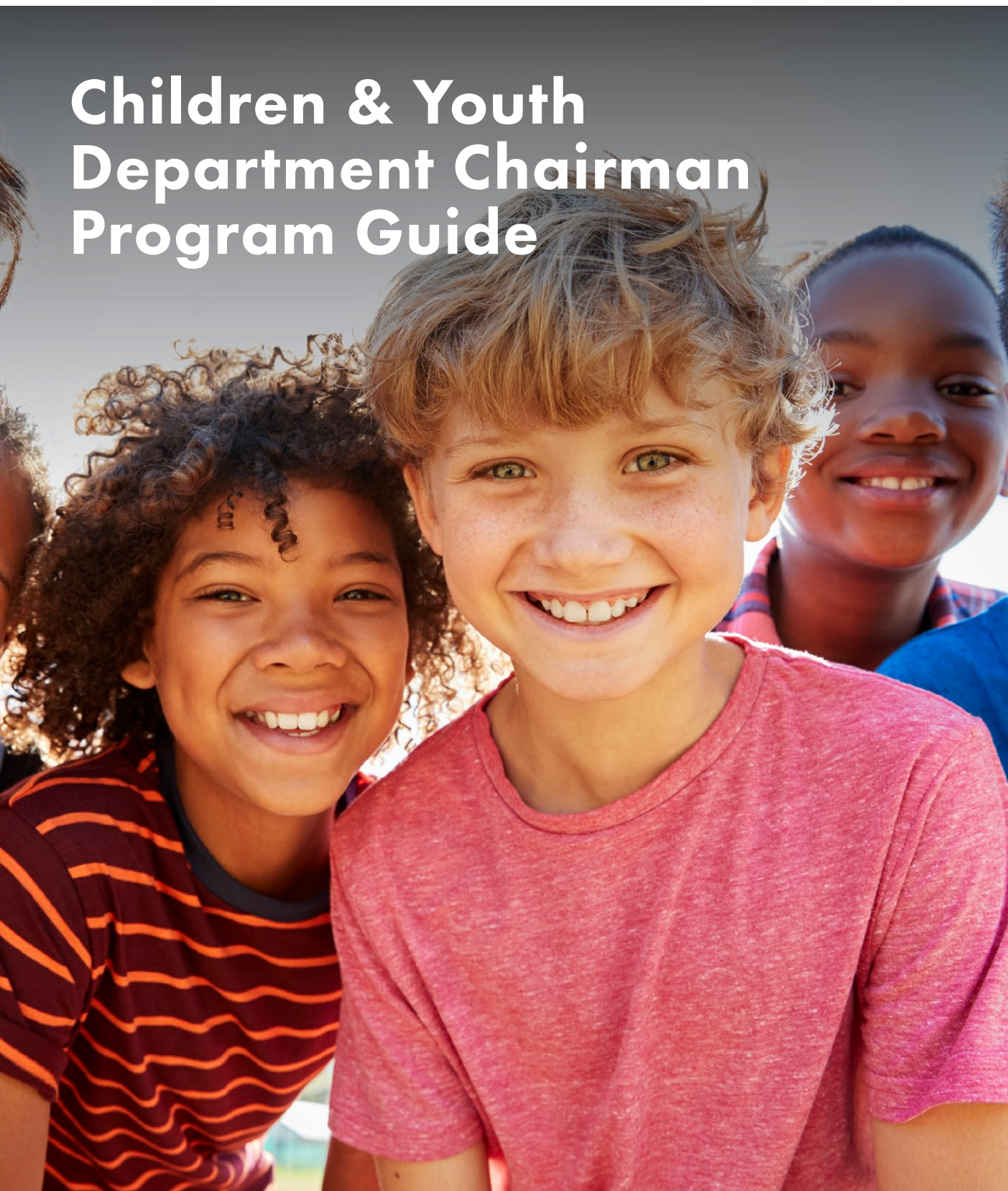




Children & Youth Department Chairman Program Guide



Disclaimer of liability

The American Legion *Children & Youth Department Chairman Program Guide* ("guide") provides the reader with very general information about planning and conducting various programs. This guide is only intended to help assist volunteers and staff. With respect to information contained in this guide, neither The American Legion nor any of its officers, directors or employees make any warranty, express or implied, nor assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process implemented at the post or department level. This guide only constitutes general advice and recommendations for operations based on best practices. Information within the guide stating "shall or must" is based on federal law or federal/IRS regulations and mandates. All other items of information in this guide are general suggestions except for the National Constitution and By-Laws. This guide does not constitute any type of legal advice. If readers have any concerns about anything in this guide, they are strongly advised to contact their respective department and an attorney licensed in their state.

Please see 36 U.S.C. Section 21704: The Corporation (The American Legion) may provide guidance and leadership to organizations (departments) and local chapters (posts) ... but *may not control or otherwise influence the specific activities and conduct of such organizations (departments) and local chapters (posts)*. (emphasis added)

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Introduction

The Americanism Commission's Committee on Children & Youth (C&Y), values having you as part of the Children & Youth team. Whether you are new to your position or a seasoned C&Y leader, your role is critical to our mission's success.

As the department C&Y chairman, you are the person American Legion posts and districts will look to for guidance in conducting C&Y programs. No matter your department's level of participation, there is always opportunity for growth.

