



2025 - 2026

Dara Oliver  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
(321) 543-1069

Department of Florida  
Children & Youth

Committee Members:  
Annie Anderson & Patti Motzer

Department President:  
Robin Burk  
#PassionForVets



## Children & Youth Committee

2025 -2026 PEP Programs Engagement Plan

Department of Florida  
childrenyouth@alaf1.org  
Chairperson: Dara Oliver

We are **RED**dy this year to promote the Children and Youth committee in the American Legion Auxiliary here in Florida. Department President Robin Burk is *passionate for our Veterans* as well as our Children & Youth program, which emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children & youth, particularly those of Veterans' and military families.

### PURPOSE -

The purpose of the Children & Youth Committee is to work collaboratively with the American Legion to promote children and youth programs and projects for all children with special emphasis on Military and Veteran children following Standing Rule 6: Core National Standing Committees.

### DUTIES -

The duty of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President is to serve as Children & Youth Chairman, visit all children's facilities sponsored by the Department of Florida, work directly with the facilities representatives, assist the Legion Children & Youth picnic Chairperson, write the Programs Engagement Plan, submit at least 3 newsletter articles regarding the C&Y committee and encourage members to support all children and youths and the programs that protect and care for them. It is the duty of every Unit & Department to have a Children & Youth Chairperson and if they are of sufficient size a C&Y Committee.

### GOALS -

The responsibility of the C&Y Chairpersons on all levels, is to recognize and reward the positive actions of our children and youth with the two ALA National awards: the Good Deed Award and the Youth Hero Award. The Chairperson also helps to achieve the two primary goals within the community: 1.) Care and protection of all children specifically children of Veterans and military members. 2.) Improve conditions for all children. The National Headquarters of the American Legion strongly recommends that the Post and Unit Chairpersons work in the closest cooperation. It is the goal of the Unit to participate in at least 1 (one) C&Y event, project, program, receive a Proclamation from a local

government entity or perform the Military Child's table. Additional goals include: to connect with servicemembers, sponsor a kid's field trip, contact the Commander and or Chaplain at the base, fort, facility or armory, renew connections with Dollar tree stores for donations and donate or volunteer for a C&Y program.

### IDEAS -

This PEP (Programs Engagement Plan) will list ways to assist and support kids, but don't be limited, be creative and feel free to 'think out of the norm.' If it helps children that doesn't cross over into another committee, then it can be counted under C&Y for members hours, money spent etc. (i.e: collecting school supplies assists school age children but falls under the Education committee.) For specific questions contact the Children & Youth Department Chairperson. Each Unit has people with special talents and skills that can make this program flourish and will assist the kids of our communities.

### AUXILIARY FOCUSED EXAMPLES -

**Busy Bags** - Have you ever been to a restaurant, store or church where a child is having a tantrum or being disruptive and the parents are at wits end and can't calm them down? The ALAFL Juniors will be assisting this year in branding "ALA FL Busy Bags." They will be filled with quiet play items for kids. This is to keep them busy as well as be filled with American Legion Family applications and brochures promoting our programs and activities. You never know when a family is eligible to join us, so here's a perfect opportunity. If they aren't eligible, we have branded ourselves as an organization that cares for Children. **Red** bags are for community kids and **Purple** are specific for Military kids. District Presidents will have an example of these bags, and your Unit can make them to hand out.

Items can include: coloring books, crayons, colored pencils, washable markers, pop sockets, fidget spinners, stickers, stuffed animal, plastic dog tags, internal cube games, larger sized Lego pieces, plastic Military figures, and pull back cars, trucks & motorcycles.

**Purple-Up Day** - April 15<sup>th</sup> Wear **purple** on this day. Explain to family and friends that it's to support Military Kids and encourage them to wear purple too.

Take a photo and post it on social media with the hastag #PurpleUp

April is the Month of the Military Child #MOMC - start early, in March contact your local schools and see if you can perform the Military Child's Table at your school and honor any Military Child. If it's around or on April 15<sup>th</sup> wear purple and promote #PurpleUp Day.

Ask your local Government to Proclaim April as Military Child's month and make sure to take photos and post on social media or publish it in your local newspaper outlets.

Host an event that can bring both community and Military families together and raise funds for one of the many programs that assist children.

Actively search for children in the community (under 18) that have performed an act of valor or have done a good deed in their community. Encourage the Good Deed Award or Youth Hero Award application to be filled out and sent to National ALA, then recognize that child either at ceremony or special event. Please contact the Department C&Y Chairperson to assist in this.

Support John Hopkins All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg. Find out what their wish list is, schedule a tour and visit the facility, volunteer at one of their events or at the hospital. Donate on the Department donation remittance form so President Robin can make a presentation while visiting the facility in March of 2026.

Ask to speak at the Legion Post, SAL or Riders meeting to share your Units ideas or collaboration on donation requests. Work together as a 'Family" to host events or celebrations that honor or promote all children & youth.

Support or donate to Special Olympics Florida. This year Department Legion Commander Jessica Moore's Special Project is Special Olympics in memory of her daughter Maddie. You can donate by using the donation remittance form.

