



American Legion Auxiliary Department of Texas Children & Youth [C&Y] Program Engagement Plan 2026-2027

Children are our future. Long after we have left this world, our legacy and teachings will live on through today's children, their children and future generations to come. It is for this reason we are called upon to teach and guide, to recognize and reward as well as develop and grow ALL children. In doing this we will be strengthening our community, state and nation while fulfilling the vision and mission of our great organization.

Program Committee Purpose:

The purpose of the Children & Youth program committee is to work with The American Legion to promote programs that emphasizes protecting, caring for, and supporting, children & youth, particularly those of veterans' and military families.

Key Elements of our Program:

- To assist young people in need in our communities in any way possible.
- To recognize and reward the positive actions of our young people,
- To honor our military children and to support them through their parent's deployment (Kids of Deployed are Heroes2).
- To support and promote the Children & Youth programs of our American Legion.

Examples of what we can do:

- Plan seasonal supply drives for Veterans in need such as Thanksgiving Dinners, Christmas Gifts, July 4 Celebration.
- Distribute Backpacks and school supplies at the beginning of school year
- Search for candidates to receive our Youth Hero & Goods Deeds Award.
- Seek out donations to the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation.

- Plan a special celebration of military children during April in honor of the Month of the Military Child-**Purple up day April 15th.**
- Use the “Star Spangled Kids” program to educate children on the history of patriotism, Americanism, and the Constitution.

Protecting:

- These are uncertain times for the safety of our children. Check with schools and First Responders in your community for specific programs we can support to help protect our children.
- Collect bears and soft toys for First Responders to give to children during times of tragedy or instability.

Caring:

- Plan a special celebration of military children during April in honor of the Month of the Military Child. April 15th is Purple Up Day for children.
- Donate \$1.00 per member to the ALA Child Welfare Foundation and receive a banner for your Unit.
- Adopt a needy Veterans’ family with kids and provide food and gifts for the holiday season.

Rewarding:

Youth Hero Award:

- Demonstrate a physical act of
- Serves as an inspirational role model for the organization and the community
- American Legion Family membership is not a criterion for consideration
- **Examples include:**
 - . Performing the Heimlich maneuver
 - . Rescue from fire or water peril
 - . Providing assistance in a medical situation

Good Deed Award:

- Project demonstrates leadership in community service by planning, organizing, and executing a service project
- Project must be initiated by the youth being nominated
- American Legion Family membership is not a criterion for consideration

- **Examples include:**
 - . Planning, organizing, and preparing a Veteran's Day Dinner
 - . Arranging for donations to a charity instead of birthday presents
 - . Organizing an event to fill backpacks for homeless veterans and arranging for their distribution

Award Presentation:

- Medal
- Certificate
- The same nomination form and process is used for the Youth Hero and Good Deed Award
- Nominations made thru a local ALA Unit
- Nomination form follows the Program Engagement Plan
- Submit nomination form to ALA Unit for Certification
- ALA Unit submits the nomination form to the Department Secretary by **May 15th for Certification and submission to National by June 1st**

Kids of Deployed are Heroes 2 (KDH2):

This is a program for military children who experience extended separation from their military parent or parents.

Examples Include:

- Host a dinner, game night, community fair, etc. that will bring military and non-military families together.
- Host a KDH2 celebration with a form of recognition gift to let military kids know we appreciate their sacrifices.
- Plan a special celebration of military children during April in honor of the Month of the Military Child
- Wear purple on April 15 in honor of Purple Up! For Military Kids Day

What is The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation?

It was established in the 1954, The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation was developed as a repository of funds from individuals who wished to contribute to the betterment of children in this country.

They contribute to the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being of children and youth through various programs and activities.

Not all children grow up inside the comfortable definition of normal childhood development. For thousands, each day it is a challenge marked by pain, prayer, and perseverance. Many of these children require specialized care. To overcome obstacles, they need help from you and the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation.

What can we do?

"It is through the gift provided to this foundation that children's lives are saved, their quality of life is improved, and they are taught traditional American values through your selfless actions and demonstration of integrity."

"Children First" Gift Club

To qualify: Awarded to American Legion post, squadron, Auxiliary units, ALR chapters, and Eight & Forty salons for their cumulative donations made during the contribution year.

- Guardian (gold) \$1,500
- Advocate (silver) \$1,000
- Caretaker (bronze) \$750
- To donate go to <http://cwf-inc-org>

ALA Department of Texas Children & Youth Program Committee:

Division 1: Sharon Shumate Elam (Chair) maranda12@verizon.net

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American Legion Auxiliary

Youth Hero and Good Deed Award Nomination Form

NAME OF YOUTH _____

Youth's Age _____ ☐ Male ☐ Female Date of deed _____

Submitted by Unit # _____ Dept. of _____

Description of bravery and/or deed performed by youth (to be completed by unit)

- **Good Deed Award** – Youth should demonstrate leadership role in community service, specific deed should be present
- **Youth Hero Award** - Youth should demonstrate a physical act of valor

Attach extra pages as need. Please attach news clippings or include website to verify the deed being recognized.

UNIT CERTIFICATION (MUST BE CERTIFIED BY TWO UNIT MEMBERS)

Unit Member _____ Date _____

Unit Member _____ Date _____

Units should send completed applications to their department secretary.

DEPARTMENT SECRETARY CERTIFICATION

Name _____ Date: _____

Department secretary mail nomination to ALA National Headquarters, 3450 Founders Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268, or email to Children&Youth@ALAforVeterans.org. Awards will be shipped at no cost.

Please ship to:

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please use this form for all Youth Hero and Good Deed Award nominations. For more information, contact National Headquarters at Children&Youth@ALAforVeterans.org or (317) 569-4500.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS USE ONLY ☐ Youth Hero Award ☐ Good Deed Award

Date received _____ Date shipped _____