

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

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

NEWS LETTER

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APRIL IS HERE AND WE ARE JUST GETTING STARTED!

April is one of our favorite months of the year, and we are kicking it off by celebrating the incredible military kids in our community. Join us on **April 10 for Purple Up Day!** Wear purple to show every military child that they are seen, valued, and celebrated. It is a small gesture that makes a big difference.

And while you are in celebration mode, do not forget that summer is right around the corner! We have day camps, activities, and resources lined up to make your family's summer truly spectacular. Get connected with your local program now so your family does not miss a thing. Your local staff have everything you need to make this the best summer yet.

Reach out today and let's make it happen!



Spring sports, activities, and school projects piling up? Keep academic momentum going with no cost tutoring designed for military families.

Tutor.com for U.S. Military Families is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) General Library Program, and Coast Guard Mutual Assistance (CGMA), is a program that provides on-demand, online tutoring and homework help at no cost to eligible service members, civilian personnel, and their dependents.

Check out what is available at: <https://military.tutor.com/home>



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THE GUARD TEEN PANEL: LEADING THE WAY FOR NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH

This April, twelve of the most driven young leaders in the National Guard community are doing something pretty remarkable. The Guard Teen Panel is traveling to Washington, D.C. to represent National Guard youth from across the nation, right in the heart of where decisions get made. And during Month of the Military Child, that means everything.

The GTP is made up of delegates from all ten regions plus two at-large representatives, and they serve as the official voice of National Guard youth nationwide. From April 8 through 12, they will be in D.C. for a week packed with purpose. Delegates will participate in protocol training, leadership calls, and a live joint meeting with State Teen Panels from around the country. One of the most exciting moments of the week will be a Q&A Teen Town Hall, where these young people will speak up, ask tough questions, and make sure the perspective of National Guard youth is heard at the national level.

This is not a field trip. This is leadership in action.

And it all starts at the state level.

Every GTP delegate's journey began with their State Teen Panel, where they first found their voice, built their confidence, and discovered what it means to lead within the military community. We asked two of our delegates to share how those state-level experiences shaped them, and their answers are a pretty powerful reminder of why getting involved early matters so much.

Jona Starks, Region 5 Representative, described what her State Teen Panel experience meant to her:

"One of the most impactful opportunities I have had was attending the Teen Summit and meeting other military teens from across the state. It meant a lot to be around people who really understand the challenges that come with being a military teen. Being able to talk with others who have gone through similar experiences made me feel supported and less alone. The leadership activities and group discussions helped me feel more confident in sharing my ideas, and listening to guest speakers with military backgrounds was inspiring. They shared real stories and advice that made me think more about my own goals and how I can make a difference. I have built friendships, grown as a leader, and felt more connected to the military community. It made me want to stay involved and help create that same kind of support for other teens."

That desire to stay involved and give back? That is exactly what the path from State Teen Panel to GTP looks like.

Kamryn Stauffacher, National Guard Delegate to the Army's Director's Teen Panel, found her footing through the programs she experienced as a younger participant:

"When I was a camper, I looked up to the junior counselors and aspired to be them one day. Now that I am one, I love helping kids learn how to problem solve, work with others, and lead. I want to show future military kids that our voices can have a bigger impact than we think, just like the counselors before me showed me."

Kamryn's story is a perfect example of what happens when a young person gets connected early, finds role models, and then becomes one.

Both Jona and Kamryn started right where many of your teens could start today, at the state level, finding community and building skills that eventually carried them all the way to a national stage.

If you have a teen in your life who is looking for connection, leadership opportunities, and a community that truly gets the military experience, the State Teen Panel is the place to start. Reach out to your **local CYS coordinator** to learn more about how your teen can get involved and begin their own journey.

STAFF ACROSS THE NATION COME TOGETHER FOR MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Every April, we celebrate the strength, resilience, and spirit of military children during Month of the Military Child. This year, that celebration got a major boost thanks to dedicated staff from across the country who rolled up their sleeves and got to work building something truly special for our families.

