

Program Engagement Plan

Children & Youth 2025-2026

The purpose of the Children & 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 our veterans and military families.

Children & Youth Chairman:

Rebekah Woodyard

Woody Dixon Jr. Unit 153

7071 Huntington Ct. N

Mobile, AL 36619

251-753-4943

Pbwoodyard@att.net

Purpose: This Program provides care and strives to improve conditions for all children. The program works to preserve the integrity of the family unit and takes a realistic approach to the needs of children by considering the physical, spiritual, and educational aspects of each situation. The program cooperates with many other public and private community agencies and organizations. To support essential legislation for children at the national, state, and local levels. In some cases, the program offers direct financial assistance and services to individual children or to the families of veterans. To support and educate members about The Child Welfare Foundation, its mission, and provide financial assistance to The American Legion in their efforts.

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

- Wear purple April 15 in honor of Purple Up! Day for Military Kids.

- Perform the [Military Child Table ceremony](#) at a unit meeting or in your community.
- 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 local news sources (newspaper, community television, community websites, and social media accounts) and town council with an offer to give a presentation about you and your unit's work for veterans and military children.
- Plan a special celebration for children during the month of April in honor of Children & Youth Month and Month of the Military Child (#momc).
- Host a dinner, game night, or community fair, etc., that will bring military and non-military families together.

To recognize and reward the positive actions of our children and youth, the American Legion Auxiliary has two special national awards bestowed to youth nominated by units: the Youth Hero Award and the Good Deed Award.

- Watch your socials and local media for possible nominations of students.
- Use the [online form](#) to submit your nomination.
- Invite your winners to a unit meeting to present the award to them.
- Contact your local media and submit a [press release](#) regarding the award presentation.
- More information: <https://member.legion-aux.org/youth-hero-good-deed-awards>

Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2) is an initiative honoring military children who may be experiencing a separation from one or both parents, whether deployed to a war zone, having a short tour, or on an extended temporary duty assignment.

- Volunteer at a Family Readiness Group event where KDH2 "I'm a Hero 2" buttons/stickers can be distributed.
- Host a KDH2 celebration with recognition buttons/stickers to let military kids know we appreciate their sacrifices.
- More Information: <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/committees/children-and-youth/recognize-kids-of-active-military>

The American Legion Auxiliary Children & Youth program strives to support and promote the [Children & Youth program](#) of The American Legion.

- Work with your post to organize celebrations for the youth in your community. Host an Easter egg hunt, a Christmas party, or a family movie night, etc.

- Work with your post to cross promote youth programs. Invite Legionnaires to speak at a unit meeting about Legion Boys State, Legion Baseball, Oratorical Contest, etc. Speak at a post meeting about ALA Girls State, Junior Activities, etc.
- Encourage the community and Unit to take part in Leadership Camp. This camp is set up to develop Patriotism, Leadership skills and to educate our youth on the patriotic programs that The American Legion and The American Legion Auxiliary promote.

To promote and support Children & Youth activities within your unit and community

- Provide school supplies to local elementary schools based on needs.
- Pass out coloring books promoting Halloween Safety, America the Beautiful, Poppies at school, community events, etc.
- Volunteer @ local school functions for back-to-school events.
- Encourage and educate Auxiliary members on volunteering with youth within the community to combat bullying.
- Help create stability for children in need of mentorship.
- To promote the collection of Tabs for The Ronald McDonald House on a Unit, District, and State level. To be turned in by April 1, 2026.
- Collaborate with other Units and work as a team to promote Children & Youth events.
- Promote donations for raffle tickets for Corn Hole Boards to be raffled at June Convention. All monies collected to be donated to Children & Youth programs with The American Legion Auxiliary.

Awards

- **National Award:** 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: Rebekah Woodyard pbwoodyard@att.net
- **Unit Award:** Best Children & Youth Program by a Unit.
A certificate will be given to the Units that participate in the Children & Youth Programs. A special Award will be given to the Most Outstanding Children & Youth program by a Unit

- 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 Family 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.
- **Ronald McDonald Tab –Top Challenge**
The District & Unit that collects the most Tab-Tops for the Ronald McDonald House will receive a special Award.

REPORTING

- Year-End: Units must send in a report to the Department Chairman no later than April 15, 2026. Reports should include the Unit report form and a consolidated narrative of the Units C&Y activities. Please submit photos, social media posts, newspaper articles, copies of proclamations etc....

Deadlines/Important Dates

- April is the Month of the Military Child (#momc)
- April 15: Purple Up! Day for Military Children
- May 15: Department chairmen report due to division chairmen, cc: national chairman
- April 15: Awards submissions due
- April 15: Year-End Unit Reports due to Department Chairman.



