

**SONS OF THE**

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 **AMERICAN  
LEGION**

# **Children and Youth Committee**

Annual Conference  
September 27, 2025

**Jeff Trout**

Chairman

Children and Youth Committee

# Mission Statement

The Sons of the American Legion National Children and Youth Committee focuses on strengthen the family unit, work with quality organizations that provide services for children and provide communities with well-rounded programs that meet the needs of young people.

## 2024-2025 Committee Focus

- American Legion Children and Youth programs
  - Veterans and Children Foundation (VCF)
  - Children Organ Transplant Association (COTA)
- American Legion Family Day
- Youth Garden
- National Convention Youth Academy

# Veterans and Children Foundation

- Raised \$82,223 as of May 31, 2025  
(All-Time High in Donations)
- National Convention Awards
  - First To Reach Goal of \$9,100 – Maryland
  - Highest Over Goal – Maryland (\$20,820)
  - Highest Per-Capita – Latin America (\$7.05)
- Donations By National Convention Over \$115,000

**Mission:** The Children's Organ Transplant Association (COTA) helps children and young adults who need a life-saving transplant by providing fundraising assistance and family support.

- Raised \$67,688 in Donations
- Worked with Detachments in raising awareness

## American Legion Family Day

- Promoted American Legion Family Day on the last Saturday in April.
- Sent out flyers and advertising to the local community to promote the event.

## American Legion Family Day (Continued)

Family Day 2025 was a success as posts throughout the country opened their doors to the community.



# Youth Garden

(Continued from previous year's Parent/Child Initiative)

- C&Y Committee introduced a youth garden where children can grow their own vegetables with the assistance from parents/adults.
- Children from the previous year returned
- Pilot program is located at Post #217 in College Park, Maryland

## Youth Garden (Continued)

- Youth Garden received national and local recognition
  - Article in legion.org
  - Articles in local and national newspapers
  - CBS news clip that reached at least 16 states
  - Articles in both the SAL Roundup and Millennium

# Youth Garden (Continued)



# Delivering the Goods

Chairman Joe Lohman and Sean Phelan presented National Commander Joseph Navarrete a basket of goodies in Tampa



# Youth Academy at Convention

## Agenda:

- Flag education
  - How to fold a flag
  - How to salute a flag
- ALA Jr. Patch Program (Americanism Patch)
- Tampa Police vehicle display and education program
- Snacks/drinks and a bag full of goodies for the kids
- Minor League Scout/Trainer



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## National Children & Youth Academy

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2025 - Registration 8am**  
**Class is from 9am-3pm**  
JW MARRIOT EDISON ROOM, THIRD FLOOR

Calling all school-aged American Legion Family members. Join us for the 2025 National Children & Youth Academy. The earlier we involve our youth, the brighter our future will be!

TRAINING WILL INCLUDE:  
FLAG EDUCATION  
ALA JR. PATCH PROGRAM

REGISTER BY  
07/23/25  
**SCAN ME**



**TO REGISTER!**

*City of Tampa*  
Florida

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Registration is mandatory so we will have a head count to be sure to have enough supplies for the class.

## Children and Youth Committee Goals - 2025-2026

- Assist with the Youth Academy
- COTA – Raise awareness and donations by 10%
- VCF – Raise awareness and donations by 10%
- CMN – Raise awareness and donations by 10%
- Victory Garden – Increase participation

# Pizza Garden - Youth Garden - Victory Garden

- Introducing different ways to garden
- Developing easy to use step by step instructions
- Giving examples for best practices in specific regions

# What is Right For Me?

**SAL YOUTH GARDEN**

## SUMMER GARDEN BUILD

### WHAT IS RIGHT FOR ME?

Feature	In-Ground Gardening	Raised Bed Gardening	Container Gardening
<b>Best For</b>	Large gardens, deep-rooted crops	Backyard spaces, better soil control	Small spaces, patios, balconies
<b>Setup Effort</b>	Low (just tilling/prep)	Medium (building & filling)	Low (buy a pot & fill)
<b>Soil Control</b>	Limited to natural soil	Can customize soil mix	Full control over soil mix
<b>Water Retention</b>	High (natural soil holds moisture)	Medium	Low (dries out quickly)
<b>Cost</b>	Low (just amendments)	Medium to high (wood, soil, materials)	Low to high (depends on container size & soil)
<b>Longevity</b>	Permanent	5-10 years (depends on materials)	Varies (plastic pots wear out faster)
<b>Ease of Access</b>	Requires bending/kneeling	Easier access, can be raised on legs	Very easy, can be moved

**IN-GROUND GARDENS PROVIDE DEEP, RICH SOIL FOR THRIVING PLANTS WHILE UTILIZING NATURAL GROWING CONDITIONS. WITH PROPER SOIL PREPARATION, YOU CAN ENJOY A LOW-COST, HIGH-YIELD GARDEN RIGHT IN YOUR BACKYARD!**

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# Container Garden

## Youth Garden Water Reservoir Garden Pot

Growing plants in buckets is an affordable and effective way to garden in small spaces. Here are two methods for creating a self-watering system:

### Option 1: Basic Drainage with Stones (Simpler Method)

- Place stones or gravel at the bottom of a 5-gallon bucket.
- Drill several drainage holes on the sides near the bottom.
- Add soil on top of the stones and plant your garden.

### Option 2: Two-Bucket Self-Watering System (Recommended)

This method creates a built-in water reservoir to keep your plants hydrated longer.

Materials Needed:

- 2 5-gallon buckets (food-grade preferred)
- 2 feet of 1-1/4" or 1-1/2" PVC pipe
- 1 5" net cup or mesh cup (optional but recommended)

Prepare the Inner Bucket:

- Cut a 5" hole in the center of the bottom of bucket.
- Drill a 1-1/4" or 1-1/2" hole for the PVC pipe.
- Drill multiple small drainage holes (1/4") in the bottom to allow excess water to drip back into the reservoir.

Prepare the Outer Bucket:

- Place the bucket with holes inside the second, uncut bucket.
- Drill two 1/4" holes just below the bottom of the inner bucket to serve as overflow drains.

Install the Watering System:

- Insert the PVC pipe into the side hole of the inner bucket. Cut a notch in one end so it doesn't sit flush.
- Place the net cup into the large center hole of the inner bucket. This will help wick water into the soil.

Fill and Plant:

- Add moist potting mix into the bucket, ensuring the net cup is filled with soil.
- Insert your plant or seeds.
- Fill the reservoir (bottom bucket) with water through the PVC pipe



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# Victory Garden (continued)

Example:

New York City Squadron:

Recommendation: Container Gardening & Hydroponics

- With limited outdoor space, container gardening allows for flexible setups on rooftops, patios, or small community areas.
- Hydroponics can be a fantastic way to grow fresh food year-round indoors, especially in schools or community centers.
- Getting Started:
  - Container Setup: Use large pots, fabric grow bags, or vertical garden towers to maximize space.
  - Soil & Watering: Use high-quality potting mix and ensure proper drainage in containers.
  - Urban Hydroponics: Start small with a simple Deep Water Culture (DWC) or Wick System before expanding.
  - Community Engagement: Partner with local schools, youth groups, or urban agriculture organizations for resources and volunteers.

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**QUESTIONS?**