### **Legion Family Sponsored Programs & Organizations -**

ALA Americanism Essay - Americanism Committee	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a> or <a href="https://www.legion-aux.org">https://www.legion-aux.org</a>
ALA C&Y Busy Bags	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a>
ALA Girls State	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a>
ALA Good Deed Award	<a href="https://member.legion-aux.org">https://member.legion-aux.org</a>
ALA Kids of Deployed R Heroes 2 - C&Y Committee	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a>
ALA Poppy Poster - Poppy Committee	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a>
ALA Youth Hero Award	<a href="https://member.legion-aux.org">https://member.legion-aux.org</a>
Children & Youth Picnic - April 16, 2026	<a href="https://floridalegion.org">https://floridalegion.org</a>
Child Well-Being Foundation CWF - (Child Welfare Foundation)	<a href="https://legion.org">https://legion.org</a>
COTA - Children's Organ Transplant Association - Donate Life	<a href="https://cota.org">https://cota.org</a>
John Hopkins All Children's Hospital in St. Pete	<a href="https://hopkinsmedicine.org">https://hopkinsmedicine.org</a>
Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2)	<a href="https://www.legion-aux.org">https://www.legion-aux.org</a>
Legion Baseball	<a href="https://floridaamericanlegion.sportngin.com">https://floridaamericanlegion.sportngin.com</a>
Legion Boys State	<a href="https://floridalegion.org">https://floridalegion.org</a>
Legion Child Well-Being Foundation	<a href="https://www.cwf-inc.org">https://www.cwf-inc.org</a>
Legion Oratorical Contest	<a href="https://floridalegion.org">https://floridalegion.org</a>
Legion Shooting Sports	<a href="https://floridalegion.org">https://floridalegion.org</a>
Legion Youth Cadet Law Enforcement	<a href="https://floridalegion.org">https://floridalegion.org</a>
Memorial Day - Poppy / Flag distribution	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a>
Military Childs Table	<a href="http://www.alafl.org">www.alafl.org</a> or <a href="https://www.legion-aux.org">https://www.legion-aux.org</a>
#MOMC - Month of Military Child - April	<a href="https://militarychild.org">https://militarychild.org</a>
Post or Unit Sponsored Angel Tree	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Children's Christmas Shop	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Game Night	Check Locally

Post or Unit Sponsored Holiday Halloween Safe Night	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Holiday Party - Christmas	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Holiday Party - Easter Hunt	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Kids Night Out	Check Locally
Post or Unit Sponsored Movie Night	Check Locally
Purple-Up Day: April 15 <sup>th</sup>	<a href="https://www.legion-aux.org">https://www.legion-aux.org</a>
Special Olympics Florida	<a href="https://www.specialolympicsflorida.org">https://www.specialolympicsflorida.org</a>

### **Other C&Y Organizations -**

Alex's Lemonade Stand	<a href="http://www.alexslimonade.org">www.alexslimonade.org</a>
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) SE FL Chapter	<a href="https://afsp.org">https://afsp.org</a>
Back-Pack Program	Check local schools for needs (food/supplies)
Beads of Courage	<a href="http://www.beadsofcourage.org">www.beadsofcourage.org</a>
Camp Boggy Creek & Bear pattern	<a href="https://www.boggycreek.org">https://www.boggycreek.org</a>
Champion for Children	<a href="https://championforchildren.org">https://championforchildren.org</a>
CMN - Children's Miracle Network	<a href="https://www.orlandohealthfoundation.com">https://www.orlandohealthfoundation.com</a>
Donate 4 Kidz - Cape Coral	<a href="http://www.donate4kidz.org">www.donate4kidz.org</a>
Duffles of Dignity of Hillsborough County or West Florida Foster Care Services, Inc.	<a href="https://childrensnetworkhillsborough.org">https://childrensnetworkhillsborough.org</a> <a href="http://www.WFFCS.org">www.WFFCS.org</a>
Easter Seals – Down Syndrome Camp	<a href="https://www.easterseals.com">https://www.easterseals.com</a>
Family Readiness Group - Military Installation & Family assistance	FRG on Military Installations
Florida Suicide Prevention Coalition (FSPC)	<a href="https://floridasuicideprevention.org">https://floridasuicideprevention.org</a>
Hoofprints to Heal Therapy Brooksville, FL	<a href="http://h2htherapy.org">http://h2htherapy.org</a>
Jason Foundation, Inc. (Suicide Awareness for youths)	<a href="https://jasonfoundation.com">https://jasonfoundation.com</a>
Kids Safe Zone Program	<a href="https://safety4kids.com">https://safety4kids.com</a>
Make a Wish Foundation	<a href="https://wish.org">https://wish.org</a>
M.A.S.H. Camp - Medical Academy of Science & Health	Check Locally
Mental Health America of Southeast Florida (MHA)	<a href="https://mhasefl.org">https://mhasefl.org</a>
NAMI - Hernando	<a href="https://namihernando.org">https://namihernando.org</a>
National Military Family Association	<a href="https://www.militaryfamily.org">https://www.militaryfamily.org</a>
New Horizons of Northwest Florida	<a href="http://www.newhorizonofnwf.org">www.newhorizonofnwf.org</a>
Operation Purple (Camps for Military kids)	<a href="https://www.militaryfamily.org">https://www.militaryfamily.org</a>
Ronald McDonald House Charities	<a href="https://rmhccf.org">https://rmhccf.org</a>
Salvation Army Angel Tree	<a href="http://www.saangeltree.org">www.saangeltree.org</a>
Shriner's Hospital for Children	<a href="https://www.shrinerschildren.org">https://www.shrinerschildren.org</a>
St. Jude's Children's Hospital	<a href="https://www.stjude.org">https://www.stjude.org</a>
The Kids Guide Books	<a href="http://www.thekidsguide.com">www.thekidsguide.com</a>
The Office of Substance Abuse and Mental Health (SAMH)	<a href="mailto:www.samh@myflfamilies.com">www.samh@myflfamilies.com</a>
To Write Love on her Arms	<a href="https://twloha.com">https://twloha.com</a>
Toys for Tots - Lake & Sumter County	Lake & Sumter Co. Toys for Tots on Facebook
USO (United Service Org.) - Storytime or Reading to Connect	<a href="https://www.uso.org">https://www.uso.org</a>
Wigs for Kids	<a href="https://wigsforkids.org">https://wigsforkids.org</a>
YMCA Camp Winona - DeLeon Springs (Military Kids 7/13-18 2025)	<a href="https://camptwinonaymca.org">https://camptwinonaymca.org</a>

