



Children & Youth

Program Action Plan 2019-2021

This year, President Ann's theme is "American Legion Auxiliary Florida Strong!" As we celebrate 100 years of serving our veterans, military families, children & youth and our communities, we will draw on our strength to move us forward into the next 100 years.

The Children & Youth program emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth - particularly those of veterans' and military families. This year, Florida Units and Members will "***OPEN YOUR HEARTS FOR OUR CHILDREN & YOUTH!***"

The Program Action Plan will focus on extraordinary youth in our communities: military children, children of veterans, chronically ill children, and children that have gone above and beyond in the "Spirit of Service, not Self."

APRIL IS "CHILDREN AND YOUTH MONTH"

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“Open your Heart” to our Military Children & Youth:

1. **Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2):** This is a recognition program for military children who experience extended separation from their military parent(s). [See Resources](#)
 - (a) Host a KDH2 celebration with recognition buttons or stickers to let military kids know we appreciate their sacrifices.
 - (b) Host a dinner, game night, community fair etc. that will bring military and non-military families together.
 - (c) Volunteer or donate to a Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS).
 - (d) Volunteer at a Family Readiness group event and distribute “I’m a Hero 2” buttons or stickers.
 - (e) Team up with other community or other civic groups that are also concerned with the special needs of military children.
 - (f) Work together with the Girls State Chairman by recognizing citizens who are the daughters of servicemembers with “I’m a Hero 2” button or sticker.
2. **Josh and G.I. Josh Dogs:** Due to circumstances beyond our control, the company that manufactures and distributes these dogs has closed operations.
3. **April is Month of the Military Child:**
 - (a) Plan a special celebration during April to honor military children.
 - (b) Encourage family members to **Purple Up! for Military Kids day April 15!!**
4. **Military Child’s Table** The Military Childs Table Setting Ceremony is a heartwarming opportunity to involve American Legion Auxiliary Jrs. and young Sons of the American Legion to honor the sacrifices of their military child friends and classmates. The ceremony is inspired by the POW/MIA remembrance table ceremony. Our military answer the call to service every day as they defend our freedoms. Their service often comes at a personal sacrifice not only for the service member but also for their children. [See Resources](#)

“Open your Heart” to Children of Veterans:

Some of our homeless veterans also have children living with them on the streets, in shelters, in cars or couch surfing.

1) Homeless and In-need children

- (a) Contact your local churches, shelters and food pantries to identify homeless or in-need veterans’ children. Ask what their specific needs are & offer your unit’s services.
Contact local news media (newspaper, community TV, community websites, social media and town council to raise awareness. Offer to give a presentation on the Unit’s efforts.
- (b) Contact your voluntary services representatives at the V.A. Medical Center. Offer assistance to help meet the needs of children of homeless or at-need veterans who come to the VAMC.
- (c) Contact local schools to identify the need for school supplies, clothes (or uniforms,) and weekend dietary needs.
- (d) Work with your Post Service Officer to assist veteran families who need financial assistance or holiday meals.

- 2) ***Klinger, a Story of Honor and Hope*** – The real-life story, told from the perspective of a black Caisson horse who lives in Arlington National Cemetery. TAPS recently was able to have a second printing through a \$25,000 grant from the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation. **See Resources**
 - (a) 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, family member or loved one.
 - (b) Volunteer at a TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors) camp program.

“Open your Heart” to the Children in your community

- 1) **“Star Spangled Kids”**: This program has moved to Americanism.
- 2) **Youth Hero Award/Good Deed Award**: This is a way the A.L.A. can recognize and Thank youth in our communities who demonstrate good citizenship by going above and beyond through a brave physical act or a good deed. **See Resources**
 - (a) Monitor newspapers, TV and your neighborhoods for children who have performed a heroic act of valor, such as performing CPR, helping evacuate in the event of a fire, calling 911 in an emergency, etc. Nominate them for the Youth Hero/Good Deed Award.
 - (b) Contact local schools, churches and youth groups and promote the Youth Hero/ Good Deed Awards. Leave Unit contact and membership information.
 - (c) Once a child has been identified as an applicant, complete the nomination form and submit to the Department Secretary.
 - (d) If the nominee is recognized with an award from National, contact local media, school leaders, community officials, and the child’s parents and plan a public presentation of the award.

