

Colorado Army National Guard Child and Youth Program 2021 Annual Report



Deployed Teens Retreat- La Foret, Colorado Springs



Emerging Leaders YAC Retreat- La Foret, Colorado

"My family & I have grown to not only enjoy, but count on, having this youth program available for military families. The opportunities, adventure, connection and loving-support provided by the youth team is invaluable to building healthy military family culture. Thank you for all you do! - Stacey Knight, military spouse

Mission Statement

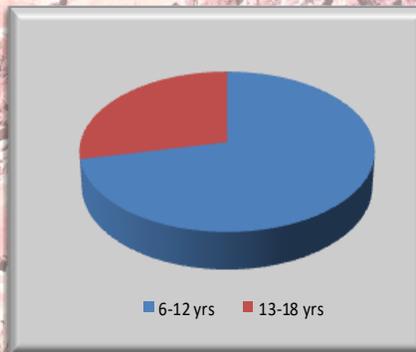
To create and support dynamic, balanced programming for Colorado National Guard Children and Youth. Programs promote the cognitive, emotional, physical and moral development of the participants as well as encourage personal responsibility and strength of character to meet the challenging demands of military life.

Goals

- Deliver fun and engaging recreational, social, and educational programs for 6-18 year old youth in strategically-targeted military communities throughout the state of Colorado.
- Collaborate with school professionals to ensure that staff are aware of the unique needs of military children, and that they are equipped with the resources to address these needs.
- Work directly with families, military components, volunteers, and community partners to increase program participation by 10%, strengthen our state's network of military service providers, and increasingly offer relevant programs to better serve our customers and stakeholders.

Youth Participation

| | 6-12yrs | 13-18yrs |
|---------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Army Guard | 335 | 362 |
| Army Active | 0 | 3 |
| Air Guard | 181 | 18 |
| Air Active | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 516 | 380 |
| Total Youth Served | <u>896!</u> | |



Volunteer Participation

| | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| Number of Adults | 78 |
| Hours Given | 495 |
| Current Statutory | 9 |

Volunteers

- Over 70 adults and teens volunteered for more than 45 events in support of Colorado military youth and families, including: Strong Bonds events, Yellow Ribbon events, family day/sleep away camps, community service projects and Youth Advisory Council events.
- In 2021, volunteers graciously donated over 279 hours of their time!



“Be the Dream” Volunteer Training,
La Foret, Colorado Springs



“The volunteer Dream Team Training Retreat opened my eyes to how much effort and planning goes into making this program run. I never knew any of this when I was a teen participating in the program--what an eye opener!”

*- Kenny Walsh, COARNG
Dependent & Program Volunteer
2021 (1st row, 2nd from right)*

2021 Child and Youth Program Highlights

- Supported eight Yellow Ribbon events. Of these eight, five were virtual and three were in-person. Resiliency skills such as: Hunt the Good Stuff, Goal Setting and Detecting Icebergs were taught.
- The program celebrated its longest running volunteer, Mario Shinault, who is now entering his 11th year in the youth program!
- Hired the new Child & Youth Program Coordinator at the CO Springs office, Sarah Nelson.
- Elected four stand out teens and one adult volunteer to attend the “Region 8” Symposium located at N. Dakota in May
- The CYS operation holds its standing in the Family Programs Division as the highest producing department in terms of number of program offerings per year
- Offered two "Deployed Youth" specific retreats to support families in the deployment



Teens Paint at Paint with a Twist , Colorado Springs

“The Colorado National Guard Youth team has been an amazing blessing to our family. Lance Ellis, Sarah Nelson, and their team of volunteers have worked hard to create a creative, enriching, and loving program where our three children can grow alongside other military families. We are thankful for all this program offers our state!”

CH (LTC) David Nagel, 193 MP BN

Full-Time Support Chaplain

Colorado National Guard – Family Life Chaplain



STEM Projects at the Little's Big Event, Denver



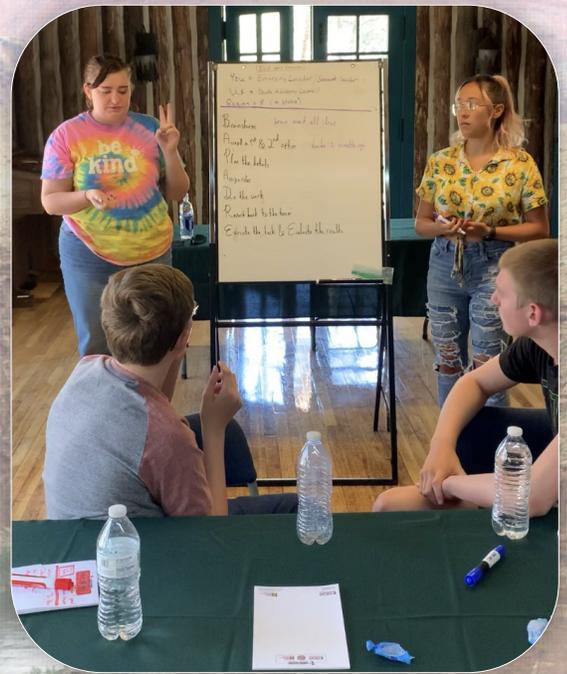
Littles' Dino Day Camp, Colorado Springs

