

Children & Youth

Plan of Action

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Purpose: The Children and youth Committee is to work collaboratively with The American Legion to promote programs that protect, care for, and support children and youth, especially those of veterans' and military families.

What can you do?

1. Support Children and Youth in your community

- “Star Spangled Kids”: This is a way an ALA program to educate children and youth on the history of the United States from the aspect of patriotism, Americanism and the United States Constitution
- Youth Hero Awards/Good Deed Awards: This way the ALA can recognize youth in our communities who demonstrate good citizenship, either through a braze physical or a good deed.
- April is The American Legion’s Children and Youth Month

Ideas Members:

- Offer to make a “Star Spangled” presentation to your local schools. Invite post members to help students learn how their military services were meaningful in the defending the U.S. Constitution.
- 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.

Refer to www.legion.org for more information on the Oratorical Contest

- Monitor 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. Work with your unit to nominate them for Youth Hero/Good Deed Award. Contact local schools, church, and youth groups to make them aware of the Youth Hero/Good Deed Awards. Make sure to leave unit contact Information.

Unit:

Create a Unit Citizenship Award for children and Youth who have learned the ideals of the U.S. Constitution.

Share a constitution fact each month in the unit newsletter, the newspaper editorial and/or on social media.

September 17 is Constitutional Day (Citizenship Day). Host a party that revolves around the U.S. Constitution for children.

Print and distribute pocket constitution to schoolchildren

2. Support military children

- Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2): This is a recognition program for military children who experienced extended separation from their military parent or parents.
- April is the Month of the Military Child

Ideas Members:

- Volunteer at a Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) camp program
- Volunteer at a Family Readiness Group event where KDH2 "I'm a Hero 2" buttons/stickers can be distributed.
- Wear purple on April 15 in honor of Purple Up! For Military Kids Day

Unit

- Host a dinner, game night, community fair, etc. that will bring military and non-military families together.
- Host a KDH2 celebration with recognition button/stickers to let military kids know we appreciate their sacrifices
- Plan a special celebration of military children during April in honor of the Month of the Military Child.
- Encourage members to wear purple on Purple Up! For Military Kids Day (April 15).
- Collaborate with ALA Girls State by recognizing citizens who are daughters of servicemembers with "I'm A Hero2" buttons or stickers.

3. Support veterans' children and youth

- Some of our homeless veterans also have children living on the streets with them.

Ideas:

Member

- Contact your local churches, homeless shelters, and food pantries to identify homeless veterans' children. Ask what their specific needs are and offer them your services as an ALA member.
- Contact your voluntary service representative at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center. Offer to work with them to help the needs of children of homeless veterans who come to the V.A
- Volunteer at a TAPS camp program.

Unit:

- Train members to be a resource for front-line agencies who receive requests for help.
- Contact local schools to assess their need for supplies and extra clothes for homeless children/ Offer to supply items that are needed.
- Purchase the book, Klinger, a story of Honor and Hope, from TAPS with the companion plush horse for children who are grieving the loss of a military parent or loved one.

- Team up with other community groups that are also concerned with the special needs of veterans' children (i.e.TAPS)

Resources:

www.constitutionfacts.com

www.alaforveterans.org

DEPARTMENT CHILDREN AND YOUTH AWARDS

District Awards: A Trophy in each of the 8 districts with the Best Children and Youth report submitted by a Unit in that district.

Perham Trophy: One trophy in each of the following categories based on the Unit membership as of March 30th

- Class A- (10-49)
- Class B- (50-99)
- Class C- (100-199)
- Class D- (200+)

Dennis R. Dumais, Jr. Trophy- To the Unit in District 3 that has done the most for sports for children up to age 16.

As part of your narrative report, please include answers to the following questions:

- How did your units promote “Star Spangled Kids”, educating children and youth about the U.S. Constitution from the aspect of patriotism and Americanism?
- How did your units and department promote the Youth Hero/Good Deed Award?
- How did your unit promote the “Kids of Deployed are Heros Program”?
- What success stories do you have regarding support for military or homeless veterans’ children?

Unit Children and Youth report totals are **due to the DISTRICT CHAIRMAN by April 1, 2026**

District Children and Youth report totals **due to the department chairman by April 15, 2026**

Children and Youth National Awards

Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Children and Youth Program (per division)

Award Citation Plaque

Presented to One unit in each division

Materials and guidelines:

Narrative to not exceed 1000 words. Include specific examples of how your unit worked the Children and Youth program, including supporting military children

May include pictures, news articles, news release etc.

Youth Hero Award:

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

Good Deed Award:

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.

Once a child has been identified as Youth Hero/Good Deed applicant, complete the nomination form. Plan to submit name of the child. Have form signed by two-unit members and then submit the form to your department secretary.

When a Youth Hero/Good Deed award has been processed by the national headquarters,

The award certificate signed by national president and nation Children and Youth chairman, will be returned, contact local media, community school leaders and the children's parents, and plan for a public presentation of the award.