“Open your Heart” to Acute or Chronically ill Children

1) All Children’s Hospital, St Petersburg

A.L.A. Representative Dee Bell
326 72nd Ave
St. Pete Beach 33706
h. 727-360-1423 c.727-804-2385
childrenyouth@alafll.org

2) Mailman Center, Miami

A.L.A. Representative Denice Grinis
1248 SW 1st. Ave.
Pompano Beach 33060
denicefl@gmail.com
754-264-4388

Units can assist and support our children's facilities in a variety of ways.

- a) Monetary Donations (Dept. Remittance Sheet)
- b) In-Kind Donations (can be mailed to or picked up by representative)
- c) Crocheted or knitted baby items (can be mailed or picked up by representative)
- d) Volunteer
- e) Soda tabs

Special Focus Projects

Camp Corral: is where kids ages 8-15 are free to be a kid away from the challenges they encounter as children of service members or veterans. They have the priceless opportunity to connect with other kids who understand and identify with those unique challenges that come with being a military child.

All monetary donations must be made directly to Camp Corral with a special notation in the memo "Florida Camp Wewa"

Camp Boggy Creek: is dedicated to fostering a spirit of joy by creating a free, safe and medically sound camp environment that enriches the lives of children with serious illnesses and their families.

[See Resources for information and websites for both camps](#)

Children & Youth charities on the donation remittance form

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: Established in 1954, The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation was developed as a source of funds from individuals who wished to contribute to the betterment of children in this country. The primary priority is to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children.

Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital: provides expert care for infants, children and teens with some of the most challenging medical problems in our community and around the world.

Mailman Center: The Mailman Center for Child Development is an academic center that addresses concerns of children with developmental disabilities and special health care needs.

Beads of Courage: helps children across Florida record, tell and own their stories using colorful beads as meaningful symbols of courage & hope along their treatment journey.

Ronald McDonald House Charities: helping families with sick children find comfort and a home away from home when they need it most.

COTA: Children's Organ Transplant Association is our Department Commanders' special project. COTA helps children and adults who need a life-saving transplant by providing fundraising assistance and family support.

Resources & Websites

1. "I'm a Hero 2" stickers/button template and instructions: www.alafl.org Children & Youth
2. TAPS (Tragedy Assistance Program for Survives): www.taps.org
3. Klinger: A Story of Honor and Hope: www.taps.org
4. Youth Hero/Good Deed Award: www.alaforveterans.org
5. Beads of Courage: www.beadsofcourage.org www.alafl.org Children & Youth
6. Ronald McDonald House Charities: www.rmhc.org www.alafl.org Children & Youth
7. The American Legion Children & Youth program: www.legion.org/programs
8. The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation: www.legion.org/cwf
9. Military Child's Table Setting Ceremony: www.alafl.org Children & Youth

How to Sheets: available at www.alaforveterans.org

- How to conduct a "Kids of Deployed Are Heroes 2" Program
- How to reach out to Military Children and Youth

Reporting

MID-YEAR:

UNIT CHAIRMAN: Please complete the Unit/District mid-year report form and mail 2 copies to your District Children & Youth Chairman by December 1, 2020. You are encouraged to include a narrative, pictures, or news articles of special events or projects.

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN: Please complete the Unit/District mid-year report form and mail 1 copy of the Unit reports and the District report to the Department Children & Youth Chairman (**DEE BELL**) by December 15, 2020. Please include any unit/district narratives, pictures, or news articles that you received.

YEAR-END:

UNIT CHAIRMAN: Please complete the Unit/District year-end report form and mail 2 copies to your District Children & Youth Chairman by April 1, 2021. You are encouraged to include a narrative, pictures, or news articles of special events or projects.

