

# Program Engagement Plan

## Children & Youth 2024-2025

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

American Legion of Alabama Department Children & Youth Chairman:

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**Purpose:** 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 military and veterans. Standing Rules 6, Core National Standing Committees

### Key Program Statements and Chairman Notes:

- To emphasizes protecting, caring for, and supporting children and youth, particularly those of veterans' and military families.
- 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.
- To educate our children about American history which is extremely important to our country's civic health. "Star Spangled Kids" is the American Legion Auxiliary initiative to educate our youth about United States history, Americanism, and the U.S. Constitution.
- 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.
- Support and promote the Children and Youth program of The American Legion.
  - Visit Leadership Camp for Department/District.
  - Share available resources with the Legion Family.
  - Support the Mental Health Awareness and Career Readiness for Youth
  - Facilitate a Youth Summit for grades 3-12. Equipping our youth with positive reinforcement for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive.
  - Contact a local vendor as sponsors for events and collaborating with Districts/Units for promotions, participation, and donations.
  - Volunteer at local schools' functions for back to school, community events and youth groups.
  - Encourage and educate the Auxiliary members on volunteerism with the youth within the community to combat bullying, help create stability for children in need and mentorship.

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- To educate members and the general public about the Child Welfare Foundation (CWF), its mission, and to provide financial assistance to The American Legion in their efforts to award grants to youth-serving nonprofit organizations.

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 and spiritual, as well as the emotional and educational aspects, of each situation. The program cooperates with many other public and private community agencies and organizations and supports 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. Auxiliary members also contribute to The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, which was established in 1954 to fund special programs and projects which emphasize preventative solutions to difficult children's issues. Educating members and the general public about these issues is a primary goal of the Auxiliary's Children and Youth program.

**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>

**The American Legion Auxiliary Children & Youth program strives to support and promote the Children & Youth program of The American Legion.**

- 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.
- 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.
- 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, Trunk or Treat, etc.
- Work with your post to cross promote youth programs. Invite Legionnaires to speak at a unit meeting about Legion Boys State, Legion Baseball, etc. Also speak at unit meetings about ALA Girls State, Junior Activities, etc.

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- Promote youth participation in the Oratorical Contest encourages deeper knowledge and appreciation for the U.S. Constitution among high school students under age 20. Developing the youth acumen for the Constitution and the importance of this founding document and the understanding of how it applies to them.
- Encourage the community and units to take part in Junior Leadership Camp to develop patriotism, leadership skills and Americanism.

### **Deadlines/Important Dates**

- April is the Month of the Military Child (#momc)
- April 15: Purple Up! Day for Military Children
- May 15: Department chairmen reports are due to division chairmen, cc: national chairman
- June 1: Awards submissions due