

MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH PROGRAM



ANNUAL REPORT FY21

Mission:

To promote and sustain the quality of life and resiliency of Missouri Army National Guard children and youth by providing secure, timely, flexible high quality support services and enrichment programs.

Purpose:

To support the readiness and resilience of geographically dispersed Missouri Army National Guard (MOARNG) Soldiers and their Families through age appropriate youth training within the program's core elements, thereby reducing the conflict between parental responsibilities and military mission requirements.



GOALS

Education: Provide age and developmentally appropriate life skills education to children and youth of the MOARNG.

Access: Provide access to federal, state and local benefits that support MOARNG children and families.

Opportunity: Develop opportunities for partnerships to participate in programming and activities geared toward the physical, emotional, social and behavioral well-being of children and youth that are available across the spectrum of government, community and private sector.

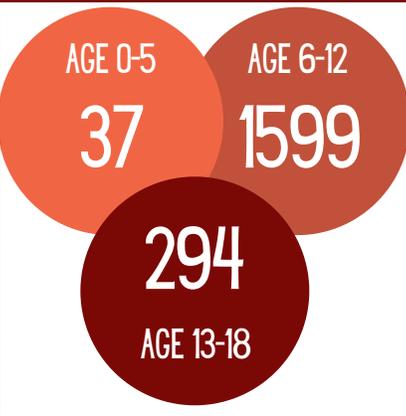
Communication: Build a sense of belonging to the MOARNG community by creating networking opportunities with other youth, parents/legal guardians and youth program facilitators within one's community, state/territory and across the nation.

Resilience: Infuse resiliency and life skills to build MOARNG leaders.

Outreach: Build and sustain relationships with parents/legal guardians and children of the MOARNG in order to communicate awareness of available support services and enrichment programs.



YOUTH EVENT PARTICIPANTS



YEAR IN REVIEW

YOUTH EVENT PARTICIPANTS AGES 6-18 BY BRANCH



ADULT EVENT PARTICIPANTS BY BRANCH



- 16 - Day Camps
- 1 - Leadership Camp
- 2 - Family Camps
- 4 - State Teen Panel Conference Calls/Trainings
- 1 - Yellow Ribbon
- 3 - Volunteer Trainings
- 1 - Unit Briefing
- 1 - Commander Briefing
- 1 - Soldier and Family Readiness Specialist Briefing

NEW INITIATIVES

Our new initiatives were originally developed as a way to continue engagement with MOARNG children and youth due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The response from soldiers/parents or guardians identified virtual programming such as monthly activity packets and camp-in-a-box, are effective deliverables in also supporting rural families and/or families where initial or regular attendance to in-person events is not conducive to their schedules. Responses also reflected gratitude in having additional tools that align with life skills being taught in the home and hands on opportunities that enhance learning by doing them while on school breaks.

"The COVID-19 Pandemic has taken a tremendous toll on our Missouri Army National Guard Youth. The initial isolation was challenging and many of our parents were looking for activities to keep their children socially engaged. Our Child and Youth Program launched the "camp in a box" concept, which allowed our families to stay engaged and connected. As restrictions began to lift, we were able to complete socially distanced in person events that kept our youth resilient. We are beyond grateful for the amazing work that our CYP coordinators completed."

-Adrienne Spadavecchia -
MAJ, AV, MOARNG - Chief,
Family and Warrior Support

Monthly Activity Packets



During FY 21, 7 monthly activity packets and 3 camp-in-a-box were created and mailed to registered, geographically dispersed school age dependents. Numerous researched based trainings and activities on topics such as recognizing and choosing your mood, resiliency, perseverance, job preparation, money management, do-it-yourself STEAM projects, physical, mental fitness and personal growth served as a platform to equip and empower recipients when encountering various military and civilian transitions. Virtual programming also strengthened our ability to spread awareness of Department of Defense resources and expose youth to several Master Resilience Training skills.



BEST PRACTICES



Family Camp: This year marked the 6th consecutive year MOARNG families were offered an experience which promoted parent/child interaction, collaboration, individual creativity, outdoor adventures and initial/continual engagement with other MOARNG families. In partnership with the YMCA Trout Lodge in Potosi, MO, ten families totaling 38 participants invested their attention in facilitator-led and self-guided programming and activities while graciously adhering to COVID-19 protocols. Programming and activities included teambuilding exercises, horseback riding, tie-dye creations, group campfire, swimming and archery. Also, in moving towards a new school year, the Child and Youth Program staff spoke with each family and offered 3 communication tools that would inspire child and family dialogue while maneuvering through daily life. Per feedback, this experience will help families work to intentionally plan family time, remember the fulfillment of outdoor settings and gave a space for youth to get to know each other outside of their school environments.

