

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- ★ Sponsor a youth-focused program such as a Military Family Day, which is a community and military hosted event with food, fun and fellowship
- ★ Schedule a Ready, Set, Go! Training for your group
- ★ Spread the word in your community to groups and organizations that would be interested in partnering with OMK
- ★ Join a local OMK Team
- ★ Conduct or Join our teen *Speak Out for Military Kids* (S.O.M.K.) Program
- ★ Sponsor a HERO Pack \$25—
Florida 4-H Foundation
3103 McCarty Hall B
Gainesville, FL 32611

FLORIDA OMK PARTNERS



4-H
American Legion
Florida Army & Air
Guard
Army Reserves
US Army Child & Youth
Services



*Serving military families in
our own backyard...*

www.operationmilitarykids.org
www.florida4h.org
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FLORIDA OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS

4-H Serving
Military
Families in
Our Own
Backyard



WHAT IS OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS (OMK) ?

Operation Military Kids is a nationwide program began by the U.S. Army. It's goal is clear: to team with American's communities to provide support to the children and youth of families impacted by the global war on terrorism.

As part of OMK, the Florida 4-H Military Program supports the "civilian turned military" families right here in Florida before, during and after parents are deployed. Focus is on the National Guard and Reserve members who are isolated from a military installation. With Extension in all Florida counties, a unique partnership is developed to assist military families.

OMK GOALS

OMK seeks to help Florida's military kids cope with the stress of having a deployed parent in the following ways:

- ★ Working with schools to ensure that staff members and teachers understand the unique needs of military students.
- ★ Educating the public on the impact deployment has on the families of those deployed and on the communities as a whole.
- ★ Creating support networks for Florida's military youth when parents are deployed.
- ★ Providing recreational, social, and educational programs for military youth.



WHAT OMK DOES

Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK)

This is an educational speaker program designed to raise awareness of issues facing military families. SOMK Teams are for military and non-military youth ages 12-17. Youth serve as a speaker's bureau for local community groups, assist with Family Days and activities at various Fairs. Teams have created public service announcements, videos and other materials to share in the community. Teams determine how often they meet.

HERO Packs

These backpacks are filled with stationery, journals, Liberty Bear and a variety of other items for children of deployed armed service members from all branches. They are meant as a "Thank You" to the children of deployed service members for their service to our country. Groups can sponsor packs at \$25 each. They can pack and present them to kids at a local event.



Ready, Set, Go! (RSG!)

This program teaches about military culture and deployment and suggest ways to understand and meet the needs of military kids. Florida will begin partnering to provide this unique program for groups in Florida. The program has a number of topics that can be designed for a groups' need. The program is meant to engage our local communities and begin serving and assisting our "military families in our backyard".

Technology Lab

A portable technology lab is available to Family Readiness Units and events that connects kids with their deployed parent. Computers, cameras, printer and scanner enable cards, letters, newsletters, and scrapbooking all to be done.

Youth-Focused Programs

These programs include many types of OMK events for military kids and families. 4-H Project workshops, camping experiences, and Family Day activities are some of these programs. These programs vary across the state dependent on the need and the local support partners.

School Guidance Assistance

OMK provides local counselors with information on military resources to assist them with students who's parents are deployed. SOMK Teams meet with counselors to share the resources that are available to schools. In some areas, RSG! Training is available and provided for counselors as well.