National Headquarters' Americanism staff is here to help you take your programs to new heights. Use this manual as a reference guide, but watch for information throughout the year regarding ongoing programs, legislative efforts, meetings and the latest resources.

Have a question, suggestion or comment? Let us know how we can help. While we may not be able to meet every special request, we will do our best to assist you in your work.

The American Legion continues to do all it can to ensure **"a square deal for every child."** Thank you for continuing to serve our nation, and the interests of children and youth, in this challenging yet rewarding position.

The “Whole Child” Plan

In the years after the American Legion’s founding, members realized that neglect of family and child welfare problems affected disabled veterans’ rehabilitation. Following a year of careful study, the organization adopted the American Legion Child Welfare program in 1924.

Established a year later, in 1925, the American Legion National Child Welfare Division put forward the “Whole Child” plan, stating that the child of every veteran “should have a home ... health, education, character, and opportunity.” The three principles found in Resolution No. 199 (Fall 1951) titled, “Re-Emphasize Three Major Principles of Child Welfare Programs of The American Legion,” are:

- **Strengthen the family unit against the forces of a more complex society.** The American Legion recognizes that the optimal environment for children is at home with his or her own parents. Our efforts have always been directed toward keeping the family together.
- **Extend support to sound organizations and facilities that provide services for children and youth.** The American Legion always acts in a supplementary capacity rather than duplicating the efforts of existing agencies.
- **Maintain a well-rounded program that meets the needs of today’s young people.** This third principle provides elasticity to address all matters of child health and child welfare, and affirms The American Legion’s commitment to all children.

While these principles are the heart of the “Whole Child” plan, four methods are the muscle: **Education, Legislation, Material Aid and Prevention.** As you read this manual, you will become more familiar with each of these methods.

Over the decades, the development of new and improved public programs to provide economic security for children has made it possible for the Legion to focus on other problem areas. To date, no area of child welfare has gone untouched by the collective hand of The American Legion. The very program of Children & Youth itself is unique from any agency, governmental or private, in its ability to expand from every area of concern for child welfare and health.

While The American Legion’s list of accomplishments is long, it is by no means complete. The American Legion will always seek new, innovative and better approaches to child welfare programs. Without knowing what challenges will face our youth tomorrow, we at least know their survival may well depend on the quality of care, education and training we provide today.

The American Legion is proud of all our members do on behalf of our nation’s youth, along with our extended family: American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion and American Legion Riders. Together, our efforts in the area of child welfare are a testament to the Legion’s ability to adapt to changing needs while maintaining high principles and taking on increased responsibilities as necessary.

Children & Youth Components

Coordinated Committees on Children & Youth

Coordinated committees are vital to the success and effectiveness of Children & Youth programs. Departments, districts and posts that run the most outstanding programs year after year have a concerted effort among all members of the American Legion Family. Since there is one Children & Youth Program for The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion, all may follow the program objectives as outlined by The American Legion.

Coordinated committees are cooperative ventures organized at the post, district and department levels to coordinate C&Y activities of the Legion, Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion. By working together, we reduce duplication of efforts and expense, and ultimately serve a greater number of children.

The American Legion Children & Youth chairman may serve as chairman of the Coordinated Committee, with the American Legion Auxiliary and Sons of The American Legion Children & Youth chairmen serving as members. Other members may include:

- American Legion adjutant
- Auxiliary secretary
- American Legion commander (ex officio)
- Auxiliary president (ex officio)
- Sons of The American Legion Children & Youth chairman
- American Legion Child Welfare Foundation chairman, if applicable
- Additional members, depending on the size and scope of your C&Y activities

The basic function of the Coordinated Committee is to put forth an organized effort to carry out the Children & Youth program in the most efficient and effective manner.

Americanism Commission's Committee on Children & Youth

The purpose of this committee is to formulate, recommend and implement plans, programs and activities designed to:

- Assure care and protection for the children of veterans;
- Improve conditions for all children and youth with due concern for maintaining the integrity of the family home;
- Prevent social and physical ills of children and youth where possible, utilizing services of and cooperating with sound organizations and agencies for children and youth;
- Maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs;
- Such other purposes as may be assigned to it by the National Executive Committee.

National Headquarters Children & Youth Staff

The role of the National Headquarters staff is to serve the Legion's membership. We are here to assist and support you in carrying out your mission as it relates to children and youth. In addition to correspondence, email and phone conversations, staff members may be available for visiting and attending your official functions. If you would like a member of the national staff to attend your department convention, meetings or training sessions, make a request through your department.

The national staff keeps in touch with many of the major agencies and organizations interested in children and youth. Should you need additional information on a specific topic, we can put you in touch with others who can assist you.

Contact us at (317) 630-1203 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET Monday through Friday) or email childrenandyouth@legion.org.

National Resolutions

Learn what American Legion resolutions are, why we have them, and how to write a resolution by downloading a guide at <https://archive.legion.org/node/7>.

The American Legion continuously maintains a portfolio of national resolutions related to the welfare of children and commendations of organizations that align with the organization's values.

