OFFICIAL ACTIONS AND POSITIONS OF THE AMERICAN LEGION ON MATTERS OF CHILDREN & YOUTH

SEPTEMBER 2012
The resolutions contained within the following pages come under the jurisdiction of the National Commission on Children & Youth and are posted through the 2012 National Convention. Each resolution listed gives a brief summation of its intent and is identified by resolution number, meeting, and year. For example: Resolution No. 56 Spring NEC – 2003 refers to Resolution No. 56 that was adopted at the 2003 Spring Meeting of the National Executive Committee.

In the interest of brevity, policies of The American Legion and the National Commission on Children & Youth listed herein have been paraphrased where technical or exact wording is not essential to the full understanding of the policy.

Over the years, the National Commission on Children & Youth has reiterated a number of policy statements. In such cases, only the most recent resolution has been included.

A complete text of a Children & Youth resolution is available from the Americanism and Children & Youth Division, The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis IN 46206; email acy@legion.org.

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CHILDREN & YOUTH

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Child Health and Medical

Catastrophic Illness Among Children

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges the federal government to expand the present federal Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant programs to include catastrophic illness; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That department and post leadership are encouraged to urge state governments to enact legislation to assist financially those individual families faced by the catastrophic illness of their children in order to maintain the integrity of the family.

Resolution No. 251 2012 National Convention

Children’s Miracle Network

RESOLVED, That The American Legion adopt and participate in the programs of Children’s Miracle Network to ensure that all children receive the life-saving and crucial treatment services they need; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages its Departments and Posts to work with and support their local Children’s Miracle Network affiliated children’s hospitals to benefit the health and well being of our nation’s children.

Resolution No. 45 Fall NEC – 2006

Children's Organ Transplant Association

RESOLVED, That The American Legion adopt and participate in the programs of Children’s Organ Transplant Association to ensure that children receive the life-saving organ transplants they need; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages its Departments and Posts to work with and support the fund raising efforts of Children’s Organ Transplant Association to benefit the health and well being of our nation’s children in need of organ transplants.

Resolution No. 33 Spring NEC – 2009

Comprehensive Health Care For Children And Youth

RESOLVED, That The American Legion affirms its support of the programs as outlined by the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant contained under Title V of the Social Security Act and urges the Congress to appropriate funds that meet or exceed current funding levels, to include all programs related to the Comprehensive Health Care for Children and Youth.

Resolution No. 257 2012 National Convention

Mercy Medical Airlift

RESOLVED, That The American Legion adopt the programs of Mercy Medical Airlift to ensure that no child, family or veteran in need is denied access to distant specialized medical evaluation, diagnosis or treatment for lack of long-distance medical transportation; and, be it further
RESOLVED, That the National Commission on Children & Youth inform Department and Post leadership of the transportation programs for children, families and veterans in need that is currently available through Mercy Medical Airlift; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages all Departments and Posts to promote this activity in the communities across their state to benefit the health and well-being of our nation’s children, families and veterans.

Resolution No. 10       Spring NEC – 2001

Support Efforts to Immunization all Children

RESOLVED, That The American Legion reaffirms its position of supporting the fullest use of any licensed vaccine to immunize children; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are urged to provide leadership and support to stimulate local treatment and immunization programs so that children in every community may achieve the fullest protection against communicable diseases.

Resolution No. 256       2012 National Convention

Ronald McDonald House Charities Pop Tab Collection Program

RESOLVED, That The American Legion adopt the Ronald McDonald House Charities Pop Tab Collection Program as a national children and youth project designed to benefit participating Ronald McDonald Houses throughout the country; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages its Departments and Posts to work with and support their local Ronald McDonald Houses to help provide a home-away-from-home environment for financially-challenged families with seriously ill or injured children who must undergo medical treatment at a children’s hospital.

Resolution No. 29       Springs NEC – 2005

National School Lunch Program

RESOLVED, That Congress appropriate funds at or exceeding current funding levels for the National School Lunch Program.

Resolution No. 264       2012 National Convention

Sickle Cell Anemia

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges the maximum dissemination of information presently known about Sickle Cell disease; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges the fullest use of any suitable procedure developed to screen all newborns.

