

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

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

NEWS LETTER

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BACK TO SCHOOL AND READY FOR FALL

The school year is here, and it is a great time to reconnect with your local Child and Youth Program. If your family needs help with school supplies or resources, reach out to your state/territory coordinator. They are here to support military-connected youth and families.

As we settle into the fall season, there are plenty of exciting programs and activities on the way. From leadership workshops to family events and seasonal celebrations, your local CYS team is planning a variety of opportunities to stay engaged and connected.

Whether your child is starting kindergarten or heading into their senior year, now is the perfect time to get involved. Be sure your contact information is up to date and follow your state/territory's social media pages so you never miss a chance to join the fun.

Wishing all of our students a safe, successful, and fun-filled school year ahead!



Full tuition



Annual stipend between \$30,000 - \$46,000, depending on degree level



Summer internships



Book and health allowance



Experienced mentor



Guaranteed employment at a DoD facility upon degree completion

DO YOU HAVE A STUDENT PURSUING A STEM DEGREE?

The SMART Scholarship-for-Service Program applications are open! This incredible opportunity offers: Full tuition, a generous annual stipend, paid internships, guaranteed job placement with the Department of Defense after graduation.

If your student is ready to launch a career in science, technology, engineering, or math, the SMART Scholarship could be their next big step.

Learn more and apply: smartscholarship.org

Help them turn their passion for STEM into a mission-driven future!



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REGION 8: A SUMMER OF GROWTH AND CONNECTION



South Dakota wrapped up its 24th summer of youth camps with a theme centered on “How to Train Your Dragon.” A total of 108 campers and junior counselors came together to explore resilience and life skills through challenges like high and low ropes courses, daily flag ceremonies, and letters of gratitude written to Midwest Honor Flight veterans. The focus on military values, confidence, and community shone through as campers practiced leadership, mindfulness, and problem solving.

Colorado’s summer wrapped up with an unforgettable backpacking trip in the Sawatch Mountains. A group of teens pushed their limits, built resilience, and discovered just how much they are capable of achieving. Time away from electronics gave them the chance to live fully in the moment, form deeper connections with one another, and strengthen their communication and social skills. The experience not only boosted confidence but also fostered friendships and memories that will last well beyond the trail.



North Dakota has been busy gearing up for camp season, and it did not disappoint. This summer, three successful camps brought together 148 youth for more than just fun in the sun. Activities like high and low ropes, rock climbing, fishing, robotics, and 3D printing gave campers the chance to stretch themselves, try new skills, and build confidence. Every day was intentionally designed to help youth grow emotionally, socially, and mentally while forming lasting bonds with fellow North Dakota National Guard youth.

Wyoming marked an unforgettable summer with its annual youth camp at Camp Roberts at the YMCA of the Bighorns. From kayaking and archery to hiking, biking, and evenings around the campfire with s’mores, campers built friendships and memories to carry with them. In July, the program joined in four Cheyenne Frontier Days parades with a National Guard float and hosted a Ropes Course Event that challenged youth to problem-solve, climb, and build trust. Excursions to the Denver Zoo and the Laramie County Fair added hands-on learning about ecosystems, biodiversity, and creativity.



Montana’s summer was filled with laughter, growth, and three incredible camps that brought communities together. A day camp welcomed 36 campers and gave them hands-on activities and a glimpse into the work their parents do on base. Teen Camp, with 30 participants, focused on leadership and building connections with peers who understand the military lifestyle. The season wrapped up with Camp Runnamuka, the largest event of the summer, with 130 campers and 27 volunteers. From wilderness survival to resilience training, youth walked away with valuable life skills and lifelong friendships.

Utah kept youth busy all summer long with a variety of fun and educational activities. A total of 216 youth participated in the Junior Master Gardening events held with 4-H at armories across the state. July brought exciting STEM day camps where youth explored solar science, art beading, and the Infinity Mission program in partnership with 4-H Extension. Each event gave participants the chance to learn new skills, spark curiosity, and strengthen their connection to the military youth community.

SPOTLIGHT



FROM CAMPER TO COUNSELOR: A BOG BROOK JOURNEY

By Isaiah Morgan, Region 1 Guard Teen Panel Delegate

In the distance, a cadence echoes as a camper calls out, "left, left, left, right." The Charlie cabin is marching to formation before being released for another day of adventure. The sun is beating down, and I'm only 48 hours into camp. Did I remember to put on sunscreen after reminding my campers a hundred times? That's just one of the many thoughts running through my head at Bog Brook, Maine's Army National Guard, Child and Youth Program, Overnight Camp.

My first summer at Bog Brook, I was a Charlie myself, one of many sixth graders packed into a cabin, spending days kayaking, hiking, rappelling, and, of course, enjoying Jim's famous cooking. Now, years later, I've returned as a junior counselor (JC) for Charlie and other cabins. This past summer, I had the privilege of leading the Cadet cabin for the second time. Guiding 8th–10th graders comes with challenges, but it also comes with highlights, like getting to play paintball alongside them!

Being a counselor has been incredibly rewarding. I've had the chance to step into the roles of mentor, leader, and friend, just as my own counselors once did for me.

