

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

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

NEWS LETTER



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WEEKEND DRILL CHILDCARE: SUPPORTING OUR GUARD FAMILIES

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) has partnered with Upwards to roll out the Weekend Drill Childcare (WDCC) Pilot Program—a solution designed to address the unique childcare challenges our Guard families face during drill weekends. The WDCC Pilot Program is a groundbreaking effort to bridge the gap in childcare services during drill weekends. NGB understands that balancing military duties with parental responsibilities can be tough, and that's where this program steps in. By providing reliable and affordable childcare, we're helping our service members stay focused on the mission, while also ensuring their families are well taken care of.

The WDCC Pilot Program is currently available for ARNG Soldiers in the following states: AR, CO, GA, IA, ID, IL, KS, LA, MA, MD, MN, MO, NH, NM, OH, OR, VA, VT, WA, or WI. If you're in one of these states, you can take advantage of the program and experience the peace of mind that comes with knowing your children are in good hands during drill weekends.

To learn more about the WDCC Program and other Childcare options for National Guard Families, check out:

<https://arngcys.com/childcare-options>



SPORT SAFETY TIPS

Participation in sports provides significant social, emotional, and physical benefits for children. One of the most challenging experiences for kids is being sidelined by an injury. Parents and coaches can take straightforward steps to help minimize preventable injuries, ensuring that youth can keep playing the games they love.

- Warm Up and Stretch Before Games and Practices
- Remember to Hydrate
- Don't Take Chances with the Brain: Know the Signs and Symptoms of Concussions
- Make Rest a Priority



READ MORE



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MULTI-REGIONAL SYMPOSIUM: A LANDMARK EVENT FOR REGIONS 9 & 10

The first Multi-Regional Symposium (MRS) hosted by Washington brought together Teen Councils from across Regions 9 & 10. This event was not just a meeting of minds but a dynamic learning experience that left a lasting impact on all who attended.

Participants delved into the Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) process, learning how they can influence change within the Army community. The chance to connect with peers from across the region was a highlight, fostering a strong sense of unity and shared purpose.

A visit to Olympia National Park allowed the teens to hike to a nearby waterfall and relax by the lake, while a community service project at the Port Angeles Food Bank emphasized the importance of giving back. The group also explored Seattle, navigating the city using public transportation and visiting Pike Place Market.

A key moment of the symposium was when the youth had the opportunity to present the accomplishments of the Child & Youth Program in their respective states. Cyrus and Laurel, representing California, delivered an inspiring briefing that showcased their state's successes while also drawing inspiration from the work being done in other states.

The Multi-Regional Symposium in Washington was more than just a gathering; it was a celebration of leadership, learning, and community. The connections made, the knowledge gained, and the memories created will undoubtedly fuel the enthusiasm and dedication of our Teen Councils as they continue to grow as leaders in their communities.



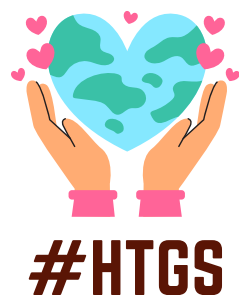
CELEBRATING WORLD GRATITUDE DAY

World Gratitude Day, celebrated annually on September 21, is a wonderful opportunity for families and friends to come together and reflect on the many blessings in their lives. Practicing gratitude not only fosters a positive outlook but also strengthens bonds and increases resilience. Here are some tips to celebrate World Gratitude Day and incorporate gratitude into your daily lives.

Create a Gratitude Jar: Place a jar in a central location in your home and provide slips of paper and pens nearby. Throughout the day, family members and friends can write down things they are grateful for and drop them into the jar. At the end of the week or month, gather together to read the notes aloud and appreciate the shared moments of gratitude.

Write Thank You Notes: Encourage youth to write thank-you notes to people who have made a difference in their lives. Whether it's a teacher, coach, friend, or family member, expressing gratitude through handwritten notes can have a powerful impact on both the sender and the recipient.

Reflect on Challenges: Discuss how challenges and difficult times have helped you grow or brought you closer together. Recognizing the positives that come from adversity can foster resilience and a deeper sense of gratitude.





TOUGH TOPIC: NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

September is National Suicide Prevention Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of mental health and the steps we can take to support those who may be struggling. Suicide is a complex and deeply impactful issue that affects individuals and communities. For young people, the pressures of growing up can sometimes feel overwhelming, and military-connected youth may face additional challenges such as parental or guardian deployments or disruptions to their routines due to weekend drills and annual training.