As of 2025, those resolutions included:



FINANCIALLY ASSIST FAMILIES FACED BY CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS OF THEIR CHILDREN, urging the federal government to expand the present federal Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant programs to include catastrophic illness, and state governments are urged to enact legislation to financially assist individual families faced by the catastrophic illness of their children. (Resolution 278/2016 National Convention)

FUNDING FOR DRUG-TRAFFICKING PREVENTION PROGRAMS, urging the President and Congress to appropriate funds that meet or exceed current funding levels for state, federal and military drug-trafficking prevention programs. (Resolution 112/2018 National Convention)

LOCATE MISSING CHILDREN AND PREVENT CHILD VICTIMIZATION, supporting appropriate legislation aimed at locating missing children and preventing child victimization and urging Congress to appropriate funds that meet or exceed current levels for the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children; also that The American Legion be authorized to collaborate with national and state missing and exploited children agencies and organizations as determined by the national Americanism Commission at all levels, in locating missing children and preventing child exploitation; and encouraging departments and posts to actively increase public awareness of child victimization and its detrimental effects. (Resolution 113/2018 National Convention)



NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM, urging Congress to appropriate funds at or exceeding current funding levels for the National School Lunch Program. (Resolution 285/2016 National Convention)

OPPOSE ANY ATTEMPT TO WEAKEN PRESENT LAWS GOVERNING PENALTIES FOR THE PRODUCTION, SALE AND DISTRIBUTION OF PORNOGRAPHIC OR OBSCENE MATERIALS TO MINORS.

(Resolution 282/2016 National Convention)



DEDICATION TO THE PHYSICAL FITNESS AND OVERALL WELLNESS OF OUR NATION'S YOUTH

reaffirming The American Legion's dedication to fitness and wellness among young people and encouraging local posts and departments to actively promote fitness, health and well-being through outreach and programs in communities. (Resolution 22/National Executive Committee, May 2023)

PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT, supporting appropriate legislation aimed at preventing child maltreatment; authorization to collaborate with national and state child maltreatment prevention organizations as determined by the national Americanism Commission; urging departments and posts to cooperate in all ways possible with organizations and agencies that advocate for child maltreatment prevention and promoting increased public awareness of child maltreatment and its detrimental effects; and urging all educators, coaches, school administrators and others responsible for children in any capacity to familiarize themselves with the warning signs of child maltreatment and report any suspected maltreatment to the proper authorities, ensuring that these children are referred to the appropriate child protective service; and continuing public education continues through The American Legion's Children & Youth program with respect to reporting suspected cases of child maltreatment. (Resolution 286/2016 National Convention)



PREVENTION OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, supporting appropriate legislation aimed at the prevention, investigation and prosecution of child sexual exploitation; American Legion collaboration with with national and state agencies and organizations involved in the prevention of child sexual exploitation, as determined by the national Americanism Commission; and encouraging departments and posts to raise community awareness about the prevalence of sexual exploitation of children and encourage cooperation 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. (Resolution 281/2016 National Convention)

PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROMOTE CHILD SAFETY supporting appropriate legislation aimed at preventing or reducing unintentional injury among children and adolescents, urging departments and posts to actively raise public awareness on organized safety commissions and to actively promote child safety at the state and local levels. (Resolution 287/2016 National Convention)

REDUCING OR PREVENTING TEENAGE PREGNANCY supporting appropriate legislation aimed at reducing or preventing teen pregnancy and authorization to collaborate with national and state teen-pregnancy prevention organizations as determined by the national Americanism Commission; and encouraging departments and posts to actively raise public awareness about organizations and agencies that seek to educate teenagers on the advantages of delaying pregnancy. (Resolution 288/2016 National Convention)

SUPPORT FOR OFFICE OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE. (Resolution 114/2018 National Convention)



SUPPORT FUNDING COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS, affirming support for programs as outlined by the Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant contained under Title V of the Social Security Act 62 and urging 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 279/2016 National Convention)

ALCOHOL AND YOUTH urging 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 encouraging departments and posts to cooperate with other organizations and agencies concerned with this problem by discussing, formulating and disseminating facts about alcohol and the threat it poses to tomorrow's leaders. (Resolution 45/National Executive Committee, May 2000)

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION PARTICIPATION WITH THE COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN authorizing The American Legion and the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (now the Child Well-beng Foundation) to work together to secure qualification of the foundation in the Combined Federal Campaign.

(Resolution 31/National Executive Committee, October 1994)

COMMENDING MERCY MEDICAL ANGELS for its humanitarian efforts to provide children and families needed charitable transportation to distant treatment locations across the United States.

(Resolution 14/National Executive Committee, May 2015)

COMMENDING RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE CHARITIES POP TAB COLLECTION PROGRAM that helps provide a home-like environment for financially challenged families with seriously ill or injured children who must undergo medical treatment at a children's hospital. (Resolution 28/National Executive Committee, May 2014)



COMMENDING SPECIAL OLYMPICS for its efforts to enhance the lives of millions of intellectually disabled children by providing year-round sports training and athletic competition in the United States and around the world.

(Resolution 27/National Executive Committee, May 2014)

COMMENDING JAYC FOUNDATION for its mission to improve the lives of children and to strengthen families.

