

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

It's More Than A Program...It's A Promise!

NEWS LETTER

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SUMMER ADVENTURES ARE ALMOST HERE!

We're gearing up for an exciting summer full of opportunities for military-connected youth to grow, explore, and connect. Whether it's heading off to overnight camp, joining a local day camp, or participating in a regional youth symposium, there's something for every age and interest.

This summer promises adventure, leadership, friendship, and personal growth. From trying new activities, to building confidence and creating lasting memories, each event is designed to support the unique needs of National Guard children and teens.

All of us working in the ARNG CYSP program are looking forward to a safe, fun-filled season of learning and discovery—and we hope your family will be part of it.

Contact your **local Child & Youth Program Coordinator** today to find out what opportunities are coming to your state or region.

NEED HELP COVERING SUMMER ACTIVITY COSTS?

GET SUMMER CAMP PAID FOR!

Find out if your children are eligible to get their summer camp and extracurriculars funded through our Guard & Reserve Deployed Program: ourmilitarykids.org/apply/



While our summer programs are low or no cost, we know your kids have lots going on! For help funding other activities like sports, camps, or fine arts programs, visit our friends at **Our Military Kids** to see if your child is eligible for a grant.



WWW.ARNGCYS.COM

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REGION 5 UPDATE: CELEBRATING MOMC 2025 ACROSS THE MIDWEST

Illinois – Partnered Color Run & Resource Fair

In Illinois, MOMC was marked by a colorful and lively Color Run event in April! Military youth and their families enjoyed a day filled with activities like visiting a resource fair, painting flower pots, making bracelets, and more. The event was made possible thanks to the many volunteers and community partners who showed their support.



Indiana – Carnival Fun & Creative Arts

The second annual MOMC Celebration Carnival at Rascal’s Fun Zone brought together 198 youth and family members for go-karts, mini golf, duckpin bowling, and arcade fun. The Indiana Teen Council and CYP team led resilience games and activities throughout the event. Another event, the MOMC Art Workshop at the Indy Art Center gave 25 youth the opportunity to explore block printing, foil embossing, and faux stained glass. The event concluded with a relaxing open art session featuring sketching, modeling clay, string art, and bracelet making.



Michigan – Carnival & Purple Up Boxes

Michigan’s MOMC celebration included a carnival, where more than 100 service members and families enjoyed activities supported by 40 volunteers. The League of Enchantment delighted kids in superhero and princess costumes. Families also had the opportunity to explore local resources at educational tables. In addition, Michigan launched its Purple Up Boxes, an initiative inspired by the Iowa CYP Team. These kits, distributed to schools, reached over 300 students with educational tools that celebrated and supported military-connected youth.



Ohio – Honoring Our Volunteers

Ohio held a recognition ceremony at Maj. Gen. Robert S. Beightler Armory in Columbus to honor this year’s OMK Military Youths of the Year and the OMK 4-H Volunteer of the Year. The three outstanding volunteers recognized at the event have collectively given more than 1,500 hours of their time to support military youth since 2022. Their dedication is a shining example of the heart behind our programs.



Minnesota – Purple Up at Mall of America®

Minnesota celebrated Purple Up Day at the iconic Mall of America®. Military youth and their families enjoyed games, a photo booth, caricatures, airbrush tattoos, treats, and character appearances. With support from sponsors, attendees also participated in a Build-A-Bear experience and enjoyed free rides at Nickelodeon Universe®.



Wisconsin – Military Kids Ball & Purple Up Camp

Wisconsin celebrations included the first-ever Military Kids Ball, held in partnership with the USO. This formal event allowed military families to enjoy aspects of military tradition together in a fun, family-friendly setting. Additionally, the state hosted a Purple Up Overnight Camp, where youth participated in wilderness skills training and resilience activities—building friendships and confidence in the great outdoors.



MONTH *of the* MILITARY CHILD

CONTEST WINNERS

This year, we invited military-connected youth to explore our 2025 theme—“National Guard Kids: Your Adventure Starts Here”—through two special creative contests: the Adventure-Themed Photo Contest and the Month of the Military Child Backpack Design Contest.

We are proud to announce the winners in each age group, whose entries captured the courage, creativity, and adventurous spirit that make National Guard kids truly exceptional.

Thank you to everyone who participated; you reminded us that adventure begins with imagination—and that National Guard kids are always ready to lead the way.



JAXON W., AGE 5

Jaxon’s winning backpack design is bold and full of personality—just like his idea of adventure! Inspired by Iron Man, his design features the superhero’s iconic red and yellow colors. For Jaxon, adventure means being brave, strong, and ready to help others—just like Iron Man and his dad, who serves in the Iowa Army National Guard.

