

**Children and Youth Program Plan of Action
2014-2015
Department of North Carolina**

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

- Host unit events or work with schools and programs in your community.
 - Donate to programs that benefit North Carolina children, especially the Legion Child Welfare Fund and NC Operation Military Kids. Be sure to send donations through Department HQ.
 - Throughout the year, be sure to record all efforts and donations by your unit and individual members that support children and youth (volunteer time, event descriptions, money spent, money donated).
 - By December 15, send a short note to the program chairman about your activities or plans so we can tell National about the great things we do for North Carolina's children and youth.
 - Year end: Fill out the Children & Youth portion of the Year End Report and submit by deadline.
 - Certificate awards will be given to units reporting the most volunteer efforts and the most donations to C&Y activities.
 - Chairman's personal awards will be given to the unit reporting the most donations to Operation Military Kids or to the Legion Child Welfare Fund.
 - Nominations for National Awards: By May 1, submit written program report to C&Y chairman. Include photographs and newspaper articles. Chairman will forward reports to Southern Division. National ALA awards citation plaques to units for 1) Outstanding Unit Promotion of Children & Youth Activities; 2) Supporting Military Children Award; 3) Star Spangled Kids Unit Award; and 4) Million Member Award for promoting membership by work in C&Y program
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1. Support military children and youth through volunteer efforts and donations. Specify whether donations are meant for national or North Carolina programs.
 - *North Carolina Operation Military Kids*. OMK events in September–December 2014 include: teen conferences in Wilmington, Greensboro, New Bern & Raleigh; special days for military families at NC zoo and museums; rocket science clubs at NC military bases. OMK partners with North Carolina 4-H and county Extension Services. Get involved: <http://www.nc4h.org/military/>
 - *Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (T.A.P.S.)*: Helping military families cope with loss. For example, TAPS holds *NC Camp Good Grief* at Fort Bragg and various family events throughout North Carolina. <http://www.taps.org>
 - The *Legion Child Welfare Foundation* has awarded grants to TAPS.
 - Volunteer and financially support events for military-family children such as troop send-offs and welcomes, holiday parties sponsored by the USO or National Guard, and similar events near military bases in North Carolina.
2. Support the *American Legion Child Welfare Foundation*
 - ☆ The Legion CWF helps children all across America through grants to statewide and local programs. In addition to donating to the Legion CWF, units can apply for CWF grants themselves or help community programs apply for a CWF grant. Examples include local Girls/Boys Clubs and county public-health programs to prevent teen suicide. When you donate to the Legion CWF, you also fulfill our Auxiliary pledge to “accomplish the aims and purposes of the American Legion.”
3. Support children and youth in your community through volunteer efforts and donations.
 - Nominate a young person for a national ALA *Youth Hero or Youth Good Deed Award* (see national website or ask the Children & Youth Committee for information).

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- Promote the ALA's *Children of Warriors National Presidents' Scholarship* in your community. Help a local senior high school student apply for one of these scholarships. (Note: advertising this scholarship will help you recruit new Auxiliary members.)
 - Get involved with local children/youth events and programs. Host events at post home or work with schools and programs in your community or donate money. Examples:
 - Special activities for April Children and Youth Month. Search "April Children" at www.legion.org for brochures to print.
 - National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is May 9, 2015; check out Member Resources tab at www.alaforveterans.org
 - Promote safety activities (ex: bicycle safety rodeo, distribute safe Halloween brochures)
 - Provide Christmas gifts for needy children in your community through Salvation Army stockings, Samaritan's Purse, or church programs.
4. Promote *Star Spangled Kids* to educate children and youth about American history, especially the U.S. Constitution. (Include this with your Education and Americanism activities)
- Make pocket constitutions for local schools (www.constitutionbooklet.com)
 - Hold a constitution & civics knowledge trivia contest and give awards.
 - Create a Unit Citizenship Award for local children and youth who have demonstrated the ideals of the U.S. Constitution.

RESOURCES:

- www.alaforveterans.org Select Members Only tab. Scroll down to Mission Outreach Committees, Children & Youth
 - ☆ Great resources: posters, forms, how-to sheets, brochures, guidebooks
 - ☆ Read the national Plan of Action for lots of ideas for unit and individual activities
- <http://www.legion.org/youth>
 - ☆ brochures to print out for children & youth programs
- For more information and help with printed applications, contact the Children and Youth Committee.

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