(Resolution 25/National Executive Committee, May 2014)

ESTABLISH CHILDREN & YOUTH POST AND DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATE AWARDS formally reinstating National Commission on Children & Youth certificate awards that recognize posts, districts and departments conducting outstanding Children & Youth programs and that the National Committee on Children & Youth continue to issue and send them. (Resolution 61/National Executive Committee, October 2012)



FIREWORKS SAFETY urging all departments and posts to assist in alerting, informing and educating parents, children, community leaders and others about the dangers of fireworks; and encouraging children and families to enjoy fireworks at public fireworks displays conducted by professionals, rather than purchase fireworks for home or private use.

(Resolution 33/National Executive Committee, May 2006)

SUPPORT EFFORTS TO REDUCE DRUG ABUSE continuing efforts to reduce drug abuse, as it affects our nation's young people; and affirming support for the Office of National Drug Control Policy ... encouraging families and institutions, including employers, law-enforcement agencies, faith-based and community-based organizations, and health-care providers to help drug abusers recognize their addictions and urge them to seek appropriate treatment; and attacking the problem of drug abuse 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 282/National Convention, 2010)



SUPPORT THE RIGHTS OF ALL PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES recognizing and supporting 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 supporting the goals of the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities:

- Full citizenship rights of people with intellectual disabilities
- Provision of all necessary supports to individuals and families
- Reduction of the occurrence and severity of intellectual disabilities
- Promotion of the widest dissemination of information of models, programs and services within the field of intellectual disabilities

The American Legion also supports and encourages 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. (Resolution 294/National Convention, 2010)

PROTECT CHILDREN FROM UNRESTRICTED MEDIA promoting efforts to restrict excessive use of violence, vulgarity and other forms of moral depravity in movies, TV programs, TV news and the Internet; encouraging departments and posts 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 authorizing the Americanism Commission to disseminate educational materials, when feasible, to inform department and post leadership about the potential dangers inherent in the media and Internet, in an effort to return the country to the God-given principles of life, liberty and the true pursuit of happiness. (Resolution 11/National Convention, 2014)



SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMMUNIZE ALL CHILDREN reaffirming support for the fullest use of any licensed vaccine to immunize children; urging departments and posts to actively raise awareness about local treatment and immunization programs so that children in every community may achieve the fullest protection against communicable diseases. (Resolution 10/National Convention, 2014)

VIOLENCE AND VANDALISM IN THE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES recommending that 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 for local schools, to include consistent, fair and responsible zero-tolerance policies; urging local law enforcement to implement effective programs combating juvenile delinquency in coordination with the Department of Education, community and other agencies within the criminal justice system; and urging posts to assist those in the educational community and criminal justice system to work closely with communities and families to reduce juvenile delinquency in schools and our communities. (Resolution 62/National Executive Committee, October 2012)

YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION EDUCATION urging departments and posts to cooperate in all ways possible to promote and increase public awareness of the warning signs of youth suicide; urging all educators, coaches, school administrators and others responsible for children in any capacity, to familiarize themselves with the warning signs of youth suicide; and encouraging all schools to incorporate youth suicide prevention programs into their regular school curricula, and provide youth suicide training for faculty and staff; and seeking state legislation to mandate youth suicide prevention education programs in each state which does not already address the problem. (Resolution 58/National Executive Committee, May 2003)

APRIL: OFFICIAL CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH:

**NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE AMERICAN LEGION
May 8-9, 2019
Indianapolis, Indiana**

Resolution No. 26: April As Official Children & Youth Month

Origin: Committee on Children & Youth Submitted by: Americanism Commission

WHEREAS, The 22nd National Convention of The American Legion assembled in Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 15-18, 1941, adopted Resolution No. 537, "April as Official Child Welfare Month"; and

WHEREAS, The Americanism Commission, at the suggestion of the Committee on Children & Youth, wishes to reflect current terminology; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, By the National Executive Committee of The American Legion in regular meeting assembled in Indianapolis, Indiana, on May 8-9, 2019, That The American Legion set aside and officially designate the month of April of each year as American Legion Children & Youth Month; and, be it finally

RESOLVED, That Resolution No. 537 of the 22nd National Convention, Sept. 15-18, 1941, "April as Official Child Welfare Month" is hereby superseded and rescinded.

Legislative efforts

Legislation is a critical part of accomplishing the Legion's C&Y goals. We have helped more children through sound legislation than any other means.

Legislation is more than new laws; it also includes administration of laws at every level, public awareness of existing laws and necessary amendments.

Every year, The American Legion is challenged to support various new or amended legislation and public appropriations at the local, state and federal levels of government. Nationally, our position on any legislation is based on the mandates of the national convention and the National Executive Committee.

Resolutions and testimony alone do not get the job accomplished. A concerted effort from the entire American Legion Family can reach people at the grassroots level. However, legislation is a last resort. When we can assist others without legislation, we should.

Local efforts

In each community, local legislative action deserves continued attention:

- City programs affecting children and youth
- Appropriations for schools and school budgets
- Immunization
- Child abuse and neglect statutes
- Juvenile justice (courts, probation, correction)
- Local public welfare departments
- All other matters relating to the health and welfare of children

If the post C&Y chairman or any other member believes there is some action The American Legion should take regarding local government, the proper procedure is to present the recommended action at a post meeting in the form of a resolution. If the resolution is adopted, the post commander or other post officers have the authority to inform the local government of the local American Legion's position on a particular matter.