AGES 0-5



AGES 6-12

Delaney’s backpack design takes us on an out-of-this-world journey! Her idea of adventure includes exploring outer space, discovering new planets, and traveling alongside a crew of cat astronauts. With imagination as her fuel, Delaney shows us that adventure can take you anywhere—even the stars. Her mom serves in the New York Air National Guard, and Delaney is ready to launch into her own great adventure.

DELANEY C., AGE 8



IAN P., AGE 9

Ian’s backpack design is filled with color and meaning. The green represents the grass beneath his feet, while the pink and yellow reflect a beautiful sunset. His mountain design was inspired by a family trip to Colorado, where he hiked through the Rocky Mountains—his greatest adventure yet! With his dad serving in the Minnesota Army National Guard, Ian reminds us that adventure can be found in nature, in family, and in the memories we make along the way.



LOVELLA H., AGE 11

Lovella’s backpack design proudly honors her roots in the small rural town of Rocky Ford, Colorado—home of the Meloneers. She attends many Child and Youth events, most of which are held in big cities like Colorado Springs or Denver. “Every time we go,” she says, “none of the other kids know where Rocky Ford is.” That’s exactly why, when asked how she’d design her backpack, Lovella didn’t skip a beat: “I’m going to make it a Meloneer backpack!” With her dad in the Colorado Army National Guard, Lovella’s design celebrates small-town pride and shows that every adventure starts somewhere special.



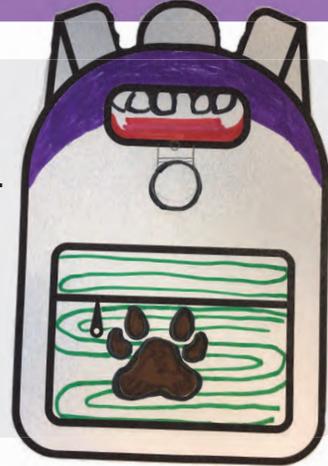
MONTH *of the* MILITARY CHILD

CONTEST WINNERS

1

GABRIEL A., AGE 15
AGES 13-18

Gabriel's powerful backpack design tells a story of resilience, growth, and loyalty. The dented smile symbolizes the changes and milestones a military parent may miss while away. The medal honors all he has achieved in his 15 years, and the paw print represents the deep loyalty shared within his military family—to each other and to their country. With his dad serving in the Puerto Rico Army National Guard, Gabriel's design reflects the quiet strength behind every military child's journey.


JAY S., AGE 14

2

Jay's backpack design tells a unique story—one filled with music, emotion, and adventure. For Jay, music is a powerful part of every journey, reflecting how we feel and shaping the way we experience the world. From symbols of love to moments of reflection, Jay's design shows that adventure isn't always loud and wild—it can also be personal, thoughtful, and deeply meaningful. With a dad in the Missouri Army National Guard, Jay expresses how every military kid's adventure is shaped by creativity, connection, and heart.



3

CAMILA L., AGE 16

Camila's backpack design honors the strength and bravery of her dad, who serves in the Puerto Rico Army National Guard. To her, military life is a true adventure—one filled with courage, sacrifice, and love. She sees her father as a warrior, someone who gives his all to protect others and support his family. Her design is a heartfelt tribute to the strength of military families and the heroes they call their own.

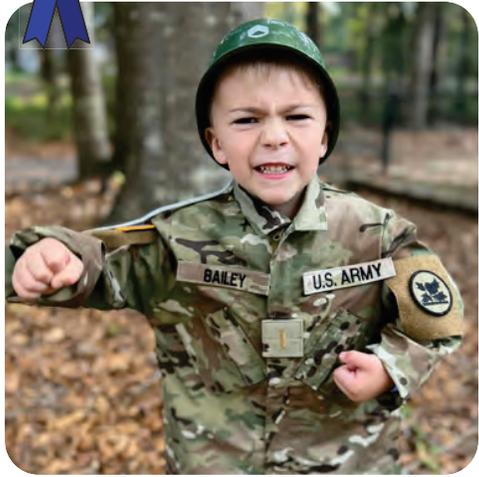
INSPIRED BY ADVENTURE: MORE DESIGNS WE LOVED


MONTH *of the* MILITARY CHILD

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



HENRY B., AGE 5



Henry loves playing Army while exploring the outdoors—with his imagination leading the way. Inspired by his dad’s service in the Alabama Army National Guard, Henry loves going on pretend missions, discovering new places, and turning every day into an adventure.

AGES 0-5



LAINAY W., AGE 1



Lainey is already embracing adventure—one pumpkin at a time! With both Mom and Dad serving in the West Virginia Army National Guard, she explored Gritt’s Farm in 2024, showing us that even the smallest adventure —can be full of wonder.



AMIYAH H., AGE 3



Adventure was full speed ahead for Amiyah as she zipped down a steep slide between hay bales at Pierson’s Farm in Orange County! With her mom serving in the New York Army National Guard, Amiyah shows us that joy, courage, and excitement can be found in the simplest moments.

