



ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CHILD & YOUTH SERVICES

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

NEWS LETTER



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Strengthening Safety
- Region 3 Updates
- National Nutrition Month®
- Smart Snacking
- MOMC 2025
- Resource Spotlight



STRENGTHENING SAFETY: BRIAN STOUDNOUR AND GAIZKA VAZQUEZ LAM EARN PRAESIDIUM GUARDIAN CERTIFICATION

The Army National Guard Child and Youth Program is proud to announce that Brian Stoudnour, National Training Coordinator, and Gaizka Vazquez Lam, Program Analyst, have earned their Certified Praesidium Guardian credentials. Brian and Gaizka successfully completed the Praesidium Guardian Certification workshop in January 2025.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our youth participants is a top priority for the Army National Guard Child and Youth Program. We are committed to fostering safe environments where children can thrive. Preventing abuse requires a proactive approach, including equipping our staff and volunteers with the necessary training and resources to recognize and address high-risk activities before they escalate.

In addition to the valuable tools and insights gained through Praesidium Certification, our staff and volunteers undergo rigorous screening, including comprehensive background and child suitability checks. They also complete required annual training to stay informed about potential risks and vulnerabilities, reinforcing our commitment to child safety in all aspects of our programming.

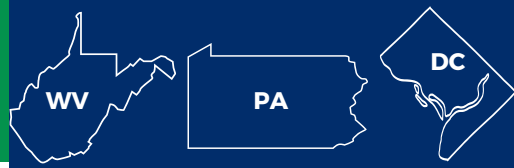
Please join us in congratulating Brian and Gaizka on this significant achievement! To learn more about the Praesidium Guardian Certification, click [here](#).



WWW.ARNGCYS.COM

#GUARDFAMILIES

#ARNGCYS



REGION 3 UPDATES



Delaware: Striking Up Family Fun

Military families in Delaware recently gathered for a fun-filled bowling event that brought laughter, friendly competition, and quality family time. While there were plenty of strikes and spares—along with a few gutter balls—everyone enjoyed the camaraderie. The highlight of the event was the Teen Bowl-Off Challenge against Andy Connell, Delaware’s new Lead Youth Coordinator. Congratulations to Aphtin from the South Bowl, who outscored Andy by 25 points to take the win!



Virginia: Leadership in Action

Virginia’s State Teen Panel recently convened for a productive and insightful meeting focused on leadership, outreach, and personal growth. The teens provided valuable feedback on future training needs, contributed ideas for the upcoming Youth Camp, and explored the MRT skill of Character Strengths. Through self-reflection and group discussions, the teens gained a deeper understanding of their unique strengths and how to apply them in their daily lives and leadership roles.



Pennsylvania: Hands-On Learning at the Bloomsburg Children’s Museum

Pennsylvania CYP kicked off the year with an exciting visit to the Bloomsburg Children’s Museum, where military families explored over 50 interactive exhibits. From learning about Pennsylvania’s Native American history to discovering how space shuttles work, families engaged in hands-on activities that sparked curiosity and encouraged exploration.



West Virginia: Service and Holiday Cheer

December was an impactful month for West Virginia’s CYP. The program participated in Wreaths Across America, honoring fallen service members with the support of the State Teen Panel President. This meaningful event allowed military youth to give back to their communities while reflecting on the sacrifices made by service members. Additionally, the Cookies in Whoville event brought festive joy to families with crafts, cookie decorating, and special visits from the Grinch, Cindy Lou Who, and Max.



Maryland: Resilience and Leadership at Teen Summit

Maryland’s CYP recently hosted a Teen Summit at Camp Fretterd Military Reservation, providing youth leaders with opportunities to enhance their MRT skills, teamwork, and resilience. Partnering with the Green Terror Battalion of McDaniel College, teens engaged in leadership exercises that pushed them to collaborate and think critically. They also heard from Sylvia Lynch, LCYPC from DC, gaining insight into their roles and responsibilities within the program.