There are times when the post C&Y chairman recognizes the need for changes at the state or federal levels in laws pertaining to children and youth. He or she should submit a resolution to the post, and if it is adopted, forward it through the proper channels as determined by the department constitution and by-laws.

Department efforts

All legislative activity pertaining to children and youth should be carried out only with the full knowledge and support of the department headquarters and the department legislative committee. When your department C&Y committee has outlined a specific legislative agenda, it is imperative that department guidelines be observed. After program approval, the C&Y committee can assist the legislative committee through research and making contacts to support the proposed legislation. When legislative resolutions refer only to proposals in state legislatures, they are not forwarded to National Headquarters, since departments handle their own state legislative activities.

National efforts

Once a resolution calling for legislative action becomes an official mandate of The American Legion, the onus is on the National Legislative Commission for appropriate congressional action. After the national convention or the National Executive Committee approves a legislative mandate, the Legislative Commission is responsible for petitioning Congress to support or oppose federal legislation connected to that mandate. The principal functions of the Legislative Commission are the planning, strategy and dissemination of information and coordination of American Legion mandates.

Testimony

Americanism staff is often called upon to offer testimony regarding federal legislation related to our mandates. Testimony may be needed at local, department or national levels to help carry out the Legion's legislative mandates. The Legislative Commission will advise the Americanism Commission and its Committee on Children & Youth when written or oral testimony is required. The Committee on Children & Youth does the research and drafts testimony that is submitted to the National Legislative Commission via the Americanism Commission. A formal draft is then composed and submitted through proper congressional channels. Your department has guidelines outlining procedures regarding testimony given at the state and local levels.

Report to Congress

The American Legion is required by our congressional charter (36 U.S.C. Section 21708) to report to Congress annually on what it accomplished the preceding year in its programs. **The department C&Y chairman or duly authorized official appointed by the department adjutant is responsible for submitting all necessary reports in a timely manner so that we comply with our congressional charter.** The Consolidated Post Report (CPR) provides us with the data necessary to accurately complete this report. Urge your posts to fulfill this important obligation.

Reporting procedures

Your department headquarters receives a bulk shipment of Consolidated Post Report (CPR) forms from National Headquarters in early February. After a post completes the CPR form to the best of its knowledge, the post will send two copies to department headquarters and retain the third (pink) copy for its files. Of the two copies sent to department headquarters, the department adjutant will retain a copy and forward the second to National Headquarters. Download a CPR Form under the Internal Affairs tab at legion.org/publications.

Post commanders and adjutants can also fill out and submit a CPR online at mylegion.org. The form is located under "My Account/My Groups." After completing the form online, click "submit" to send the report directly to National Headquarters.

Chairmen duties

Many department chairmen find difficulty in receiving a high level of response with the Consolidated Post Report (CPR) form. Yet it is necessary for a complete picture of post activities. The CPR is a national form of reporting. We must make it clear to all posts that this is how we must report.

As chairman for the Children & Youth program of your department, you surely have a great deal of pride in what is accomplished for young people. This accomplishment may only be a few hours of volunteer time or a few dollars donated to a worthy cause. However insignificant it may seem, your activities deserve recognition and should be reported. The American Legion's federal charter requires us to submit an annual report of our activities and expenditures to Congress. Therefore, the number of posts reporting C&Y activities in your department is extremely important.

The Consolidated Post Report covers the period of June 1 to May 31. Part of your job is to encourage all post C&Y chairmen to fill out the section pertaining to C&Y activities.

Submitting the CPR to National Headquarters by July 1 of the current year is the department adjutant's responsibility. The Department Children & Youth Report is your responsibility and must be received at National Headquarters by July 1 of the current program year.

Children & Youth Program Reporting Awards

The Committee on Children & Youth and the National Executive Committee have authorized a number of program and reporting awards. American Legion post Children & Youth awards may be found under the General tab on [Mylegion.org](https://mylegion.org).

Post awards

The Committee on Children & Youth offers three post-level Children & Youth program awards. After determining which posts deserve the following awards, use the awards template on [MyLegion.org](https://mylegion.org) under the General tab to create the award.

Annual Children & Youth Citation

Upon certification by the department Children & Youth chairman, this award is available to any post that has reported an outstanding Children & Youth program for the year.

Special Children & Youth Citation

This award recognizes posts within a district that have conducted outstanding C&Y programs during the reporting year. One post is selected from each of the four membership categories:

Category 1	15 to 99 members
Category 2	100 to 299 members
Category 3	300 to 499 members
Category 4	500+ members

Certificate of Meritorious Service

The Committee on Children & Youth issues this award for meritorious work performed by a post. It is available to only one post in each of the four membership categories within a department. These posts must have distinguished themselves as having the best Children & Youth program in their respective category. Once you have determined the top four standards for judging, posts' reports are left entirely to the discretion of the departments. Departments are the final and sole authority in the selection of posts to receive these awards. **Give citations only in cases where a post has actually reported creditable Children & Youth work. A report form with the notation "no report" is just that.**

The Committee on Children & Youth believes you are the best judge of who deserves these awards; therefore, supporting documentation is not required for justification.