Two powerhouse workgroups came together with one goal in mind: creating meaningful, high-quality programming that military kids and the people who support them can actually use.

The Virtual Activities Workgroup, chaired by National Program Manager Jeremy Van Wyk and made up of Heath Vincent (CYPC, IN), Katie Griffin (LCYPC, IN), Steffi Faure (LCYPC, NY), Rose Rivera (CYPC, PR), Karis Katzen (CYPC, CO), Hannah Cote (LCYPC, NH) and Erica Wand-Dukes (West Regional Program Manager), created two incredible resources this year.

First, they built a youth packet packed with six hours of programming and life skills education designed for military youth to work through throughout the month. It is hands-on, engaging, and built with National Guard kids in mind.

Second, they developed an educator resource guide specifically designed to help teachers and school staff better understand what it means to have a National Guard student in their classroom, complete with activities they can use right away. This guide has already been picked up by the Department of War and is now being shared as an official resource through their channels. That is a big deal, and it reflects the quality of the work this team put in.

The Virtual Day Camp Workgroup, chaired by National Training Coordinator Brian Stoudhour made up of Raymond LaPoint (CYPC, NJ), Andrew Seward (LCYPC, OH), Andy Connell (LCYPC, DE), Blake Davis (LCYPC, OK), JD Engelhardt (LCYPC, WI), Gaizka Vazquez Lam (Program Analyst), Elizabeth Marcotte (East Region Program Manager), and Erin Berry (National Marketing Coordinator), designed two virtual day camp experiences that are happening on April 4th.

One camp is built for kids ages 6 to 12, and the other is designed specifically for teens ages 13 to 17. Both camps are built around this year's theme: Mission Possible. The younger kids will dive into exciting, age-appropriate activities, while the teens will get to work with a storytelling coach to develop and share their own personal stories. It is going to be an experience they will not forget.

None of this happens without the people who show up and do the work. To every staff member, volunteer, community partner, and military family who has supported Month of the Military Child, thank you. You make it possible for us to show military children just how much they are valued and celebrated.

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES FOR MOMC

Educator Resource Guide: Our MOMC Educator guide provides resources, booklists, and classroom activities designed to support military youth.

Download a Copy Here



MOMC Youth Packet: Our Month of the Military Child Secret Agent Mission Book is packed with creative challenges including map making, spy hunts, periscope building, Hunt the Good Stuff activities, and secret message decoding.

Request a copy from your local ARNG CYS Team



Virtual Day Camps: Registration is now closed

Purple Up Day: April 10, 2026





STAY CONNECTED. STAY INFORMED. STAY INVOLVED.

What if staying up to date with everything happening in the Army National Guard Child & Youth Services program was as easy as a click or a tap? It is.

Our website and mobile app are your go-to sources for the latest program updates, resources, opportunities, and events happening across the country. Whether you are a parent, Soldier, volunteer, or community partner, staying connected helps you make the most of everything available to Guard youth and families.

When you subscribe to our website, you get direct access to:

- The latest newsletters and national updates
- Program opportunities and events
- Resources that support military-connected youth and families
- Important announcements you do not want to miss

No searching. No guessing. Just helpful information delivered right to you.

Our mobile app makes it even easier to stay connected. With just a few taps, you can explore resources, find information, and stay in the loop wherever you are. It is a simple way to keep support and opportunities right at your fingertips.

Know someone who could benefit from these resources? Share it.

- Family Readiness Groups
- Soldiers and military families
- Schools and educators
- Community partners and youth organizations

The more people we reach, the more youth and families we can support. You play a key role in helping us expand that impact. Let's Build Something Bigger Together

Our goal is simple. Keep families informed, connected, and supported no matter where they are. By subscribing and sharing, you are helping strengthen a network that reaches Guard youth across the nation.

Having trouble subscribing? We are here to help. Reach out to: erin.berry@chenegagms.com for assistance.



RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

Military families serve too and they deserve strong support networks.

Blue Star Families connects military families with local communities, empowering them with resources, career development programs, and research-driven advocacy. See how they're supporting families like yours.

For more information:
<https://bluestarfam.org/>

