



## Children & Youth

Plan of Action 2011-2012

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**Purpose:** To protect, care for and support children and youth, particularly those of veterans' families and military families.

1. **Objective:** Develop, implement and monitor programs and activities that contribute to the physical, mental and emotional health and wellness of children and youth of military families.

### Action Steps:

#### a. ALA KIDDS—Kids in Danger of Depression and Suicide

1. Community events and gatherings that bring together military and non-military families, such as unit-hosted dinners, game nights, community fairs, charity walk/runs, etc.
2. Participation in National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day in May

#### b. Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America Military Mentoring Program

1. Work with the local BBBS organization to create educational or recreational group event for unmatched military children.
2. Invite your local BBBS to a Legion Family event to explain how members can become BBBS mentors.
3. Reach out to other service organizations to better serve the unmatched military children and youth populations.

#### c. Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) Military Programs

1. Initiate joint service projects for Juniors and BGCA military children; peer mentoring Junior members and BGCA military children.
2. Sponsor or organize educational or recreational events for BGCA military clubs or traditional clubs.

#### d. Operation: Military Kids (OMK)

1. Assemble Hero Packs at Junior meetings and/or Girls State session.
2. Sponsorship of an OMK camp in your department.
3. Raise community awareness of the needs of military children.

2. **Objective:** Support the implementation of Children & Youth programs of The American Legion.

### Action Steps:

1. Visit [www.legion.org/youth/publications](http://www.legion.org/youth/publications) for information on Gateway Drugs, Suicide Warning Signs, Halloween Safety and Missing Children.

## **Programs and Activities**

April is Children & Youth Month

During this time, The American Legion Family emphasizes its commitment to our nation's children. Visit

[www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/cybroch\\_aprilmonth.pdf](http://www.legion.org/documents/legion/pdf/cybroch_aprilmonth.pdf) for more information.

## **Children & Youth Awards**

### **1. Best Overall Program - Department Award**

A citation plaque will be awarded to the Department Chairman in each Division conducting the best overall promotion of the Children & Youth program. Entry must be in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words, and may include pictures, news articles, press releases, etc. A cover sheet, including the name of the award and name and contact information for the Department C&Y Chairman, should be included. All entries must be mailed to the appropriate Divisional Chairman by June 1, 2012.

### **2. Outstanding Promotion of Supporting Activities – Unit Award**

A citation plaque will be awarded to the Unit Children & Youth Chairman in each Division for the most outstanding program promoting the Children & Youth program activities. Entry must be in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words, and may include pictures, news articles, press releases, etc. A cover sheet, including the name of the award, Department, and name and contact information for the Unit C&Y Chairman, should be included. All entries must be mailed to the appropriate Divisional Chairman by June 1, 2012.

### **3. “Honoring Their Service” Award**

The children of military parents and of activated Guard and Reservists are also “serving” their country. We can honor their service by providing support for these children. A plaque citation will be awarded to a Unit in each Division with the best innovative program supporting military children. Entry must be in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words, and may include pictures, news articles, press releases, etc. A cover sheet, including the name of the award, Department, and name and contact information for the Unit C&Y Chairman, should be included. All entries must be mailed to the appropriate Divisional Chairman by June 1, 2012.

## **Resources**

1. Operation: Military Kids (American Legion Family National Partner) [www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)
2. Big Brothers Big Sisters: [www.bbbs.org](http://www.bbbs.org)
3. Boys & Girls Clubs of America: [www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org)
4. The American Legion Children & Youth Programs: [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org)
5. The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: [www.legion.org/cwf/](http://www.legion.org/cwf/)

See program page on [www.ALForVeterans.org](http://www.ALForVeterans.org) for additional resources.