District award

The National Executive Committee has authorized one district reporting award. The National Achievement Award is given to districts achieving 100% Children & Youth reporting by posts in the district. Percentages of reporting are to be based solely on the CPR form.

Department awards

The Committee on Children & Youth has authorized department C&Y reporting awards:

100% Consolidated Post Reporting Award

This award recognizes departments achieving 100% post reporting on the CPR form, as verified by National Headquarters. Qualifying departments receive their citations in the fall.

100% Children & Youth Post Narrative Reporting Award

For a department to qualify for this award, the department chairman must have received a copy of a narrative report from each of his or her posts. These in turn are compiled by the chairman into a single department narrative report, which is mailed to the Americanism Division, separate from the CPR. When you have determined that your department has achieved 100% C&Y narrative reporting, fill out the appropriate form, attach a copy of each report and forward it to the Americanism Division at childrenandyouth@legion.org. Only those departments having 100% Children & Youth post reporting should submit this report for verification.

Individual department narrative forms for reporting post Children & Youth activities

By action of the Executive Section of the Commission on Children & Youth meeting on Oct. 15-16, 1979, it was recommended and agreed that each department C&Y chairman be responsible for disseminating the department's own narrative reporting form. The committee has agreed to respond to such involvement by offering 100% Department Narrative awards to those departments able to verify receipt of such reports from all their posts.

The department chairman is required to submit a Children & Youth narrative report to the Americanism Division containing the compiled information from posts. This approach accomplishes two major goals:

- Requires the department chairman to take full responsibility for narrative reporting.
- Offers reporting awards for 100 percent Children & Youth narrative participation at the department level, based on the department's own C&Y narrative reporting form.

To encourage department C&Y chairmen to assume the responsibility of distributing their own narrative forms to posts in their departments, the Committee on Children & Youth will recognize a department's own Children & Youth narrative reporting form for the purpose of a 100% Post Children & Youth Narrative Reporting Award.

Use of a narrative form developed and used by your committee serves three purposes:

- Provides you with information enabling you to better judge winners for various awards.
- Provide a better picture of overall Children & Youth efforts.
- Serve as the basis for a 100% Narrative Reporting Award.

As with the Consolidated Post Report, it will be your job to encourage all posts to complete your department's Children & Youth narrative reporting form.

If your department does not have an established form for reporting posts' C&Y activities, it will be necessary to create one. It is recommended you use the suggested Children & Youth Post Narrative Report in the appendix.

Make special note of the deadlines for all submissions of reports and requisitions located on the specific form.

Publications

Download and print the following Children & Youth publications available at www.legion.org/advocacy/youth-support/youth-support-publications:

- April is Children & Youth Month
- The Whole Child
- National Family Week
- Temporary Financial Assistance
- The American Legion Veterans & Children Foundation
- The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation brochure
- The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation Awards brochure

Any successful C&Y program needs a plan as well as the materials necessary to accomplish the objectives. Our C&Y publications are available to help you develop and carry out your program.

Special projects and needs

At times, you will require additional publications to promote projects or fulfill special needs – an American Legion booth at a county fair, for example, or a workshop on a particular program.

The Americanism Division does not maintain hard-copy inventory of publications. In order to keep up with the most current informations and changes, the Americanism Division has placed the publications online for download at www.legion.org/advocacy/youth-support/youth-support-publications. Posts, units and squadrons, or any level of the Legion Family, may have materials reproduced locally as desired.

Budget

As department C&Y chairman, you may need to know the financial limits of your program. Specifically, know the answer to the following questions:

- How much is budgeted for the department's Children & Youth program?
- What is the accepted procedure for submitting a proposal to your department finance committee?
- How often does your finance committee meet?
- What percentage of your budget is earmarked for travel, printing, special meetings, special projects, or other areas not mentioned?

Annual Programs

American Legion Child Well-being Foundation, Inc.

Established in 1954, the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation (CWF) now doing business as the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation since 2024 is a repository of funds from individuals who wish to contribute to the betterment of the nation's children. Our foremost philanthropic priority is to contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual welfare of children and youth by aiding progress in the field of child welfare through research, studies, surveys and projects, or by supporting programs and activities benefiting the welfare of children and youth.

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

For more information on CWF, go to cwf-inc.org.

For grant information, contact (317) 630-1202 (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET Monday through Friday) or email admin@cwf-inc.org.

CWF awards

The American Legion Child Well-being Foundation presents annual awards for outstanding support of C&Y programs. Awards are based on contribution year (June 1 of the current year through May 31 of the following year). A CWF awards brochure is available for download at **Legion.org** under Advocacy and Youth Support.

Children's Action Teams

Department Children & Youth chairmen are responsible for promoting the American Legion's Child Well-being Foundation. CWF's mission depends heavily on your efforts. One of the best ways to promote CWF is through a Children's Action Team, or CAT.

As CATs, you and your colleagues are representatives of – and advocates for – CWF in your department.

The vast majority of donations come from the memberships of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, Sons of The American Legion, American Legion Riders, and the Eight & Forty. Therefore, you need to encourage individuals, posts, units, salons, chapters, squadrons, districts, departments, detachments and departmentals to contribute on a regular and annual basis.

