NEW HAMPSHIRE
OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS

WORKING TOGETHER TO SUPPORT MILITARY KIDS AND THEIR FAMILIES

2012 ANNUAL REPORT
New Hampshire Operation: Military Kids (OMK) collaborates with all branches of the military, as well as community organizations across the state, to provide sustainable local support services to military youth and their families before, during, and after deployment.

**Mission**

New Hampshire Operation: Military Kids (OMK) collaborates with all branches of the military, as well as community organizations across the state, to provide sustainable local support services to military youth and their families before, during, and after deployment.

**2012 Goals**

- Continue to broaden existing networks of support for military youth and continue to connect them with other military and non-military youth through a variety of recreational, social and educational programs, such as OMK youth and family camps.
- Conduct Ready, Set, Go! (RSGo!) programs to foster understanding of the impact the deployment cycle has on military youth, their families and their community.
- Organize youth-focused programs for military kids and their families so they can have fun, share new learning experiences, and offer support to one another in an informal environment.

- Train additional military and non-military teen ambassadors for the Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) team.
- Oversee our Hero Pack program by coordinating donations and letters to military kids and distributing hero packs in honor of the personal contributions made by our youth in military families.
- Continue to partner with organizations to implement the 4-H/Army Child & Youth Services babysitter training program to provide childcare support for military families.
- Regularly promote the use of the Mobile Technology Lab, Tech Discovery Kit, and Yellow Ribbon Kits in youth programming, diligently reviewing the equipment and check-out process to ensure a well-run system of equipment management and transfer around the state.
- Enhance and engage our OMK State Team, actively involving members to achieve the broadest possible level of community support.
- Capture and report OMK program impacts to partners, stakeholders, and project funders.

**April-Month of the Military Child**

New Hampshire’s second annual “Purple Up! for Military Kids” was held on Friday, April 13th. What started only last year as a NH initiative to honor military youth during the Month of the Military Child, “Purple Up!” went viral in just one year, spreading across the entire country. Community members, and school children, wore purple to show support for military children and thank them for their sacrifices. Purple is the color that symbolizes all branches of the military – Army Green, Marine Red and Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard Blue.

Just a few other ways New Hampshire celebrated the Month of the Military Child:

- Governor John Lynch officially proclaimed April 2012 as the Month of the Military Child in a ceremony at the State House in Concord, NH, with unanimous support from the NH United States Congressional Delegation.
- The American Legion hosted a Military Family Day, where families could enjoy good food and fun activities.
- The Gorham Family Resource Center organized a “Purple Up!” Day Parade for military kids.
- Many NH National Guard and Reserve members participated in “Bring Your Kids to Work Day”, sponsored by the NH Department of Health and Human Services.


**Children of Military Members by County**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total Youth</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belknap</td>
<td>297</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carroll</td>
<td>107</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cheshire</td>
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<td>Coos</td>
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<td>Grafton</td>
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<td>Hillsborough</td>
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<td>Merrimack</td>
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<td>Rockingham</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strafford</td>
<td>723</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sullivan</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5433</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Purple Up! for Military Kids” on April 15, 2013.
Speak out for Military Kids

The NH Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) team raises awareness about the unique needs of geographically dispersed military kids. This year, these teens provided 16 presentations to over 380 community members, educating audiences about the impact of deployment on children and families. They also assist at NH National Guard Yellow Ribbon events, utilizing the MTL to create personalized “Give-A-Hug” dolls. SOMK team members participate in Hero Pack distribution ceremonies as well.

“I really liked the mock deployment and the fact that we used more technology, seeing as it is becoming bigger and better.”

– SOMK Team Member quote

A Sampling of SOMK Teen Camp Impacts

- 100% learned the importance of compromise when working with others in a group setting
- 100% learned how to better share responsibility
- 100% became better at listening to the ideas of others
- 86% better understood the impact of their feelings and actions of others

Ready, Set, Go!

Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) programs provide information on military culture and how to best serve the unique needs of military youth. “Military Culture 101 and 201 for Educators” originally developed by NH OMK, the Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP), and the Deployment Cycle Support Team, provide valuable tools to school systems to help them foster resiliency among military youth. In 2012, NH OMK participated in 27 RSG programs which reached over 795 community members, partners, and educators. In addition, 267 informational briefings reached a total of nearly 24,000 community members.

Hero Packs

In 2012, NH OMK prepared 72 Hero Packs to honor the contribution and personal sacrifice made by military youth. Over 80 non-military youth and adult volunteers helped create Hero Packs filled with items that help kids keep in touch with their deployed loved ones and serve as a small token of thanks and recognition of how a deployment in the family affects their everyday life. Hundreds of Hero Pack items were also donated by community groups and SOMK partners.

Mobile Technology Lab (MTL) Tech Discovery Kit (TDK)

In 2012, 24 events across the state utilized the OMK technology components, providing an opportunity for over 170 military youth and 50 military family members to connect and learn through technology. The MTL and TDK were used at Speak Out trainings, the OMK Tour of Discovery Camps, Family Camp, and at many military family community programs and events to benefit New Hampshire’s military youth.

OMK Tour of Discovery Camps

New Hampshire OMK Camps focused on the 4-H Mission Mandates of Healthy Living, Citizenship and Science. In addition to theme-related programs, kids enjoyed cooking s’mores over a campfire, nature-based adventures, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, paddle boarding, support and connection with other military youth and families, and quality time with old and new friends. OMK Camps served 133 participants in 2012. NH OMK also supported five other camps reaching an additional 76 military teens.

Engineering Bonanza

Teens found creative ways to optimize the performance of water bottle rockets, catapults, and water balloon launching trebuchets!

Family Adventures…

Explore Underwater Without Getting Wet! Military families constructed and operated a Seaperch (mini remotely operated underwater vehicle), while still having plenty of time for swimming, canoeing, hiking, group games, birdwatching, digital photography, archery, and evening campfires!

Up for the Challenge

Youth actively participated in all types of outdoor recreation activities as they learned delicious and healthy eating tips from students enrolled in the UNH Dietetic Internship Program.

86%

96%

91%

91%

96%

96%

96%

91%

97%

91%

97%

91%

97%

91%

97%

91%

97%
Get Involved - Make A Difference

- Join us in honoring military youth by wearing purple on “Purple Up! for Military Kids” on April 15, 2013.
- Host a Ready, Set, Go! program about military culture and supporting military youth.
- Collect items and/or write appreciation letters for OMK Hero Packs for military kids.
- Join our Speak Out For Military Kids (SOMK) Team.
- Invite military youth to join an existing 4-H Club or start a new 4-H Club.
- Volunteer to share your special abilities at an OMK program, such as cooking, photography, acting, fishing, engineering, animal science, or iPad expertise.
- Take an OMK Babysitting Course - become a sitter for military families.
- Train to become an OMK Babysitting Course Instructor.
- Share your photo, film making or computer skills with military kids—borrow our Mobile Technology Lab (MTL) to use at any event with a military theme.
- Conduct an OMK Partner Project for military kids.
- Donate money in support of military kids’ hero packs, camps and activities.
- Write letters to local media encouraging your community to remember military kids.
- Join our OMK State Team, or volunteer to help at an OMK program.

Want More Ideas? Contact Us!

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OMK - Learn More

nhomk.com 
operationmilitarykids.org  
4-hmilitarypartnerships.org 
extension.unh.edu

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