Resolution No. 252       2012 National Convention
Child Safety and Welfare

Adequate Foster Care

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at improving services for children living in foster homes; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion is authorized to collaborate with the leading national foster care organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children and Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in the promotion of adequate foster care programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That posts are urged to volunteer their talents and energies in behalf of foster children and are urged to make their communities aware of the vital role that adequate foster care services play in enabling these children to develop into mature, responsible and productive adults.

Resolution No. 266  2012 National Convention

Bill Of Rights For Foster Children

RESOLVED, That it formally endorses the Bill of Rights for Foster Children as developed by the National Action for Foster Children Committee.

Resolution No. 34  Spring NEC – 1974

Child Maltreatment

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at preventing child maltreatment; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion be authorized to collaborate with national and state child maltreatment prevention organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children & Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in the promotion of child maltreatment prevention programs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are urged to cooperate in all ways possible with organizations and agencies that advocate for child maltreatment prevention and are urged to promote and increase the public’s awareness of child maltreatment and its detrimental effects on the children and youth of our society; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges all educators, coaches, school administrators and all others responsible for children in any capacity to familiarize themselves with the warning signs of all forms of child maltreatment and report any suspected maltreatment to the proper authorities and ensure that these children are referred to the appropriate child protective service in their community; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion continue through its Children & Youth program, at all levels, to educate the public of their obligations and duties with respect to reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment.

Resolution No. 262  2012 National Convention
**Programs and Organizations the Promote Child Safety**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at preventing or reducing unintentional injury among children and adolescents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion is authorized to collaborate with the leading national safety organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children and Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in the promotion of adequate child safety programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are encouraged to provide leadership on organized safety commissions and are urged to actively promote child safety at the state and local levels.

*Resolution No. 263  2012 National Convention*

**Childcare Services**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion is authorized to collaborate with the leading national child care organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children and Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in the promotion of adequate child care programs; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are encouraged to cooperate with the state and community public or private agencies with day care responsibilities to the end that licensed child care facilities will be available to all children in our nation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are urged to continue to encourage the adoption and implementation of safe and consistent licensing standards for childcare in facilities throughout this nation; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That departments and posts be encouraged to assist in raising the level of understanding among the general public about the needs of adequate child care, and urged to commit the resources to achieve a level of quality that is necessary for children to grow in a healthy and safe environment.

*Resolution No. 255  2012 National Convention*

**Fireworks Safety**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges all Departments and Posts to assist in alerting, informing, and educating parents, children, community leaders, and others about the dangers of fireworks; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Departments and Posts encourage children and their families to enjoy fireworks at public fireworks displays conducted by professionals, rather than purchase fireworks for home or private use.

*Resolution No.33 Spring NEC – 2006*

**Intellectual Disabilities**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recognize and support the rights of all people with intellectual disabilities to enjoy a quality of life that promotes independence, self-determination, and participation as productive members of society; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the goals of the President’s Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities:

- The assurance of full citizenship rights of people with intellectual disabilities;
• The provision of all necessary supports to individuals and families;
• The reduction of the occurrence and severity of intellectual disabilities; and
• The promotion of the widest dissemination of information of models, programs, and services within the field of intellectual disabilities;

become the goals of The American Legion; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support and encourage early diagnosis, intervention and treatment, increased professional staffing, expanded educational opportunities, family counseling, improved and new living facilities, and adequate social and vocational services for the intellectually disabled; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports continuing research, and preventive and early intervention efforts to prevent intellectual disabilities, to include research on the development and function of the nervous system, fetal treatments, and gene therapy to correct the abnormality produced by defective genes; and early intervention programs with high-risk infants and children; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That whenever possible, The American Legion is encouraged to help alert the public through awareness and education programs designed to change the negative attitudes and prejudices concerning our nation’s intellectually disabled children.