If all of our local-level organizations committed to issuing a \$25 check annually to CWF, such contributions would ensure a steady growth in principal and greatly enhance CWF's grant-giving capabilities. In raising funds, the sky's the limit.

- If your organization has a newsletter, place an article about what you are doing to support CWF. Make it a challenge. Do the same thing with your department and district publications.
- Enlist the support of your commanders and adjutants for announcements. Set up a small display at post, district and department meetings. Organize a fundraising dinner, golf outing or sports tournament, with proceeds benefiting CWF. Find local merchants willing to donate merchandise and conduct a raffle or silent auction.
- While attending various functions around your state, be on the lookout for children and youth organizations that may need CWF assistance. Tell them about us and give them our mailing and website addresses. If they want to write to us for an application, ask them to mention your name in the correspondence so we can track applications resulting from your efforts.

It is our sincere hope that through your work, the American Legion Child Well-being Foundation will enjoy greater annual support by members of your department.

I am interested in learning how to become an American Legion Child Well-being Foundation Children's Action Team (CAT) member for the

Department/Detachment of

Last Name		
First Name	Middle Initial	
Address		
City	State	ZIP
Home Phone		
Cell Phone		
Email		

☐

I certify that I am a member in good standing with The American Legion / the American Legion Auxiliary / Sons of The American Legion.

Membership No.

☐

I understand that should I qualify, I must successfully complete a written exam and remit a \$25 donation to CWF to become a fully certified CAT member for my department.

Signature	Date
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For more information, contact CWF at **(317) 630-1202** or go to **legion.org/cwf**.

April is Children & Youth Month

In 1938, a major program change designated April as Child Welfare Month, and The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary began a cooperative venture to celebrate the nation's children and youth.

Annually, The American Legion observes *April Is Children & Youth Month*. Departments, posts, units and squadrons are encouraged to conduct a Children & Youth activity or activities in April, informing members and the community of The American Legion's work on behalf of young people.

Download the ***April Is Children & Youth Month*** brochure under Advocacy then Youth Support, then Publications. It includes activity suggestions, along with a sample proclamation and news release. This publication is available online only.

Child Safety

The American Legion views child and youth safety as a shared community responsibility and has made it a core priority for decades. In 1992, the Committee on Children & Youth unanimously designated the Child Safety Program as one of the organization's annual national initiatives. This program promotes awareness, prevention, and practical safety education to help protect young people from avoidable harm.

A long-standing part of this commitment includes ensuring that holidays and community events are safe for children. Since the early 1970s, the National Committee on Children & Youth has encouraged Legion posts and members to host or support safe Halloween activities. These efforts aim to reduce accidents and injuries by offering supervised, community-based alternatives that keep children protected while still allowing them to enjoy the holiday.

Together, these initiatives reflect the American Legion's enduring belief that protecting children is everyone's business and that strong, informed communities play a vital role in keeping young people safe.

Temporary Financial Assistance

Since 1925, The American Legion Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) program has awarded cash grants to American Legion veterans and active duty military personnel who have minor child(ren) living in the home full time. TFA grants help keep child(ren) in a stable home environment by providing assistance with shelter, utilities, food, clothing and health expenses.

The TFA program is governed by Resolution No14 from May 2025 titled Temporary Financial Assistance Program Policy Update. The resolution can be found in the digital archives at [Legion.org](https://legion.org).

The TFA application is available from your department headquarters or department children & youth chairman.

Post Name		No.	District No.
Department of		Present Membership	
City		State	ZIP
Address			
Date	Signature		

- (1) Did your post file a Consolidated Post Report form? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- (2) Did your post participate in any of the following National Children & Youth Program objectives?
- ☐ Family Emphasis (National Family Week) ☐ Child Safety (Drug Abuse Prevention, Youth Suicide Prevention, etc.)
- ☐ Halloween Safety ☐ Missing Children
- ☐ Temporary Financial Assistance

(3) Estimate the number of volunteer service hours provided by the membership of your post for the children and youth in your community:

Hours

(4) Please estimate the amount of money your post expended for administrative expenses for Children & Youth overhead (postage, printing, conferences, travel, salaries, etc.)

\$

(5) Use the remaining space on this sheet to describe, in detail, specific C&Y activities promoted by your post. (Attach extra sheets as needed.) This section of the narrative is most important to your department Children & Youth committee in determining various awards.

Instructions on other side

INSTRUCTIONS

For the post Children & Youth chairman:

1. Before completing this form, complete your section of the Consolidated Post Report.
2. Fill out this narrative report form.
3. Send this completed form, and any additional information, to your department C&Y chairman at department headquarters.
4. This narrative report form is NOT to be attached to the Consolidated Post Report form. It is intended for use by your department chairman in determining post C&Y awards and validating to National Headquarters your department's attainment of 100 percent C&Y post narrative reporting.
5. To make your total report more effective, we recommend you make three copies: one for your file, and one to be mailed to both your district and department C&Y chairman.