When I'm lifeguarding at Frenchman Falls with the Cadet cabin, I often wonder if one of the campers in front of me will one day become the Teen Council President. I remember when I was in their shoes, worrying about whether my hat would get frozen in the chow hall or bracing myself for a paintball splatter.

All I want is to leave this program better than I found it, and to help youth love their camp experience as much as I always have. My hope is that campers spend the year counting down the months, weeks, days, and hours until they're back at Bog Brook—reuniting with friends, laughing like no time has passed, and making memories that last a lifetime.



SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

SUPPORT STARTS WITH AWARENESS AND CONNECTION

Suicide is a difficult topic, but it deserves open conversation, compassion, and action. Every life matters, and every person, civilian or military, should know that support is available when they need it most. September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage connection.

Support for Military Families

Service members and their families often face unique stressors like deployments and short and long separations. These challenges can impact mental well-being and may increase the risk of isolation, anxiety, or depression.

You do not need to be a mental health professional to help. Being present, listening without judgment, and offering support can make a meaningful difference.

Know the Warning Signs

If someone you care about is struggling, they may show:

- Withdrawal from friends, family, or usual activities
- Changes in mood, behavior, or sleep patterns
- Expressing hopelessness or feeling like a burden
- Talking about death or not wanting to be here
- Engaging in risky or self-destructive behavior



How You Can Help

- Start a conversation. Let them know you care and are there for them
- Listen without trying to “fix” everything
- Encourage professional help or assist them in finding resources
- Stay connected through regular check-ins and quality time

Where to Find Help

If you or someone you know is in crisis, there are people ready to help.

- 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: Call or text 988 or visit 988lifeline.org
- Military OneSource: [1-800-342-9647](tel:1-800-342-9647) or militaryonesource.mil
- Veterans Crisis Line: Dial [988](tel:988) and press 1 or Text 838255
- TRICARE Mental Health Services: tricare.mil/mentalhealth
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention: afsp.org



Final Thoughts

We all have a role to play in preventing suicide. Whether you are a service member, a family member, or a community partner, your support, compassion, and awareness can help save a life.



SEPTEMBER IS PREPAREDNESS MONTH

Is Your Family Ready? September is National Preparedness Month, a time to help families get ready for emergencies before they happen. Whether it is a natural disaster, power outage, or unexpected event, having a plan can make all the difference.

Military families understand the importance of being prepared. Use this month to build or update your emergency kit, talk about your family's communication plan, and make sure everyone knows what to do in different situations.

Helpful resources are available at [Ready.gov/kids](https://ready.gov/kids), FEMA, and the American Red Cross. These sites offer checklists, games, and tools that make preparedness simple and family-friendly.

Being ready is one more way we support each other and stay strong in any situation.



RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

Our Military Kids® is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to supporting children and teens of deployed National Guard, deployed Reserve, or post-9/11 combat wounded, ill, or injured Veterans in treatment.

They provide extracurricular activity grants for sports, arts, tutoring, camps, and more — helping build self-confidence, enhance family wellness, and strengthen a shared sense of community. These grants give military kids the chance to thrive during challenging times and stay engaged in activities they love.

If your family qualifies, don't miss this valuable opportunity!

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

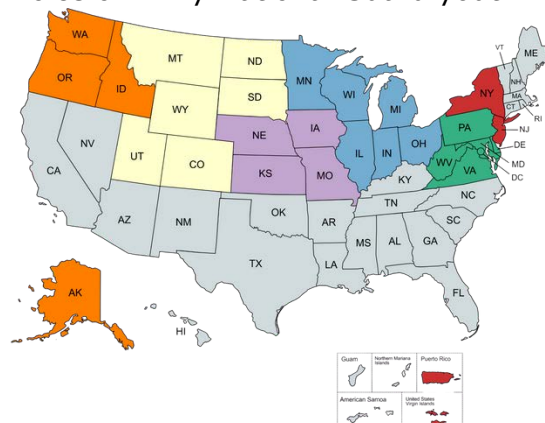
Disclaimer: Sharing of resources in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by NGB, any contract vendor or the PM Team.

CALLING ALL TEEN LEADERS: GUARD TEEN PANEL APPLICATIONS OPEN SEPTEMBER 8

Do you know a military-connected teen who is ready to lead, advocate, and make an impact? The Guard Teen Panel (GTP) is looking for motivated students to represent their peers and share the voice of Army National Guard youth across the country.

Regions with Open Positions

- Region 2 (NY, NJ, USVI, PR)
- Region 3 (PA, DE, MD, DC, VA, WV)
- Region 5 (OH, IN, IL, MI, WI, MN)
- Region 7 (MO, IA, KS, NE)
- Region 8 (SD, ND, CO, UT, WY, MT)
- Region 10 (AK, ID, OR, WA)



GTP members serve a two-year term and work closely with the Army National Guard Child and Youth Services Program on issues that matter most to military families. They also have opportunities to attend leadership events, contribute to national initiatives, and collaborate with peers from across the nation.

Teens currently in 9th to 11th grade and active in their State/Territory Teen Panel are eligible to apply. If selected, they will gain valuable experience in public speaking, teamwork, and advocacy while giving back to their Guard community.

Visit <https://arngcys.com/teens-on-the-move> to learn more. Encourage the teens in your life to take the next step in leadership. Their voice matters.

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