Youth Advisory Council

Colorado's State Teen Panel (aka, Youth Advisory Council (YAC)), remains a consistent program since its inception in the state in 2014! There are currently nine teen members who keep the council actively running by participating in bi-weekly Zoom meetings, attending the annual "Emerging Leaders' Training" in June, participating at the R3 (Review/Re-connect/Re-Focus) training retreat in November and conclude the one year term in May with the end of year/new term recruitment event.

The council assists the CYP team with program ideas, service projects, work support and this year developed and ran their own youth retreat for younger kids!

It never ceases to amaze the staff and adult volunteers to see how dedicated the teens are to this program to keep it moving forward and progressing. In 2021, the teens as a group accrued over 125 hours of volunteer service and training sessions within the Colorado National Guard Youth Program.



Jamie and Izzy introduce and explain the Youth Advisory Council to new teen recruits

The Youth Advisory Council is and has been really helpful for me because it taught me speaking and leadership skills. They are also always opened to meeting new people and are very welcoming" - Demion Scott Nelson



Strong Bonds at Snow Mountain Ranch YMCA— Winter Park, Colorado

"The Snow Mountain Ranch Camp was the first Youth Program event that my children attended. Weeks later they are still talking about how great it was. The staff truly out did themselves!"

SFC Sam Shriver, 89th Troop Command Operations NCOIC

7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens/Strong Bonds Events

The Family Strong Bonds events remain at the top of Colorado's favorite programs. Typically the CYS Team and the Chaplains run two events each year--in April & Sept. Unfortunately, COVID mandates to keep programs virtual caused a cancellation of the April event. On the other hand, in-person programming had resumed early enough in the year to plan and run the 2nd event on Sept 24th-26th 2021 at Snow Mountain Ranch YMCA near Winter Park, CO.

Over 24 families participated yielding 32 youth participants. The feedback from families was stellar as they appreciated the training, square dancing and fun family activities in the beautiful Colorado mountain setting.



ARNGCYS Family Day, Denver

Best Practices/New Initiatives for 2021

- Kids love animals, so this year the CYS Program orchestrated a Pet Emergency Training Certification that included 6 hours of first aid and injury care for dogs and cats. Participants learned all of the skills one would learn through a CPR/1st Aid training training for humans such as: rescue breathing, CPR, 1st aid, hot and cold emergencies, splinting injury sites and general preventative practices for the family pet. The participants raved about the program and received a certificate of completion after the course.
- Launched a "Healthy Living" initiative series that utilized the dissection of animal organs to help youth learn about their own bodies and how caring for ourselves through healthy behaviors effects our own organs



Yellow Ribbon—Breckenridge, Colorado

Covid-19 Response

- Conducted 15 virtual youth programs during the Covid stay at home order: virtual guitar lessons, SCAV-ART (supplies are read to kids on Zoom and then have to find the item in their own home. Once all items are found, they are led in an art project with those supplies), a 4-H Baking Class, a finance workshop, an embryology workshop series and more to name a few.
- Teens who received resiliency training in the past used this knowledge to encourage and teach younger kids through our "Zoom in to Military Youth" series to develop mental agility through a tough season

Building Community Capacity

The Colorado Army National Guard Child and Youth Program is proud to announce new partnerships throughout the Colorado Springs and southern areas and continues to build a statewide network to support military youth.

Examples of new partnerships include:

- **Say it with Music:** A music production company who produced over 50 CDs of songs for deployed parents, made from their child's lyrics
- **Paint with a Twist:** Partnered with the Army Guard youth program in an effort to teach artistic expression and stress relief through art
- **The Rocky Mountain Dinosaur Resource Center:** A museum, located in Woodland Park, CO Guard youth program to teach and help youth explore archeology and history
- **Airforce and Army CYS Programs:** Collaborating with military-affiliated CYS programs located on at Peterson AFB and Fort Carson



Littles' BIG Night Out, Centennial



Color Wars 2021, Wyoming



Bike Tour, Cherry Creek

"This program takes you to places one would never expect. A foundation of trust, respect and friendship provides support in every aspect of life, from repelling off boulders to dealing with deployment-someone will be there to catch you if you fall." --Izel Ceja, Military Youth

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