

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

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

NEWS LETTER

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Region 6 Updates
- MOMC 2023
Winners
- Training Ops

CAMP EXPERIENCES ENHANCE THE WELL-BEING OF YOUTH

In today's technologically advanced world, where children are increasingly glued to screens and immersed in virtual experiences, the importance of outdoor activities cannot be overstated. Camping experiences can positively impact the lives of youth, fostering personal growth, social skills, and create a deeper connection with the natural world by:

1. Fostering Independence and Resilience: Camping provides young individuals with the chance to take on new challenges and responsibilities outside of their comfort zones. Whether it's setting up tents, cooking meals, or navigating trails, campers learn new skills and identify problem-solving abilities. These experiences build self-confidence and resilience as youth learn to adapt to different situations, overcome obstacles, and develop a sense of independence.

2. Developing Social Skills and Teamwork: Camping encourages collaboration and teamwork, offering an ideal setting for youth to interact with their peers and develop essential social skills. As children work together to achieve common goals, they learn to respect diverse perspectives, appreciate teamwork, and may forge lifelong friendships.

3. Nurturing Environmental Awareness and Conservation Ethic: Camping experiences immerse youth in the natural world, fostering a deep appreciation for the environment and instilling a sense of responsibility towards its preservation. Children develop a heightened awareness of ecological systems, flora, and fauna. They learn about Leave No Trace principles, understanding the importance of minimizing their impact on the environment. By experiencing the beauty and fragility of nature firsthand, youth are more likely to become environmental stewards, advocating for sustainable practices and taking action to protect our planet.

4. Promoting Physical and Mental Well-being: Camping encourages an active lifestyle and a break from sedentary habits. Outdoor activities promote physical fitness and improve mental well-being. Engaging with nature has been shown to reduce stress, boost mood, and enhance cognitive function. Being away from the constant stimulation of technology allows youth to disconnect, recharge, and gain a fresh perspective. Camping can provide an escape from the pressures of everyday life, allowing youth to connect with their inner selves and find solace in the simplicity of the natural world.

The memories created during camping trips often become cherished moments that inspire a lifelong love for the outdoors. If you would like to learn more about camping events and other activities in your [state, contact your local CYS team.](#)

Do you
want to
stay up-
to-date
with the
latest
info?

[Subscribe
on our
website!](#)



FL ARNG CYS Camp
Flag Raising



#GuardFamilies
#ARNGCYS

WWW.ARNGCYS.COM

NEW MEXICO



On March 10th, 2023, the New Mexico ARNG CYS held an art camp for teens. Teens molded, painted, and kiln fired their own pottery, showcasing their individual artistic skills.



Oklahoma ARNG CYS held a Daddy/Daughter dance on 2/11. It was a huge success and meant the world to the girls. It was especially poignant as several of our service members were leaving for a 1 year deployment the following week. A memory they will never forget.



LOUISIANA

Louisiana has a wonderful partnership with United Through Reading. Since April 2022, this organization has provided LANG Child and Youth Program with over 1,000 free books, bags, teddy bears and the organization's brochures for our families. These items are typically dispersed at our Yellow Ribbon's and community outreach events.



TEXAS



"The weekend of April 14-16th, the Texas CYS Program held their annual Teen Leadership Retreat at Candelight Ranch. Youth spent the weekend engaging in team building and leadership activities such as high and low ropes, obstacle courses where they had to work together to get across to the other side. Teens completed MRT training modules and created art that best represented who they are as a person."



Month of the Military Child Photo Collage Contest 2023

Theme: "National Guard Kids: Rising to the Challenge"

Celebrating Military Children

The **Month of the Military Child** is a special time dedicated to honoring and recognizing the resilience, sacrifices, and unique experiences of military connected children. As part of the celebrations, the Army National Guard Child and Youth Program organized a Photo Collage Contest in April 2023, providing an opportunity for military connected youth aged 0-18 years old to showcase their creativity and capture the essence of being a National Guard child.

The Month of the Military Child Photo Collage Contest received an overwhelming response, with a total of 67 entries submitted by talented photographers from across the National Guard community. This participation reflects the enthusiasm and passion these military children possess, ready to share their unique perspectives and experiences through the lens of a camera.

Each category (**0-5; 6-12; 13-18yrs**) had **three winners**, making it **a total of nine distinguished photographs**. And the selection of winners was carried out by a panel of CYS Staff and Guard Teen Panel Youth members. They evaluated the photos based on artistic composition, originality, and the ability to convey the contest's theme.

The theme, **"National Guard Kids: Rising to the Challenge"**, served as a guiding principle for the young photographers. It encouraged participants to capture moments that reflected their unique experiences as children of National Guard service members. From heartwarming family moments to snapshots of strength and resilience, the theme celebrated the unwavering commitment of these military-connected children.

Through the creativity of photography, the youth showcased strength, resilience, and courage and shed light on their remarkable journey of military childhood and offered a glimpse into their extraordinary lives.

On behalf of the whole CYS team, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the participants of the Month of the Military Child Photo Collage Contest 2023, as well as to those who continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of National Guard military-connected youth.

Thank you to each and every individual who contributed their talent, creativity, and passion to the contest. Your dedication and enthusiasm brought the event to life and made it a resounding success. The depth and quality of the submissions truly showcased the incredible artistic abilities and unique perspectives of the military children within our community.

