

# Children and Youth Program Action Plan 2018 - 2019

This year, President Michele's theme is "We're All In." We're all in for our Veterans, Military Families, Community, and Children & Youth. By working together, we will be able to carry this organization into the next 100 years!

The Children and Youth program emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families. Florida's C&Y committee has chosen a slogan of ***"Betting on our future is a sure WIN!"***

In order to fulfill that slogan, we are excited to announce that we will be bringing our Juniors to Fall Conference this year! We encourage every Unit to bring your Juniors with you. We respectfully ask for Juniors eight (8) years and above. They will have a breakout session for Juniors only, but then we will be bringing them into the General Session. What better way to show them "Who we are, what we do, and why we matter"!

Your Program Action Plan will cover three main objectives, which will include examples, and resources that are full of valuable information I am sure will help you throughout the year. Enclosed, you will also find the Junior's Program Action Plan.

Let's bet on our children because..... **KIDS ARE ALL IN TOO!**

For God and Country,

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# Children and Youth Objectives

## 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.
  - a. Offer to make a “Star Spangled” presentation to your local schools. Invite post members to help students learn how their military service was meaningful in defending the U.S. Constitution.
  - b. Contact local high schools to invite them to encourage their students to use their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution by participating in The American Legion Oratorical Contest.
- **Youth Hero Awards/Good Deed Awards:** This is a way the ALA can recognize youth in your community who demonstrate good citizenship, through either a brave physical act or a good deed.
  - a. Search through your newspapers, TV, and neighborhoods for children and youth who have performed a heroic act of physical valor, such as performing CPR, helping evacuate in the event of a fire, calling 911 for an emergency etc.
  - b. Contact local schools, churches, and youth groups to make them aware of the Youth Hero/Good Deed Awards. Leave your Unit contact information.
- **Support Children’s Hospitals in Florida:**
  - a. Contact the hospital and ask how you can Volunteer.
  - b. Ask for a donation list, i.e. blankets, toys etc.
- **April is The American Legion’s Children and Youth month:**
  - a. Plan a special celebration of children during the month of April in honor of Children and Youth Month.

## 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(s).
  - a. Donate to the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS).
  - b. Host a dinner, game night, community fair, etc. that will bring military and non-military families together.
  - c. Host a KDH2 celebration with recognition buttons/stickers to let military kids know how we appreciate their sacrifices.
- **Josh dogs:** An American Legion Family alliance, GI Josh is a plush dog and accompany storybook used to help ease separation fears for military children.
  - a. Identify children in your community whose parent(s) are deployed and present them with a GI Josh dog.

- **April is The American Legion’s Children and Youth month:**
    - a. Wear purple on April 15 in honor of Purple Up! For Military Kids day.
    - b. Plan a special celebration of children during the month of April in honor of Children and Youth Month.
3. Support veterans’ children and youth:
- **Some of our homeless veterans also have children living on the streets with them.**
    - a. Contact your local churches, homeless shelters, and food pantries to identify homeless veterans’ children. Ask what their specific needs are, offer them your services.
    - b. Contact local schools to assess their need for supplies and extra clothes for homeless children.
    - c. Contact your post Service Officer to offer help with the needs of children of veterans who need financial help.
    - d. Help raise awareness for the needs of homeless children in your community by sharing unit activities on the unit website, social media pages and newsletters.
  - **Klinger, a Story of Honor and Hope** – Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is affiliated with the American Legion Family.
    - a. Volunteer at a TAPS camp program.
    - b. Purchase the book, Klinger, a Story of Honor and Hope, from TAPS with the companion horse for children who are grieving the loss of a military parent or loved one.

## **SPECIAL PROJECTS**

- **Beads of Courage**
  - a. Carry a Bead
  - b. Bead Bags
  - c. Monetary donations
- **Ronald McDonald House**
  - a. Soda tops
  - b. Monetary donations
  - c. Goods donations

## *Additional Resources:*

1. Star Spangled Kids: information on [www.alafl.org](http://www.alafl.org), under Children & Youth
2. Youth Hero/Good Deed Awards: information on [www.alaforveterans.org](http://www.alaforveterans.org)
3. Florida Children's Hospitals: Google "Florida Children's Hospitals"
4. T.A.P.S. (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors): [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org)
5. "I'm a Hero 2" stickers template and instructions can be found on the Children & Youth program page at [www.alafl.org](http://www.alafl.org)
6. The national Children & Youth Committee Facebook group, search "ALA Children and Youth"
7. The American Legion Children & Youth programs: [www.legion.org/programs](http://www.legion.org/programs)
8. The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: [www.legion.org/cwf](http://www.legion.org/cwf)
9. Josh and Friends (American Legion Family alliance): [www.joshandfriends.com](http://www.joshandfriends.com)
10. Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (an American Legion Child Welfare Foundation grant recipient for *Klinger*): [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org)
11. Beads of Courage: [www.beadsofcourage.org](http://www.beadsofcourage.org)
12. Ronald McDonald House Charities: [www.rmhc.org](http://www.rmhc.org)

## *AWARDS*

### *National:*

- A. Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program
- Deadline: June 1, 2019
  - Send to National Division Chairman postmarked or emailed by 5 pm. EST

### *Department:*

- A. **PEGGY MILLER AWARD:** Awarded to the Junior Auxiliary member who shows outstanding participation in one or more programs of the American Legion Auxiliary.
- Narrative – see Unit Guide or Award Description on Department website [www.alafl.org](http://www.alafl.org)
  - Entry to be received by the Department Children & Youth Chairman no later than May 29, 2018.

**B. LOIS McFALL CHILDREN & YOUTH AWARD:**

- Children & Youth Year-End Report must be submitted and includes all required statistical information i.e. money expended, number of children and families assisted, etc.
- Cash contributions must be made through Department Office (list is on the Award Rules).
- Narrative to be received by the Department Chairman no later than May 29, 2018.

**C. Beads of Courage:** A certificate of appreciation will be presented to all Units who supported The Beads of Courage Program.

**D. Ronald McDonald House:** An award will be presented to one Unit from each membership grouping regarding the following contributions:

1. Highest poundage (lbs) of aluminum pull tabs (i.e. soda pull-tops)
2. Highest dollar (\$) amount donated

## ***REPORTING***

**MID-YEAR:** Please send a narrative to your District Children & Youth Chairman by December 1, 2018. You are encouraged to include any pictures or news articles. District Chairman must send the narratives to the Department Children & Youth Chairman by December 15, 2018.

**YEAR-END:** Your Year-End Reporting form must reach your District Children & Youth Chairman by April 1, 2019. Please include a narrative report. Please be encouraged to send pictures and/or news articles. District Chairman must send the Year-End Reports to the Department Children & Youth Chairman by April 15, 2019.

### ***Narratives should include the following:***

1. How did your Unit promote “Star Spangled Kids”?
2. How did your Unit promote the Youth Hero/Good Deed Award?
3. What success stories do you have regarding support for military or homeless veteran’s children?
4. Did your Unit participate in Beads of Courage?
5. Did your Unit donate to the Ronald McDonald House?