Annual Report

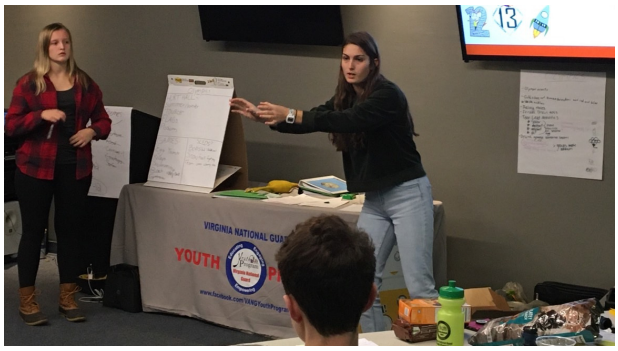
VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD YOUTH PROGRAM

Retention Readiness Youth Program Virginia National Guard Resilience

FY20

Mission

The mission of the Army National Guard (ARNG) Child & Youth Services (CYS) is to promote and sustain the quality of life and resilience of Army National Guard dependent children and youth by providing secure, timely, flexible, high-quality support services and enrichment programs.



Teen Panel discusses and plans upcoming events

Goals

Education:	Provide developmentally-appropriate life skills.
Access:	Provide information about benefits that support NG children and Families.
Opportunity:	Participate in programs, events, and activities geared toward the behavioral and physical health and welfare of children and youth.
Communication:	Build a sense of belonging within the ARNG community and network.
Resilience:	Infuse resiliency and leadership skills and techniques into all ARNG children and youth programs.
Outreach:	Build/sustain contact with families of the NG in order to create awareness of available support services.

Impact Strategy

Geographically dispersed Army National Guard Dependents

+

Education
Access
Opportunity
Communication
Resilience
Outreach

=

Soldier & Family **Readiness**
Youth **Resilience**
Soldier **Retention**

"The Teen Panel did an outstanding job! Joe, thanks for the support. They conducted quality assurance on each table setting to ensure we exceeded the standard.."

- SGM (Ret) Tim White, after the Teen Panel volunteered at the Military Ball

Youth Program Highlights

2 Yellow Ribbon Events

1 Virtual Youth Camp

29 Virtual Events and Engagements

464 Month of the Military Child Recogition

14 State Teen Panel Trainings/Meetings

1 State Teen Panel Service Projects

1 Master Resilience Training Events

10 Community Partnership Meetings

"Thank you for setting a model for virtual learning and helping us feel better about the future of public school's offerings."
- Rebekah McClung, ARNG CYS Parent/Volunteer

Youth Served

The presence of COVID-19 created many challenges and opportunities for virtual engagement with National Guard Families. Our response included virtual camps, creation of online resource guides, and regular virtual trainings. Our program has used these opportunities to continue to make consistent impact on National Guard Families around the state.

317 Youth Ages 6-12

255	Army NG
53	Air NG
1	Army Reserve
1	Active Army

304 Youth Ages 13-18

272	Army NG
31	Air NG
1	Active Army

Adult Engagements

916	Army NG
451	Other

Youth Ages 0-5

210	Youth

Programming Hours

88.5 Hours of Training

Campers tune in to live sessions and projects during Virtual Camp

Volunteer Support

Volunteers are an integral part of the VANG Youth Program. This year volunteers played a key role in brainstorming and assisting with many of our virtual engagements by recording trainings, packing camp boxes, and creating activities that would be shared with NG youth.

24 Volunteers **510 Hours Served**

$13,872 of Volunteer Services

Value based on the 2020 Estimated National Value of Each Volunteer; Independent Sector.

CYPC and Volunteer conduct a live session with teens at Virtual Camp

Master Resilience Training

Master Resilience Training was utilized during FY20 through Yellow Ribbons and State Teen Panel events to create a common language between Service Members and their families. Sixteen teens received Master Resilience Training through these programs and activities. Specifically, our State Teen Panel started off their year by working through Goal Setting and Strengths of Character as they planned for a year of working together and speaking on behalf of other National Guard youth.