Being aware of the warning signs can make a significant difference in preventing suicide. Some indicators that a child or adolescent may be in distress include:

- **Changes in Behavior:** Sudden withdrawal from friends or activities, noticeable changes in eating or sleeping patterns, or a decline in academic performance.
- **Emotional Signs:** Expressions of hopelessness, worthlessness, or severe anxiety and irritability.
- **Physical Indicators:** Frequent complaints of physical ailments such as headaches or stomachaches without a clear cause.
- **Verbal Cues:** Talking about feeling trapped, being a burden to others, or expressing a desire to die.

If you notice any of these signs, it's essential to approach the situation with sensitivity and care:

- **Listen and Observe:** Pay close attention to your child's behavior and take note of any concerning changes.
- **Communicate Concerns:** Reach out in a non-judgmental way. Share your observations and express your concerns calmly and clearly.
- **Encourage Professional Help:** Seek guidance from mental health professionals. If you need assistance finding support services, reach out to your Child and Youth Coordinator.
- **Provide Support:** Let your child know you are there to support them in any way you can, whether it's providing a safe space to talk or simply being a consistent and caring presence.

RESOURCES

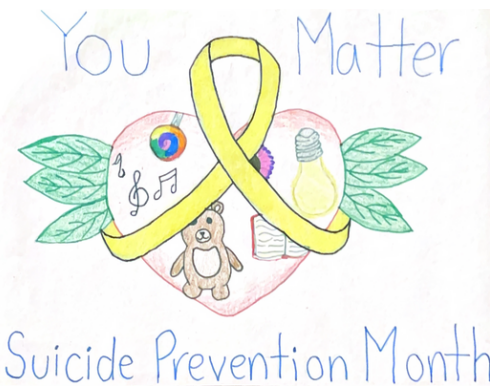


In emergencies or when immediate help is needed, the following services can provide critical support:

- **911:** In an emergency, or if someone appears to be at risk of self-harm and says that they intend to die, call 911. Do not leave the person alone.
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** Call or text 988 for 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress, including thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crises, or any other kind of emotional distress.
- **Veterans Crisis Line:** Veterans and their loved ones can text 838-255 or dial 988 then press 1 for 24/7 confidential crisis support. Responders are real people, many of them veterans, who are specially trained to support veterans. You don't have to be enrolled in VA benefits or health care to use the Veterans Crisis Line.

Several websites offer valuable information and resources for understanding and preventing youth suicide:

- **[The Suicide Prevention Resource Center \(SPRC\)](#):** Funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), SPRC houses a database of resources, including fact sheets, presentations, and self-help worksheets like the [Stanley-Brown Safety Plan](#).
- **[The Jason Foundation](#):** Dedicated to preventing youth suicide through educational and awareness programs, this website offers information for students, parents, and educators/youth workers.
- **The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:** Provides a [guide for talking to a child about a suicide attempt in their family](#), with specific recommendations for holding these discussions with preschoolers, school-age children, and teenagers.



Camille Welch is a National Guard Delegate on the Army's Director's Teen Panel and is also part of the Guard Teen Panel (GTP), a program jointly representing the Army and Air National Guard. The GTP, a youth-led initiative with adult guidance, aims to advocate for National Guard youth nationwide and offer youth perspectives and recommendations to National Guard Leadership. Camille created a drawing to honor Suicide Prevention Month.



RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

Our Military Kids® is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit offering extracurricular activity grants to children and teens of deployed National Guard, deployed Reserve, or post-9/11 combat wounded, ill, or injured Veterans in treatment. OMK activity grants build the children's self-confidence, enhance family wellness, and strengthen a shared sense of community.

For More Information:
<https://operationhomefront.org/>

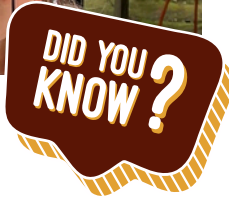
CYS CONNECT



- This is your last chance to provide feedback for FY24! We want to hear from you about your experiences with your local program over the past year. Your input is crucial in helping us understand what we're doing well and where we can improve.
- Let us know how we are doing by providing your feedback at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Soldier-Parent24>
- Your insights will help us enhance our services and better meet your needs in the future. Thank you for your time and contribution!



SPECIAL DAYS IN SEPTEMBER



- September 2nd - Labor Day
- September 7th - National Hummingbird Day
- September 6th - National Read a Book Day
- September 8th - Star Trek Day
- September 10th - World Suicide Prevention Day
- September 10th - Swap Ideas Day
- September 11th - Patriot Day
- September 13th - Positive Thinking Day
- September 20th - National POW/MIA Recognition Day
- September 21st - World Gratitude Day
- September 22nd - Fall Equinox
- September 27th - World's Biggest Coffee Morning
- September 28th - National Good Neighbor Day