DISTRICT CHAIRMAN: Please complete the Unit/District year-end report form and mail 1 copy of the Unit reports and the District report to the Department Children & Youth Chairman (**DEE BELL**) by April 15, 2021. Please include any unit/district narratives, pictures, or news articles that you received.

If doing a narrative, please include answers to the following questions:

- 1) How did your unit or district promote the Youth Hero/Good Deed Award?
- 2) What success stories does your unit or district had regarding support for military or homeless or in-need veterans' children.

Awards

National

DEADLINES & SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Taking the time to share a favorite story about the positive impact you or someone you know has had on our mission is worth doing. It helps us to tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just three simple steps to add your part to our national success story.

- 1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report & Awards Cover Sheet found in the awards section of the Program Action Plan.
- 2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the award's materials and guidelines section of the 2017-2022 National Program Action Plan on the National website.
- 3) Make sure to include your all data from 2019-2021 in your report.

National Report & Awards Cover sheet, deadlines, and Children & Youth committee contact information can be found on the Children & Youth committee page on the national website, www.alaforveterans.org

YOUTH HERO AWARD

- Award: Youth Hero Medal & Citation
- Presented to: Youth under 18 years of age who have performed heroic acts of physical valor, membership in the American Legion Family is not required.
- Materials & Guidelines
 - Complete the Youth Hero & Good Deed Award Nomination Form and mail to the Department Secretary, who certifies, then mails the application to National Headquarters. (Please **do not** mail applications to National Headquarters.)
 - The award certificate, signed by the national president and national Children & Youth chairman and medal will be returned to the unit or dept. to be presented on behalf of the National organization.
 - The Dept. Chairman should be notified of the award.

GOOD DEED AWARD

- Award: Citation
- Presented to: Youth under 18 years of age who have performed specific good deeds and are great examples of community service in action; membership in the American Legion Family is not required.
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Complete the Youth Hero & Good Deed Award Nomination Form and mail to the dept. secretary, who certifies, then mails applications to National Headquarters. (Please **do not** mail applications to National Headquarters.)
 - The award certificate, signed by the national president and national chairman will be returned to the unit or dept. to be presented on behalf of the National organization.
 - The dept. chairman should be notified of the award.

UNIT AWARD: Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program (per Division)

- Award: Citation Plaque
- Presented to: One in each division (5)
- Deadline: May 1, 2021
- Materials and guidelines:
 - Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of how your unit worked the C & Y program, including supporting the National President's special focus, The Health and Well-being of our Veterans, Military and Their Families.
 - May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.

PLEASE MAIL TO DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN DEE BELL BY MAY 1, 2021

Department

LOIS MCFALL CHILDREN & YOUTH AWARD

- 1) A NARRATIVE OF ALL Children & Youth projects and activities achieved this fiscal year not to exceed 1,000 words must be submitted. This narrative can include any projects done in cooperation with the post or other community service organizations in your area.
- 2) Narrative
 - a) Margins will be 1" on all sides.
 - b) Narrative will be typed on white bond, 8 ½ x 11.
 - c) Double spaced in upper/lower case type.
- 3) Entry must include a cover page which first lists the title NARRATIVE CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAM (all capitalized.) The unit name, unit number, address and district and the chairman and president's name, emails, and signatures. This information will be centered on the cover page.
- 4) The unit should have held a special children and youth meeting during the year and must have given cash donations through department to:
 - a) John's Hopkins All Childrens' Hospital
 - b) American Legion Child Welfare Foundation
 - c) Camp Boggy Creek
- 5) The completed statistical year-end report form must be submitted with the narrative.
- 6) Narrative to be received by the Department Chairman no later than thirty (30) day prior to Department Convention. And will be judged by the Children and Youth Committee of other individuals as deemed appropriate. Judging will be based on compliance with the above rules, neatness, spelling, grammar, punctuation and originality of projects.

DEPARTMENT CHAIRMAN'S "BIG HEART AWARD"

An award will be given to the Units that make a donation of at least \$1.00 per member (close of books June 2020) to Camp Corral or Camp Boggy Creek by April 30, 2021.