For the department Children & Youth chairman:

1. This narrative report form should be helpful in determining winners of various C&Y reporting awards and citations.
2. This form is for use within your department. DO NOT FORWARD individual post forms to National Headquarters.
3. Review the Consolidated Post Report for each narrative received. Together, they should provide an accurate picture of each post's particular C&Y program.
4. Each question has been designated by a letter. The department chairman's reporting sheet references the same letters. It is your responsibility to transfer all information from the narrative form to the chairman's reporting sheet.
5. For the purpose of 100% narrative reporting awards, National Headquarters will recognize this form. The decision to recognize this form in no way removes the responsibility of the post for submitting the Consolidated Post Report form. As chairman of a major program within your department, you should strongly encourage posts to file the CPR.
6. To provide feedback to your districts, you may wish to compile separate reports concerning narratives at the district level and mail those figures to the appropriate C&Y officers.

Department of	Years
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PURPOSE: This form allows departments opportunity for enhanced, consolidated reporting on assistance provided to children and youth by levels other than posts (e.g., district, county, area, department) that are not captured through regular Consolidated Post Reporting (CPR) by individual posts.

INSTRUCTIONS: Prior to May 31, each post in your department will receive a copy of the Consolidated Post Report form. All CPR forms are to be sent through your department to National Headquarters. All narrative forms should be sent to you in care of your department headquarters.

It is your responsibility as department Children & Youth Chairman to see that the requested department expenditures are listed below and that all narrative report forms are tabulated and entered in Part II of this form. When completed, this form should be sent directly to: The American Legion, ATTN: Children & Youth, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis IN 46206-1055.

Fax: (317) 630-1369

E-mail: childrenandyouth@legion.org

Deadline: July 1 Annually

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION		
Number of posts in department		
Name of person making this report	Title	
Address		
City	State	ZIP

PART II - INFORMATION FROM POST NARRATIVE REPORT FORM	
The following information is to be tabulated from your department's own Children & Youth post narrative report forms that are received by the department Children & Youth chairman.	
A. Number of posts filing a Consolidated Post Report form	
B. Number of posts participating in any of the following National Children & Youth Program objectives	
1) April is Children & Youth Month	
2) Youth Suicide Prevention	
3) Drug and Alcohol Abuse Education	
4) Halloween Safety	
5) Child Health & Safety	
6) Temporary Financial Assistance	
7) National Family Week/Family Emphasis	
8) Family Support Network	

C. Number of estimated volunteer service hours provided by the membership of posts in your department for children and youth:	
D. Amount of estimated money spent for administrative expenses for C&Y overhead (postage, printing, conference):	

PART III - CHILDREN & YOUTH EXPENDITURES - DEPARTMENT

These are funds expended by levels of the department other than posts for the Committee/Commission on Children & Youth; DO NOT reflect expenditures of posts.

SECTION A — DIRECT AID	
Cash aid given to needy children	1)
Value of goods given to children (reasonable estimate)	2)
TOTAL DIRECT AID (Add lines 1 and 2)	3)
SECTION B — CONTRIBUTIONS TO	
American Legion Child Welfare Foundation	4)
SECTION C — CONTRIBUTIONS TO	
Miscellaneous other C&Y programs	5)
All others sum total	6)
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS (Add lines 5 through 6)	7)
SECTION D — EXTRAS	
Cost of parties, gifts, similar extras	8)
SECTION E — MISCELLANEOUS	
Cost of any other activities for children and youth	9)
TOTAL CHILDREN & YOUTH EXPENDITURES (Add lines, 3,4,7, 8 and 9)	10)
Please estimate the amount of money spent for administrative expenses for the department's Children & Youth overhead (postage, printing, conferences. travel, salaries, etc.)	\$

PART IV - CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AIDED - DEPARTMENT

These are the number of children aided through levels of department other than posts for the Committee/Commission on Children & Youth; DO NOT reflect the efforts of posts.

SECTION A — DIRECT AID	
Number of children helped by cash grants	11)
Number of children given food, clothing, etc.	12)
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN DIRECTLY AIDED (Add lines 11 and 12)	13)
SECTION D — EXTRAS	
Number of children given parties, gifts, similar extras	14)
SECTION E — MISCELLANEOUS	
Number of children reached through other activities	15)
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN (Add lines 13, 14 and 15)	16)

PART V

Use additional sheets to describe in some detail a special Children & Youth activity promoted by your department. If submitting online, please use the text box below to detail your special activity.

Signature

Date

Disclaimer of liability

The American Legion *Children & Youth Department Chairman Program Guide* (“guide”) provides the reader with very general information about planning and conducting various programs. This guide is only intended to help assist volunteers and staff. With respect to information contained in this guide, neither The American Legion nor any of its officers, directors or employees make any warranty, express or implied, nor assume any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product or process implemented at the post or department level. This guide only constitutes general advice and recommendations for operations based on best practices. Information within the guide stating “shall or must” is based on federal law or federal/IRS regulations and mandates. All other items of information in this guide are general suggestions except for the National Constitution and By-Laws. This guide does not constitute any type of legal advice. If readers have any concerns about anything in this guide, they are strongly advised to contact their respective department and an attorney licensed in their state.

Please see 36 U.S.C. Section 21704: The Corporation (The American Legion) may provide guidance and leadership to organizations (departments) and local chapters (posts) ... *but may not control or otherwise influence the specific activities and conduct of such organizations (departments) and local chapters (posts).* (emphasis added)

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