STATE TEEN PANEL

→ 1 Member

→ 8 Hours Volunteered



Forming a State Teen Panel (STP) was quite a challenge this fiscal year; with teens having to figure out school and extracurricular schedules in the midst of COVID-19. However, 1 candidate showed interest and provided thorough attention as a STP member. This member gained 8 volunteer hours by attending 4 STP conference calls, 1 face to face training, and facilitated age appropriate icebreaker and teambuilding activities during the July Family Camp. The hard work and determination of this member was also exhibited within the Month of the Military Child (MOMC) Display, which was showcased the entire month of April. Last, to reflect the view point of a military child, this member judged the MOMC t-shirt design contest where participants were asked to convey artistically why they are proud to be a military kid. The dedication and experience of this STP member is a great example for applicants as we move forward into FY22. Due to advocating for the STP during in person events offered this past summer, we are moving into FY 22 so far with 3 new STP candidates!



MASTER RESILIENCE TRAINING (MRT)

Per our monthly activity packets and in person events, **99** youth aged 11-17 were exposed/trained in the following MRT skills:

- December Do It Yourself (DIY) Activity Packet- **36** recipients were exposed to the Hunt The Good Stuff (HTGS) skill
- Figure It Out February Activity Packet- **56** recipients were exposed to the Activating Event, Thoughts and Consequences (ATC) skill
- Bouncing Back at the Ball Park Family Event- **7** participants were briefed on the Character Strengths skill
- July Family Camp- **16** participants were trained on the HTGS skill



"I'd like to thank the awesome leaders with the Child and Youth program for the MO National Guard. I can tell they really take pride in offering exceptional services and I truly appreciate that. This is our first deployment away from my husband and the kiddos' first time being away from their Dad for a year. My two kiddos and I were able to take part in a weekend long getaway the Child and Youth program sponsored. As the spouse of a deployed service member, I was able to enjoy a weekend away from household responsibilities and reconnect with my kiddos. My kids were also able to enjoy life a bit more and take their minds off of being home without their Dad. My husband was also happy for us that we were enjoying a weekend away and having fun. All in all it was awesome and I really appreciated it!" -Rachel Laws - Military Spouse -1136th MP CO

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

American Red Cross: This partnership allowed for volunteers to be trained in adult/child CPR/First Aid, participate in a Connection with Kids Workshop and learn Emergency Preparedness skills.



Mad Science: Certified facilitators virtually instructed 47 participants through visual, hands on bug, movie effect and rocketry scientific experiments. All supplies were provided and delivered to each registered youth's home.

Her Records? -Say It With Music:
(www.sayitwith-music.com)

This collaboration fostered 9 MONG through virtual songwriting and recording. Participants agreed upon a topic and expressed their points of view through songwriting, poetry and/or other positive forms of self-expression.



St. Louis Cardinals: Through a tour of the Hall of Fame Museum, 66 attendees, which totaled 18 families, learned and celebrated the heritage and history of the St. Louis Cardinals, viewed a ball game and witnessed the Cardinals ability to execute mental agility and recognize their teammates character strengths.



Art Adventures- Traveling Art Studio: Through the use of various painting techniques, 106 participants composed paintings reflecting the "Wall of Resilience" theme. This virtual event was led by Artist Shawna Sprague and all supplies were provided to those registered.



VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT



The MONG Child and Youth Program volunteers have continued to show their commitment and adaptability in supporting and leading MONG children, youth and teens. Twenty seven volunteers invested 149.5 hours by attending 3 scheduled trainings, assisted in the preparation for 2 family camps and the distribution of camp-in-a-box. During family camps, volunteers motivated youth to continue communication beyond the camp grounds in efforts to establish/build military-connected friendships. When supporting an in-person Yellow Ribbon this year, not only did our volunteers aid in the facilitation of youth programming, they also listened, encouraged and due to personal experience, gave strategies that could guide youth dependents during the upcoming deployment cycle.

"The MONG Child and Youth Program provided opportunities for my kids to learn about resilience and for my family to create new opportunities to spend time together and bond over fun projects and activities. Our most memorable moment this past year was the chance to go to a Cardinals game and museum. Not only did we have the chance to reminisce in our childhood memories, we created lasting memories for our kids to carry forward. Our Child and Youth Program truly cares about our families and their mission is an absolute contributor to retaining MONG Soldiers and Airmen." -Brandi Rice - Military Spouse - 135th Army Band

VIRTUAL ENGAGEMENT

ENGAGED
SOCIAL MEDIA

895

VIEWED
SOCIAL MEDIA

234

MONTH OF THE
MILITARY CHILD
PARTICIPANTS

212

CAMP-IN-A-BOX
DISTRIBUTED

254

ACTIVITY
PACKETS
DISTRIBUTED

1127

213
VIRTUAL
EVENTS
PARTICIPANTS



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