



2019-2020 Program Action Plan

CHILDREN & YOUTH

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What is this program, and why do we have it?

The Children & Youth program emphasizes protecting, caring for and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans and military families.

What can you do?

- 1. Support Children and Youth in your community.**
 - **Youth Hero Awards/Good Deed Awards:** This is a way the ALA can recognize youth in our communities who demonstrate good citizenship, either through a brave physical act or a good deed.
 - **April is The American Legion's 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 or parents.
 - **April is the Month of the Military Child**
- 3. Support veterans' children and youth.**
 - Some of our homeless veterans also have children living on the streets with them.
 - Klinger, a Story of Honor and Hope – Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) is affiliated with the American Legion Family

There are a few items that need to be pointed out in this program:

Two include:

- *Sadly, due to circumstances beyond our control, the company that manufactures and distributes Josh Dogs/GI Josh is closing operations. It is our hope that this is a temporary situation and Josh will simply be in hiatus for a year.*
- *Star Spangled Kids (SSK) is moving to the Americanism program. Don't stop working this initiative; simply report it under Americanism.*



“Celebrating a Century of Service”

So without those two initiatives in our C&Y program this year, it is understandable that the Good Deed Awards and Youth Hero Awards will play a larger-than-life role this year.

- **Good Deed Award** – Youth should demonstrate leadership role in community service, specific deed should be present
- **Youth Hero Award** - Youth should demonstrate a physical act of valor

In celebration of our 100th anniversary, the goal is to present 100 of each award this year! That’s an average of about 2 a Department. As you can imagine, the Youth Hero Award might be a bit more difficult to find. But help is on the way! More on that will be informed later.

Another item the Program Action Plan that needs to be stressed has to do with Reporting and Awards.

In your Unit narrative reports, one question that is asked has to do with Star Spangled Kids. It is also a requirement for both the Unit and Department Awards. However, since SSK has been moved to Americanism, please use the following qualifying question:

1. **How did your unit demonstrate “Celebrating a Century of Service,” with the focus centering on “The Health and Well-Being of our Veterans, Military, and Their Families”?**

Of course the following two questions will remain the same:

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 veterans’ children?*

As well, the criteria to receive the National President’s Award For Excellence has been streamlined. There will be five Unit and five Department awards (one in each Division), that demonstrates “Celebrating a Century of Service,” with the focus centering on “The Health and Well-Being of our Veterans, Military, and Their Families.” The winners will be recognized on stage at the 2020 ALA National Convention.

Contact Department Children & Youth Chairman for more ideas.

Children & Youth Awards Deadlines and 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 tell the world who we are, what we do, and why we matter. Just two simple steps to add your part to our national success story:

- 1) Please follow instructions as you fill out the National Report and Awards Cover Sheet.
- 2) Provide details/examples about the activity as outlined in the Program action plan.



AWARDS *Contact Department Chairman for forms and deadlines*

A. Youth Hero

- **Award:** Youth Hero Medal and 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 and guidelines:**
 - Complete the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination Form and mail to your department secretary, who certifies, then mails the application to National Headquarters. (Please, do not mail applications directly to National Headquarters.)
 - The award certificate, signed by the national president and national Children & Youth chairman, and Youth Hero Award medal will be returned to the unit or department to be presented on behalf of the National organization.
 - The department Children & Youth chairman should be notified of the award.

B. Good Deed

- **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 and Good Deed Award Nomination Form and mail to your department secretary, who certifies, then mails the application to National Headquarters. (Please, do not mail applications directly to National Headquarters.)
 - The award certificate, signed by the national president and national Children & Youth chairman, will be returned to the unit or department to be presented on behalf of the National organization.
 - The department Children & Youth chairman should be notified of the award.



C. Unit Award: Most Outstanding Unit Children & Youth Program

- **Award:** Citation Plaque
- **Presented to:** One unit in each division (5)
- **Materials and guidelines:**
 - Narrative not to exceed 1,000 words. Include specific examples of how your unit worked the Children & Youth program, including supporting military children.
 - May include pictures, news articles, news releases, etc.
- **Deadline:** Units submit to Department Chairman by **May 1, 2020**

Children & Youth Reporting:

Mid-Year Reports

Please submit a narrative report to Department Chairman by **December 21, 2019**

Year-End Reports

Please submit a narrative report to Department Chairman by **May 1, 2020**

Special 100th Anniversary Program Facts:

The ALA's Children and Youth (C&Y) program started out as "Child Welfare" in 1931-1932 and was changed to Children and Youth in 1970-1971. The Youth Hero Award became a part of C&Y in 2002-2003 to recognize someone under 18 year of age who performs a heroic act of bravery. The Good Deed Award was added shortly after to recognize youth who contribute through community service. In 2013-2014, the "Kids of Deployed are Heroes, Too" (KDH2) initiative was started to help military kids feel special and not ignored when their family member was deployed.