MORE MOMENTS WE LOVED



MONTH *of the* MILITARY CHILD

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



ABEL H., AGE 10



Abel is always on the move—whether it’s motocross, baseball, BMX, golf, fishing, or hunting, he’s all about trying new things and staying active. With his dad serving in the Texas Army National Guard, Abel embraces every chance to explore and have fun.

AGES 6-12



BRIGGS G., AGE 11



Briggs kicked off an exciting adventure with his first race of 2025. Racing through cold, wet, and muddy conditions, he powered through to earn 4th place. With his dad serving in the Mississippi Air National Guard, Briggs embraces every challenge and pushes himself to grow with each race.



ALEESA A., AGE 9



Aleesa’s adventure begins on horseback—riding tall, learning new skills, and building confidence with every stride. With her mom serving in the Alabama Army National Guard, Aleesa’s journey is full of strength, balance, and bold new experiences.

SNAPSHOTS OF ADVENTURE



MONTH *of the* MILITARY CHILD

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

1

AUTUMN R., AGE 17



"This is where it all begins—just me, my quad, and a wide open world full of adventure." With her mom serving in the Connecticut Army National Guard, Autumn has learned that every place, new start, and wild ride helps shape who you are. "Every bump, every turn, every laugh and crazy moment ahead is part of the story I'm writing. My adventure starts here, and I'm ready for every second of it."

AGES 13-18

2

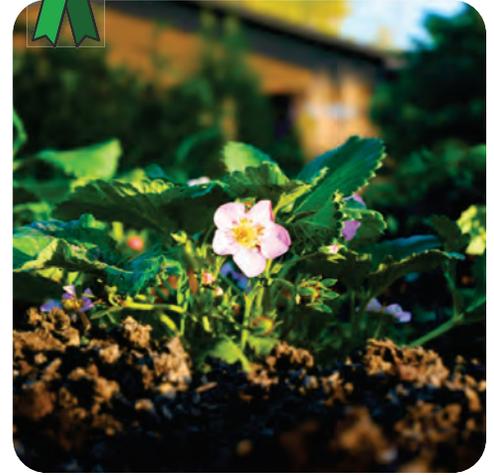
LOGAN N., AGE 13



Logan dove into adventure—literally—while scuba diving in Brazil with his younger brother, Conan (age 10). Surrounded by fish as big as they were, the experience was unforgettable. With their dad serving in the New Hampshire Army National Guard, these kids are always ready to explore the world around them.

3

JENNIFER V., AGE 16



Jennifer captured this photo of a strawberry plant her family has been growing since spring 2024.

"Working in the outdoors and interacting with nature has been an amazing adventure," Jennifer says. "I didn't start out with a green thumb, but I've grown through every challenge. I hope our garden brings sweet strawberries—and even sweeter memories—by summer's end."

With her dad serving in the Nebraska Air National Guard, Jennifer's love of gardening is one more way her family grows stronger together.

HONORING EVERY EXPLORER





**American
Red Cross**

RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

The Red Cross supports military members, veterans, and their families by helping them prepare for, cope with, and respond to the challenges of military life. Volunteers provide essential services and comforts on military bases and in hospitals worldwide, assist military families during deployments and emergencies, and continue offering support to veterans even after their service ends.

For more information:

<https://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/military-families.html>

Disclaimer: Sharing of resources in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by NGB, any contract vendor or the PM Team.

DOWNLOAD OUR APP!



Search "ARNG CYP"

JOIN US FOR OUR NATIONAL ADVENTURE!

Pack your curiosity and sense of fun—Our National Adventure is ready for takeoff! This exciting, nationwide project invites military-connected youth to “travel” across the country through engaging, educational worksheets that highlight fun facts, and state history.

Each state and territory has created a unique activity sheet filled with crosswords, word scrambles, trivia, and more—all designed for a variety of ages. It’s a fun, self-paced way for kids and teens to explore different parts of the country, learn something new, and feel more connected to the larger Guard Family.

How it Works:

- [Visit our website](#) and click on a state or territory name to download its worksheet.
- Complete as many worksheets as you’d like—it’s your adventure to design!
- When you’re done, submit your completed sheets to your [local Child & Youth Coordinator](#), via email.
- Coordinators will review entries and may award certificates, camp shirts, or Guard swag to celebrate your progress!

The more worksheets you complete, the farther you’ll go on this virtual journey across America. Whether you finish five or all fifty-four, you’ll discover amazing facts and stories about our country—and the National Guard’s important presence in every corner of it.

Questions? [Reach out to your local Child & Youth Program Coordinator](#) for help getting started.

OUR NATIONAL
adventure



DOWNLOAD NOW