the end of this program plan, including the name of the award as well as the name and contact information for the unit Children & Youth chairman.
- Send to Patti Westpfahl, Children & Youth Chairman, W2065 Northwest Road, Green Lake, WI 54941 by May 1, 2019.

Unit Award: Star Spangled Kids Unit Award

Type of Award: Citation Plaque

Presented to: One unit chairman in each division (5 overall awards)

Materials and guidelines:

- Awarded to the unit chairman in each division for the most outstanding program promoting “Star Spangled Kids.”
- Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of Star Spangled Kids activities and programs.
- Attach an award cover sheet, including the name of the award, as well as the name and contact information for the unit Children & Youth Chairman
- Send to Patti Westpfahl, Children & Youth Chairman, W2065 Northwest Road, Green Lake, WI 54941 by May 1, 2019.

Additional Resources You Can Use

1. The American Legion Children & Youth programs: www.legion.org/programs
2. The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: www.legion.org/cwf
3. Josh and Friends (American Legion Family alliance) www.joshandfriends.com
4. Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (an American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grant recipient for *Klinger*): www.taps.org
5. Print Pocket Constitution for school children: www.constitutionbooklet.com
6. Military Child Education Coalition: www.militarychild.org
7. “I’m a Hero 2” stickers template and instructions can be found on the department website on the Programs page.
8. See Children & Youth program page at: www.ALForVeterans.org for additional resources.

HOW TO CONDUCT A “KIDS OF DEPLOYED ARE HEROES 2” PROGRAM

Submitted by:

Patti Westpfahl, Department Children & Youth Chairman

Contact information for questions:

pjw1975@ymail.com ♦ 920-299-0943 (cell)

Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2): Honoring military children who may experience a separation from one or both parents, whether deploying to a war zone, having a short tour or extended TDY (temporary duty assignment).

1. Make preparations for a supply of “recognition buttons” for distribution. Visit the Children & Youth page of the members only section at www.ALAforVeterans.org for more information. Buttons may be ordered through the Auxiliary, a commercial vendor or made locally with the following content:
 - I’m a Hero 2.
 - Proud Parent of a Military Child with a picture.
 - Proud Grandparent of a Military Child with a picture.

2. Call a planning meeting: include the Legion Family, especially Junior members. Consider the following ideas to recognize military kids:
 - Make or purchase and distribute 'I’m a Hero 2’ buttons.
 - Make or purchase and distribute ‘Proud Parent/Grandparent of a Military Child’ with picture button.
 - Can’t afford buttons? Make or purchase and distribute stickers.

3. Decide the best location for recognition of military kids:
 - Coordinate with Family Readiness Groups for button distribution during family days.
 - Coordinate with Legion Family members for local community days/fairs etc.
 - Consider having an activity day/dinner for military families at your post home.
 - If your unit is in close vicinity to a military installation, contact Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) for a listing of activities in which you might have a concession or table.
 - Make buttons available for ALA Girls State and The American Legion Boys State programs and Junior members.
 - Consider suggestions from Junior members for school activities and locations.

No matter what you decide to do, plan a public relations campaign around your event. Consider having Auxiliary membership applications available. Community events provide the best opportunity to sign up new members.

HOW TO PROMOTE “STAR SPANGLED KIDS”

Submitted by:

Patti Westpfahl, Department Children & Youth Chairman

Contact information for questions:

pjw1975@ymail.com ♦ 920-299-0943 (cell)

www.ALAforVeterans.org (Members Only – Children & Youth)

Star Spangled Kids: Educate children and youth on the history of the United States from the aspect of patriotism, Americanism and the U.S. Constitution.

- In conjunction with local schools, create a Unit Citizenship Award for children and youth who have demonstrated the ideals of the U.S. Constitution.
- Team with the Education chairman to bring veterans or servicemembers into the classroom to talk about what their service means to defend the ideals of the Constitution.
- Share "Fascinating Facts about the U.S. Constitution" each month in the department or unit bulletin, in tweets, or in a newspaper editorial.
- List important constitutional dates by chronological order or by month.
- Encourage students to test their knowledge of the Constitution.
- Distribute patriotic coloring book pages for children in primary grades.
- Celebrate Constitution Day (also known as Citizenship Day) on September 17, the day set aside each year to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution.
 - Celebrate at September's Junior meeting with a cake or cupcakes.
 - Let Juniors report on different sections of the Bill of Rights
 - Print and distribute pocket copies of the U.S. Constitution for school children and/or Juniors
- Put on a skit or musical about the Constitution and the signers.
- Hold a scavenger hunt in the post where children find information relating to the Constitution.
- Have members dress up as signers of the Constitution and describe the role of their character in the writing and signing of the Constitution.
- Encourage high school-aged students to use their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution by participating in The American Legion Oratorical Scholarship Contest.

