



University of Idaho Extension
Operation: Military Kids
714 W. State Street
Boise, Idaho 83702

Operation: Military Kids



★ **O:MK Partners** ★

4-H Extension ★
American Legion
Army Reserves Child & Youth Services
Army One Source
★ Boys & Girls Clubs of America
★ Idaho Air National Guard,
Family Readiness
Idaho Department of Education
Idaho Joint Family Support
Assistance Program
Idaho National Guard
Idaho State Elks Association
Les Bois Federal Credit Union
Military & Family Life Consultants (MFLC)
Mountain Home Air Force Base
Youth Programs
National Guard - Youth development
One Stone
Survivor Outreach Services
University of Idaho
Veteran's Center Outreach
YMCA

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Operation: Military Kid

O:MK is a 4-H Youth Development program of the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension. It was launched in 2005 as a collaborative effort between the military, 4-H, and local communities across the U.S. to provide support for children before, during, and after the deployment of a loved one. Our goal is to build community partnerships that increase local support and programs for military youth.

The Need

Idaho currently has over 10,700 military children located all over the state and 75% of them live in our neighborhoods, not on a military installation. They need additional guidance accessing the support network familiar to career military families. Their parents are members of the National Guard and Reserves and their kids still think of them in the job they used to have. They attend our schools and many of their classmates and teachers don't know the struggles they are facing each day. These children did not sign up for duty, but they serve too, and they do it with a keen sense of patriotism and love for the work that their service member does. They need our help to provide them with the resources necessary to manage a very challenging time in their young life. We help them connect to resources in our community and provide programs that develop the life skills they need to cope in their unique situation. **Supporting these children is an important extension of supporting our nation's troops.**



Activities

Hero Packs are the way communities recognize the strengths of military-connected children and youth. Packs provide children a symbol of thanks for the sacrifices they make when their parents are deployed and the tools to help them stay connected with their absent parent. Presentations also educate the non-military community about the challenges families face. Schools and community youth centers can help by having a ceremony to present Hero Packs to children in their area. Community groups can help by raising funds to purchase items for the Hero Packs.

Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) is an on-going youth-driven community outreach to generate community awareness and support about issues facing military families during mobilization and deployment. Youth gain valuable leadership, research, organization, technology, and public speaking skills. Adults are needed as volunteer mentors for each SOMK group that is formed. Additionally, each SOMK group needs opportunities to speak at service clubs and community events.

Enrichment Activities for Military Kids are opportunities provided for military youth to spend time with each other in activities that build life skills. Each activity strengthens their ability to communicate, manage, relate to and cope with changes in their family life. Camping trips, babysitting training, archery lessons, 4-H robotics programs, shooting sports, rafting, GPS training, skiing and other activities are a means of teaching 35 various life skills they need.

Marketing and Communication opportunities, with the help of volunteers, allow OMK to bring information to children and families at Military Family Days, community fairs, and college information booths. Newspaper articles, radio and television interviews, and presentations at service clubs inform the communities of needs throughout the state of Idaho.

Opportunities to help

- Volunteering
- Financial Support
- Providing opportunities for the message to be heard
- Becoming a State Partner



Please contact me.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Military affiliation _____

Interests:

Attending activities

Ages of Kids _____

Volunteering