

Arkansas National Guard 2021 Annual Report



Mission

To promote and sustain the quality of life and resiliency of National Guard children and youth by providing secure, timely, flexible, high-quality support services and enrichment programs. Arkansas National Guard Child and Youth Program will accomplish this mission through SIX GOALS: education, access, opportunity, communication, resiliency training and outreach.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

“The Arkansas National Guard Child and Youth Program has been such a blessing for my son. Because of this program he was able to go to his first overnight camp, which was amazing because he has strong separation anxiety. He has developed self-confidence and enjoys helping now that he is a teen. We love our Child and Youth Program Coordinators.” ~MAJ Reese Austin

- 8 Resilient & Fierce Drill Military Youth Training
 - 19 Virtual Events
 - 12 Volunteer Trainings
 - 2 Family Events
 - 4 Partnered Events
 - 1 State Teen Panel Events
 - 5 State Teen Panel Meetings
 - 2 MOMC Events



Best Practice #1: Virtual Resilient & Fierce Monthly Military Youth Training

Our Monthly Drill Weekend Training went virtual when all our in-person events were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. This new Virtual Training platform has allowed us to increase our reach and impact to more outlining and remote areas of Arkansas. Our numbers went from about 60 participants per month to over 250 making the training a more family oriented event.

Best Practice #2: Resilient & Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Training (Central Arkansas and Northwest Arkansas)

Charged with training and empowering our future leaders today to meet the increased challenges our military youth face everyday, the ARNG CYP implemented a Resilient & Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Training on Camp Robinson in 2017. It was so well received that we initiated another Resilient & Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Training in Fort Smith as well.

This consistent drill weekend youth monthly training has strengthen our military youth, and in turn, our military families by targeting Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual and Family Resilience. The monthly drill weekend Resiliency Training has given them opportunities to build strong bonds with their extended military family and has enhance their loyalty to the military lifestyle. Our Partnership

with the American Red Cross, with their "Roger That" Communication Counts and their "Confident Coping" Workshops have been a tremendous help also! These workshops are delivered by certified mental health professionals and they have given our military youth direct and consistent access to individuals trained to help them with any issues they may be immediately facing and it has given our military youth more tools to add to their resiliency arsenal. We look forward to increase our impact with military youth across the state of Arkansas.



Best Practice #2:: Statewide Soldier and Family Readiness Individual Site CYP Volunteer Training

The Arkansas National Guard Child and Youth Program did volunteer trainings at 10 of the Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist Sites to include Little Rock, Fort Smith, Bentonville, Batesville, Jonesboro, El Dorado, White Hall, Benton, Conway, and Russellville. We worked with each Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist to recruit and train volunteers in their area to help enhance Child and Youth Programs in their specific areas in the state.

Awesome Partnerships: The American Red Cross has been an invaluable part of our Drill Weekend Military Youth Trainings. With the help of their Service to Armed Forces volunteers and classes like “Roger That” and “Confident Coping” which are taught by Mental Health Counselors, we have been able to add a consistent Mental Health Wellness segment to our events. Additionally, Camp Alliance has done a wonderful job of meeting our Military youth needs through the use of their volunteers, volunteered resources, and Silver Star Program. More importantly, they have helped us bridge the gap of support for Military Youth ages 6 weeks to 5 years. In collaboration with Camp Alliance and utilizing their volunteer force and financial resources, the ARNG Child and Youth Program has been able to offer our Resilient and Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Training to our youth and also thru Camp Alliance’s



Kids In Drill Program, we have been able to offer support to our

military families free of charge to military youth ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.

Yellow Ribbon Events: In FY21, all Yellow Ribbon events were conducted virtually. Members and families were briefed on our Child and Youth Program and resources.

MRT: Our MRT efforts were challenged this year due to COVID-19. We also added another Drill Weekend Event in Fort Smith which divided the Lead and Coordinator positions making it difficult to do our MRT Curriculum. Moving forward, we will be doing an RTA Class for our volunteers in both locations so we can conduct our MRT lessons and comply with MRT Training standards.





ARNG Teen Council: There were 12 active members on the FY 21 ARNG Teen Council. The Teen Council mission is to give back to their military community throughout the state by volunteering at CYP events such as Family Events, Yellow Ribbon events, STEAM Day Camps, and our Resilient and Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Trainings. The Teen Council members serve as role models and leaders within their respective communities as well as role models for kids who are experiencing deployments and other at-home military changes.

COVID-19's impact on ARNG Child and Youth Program: Despite having to adjust fire on several of our events. COVID-19 has challenged our programs

outreach process and has enhanced our scope by the increase of our virtual events and virtual trainings. In many ways it has brought our military youth closer together and has forced them to make an effort to cultivate their military family bond by checking up on each other weekly. We added virtual events and increased our participation in PHA's. We had to cancel Day Camps, Spring Break Camp, Spiritual Fitness Camp, Minuteman Youth Camp and our Region 6 Youth Symposium but we look forward to adding those back as in-person events recommence.