Washington, DC: Giving Back During the Holidays

The DC National Guard Family Programs and Child & Youth Program came together for an annual Christmas event that provided military families with essential resources, holiday gifts, and a festive atmosphere. Special appearances from Santa and the Grinch added to the holiday cheer, creating a memorable experience for children and parents alike.



MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

March marks National Nutrition Month®, an annual campaign established in 1973 by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. This month-long initiative encourages everyone to make informed food choices and develop healthy eating and physical activity habits.

This year's theme, "Food Connects Us," highlights the powerful role food plays in bringing people together. Food connects us to our cultures, families, and friends. A shared meal is more than just nourishment—it's an opportunity to learn about its preparation, the person who made it, and where the ingredients came from. Our relationship with food is shaped by health, memories, traditions, seasons, and access, all of which influence the choices we make daily.

While these factors impact what we eat, what we eat also impacts our health. One way to encourage healthy eating habits is through smart snacking—especially for kids! Snacks can provide essential nutrients and energy between meals, supporting growth and overall well-being.

SMART SNACKING TIPS FOR KIDS

Here are some helpful tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to make snacking both fun and nutritious for children:

- Parfait: Layer vanilla or plain low-fat yogurt with fruit and dried cereal.
- Toast a whole grain waffle and top with low fat yogurt and sliced fruit or smooth nut butter.
- Blend low-fat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana for thirty seconds for a delicious smoothie.
- Sandwich cut-outs: Make a sandwich on whole grain bread. Cut out your favorite shape using a big cookie cutter. Eat the fun shape and the edges, too!
- Mini pizza: Toast a whole wheat English muffin, drizzle with pizza sauce and sprinkle with low-fat mozzarella cheese.
- Frozen treats: Mix equal amounts of fat-free plain or flavored yogurt with 100% fruit juice, then pour into paper cups and freeze for a tasty treat.
- Quesadilla: Sprinkle shredded cheese over a corn or whole wheat tortilla; fold in half and microwave for twenty seconds. Top with salsa.
- Spread hummus on a tortilla. Top with a slice of turkey or ham, low-fat cheese and lettuce. Then roll it up.
- Microwave a small baked potato. Top with reduced-fat cheddar cheese and salsa.
- Dip slices of fruit or whole-grain graham crackers into low-fat vanilla pudding or yogurt.



For additional food and nutrition information, visit eatright.org.





RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT

The National Guard Spouse and Family Interest page is a comprehensive resource developed by NGB J1, offering valuable information and links to programs and services available through the National Guard and its military partners. Designed to support spouses and families, this site provides easy access to resources on, Strong Bonds, Exceptional Family Member Program, Family Programs, Resilience, and more, empowering National Guard families to thrive at every stage of their journey.

For more information:

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/Leadership/Joint-Staff/J-1/Spouse-and-Family-Interest/>

Disclaimer: Sharing of resources in this newsletter does not constitute an endorsement by NGB, any contract vendor or the PM Team.

CELEBRATING MILITARY CHILDREN: APRIL IS THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

April is dedicated to honoring the strength, resilience, and sacrifices of military children. Month of the Military Child (MOMC) is an annual observance that acknowledges their unique experiences and the important role they play in military families. These children navigate challenges such as frequent relocations and parental deployments with incredible courage and adaptability.

One of the highlights of MOMC is the National Guard's observance of **Purple Up Day on April 11th**. Wearing purple on this day is a simple yet powerful way to show support and appreciation for military kids. The color represents all military branches, signifying unity and recognition of their experiences.

Want to participate? Visit <https://arngcys.com/momc-2025> for information on national initiatives, resources, and ways to celebrate military children. Be sure to check out local programs for special events and activities happening in your area.

Let's come together to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary children of military families this April!

CYS CONNECT



Do you want to stay up-to-date with the latest info? Be sure to subscribe [HERE](#) on our website



Lets us know how we are doing. Provide feedback on your experience with your local program over the last year at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Soldier-Parent25>

DOWNLOAD OUR APP!



Search "ARNG CYP"