Resolution No. 294 2010 National Convention

Locating Missing Children and Prevent Child Victimization

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at locating missing children and preventing child victimization; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge Congress to appropriate funds that meet or exceed current funding levels for the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion be authorized to collaborate with national and state missing and exploited children agencies and organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children & Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role, at all levels, in locating missing children and preventing child exploitation; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the departments and posts are encouraged to increase the public’s awareness of child victimization and its detrimental effects on the children and youth of our society and are urged to cooperate with credible organizations and agencies that seek to locate missing children in their states and communities.

Resolution No. 261 2012 National Convention

Production, Sale And Distribution Of Obscene Literature

RESOLVED, That The American Legion strongly opposes any attempt to weaken our present laws governing the penalties for the production, sale and distribution of pornographic or obscene materials to minors.

Resolution No. 254 2012 National Convention
Support for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

RESOLVED, That The American Legion supports the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and its programs; and, be it finally

Resolved, That the President and the Congress meet or exceed current funding levels for the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Resolution No. 298 2010 National Convention

Protect Children From The Unrestricted Media

RESOLVED, That The American Legion promote efforts to restrict the excessive use of violence, vulgarity and other forms of moral depravity in movies, TV programs, TV news and the Internet; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are encouraged to conduct awareness campaigns to educate their members, their families and the general public about the potential dangers the Internet and other forms of electronic media pose to children and teenagers, and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Commission on Children & Youth disseminate educational materials to inform department and post leadership about the dangers inherent in the media, in an effort to return the country to the God-given principles of life, liberty, and the true pursuit of happiness.

Resolution No. 250 2012 National Convention

Prevention of Child Sexual Exploitation

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at the prevention, investigation and prosecution of child sexual exploitation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion be authorized to collaborate with national and state agencies and organizations involved in the prevention of child sexual exploitation as determined by the National Commission on Children & Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in preventing child sexual exploitation; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are encouraged to raise community awareness about the prevalence of sexual exploitation of children and are encouraged to cooperate with law enforcement agencies, government entities and public/private organizations that seek to empower the public to take immediate and direct action to enforce a zero tolerance policy regarding child sexual exploitation.

Resolution No. 259 2012 National Convention

Support For Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA)

RESOLVED, That The American Legion does affirm its support for the aims and mission of the Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Departments and Posts are encouraged to cooperate with other concerned state, county and community organizations to assist those children and youth involved in the juvenile justice system; and, be it further
RESOLVED, That Posts are encouraged to assist their local CASA program, wherever possible, to recruit quality volunteers to represent the best interests of abused and neglected children in court; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Posts are urged to raise community awareness concerning the vital role that Court Appointed Special Advocates play in providing safe, permanent and nurturing homes for abused and neglected children, thus enabling them to develop into mature, responsible and productive adults.

Resolution No. 35 Spring NEC – 2007

Support for Special Olympics

RESOLVED, That The American Legion adopt Special Olympics as a national children and youth project and participate in their programs to assist in providing year-round sports training and athletic competition to millions of children and adults with intellectual disabilities in the United States and around the world; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge all its Posts, Districts and Departments to work with and support the Special Olympics programs in whatever capacity that they so choose to increase quality of life opportunities for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

Resolution No. 33 Fall NEC – 2007

Reducing or Preventing Teenage Pregnancy

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support appropriate legislation aimed at reducing or preventing teen pregnancy; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion is authorized to collaborate with national and state teen pregnancy prevention organizations as determined by the National Commission on Children & Youth to the end that The American Legion can maintain an effective role in the promotion of adequate teen pregnancy prevention programs; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That departments and posts are encouraged to support and cooperate with organizations and agencies that seek to educate teenagers on the advantages of delaying pregnancy.

Resolution No. 260 2012 National Convention

Youth Suicide Prevention Education

RESOLVED, That Departments and Posts of the American Legion cooperate in all ways possible to promote and increase the public’s awareness of the warning signs of youth suicide; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges all educators, coaches, school administrators and all others responsible for children in any capacity, to familiarize themselves with the warning signs of youth suicide; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages all schools to incorporate youth suicide prevention programs into their regular school curriculum, and provide youth suicide training for faculty and staff; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That legislation be sought through state legislatures to mandate youth suicide prevention education programs in each state which does not already address this problem.

