The American Legion has long recognized the family as the foundation of this nation. A guiding principle of The American Legion's Children & Youth programs continues to be maintaining the integrity of the family.

Since 1972, every U.S. president has declared the week of Thanksgiving as National Family Week. All members of The American Legion Family are encouraged to initiate and engage in local activities during National Family Week that promote, encourage and celebrate healthy families and communities.

NATIONAL Family WEEK

As the world's largest veterans service organization, The American Legion embodies strong American values and forms a grassroots force dedicated to love of country, and commitment to veterans, their families, their communities and the young people of this nation.

For additional information and family resources:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families
acf.hhs.gov

Alliance for Children & Families
800-221-3726
alliance1.org

Focus on the Family
800-232-6459
family.org

THE AMERICAN LEGION
AMERICANISM COMMISSION
COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206
(317) 630-1203
americanism@legion.org
legion.org

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Stock# 24-009 (Rev. 12/20) Artwork# 106ACY1220

THE AMERICAN LEGION

NATIONAL Family WEEK

NATIONAL Family WEEK

Societal pressures on the American family threaten its integrity. These threats come in many forms:

- Divorced and separated families are commonplace and continue to grow in number.
- Families can find themselves isolated from other family members due to the high mobility of our society.
- Military families are more likely to experience separations due to increased deployments and activations.

Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.

– Jane Howard ***(1935-1996, American journalist and author)***

GET INVOLVED and make a difference

In an effort to promote National Family Week, posts, units and squadrons are encouraged to initiate and participate in activities that promote family strength and integrity. The possibilities are endless.

ADVOCATE for a family strengthening initiative

Work with officials at all levels of government to advance a position beneficial to all children and families. And urge local and state government to observe and engage in National Family Week.

PLAN a connection-building event

Encourage open dialogue about important community issues during a family summit or community meeting.

Hold a military family appreciation event to encourage and offer support for military families.

ORGANIZE community-wide efforts

In partnership with the local government and other community partners, help organize a family festival that includes fun and safe activities and entertainment for the whole family. Or, get involved in established local National Family Week activities.

COORDINATE volunteer projects

Work with state and local groups to improve communities through family projects.

Invite families to volunteer with community projects.

The history of National Family Week

For more than the last 45 years, the week of Thanksgiving has been proclaimed National Family week by the president of the United States according to the National Family Week website.

In Ronald Reagan's first proclamation of National Family week as president he said, "A family is the basic unit of our society, the heart of our free democracy. It provides love, acceptance, guidance, support and instruction to the individual. Community values and goals that have America strength also take root in the home. In times of change and challenge, families keep safe our cultural heritage and reinforce our spiritual foundation.

"As the mainstay of our national life, family life must be preserved. When a family needs external assistance to help it to perform its unique role, this assistance should not interfere with the family's fundamental responsibilities and prerogatives. Rather aid should be supportive and purposeful in strengthening the family's stability, self-sufficiency and permanence.

"National Family Week is a time to be thankful for the family as a national heritage and resource. It is a time to recommit ourselves to the concept of the family – a concept that must withstand the trends of lifestyle and legislation. Let us pledge that our institutions and policies will be shaped to enhance an environment in which families can strengthen their ties and best exercise their beliefs, authority and resourcefulness. And let us make our pledge mindful that we do so not only on behalf of the individual family members, but for AMERICA."