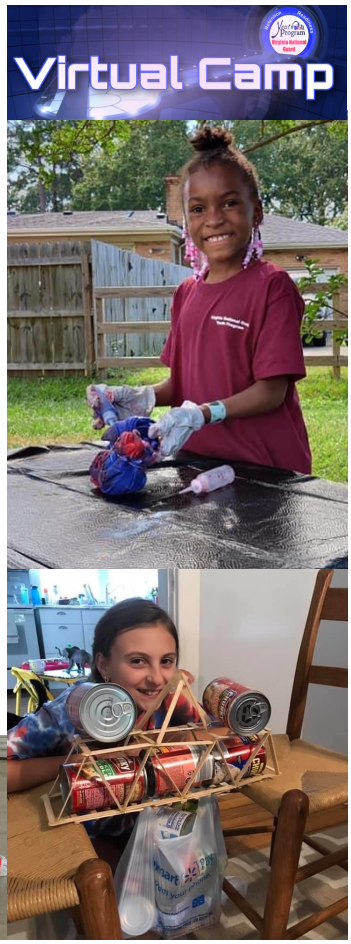
Panel Members work through the MRT Skill of Character Strengths

State Teen Panel

The Virginia National Guard State Teen Panel (STP) is a statutory volunteer group of 16 Teens, age 13-17 years old, from across the state of Virginia, who work with the State Child and Youth Coordinators in supporting the youth and teens of the Virginia National Guard. This year, the STP assisted with the State Officer / Enlisted Conference and Military Ball (***pictured above***) and helped in the planning and execution of the first ever Virtual Camp. At the Military Ball, STP Members greeted and directed attendees while answering questions about the Teen Panel and Youth Programs. In preparation for and during the Virtual Camp, STP members created promotional content, led Zoom-based teambuilding sessions, and assisted with trainings during live-streamed content.

Best Practice: Virtual Camp

Due to changes made because of COVID-19, we shifted our in-person camp to a first-ever Virtual Camp. We had 53 campers and 11 National Guard Teens participated in the week long, online experience. Prior to camp, campers and teens received Camp Boxes in the mail, which contained a t-shirt, water bottle, and a variety of camp packets for the various online sessions they were to engage in throughout the week. Sessions consisted of Facebook Live videos that explained how each educational packet was to be used. Activities ranged from creating lava lamps out of Alka-Selzer, building bridges out of popsicle sticks, and designing tie-dye t-shirts unique to this special camp year. Each day, campers also participated in Zoom Breakout sessions. Impact of the camp was very positive, with parents very grateful for the connections made and our Adjutant General sending out a message of resilience to the participating families.



"I just want to say again how awesome you guys did! I will be honest....I was a little skeptical at the idea of virtual camp but you guys went above and beyond this week!!"

- Jessica Mullins,
ARNG CYS Volunteer & Parent

Clockwise from top: 1) Camper does tie-dye; 2) Camper showcases bridge load capacity; 3) Joe packs boxes for Virtual Camp

Best Practice: College Readiness

At the request of many of our parents, we held an in-person college readiness workshop in February. A trio of speakers provided information for teens and parents in the areas of college preparation, financial readiness, and information about applying to military academies. The event was free to both the 15 attendees and was coordinated at zero cost to our program. We received a strong, positive response from our participants, partners, and parents for the content presented and discussed.

LTC Copeland discusses the process of her three daughters getting into West Point Military Academy

"This was great! [...] I think we had just as many questions as the youth! Thanks for this planning!"

- Rebekah McClung, Parent and Attendee

Partners and Organizations

Our state and national partners expand our reach and impact to National Guard Families through the programs and services they provide. This year many of these partners below offered their services online. Virginia 4H offered virtual camps, STARBASE created virtual content for our programming, and the YMCA has continued to open their doors to virtual leaners, whose schools have gone remote. We are grateful for all their content and assistance to National Guard families throughout this year.

Find us on Social Media

FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/VANGYouthPro

INSTAGRAM: @VANGYouthPro

Meet our Youth Coordinators

Joe Duerksen
Lead Child and Youth Coordinator
Contractor, Virginia National Guard
804-236-7866
joe.m.duerksen.ctr@mail.mil

Hannah Brownell
Child and Youth Coordinator
Contractor, Virginia National Guard
804-236-7865
hannahbrownell.cypc@gmail.com