THE AMERICAN LEGION

CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS

AMERICANISM COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN & YOUTH

CHILDREN & YOUTH PROGRAMS

Today's American Legion is as focused on the welfare of our country's children and the issues facing our young people as it has ever been. The structure of this organization is forever supported by the balance that our founding architects envisioned. Therefore, this pillar – Children & Youth – and its programs remain committed to serving the nation's youth.

Members of The American Legion Americanism Commission's Committee on Children & Youth have been entrusted with the awesome responsibility of upholding this pillar – the one that braces our nation's veterans by caring for their children, and our nation's children.

The purpose of the 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.
- Maintain a balanced program that provides for their physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs.

FAMILY EMPHASIS

The family is the cornerstone of American society; however, modern society places demands on the family that didn't exist in years past. These challenges can deteriorate family strength and unity. The family-emphasis programs of The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth aim to promote the importance of family strength and integrity.

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK

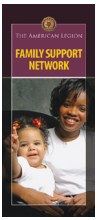
The American Legion recognizes that families of deployed and activated military personnel face unique difficulties and hardships. With the help of the Family Support Network, these families do not have to shoulder this burden alone. They can connect with American Legion Family members by requesting assistance through the nationwide toll-free number or electronic application. Legionnaires at the post level then provide assistance such as performing minor household chores and repairs, completing a Temporary Financial Assistance application and connecting the family with local programs.

Family SupportNetwork
1-800-504-4098

Electronic Application
www.legion.org/familysupport/assistance

Information and Resources
www.legion.org/familysupport

Publications
Family Support Network Brochure (24-010)



Temporary Financial Assistance

Publications
Temporary Financial Assistance Brochure (24-008)

TEMPORARY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Committee on Children & Youth's landmark program is Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA), which was established as a form of direct aid to children in 1925. Through TFA, a post can call upon the national organization for cash assistance to help maintain the basic needs of veterans' children. Funds are granted to eligible families when it has been determined that the child is in need and that all other resources have been exhausted or are not available. TFA can help families meet the costs of shelter, food, utilities and health expenses when parents are unable to do so, thereby affording the child, or children, a more stable home environment.

The veteran does not have to be a member of The American Legion, however he or she must be eligible for membership, and there must be minor children in the home. Eligible children include biological children of an eligible veteran or children in the legal custody of an eligible veteran. TFA applications are obtained and must be submitted through the department adjutant or the department chairman of Children & Youth.

CHILD SAFETY

The American Legion Committee on Children & Youth believes that child safety is everybody's business. Prevention through education remains the best way to keep children safe. To promote child safety, the commission publishes several useful brochures designed to educate children and parents and supports numerous national initiatives to keep children safe.

GATEWAY DRUGS

Alcohol, tobacco, inhalants and marijuana are often readily available and considered to be the entryway to a life of drug dependency and delinquency. Gateway drugs are so-called because the use of these drugs often leads to drug abuse, addiction and to the use of other drugs such as heroin, cocaine and LSD. The commission asks all members of The American Legion Family to educate parents and children in their communities about the dangers of gateway drugs.

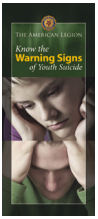
WARNING SIGNS

The Children & Youth Committee recognizes the serious, yet often overlooked, problem that continues to plague our nation's youth: suicide. Suicide is a tragic and senseless act of desperation. While it can be difficult and unpleasant to talk about suicide, it is important to communicate effectively about the subject, know the facts, dispel the misconceptions and learn the warning signs of youth suicide.

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

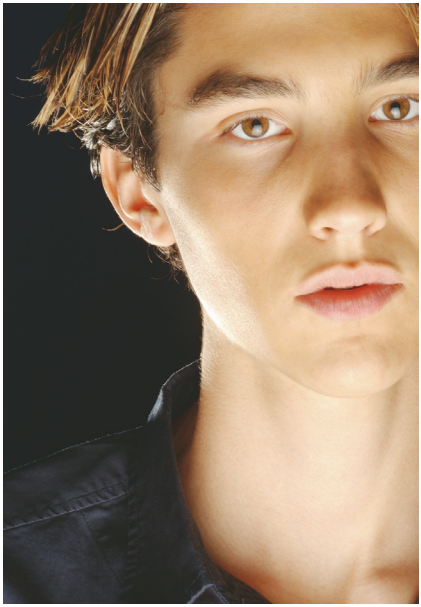
As long as Halloween activities are sponsored and promoted in our communities by duly appointed and elected officials, the Children & Youth Committee believes children and parents should know how to make this observance as safe as possible. This annual program continues to be one of our most popular.

Gateway Drugs
Publications
Gateway Drugs Brochure (24-006)



Warning Signs Assistance
Publications
Warning Signs of Youth Suicide Brochure (24-005)

Halloween Safety
Publications
Halloween a Fun and Safe Night Brochure (24-012)



MISSING CHILDREN

The American Legion encourages posts to provide or assist in making available child identification activities to give parents a means of providing this information to authorities should the need arise. In addition, all levels of the organization are encouraged to increase the public's awareness of child victimization and its detrimental effects on our children and youth, and to cooperate with credible organizations and agencies that seek to locate missing children in their states and communities.

THE AMERICAN LEGION CHILDREN'S CHARITIES

AMERICAN LEGION CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION

The American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization, is "dedicated to the betterment of all children." Its purpose:

> *To contribute to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs of children and youth through the dissemination of knowledge about new and innovative organizations and their programs.*
>
> *To make wider, more effective use of the knowledge already possessed by well-established organizations to the end that such information will benefit youth and be more adequately used by society.*

The Child Welfare Foundation accomplishes these goals each year by awarding grants to nonprofit youth-serving organizations for disseminating information that conforms to the foundation's purpose. Since 1954, over $14 million has been granted to help deserving organizations produce and distribute current and valuable information.

Children & Youth Month
317-630-1202

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Website
www.cwf-inc.org

Publications
Child Welfare Foundation Brochure (25-005)

American Legion Endowment Fund
317-630-1323

American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation
c/o The American Legion
National Headquarters
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

To donate
www.legion.org/donate

Publications
Endowment Fund Brochure
(24-034)

AMERICAN LEGION ENDOWMENT FUND

The American Legion Endowment Fund Corporation is a 501(c)(3) organization. Funds for the operation of the Temporary Financial Assistance program are provided from a share of the earnings of the Endowment Fund.

In 1925, World War I veterans, widows and children continued to struggle to return to a regular life. The members of The American Legion, aware of the grave responsibilities entrusted to them by those who had served, knew the time had come to take action.

More than 900,000 Legionnaires, American Legion Auxiliary members and other American citizens joined the campaign, raising nearly $5 million and establishing the American Legion Endowment Fund.

CHILDREN & YOUTH MONTH

Celebrated as "Children & Youth Month" since 1938, April is the perfect time of year for Legionnaires to demonstrate that The American Legion Family is committed to its community, and especially its children.

Posts can host a child- or youth-themed community event, invite a subject-matter expert to present at a meeting, collaborate on a project with a local school, or any number of other activities.

Children represent the future of our nation. It is up to us to equip them with knowledge, leadership skills and a commitment to service that they will use as productive adult citizens of the United States.

Children & Youth Month

Publications

April is Children & Youth Month (online only)

THE AMERICAN LEGION

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www.legion.org

Follow The American Legion online:
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twitter.com/AmericanLegion

To become a member of The American Legion, visit **www.legion.org/join**.

To contribute to one of The American Legion's programs that helps veterans, youths and others, please visit **www.legion.org/donate**.

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