PHAs: We have been able to attend additional unit briefings during drill weekend since we have not been able to do as many in-person drill weekend CYP events. Attendance at these mandatory unit events has helped us increase our marketing and outreach numbers.

Day Camps: STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. The trainings at our STEAM day camps focus on the development of life skills, vocational skills, and the enhancement of problem solving techniques. This year we initiated a STATEWIDE STEAM Day Showcase in 10 sites where we have Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist. This collaboration between the Specialist and CYP Program allowed us to meet family members in those areas and give out CYP and Military Family resources as a family programs resource team.



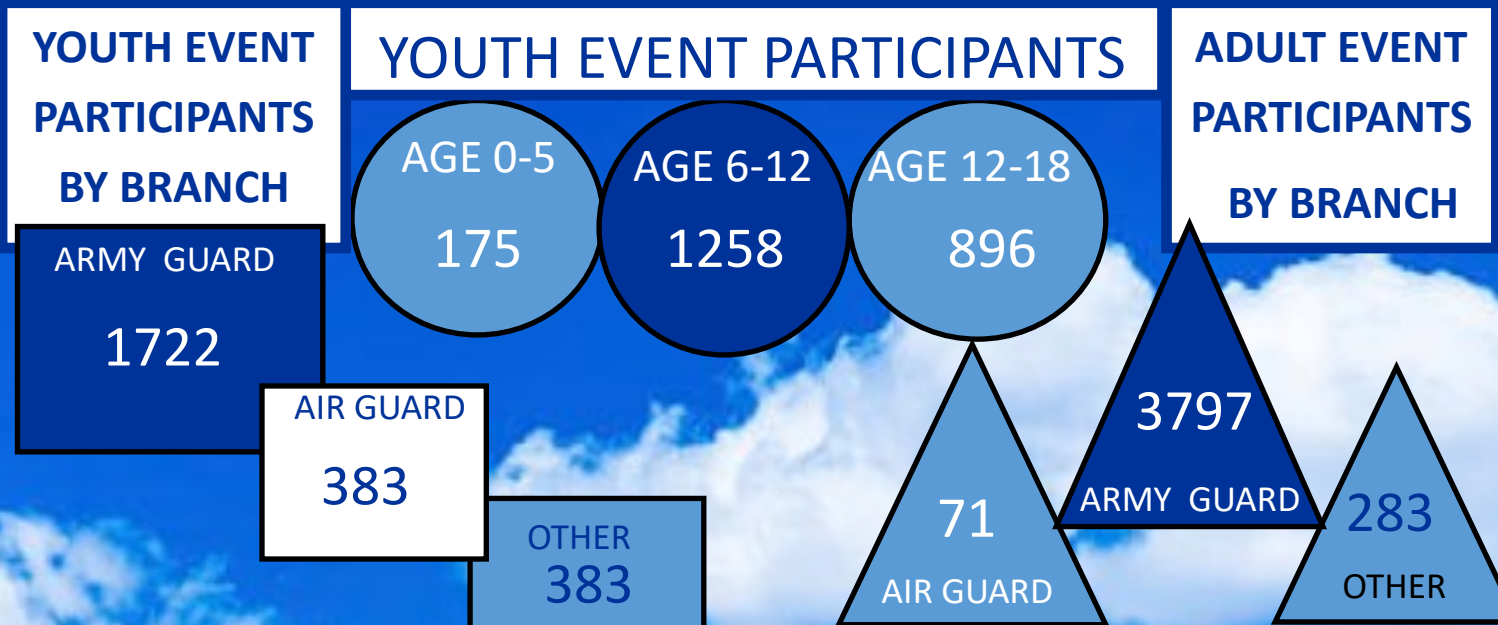
Spring Break Camp/Junior Counselor Spring Break Camp: This year our Spring Break Camp was cancelled due to COVID. During our Camp youth between the ages of 9-11 participate in 3 days of communication, teambuilding, and other vocational skills. Throughout the week, the older youth go through a 2-hour MRT workshop. The ARNG CYP used a chosen theme to demonstrate MRT skills. During the 6 days, the teens use the identified strengths within themselves and their teams to overcome Rock Climbing challenges, orienteering and other team challenge activities.

Volunteers: Our volunteers have been a tremendous help to our program this year by offering their time and expertise in multiple areas such as art, computer science, dance, physical fitness, and overall positive mentorship. They helped with our Resilient & Fierce Drill Weekend Military Youth Trainings, and our Holiday Family Drive-In event. Their selfless service has multiplied our program's efforts to more effectively and efficiently serve more ARNG military youth in our state.

Social Media: Our FACEBOOK link is: https://www.facebook.com/arng_cyp and our Instagram link is: https://instagram.com/arng_cyp.



"The Arkansas National Guard Child and Youth Program has brought my family closer together. We have learned how to better communicate and I think it has helped my son, Jeremiah, to better understand what his Dad goes through when he returns from extended training and deployment. ~Mrs. Brittney Roper, Army National Guard



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