>> To see all of the amazing photo entries for the MOMC 2023 photo contest, follow the link at: <https://arngcys.com/momc-2023-1>



WINNER



Marley E. - 5 years old

Marley is clinging tightly to her dad's dog tags that he has worn during his two deployments since she was born.



Jaxon S. - 4 years old

Jaxon traveled to Grafton National Cemetery to honor those who served during wreaths across America.



Adak R. - Age 7 months

Adak getting ready for his first PCS. Packing the important things first.

6-12 years old

WINNER



Cheyenne M. - 11 years old

This photo collage includes multiple community events Cheyenne has been a part of. Centered on the collage is Cheyenne's very own community service platform in action called "My First Duffel Bag." She runs donation drives at her school and in the community to fill duffel bags with all items needed for recruits to take to basic training. She participated in collecting donations and putting together easter baskets (over 50 baskets) that were delivered to Arkansas Children's Hospital. She supported Toys for Tots in an archery tournament and supported a canned food drive for the University of Arkansas. She ran a Kindness Challenge at her school, collected and donated school supplies to Operation HomeFront's Back to School, and ran a winter clothing drive at school. Teamed up with National Guard Instructors, students dropped their can pop tabs into a water jug and delivered it to the Ronald McDonald House.



Peighton S. - Age 10

Peighton moved from Guam to Virginia five years ago. Her mom's permanent change of station summer move from an island to the East Coast was a huge culture shock, but it taught her how to become a resilient military daughter. At age 10, she joined Taekwondo as a beginner white belt student. Through the ranks she now earned a 2nd degree black belt. Her personal goal is never quit! She has competed in numerous demonstration events in the National and State levels. Peighton gives back to the community by volunteering numerous hours in local schools and dojang. She enjoys helping other students like herself with training, sharing words of encouragement and help boost their confidence by demonstrating the "I can do it and never give up" attitude. She has received numerous awards to include the President's Volunteer Award. She is disciplined, displays trust, and respects others. Peighton's passion and a leader in Taekwondo has helped her remain positive and calm- a reflection of a true military kid!!!



Waverlee C. - Age 6

This is the first photo in a personal series called The Yellow Ribbon Project. We've emphasized the importance of a yellow ribbon throughout my husband's deployment. How fortunate we are to empathize with other families as they navigate deployment. How small stories like ours weave together the fabric of the American Soldier and their family. Past, present and future.

HIGH FIVE.



WINNER



Jonathan S. – Age 17

Our son, a Cadet Lieutenant Colonel with the Civil Air Patrol: Kansas Wing, was selected by the Wing Commander to lead a ceremonial cadet flight at the Adjutant General of Kansas' Transfer of Authority alongside the KS Air and Army National Guard on 1 April 2023. Based on his outstanding leadership within the Wing and the pride in his father's service under command of the TAG he rose to the challenge. Leading 15 cadets and one-color bearer through the ceremonial formation to include a Pass and Review.



Mathias H. – Age 14

Being a kid of a military parent can have so many benefits.. a few of them being to take responsibility for yourself and your actions, to be an example, to be disciplined and dependable.. as a young man of the house whose father is a soldier, he's had to accept the challenge of stepping up when dad's been gone. This picture of him being a patient & trustworthy big brother in action is truly a representation of some of the quality's he's learned while being an Army Guard kid.



Thaddeus S. – Age 13

Thaddeus started to train with his dad Jeremy to run a 10k. He's never run before outside of baseball and tackle football. Even when he did not want to he would go out for a nightly run. This photo is the photo taken by the Gatorade group who sponsored the run on the beach in El Salvador of Thaddeus and his dad Jeremy after the run.

WOW

TRAINING OPS

MCEC JUNE Parent Webinars are presented live on Zoom Tue/Wed at Noon EST.

>>Participants must register in advance.<<

- Maximizing Connections During Military Transitions 06/06/23
- Life After High School: Exploring the Trades 06/07/23
- Tips and Strategies for Interacting with Your Military-Connected Teen 06/13/23
- Self-Care Essentials for Military Families 06/14/23
- Building Meaningful Connections That Count 06/20/23
- Back to the Basics- How Goals Drive Placement 06/21/23
- Nurturing Problem Solvers: Supporting Early Math Skills at Home and in Early Education Settings 06/27/23
- Motivate Your Adolescent to Read During the Summer 06/28/23

<https://www.militarychild.org/webinars>



According to the American Psychological Association there are 10 ways to build resilience:

1. Making connections and building your social support network;
2. Avoiding the tendency to view crises as insurmountable challenges;
3. Accepting that change is a natural and unavoidable part of life;
4. Moving towards your (realistic) goals;
5. Taking decisive actions that will help you face your challenges;
6. Looking for opportunities for self-discovery;
7. Nurturing a positive view of yourself and your abilities;
8. Keeping things in perspective and in context;
9. Maintaining a hopeful outlook on life;
10. And taking care of yourself.

Check out the link below for more information, resources and free downloads!

<https://positivepsychology.com/resilience-activities-worksheets/>

*This does not indicate an endorsement of resources, programs and/or services by National Guard Bureau, DysTech, staff or contractors.