Resources:

- www.constitutionfacts.com
- Constitution Day Resources:
<http://ca3rsproject.org/pages/ConstitutionDayResources.html>

HOW TO REACH OUT TO MILITARY CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Submitted by:

Patti Westpfahl, Department Children & Youth Chairman

Contact information for questions:

pjw1975@ymail.com ♦ 920-299-0943 (cell)

www.ALAforVeterans.org (Members Only – Children & Youth)

Some ideas for reaching out to military children and youth:

1. Sponsor a "You're My Hero" event, similar to the Hero Award, but for military children.
 - Present them with certificates and medals.
 - Be creative.
 - Ask your Junior members to participate.
 - Use your public relations tools to inform the community. Refer to the Public Relations Toolkit at www.ALAforVeterans.org.
2. Host a movie and popcorn night for teens or a board game night.
3. Many military kids can't afford new prom dresses. Get the community involved in collecting and distributing gently used prom dresses.
 - Ask local radio stations and newspapers to donate time and space to help advertise your initiative.
 - Get local bridal shops involved.
 - Involve your high school counselors.
 - Your unit may also want to help with transportation expense, flowers, etc.
4. Contact your local homeless shelter. Ask if there are any veterans there with children.
 - Since one in five homeless are veterans, there is a good chance they will be living in local shelters. Find out what your unit can do to help the children.
 - VA hospitals have homeless coordinators and/or directors of voluntary services. Meet with them to establish a method in which the coordinator/director will coordinate with your unit whenever a homeless veteran with children is identified. Offer to provide school supplies for the child, through the homeless coordinator or director of voluntary services.
5. Maybe the best thing you can do is get your Legion Family together and brainstorm ideas that might work in your community. Sometimes, school-aged children might be your best link to finding military children in your community. Be creative.

No matter what you decide to do, plan a public relations campaign around your event. Consider having Auxiliary membership applications available. Community events provide the best opportunity to sign up new members.



**American Legion Auxiliary
2018-2019 National Award Cover Sheet**

Send completed form to:

Patti Westpfahl, Department Chairman
W2065 Northwest Road, Green Lake WI 54941
Email: pjw1975@ymail.com ♦ Phone: 920-299-0943

Award certificates will be completed using the information given on this sheet, so please write carefully. All awards will be mailed to the department office after national convention. Department presidents may wish to recognize award recipients by presenting them at a department function.

National committee sponsoring award: CHILDREN & YOUTH

Type of Award: Department Unit Member

Name of the award you are applying for: _____

Complete the following if you are applying for a department award:

Name of department: _____

Name of department chairman: _____

Chairman's phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Chairman's email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a unit award. Be sure to give the complete name of your unit. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Name of department: _____

Unit president/chairman (circle one) name: _____

Phone number: (____) _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Email address: _____

Please complete the following if you are applying for a member award. Be sure to give the complete name of the member. The award certificate will be prepared using the information you include below.

Unit #: _____ Full official unit name: _____

Name of department: _____

Member Name: _____ ALA member ID#: _____

Nominating Member (if different from above): _____

Nominator's Phone number: (____) _____

Nominator's Email address: _____

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Support Badger Girls/Boys State
Oratorical Scholarship Program
Family Readiness Group Activities
Blue Star Banner Service
Eagle Scout Scholarships
Poppy Contests
Operation Military Kids
GI Josh Dog Program
Read & Donate a Book to your school
Shooting Sports Program
Kids Against Hunger
National Family Week
Gateway Drugs Program
Missing Children
Big Brothers/Big Sisters Programs
Kinship Care Program
Camp Yellow Ribbon
Partner with local Readiness Group
Soldiers At-Home Movie Night for Families of Deployed
Promote April as Children & Youth Month

County Youth Government Day
Legacy Run Scholarship
Child Safety Programs
Veterans in the Classroom
Legion Baseball Program
Child Welfare Foundation
Flag Folding
TAPS Camp Program
Troop & Family Support
Hunter Safety
Essay Contest
Family Support Network
Fire Safety Programs
Temporary Financial Assistance
Boys/Girls Clubs of America
Write Letters to Deployed
Halloween Safety
Government Scholarship Testing
Big Brother/Big Sisters Program

Opportunities such as these exist across the state. Brainstorm ideas with other members of the American Legion Family. Select one or two ideas your members feel they can work on. Involve your Juniors. They are often aware of activities planned by other organizations which support youth. Partner with the American Legion Family and other organizations. There is strength in numbers and this will also provide you with visibility in your community. Wear your branded clothing with pride. Be prepared to share your story of “Who we are, what we do, and why it matters.” Be proud to be a member of the world’s largest women’s patriotic organization.



The American Legion Family