## AWARDS -

### National Award -

Unit - National Award for Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth program (Per Division)

- All entries must be submitted to the Department C&Y Chairperson sent no later than midnight on May 1, 2026. Late arrivals cannot be accepted.
- Your Unit narrative report can be used for this award, but please be specific and be detailed including pictures.
- All entries must be e-mailed due to all submissions to National are electronic.
- Indicate that this is your submission for a National award. Submit to 2025-2026 Children & Youth Chairperson: Dara Oliver [childrenyouth@alaf1.org](mailto:childrenyouth@alaf1.org)

### Department Awards -

Lois McFall Children & Youth Award (expires 2029)

- Children & Youth Year-End report must be submitted and includes all required statistical information (i.e.: money spent, number of children helped, volunteer hours, etc...)
- Cash contributions must be made through the Department Office (listed on the award rules) and use the donation remittance form.
- Narrative to be received by the Department Chairperson on or before the date listed in the rules. Thirty (30) days prior to Department Convention.
- Please Follow the Rules listed in the Unit Guide Exactly - Incorrect submissions will be disqualified.

### Chairman Awards -

Busy Bag Program - A certificate and award will be given to the Unit that best participates in Busy Bags.

- Explain how your Unit bought the items.
- How you filled the bags.
- What items were in the bags.
- How you distributed them.
- Submissions with photos and a narrative are not required but highly suggested.

Best Children & Youth Program in a Unit per each membership grouping. A certificate will be given to the Units that best participates in the Children & Youth committee.

- Write a narrative of how your Unit supported children and youths and the programs that protect and care for them.
- Explain how you worked collaboratively with the American Legion to promote children and youth programs and projects for all children with special emphasis on Military and Veteran children.
- Include Proclamations, Youth Hero Award submissions and Good Deed Awards.
- Provide volunteer hours spent, money donated, and number of children assisted.



- Include all Legion Family and outside Organizations names and projects that you included or assisted with including when your Unit participated.
- Submissions with photos and a narrative are not required but highly suggested.

Best Children & Youth Program in a District. A certificate will be given to the District that best participates in the Children & Youth committee.

- Write a narrative of how your District supported children and youths and the programs that protect and care for them.
- Explain how you worked collaboratively with the American Legion to promote children and youth programs and projects for all children with special emphasis on Military and Veteran children.
- Include Proclamations, Youth Hero Award submissions and Good Deed Awards.
- Provide volunteer hours spent, money donated, and number of children assisted.
- Include all Legion Family and outside Organizations names and projects that you included or assisted with including when your Unit participated.
- Submissions with photos and a narrative are not required but highly suggested.

### **REPORTING -**

Year-End: Units must send in a report to the District Chairman no later than midnight on April 1, 2026. Reports include the Unit report form, Unit year-end Impact numbers report and a narrative. Please submit photos, social media posts, newspaper articles, copies of proclamations etc...

Year-End: Districts must send in a report to the Department Chairman Dara Oliver no later than midnight on April 15, 2026. Reports include the District report form, Impact report and a consolidated narrative of all Units that submitted a report or all C&Y activities and events held or hosted within the District. Please submit photos, social media posts, newspaper articles, copies of proclamations etc...

2025-2026 ALA FL  
 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
 Children & Youth Chairperson  
**Dara Oliver**  
 (321) 543-1069  
 17776 SE 158<sup>th</sup> Court  
 Weirsdale, FL 32195  
[alamemberdoliver@gmail.com](mailto:alamemberdoliver@gmail.com)