

## Vendors for Hero Pack Items

The following are two OMK partners used previously for Hero Pack items. Feel free to use either of these resources and/or your own sources for Hero Pack contents.

- **Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)**  
254-953-1923, [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org)  
- MCEC bracelet, magnet, or Frisbee
- **National 4-H Council/Supply Service**  
301-961-2934, [www.4-hmall.org](http://www.4-hmall.org)  
- 4-H Power of Youth hat, 4-H bandana

## Contact Information

Operation: Military Kids  
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[www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)



## UNHCE County Offices

**Belknap County**  
(603) 527-5475

**Carroll County**  
(603) 447-3834

**Cheshire County**  
(603) 352-4550

**Cöös County**  
(603) 788-4961

**Grafton County**  
(603) 787-6944

**Hillsborough County**  
(603) 641-6060

**Merrimack County**  
(603) 796-2151

**Rockingham County**  
(603) 679-5616

**Strafford County**  
(603) 749-4445

**Sullivan County**  
(603) 863-9200

## Military Contacts

New Hampshire National Guard  
Child and Youth Program  
State Family Program Director  
(603) 227-1496

Wing Family Program Coordinator  
Bonnie Rice  
(603) 430-3545

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UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

## Operation: Military Kids (OMK) Hero Packs



**OMK ...  
Working Together to  
Support Military Kids and  
their Families**

[www.operationmilitarykids.org](http://www.operationmilitarykids.org)

## What is Operation: Military Kids (OMK)?

When National Guard, Reserve, and other military families living in civilian communities become mobilized, their children experience the stress of being a military kid. These children have unique needs for special support and services, even though they still “look the same” to their friends and community. University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development partners with all branches of the military, American Legion, Red Cross, schools, the spiritual community, YMCA, Community Recreation Centers, Boys and Girls Clubs, PlusTime NH, and other youth and family organizations to form the outreach effort called Operation: Military Kids (OMK). This program functions in 34 states across the country, including NH.

The mission of OMK is to create support networks for military children and connect them with other military and non-military youth through a variety of recreational, social and educational programs. The state partners create programs that serve the unique needs of military kids and their families before, during, and after their family members are deployed. OMK also works to foster public understanding about the impact of the deployment cycle on the military member, family, child and larger community.



## Hero Packs

Hero Packs are backpacks filled with mementos and items designed to help connect kids with their deployed family member. Presenting Hero Packs to kids is a way to show appreciation and *hand-deliver* a salute to military youth for their strength and sacrifices while parents are deployed. Hero Packs are designed to say thanks to military youth and families, offer supportive information and provide items to aid in family connection and fun.

The Hero Pack project is a chance for groups of youth and adults become involved in a valuable community service effort that also builds awareness and fosters community support for geographically dispersed military families.

## Volunteer to do a Hero Pack Project...

### The Hero Pack Process...

1. Contact the OMK office via phone or email. You will then be provided with empty backpacks, parent pouches, and specific guidelines for filling them.
2. Think about involving other individuals, groups, and businesses in this effort.
3. Purchase Hero Pack supplies or obtain donations from local business (for example: toy stores, bookstores, stationary stores, etc).
4. Have the youth involved handwrite letters of appreciation and support to military kids.

5. Get your group together to fill Hero Packs.

6. Once your group has finished packing the Hero Packs, they need to be returned to the OMK office. They will then be distributed to military youth in New Hampshire.

## Contents of Hero Packs

The contents of Hero Packs can vary, but contain only NEW items, including:

- *Partner Information for Parents* (“*Parent Pouch*”): included but not limited to OMK information and resources, local 4-H Club and Boys and Girls Club program information, and the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) “*Staying Involved in Your Child’s Education During Deployment*” booklet.
- *Handwritten Appreciation Letters*: written to the military youth and their deployed family member thanking them for their service and sacrifices to our country.
- *Fun Items*: such as, stuffed animals, stickers, Frisbees, children’s books, movie coupons, free passes to places like the local Boys and Girls Club, etc.
- *Connection/Communication Tools*: items to assist youth in staying connected to their deployed family member. Acceptable items include: disposable camera; international calling cards; photo album; scrapbook; journal; pen; stationary; other items that youth could send to their family member, such as worry dolls, OMK lanyards or a gift card to the Post Exchange (PX).