Resolution No. 58 Spring NEC – 2003
Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention

Alcohol And Youth

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges all Departments and Posts to assist in alerting, informing, and educating parents, teachers, and other school authorities in their communities of the tragic results of alcohol abuse by youngsters; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That Departments and Posts be encouraged to cooperate with other organizations and agencies concerned with this problem by discussing, formulating and disseminating the facts about alcohol and the threat it poses to our leaders of tomorrow.

Resolution No. 45 Spring NEC - 2000

Drug Trafficking

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urge the President and Congress of the United States to appropriate funds that meet or exceed current funding levels for state, federal, and military drug trafficking prevention programs.

Resolution No. 258 2012 National Convention

General Drug Abuse Statement

RESOLVED, That all levels of The American Legion be urged to continue their efforts to reduce drug abuse, as it affects our nation’s young people; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion does affirm its support for the Office of National Drug Control Policy, and that, to the extent possible, the Legion will work with the President of the United States, Congress, state legislators, and federal, state and local agencies, when, as an organization, the Legion believes changes or additions to our laws or government policies are necessary; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion support those initiatives designed to educate children about the real dangers associated with drugs, and seeks the involvement of parents, business and community leaders, school administrators and coaches, and other role models in a broad prevention campaign; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages families and institutions, including employers, law enforcement agencies, faith-based and community-based organizations, and health care providers to help drug abusers recognize their addiction and urge them to seek appropriate treatment; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That drugs and drug abuse must be attacked as a whole, which includes international relations, law enforcement, education, judicial reform, research, treatment and rehabilitation, to ensure that our nation’s children grow up as healthy and productive members of society.

Resolution No. 282 2010 National Convention
Minimum Drinking Age

RESOLVED, That The American Legion urges all Departments, where applicable, to strongly oppose the lowering of the minimum drinking age requirements of their respective state; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Departments, where applicable, voice their concern and support for the re-establishment of a minimum drinking age of 21.

Resolution No. 40 Spring NEC – 2000

Families

Oppose All Efforts To Undermine, Alter Or Otherwise Corrupt The Institution Of Marriage

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recognizes that marriage is a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That The American Legion opposes all efforts to undermine, alter or otherwise corrupt the institution of marriage, which is the cornerstone of a healthy family.

Resolution No. 253 2012 National Convention

Establish “National Family Week”

RESOLVED, By That The American Legion urges the President of the United States and the Congress to establish "National Family Week" during Thanksgiving Holiday Week as an annual observance.

Resolution No. 265 2012 National Convention

Operation: Military Kids

RESOLVED, That The American Legion encourages its Departments and Posts to work with and support their local Operation: Military Kids efforts to contribute to the well being of children of military personnel.

Resolution No. 30 Spring NEC – 2005

Juvenile Justice

Violence And Vandalism In The Schools

RESOLVED, That The American Legion recommends school boards and national and state education agencies, in conjunction with parents and community members, develop and implement programs that create effective violence prevention strategies, to include consistent, fair and responsible “zero tolerance” policies; and, be it further

RESOLVED, The American Legion urges local law enforcement to implement effective programs for the amelioration of juvenile delinquency in coordination with the Department of Education, community citizenry and other agencies within the criminal justice system; and, be it finally
RESOLVED, That local Posts urge and assist those in the educational community and criminal justice system to work closely together with communities and families in efforts to reduce the development and prevailing patterns of juvenile delinquency in schools and our communities.

Resolution No. 36 Spring NEC – 2006

**Miscellaneous**

**Authorization To Conduct National Children & Youth Conference**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion does hereby authorize the National Commission on Children & Youth to conduct a Children & Youth Conference for Department Children & Youth representatives, beginning in the fall of 2007, and annually thereafter.

Resolution No.44 Spring NEC – 2006

**Child Welfare Foundation Participation With The Combined Federal Campaign**

RESOLVED, That The American Legion work with the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation to secure qualification of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation in the Combined Federal Campaign; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That the National Commander, after review and approval of the National Judge Advocate, be and is hereby authorized and directed to execute any documents necessary, and the National Adjutant be and is hereby authorized and directed to attest same.

Resolution No. 31 Fall NEC – 1994