

# OPERATION: MILITARY KIDS

Annual report 2014

January 2015

## What we do

University of Idaho Youth Development develops resiliency in young people with a special concern for those in stressful life circumstances:

- Children who have experienced the war time deployment of one or more parents.
- Children who have been separated from parents for prolonged periods of time.

The program also provides other youth programs in Idaho with information on how to teach life skills to children that will build their resiliency.



## How our program helps kids

- Activities build a sense of belonging and shared experiences with other military kids and teens in leadership training.
- Skills classes provide a sense of competency with participation in activities that build proficiency in a variety of areas: art, archery, rifle, babysitting training classes, computer challenges, and science experiments.
- Weekend camps build families that endure by offering team work activities with parents and kids. Activities build listening and communication skills and increase empathy for each other.
- Increase kids' resiliency by taking on new challenges and overcoming fears together – zip lining, rafting, skiing & rope courses.



Learning together

## 2014 by the numbers:

- Military Kids served 2,810
- Support programs 47
- Volunteers: 147
- Hours of service 2,500
- Community event Support: attendance of 6,616 military family members and 16,593 civilians



University of Idaho  
Extension



Parachute is one of the favorite camp activities.

## What we accomplished in 2014!

- 47 support programs, supporting 2,810 military children in Idaho; 515 now gaining support from long term 4-H programs
- O:MK supported 5 camps collaborating with the Idaho National Guard and others
- Provided 4 leadership training opportunities for teens
- 11 branches of the military services were reached in Idaho
- Support was provided for 7 Military Family days around the state
- Programs expanded to geographical-dispersed military kids in areas creating new support in Eastern, Northern and Central Idaho utilized 4-H programming and county agents, American Legion, BGC, YMCA, schools and volunteers.

### *Things military kids want you to know...*

We are proud of our parents. • We miss our parent.

We think about war and we know what it means. • We live in the community.

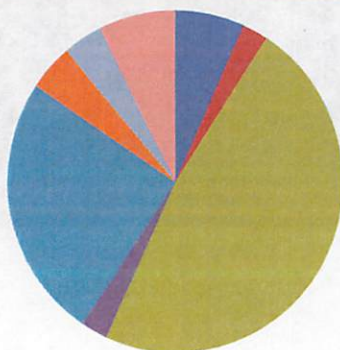
We take on a lot of responsibility (but sometimes, it's too much).

We appreciate recognition of our family's service.

In a lot of ways we're just like the other kids.

**We serve too.**

### 10,767 Military Youth in Idaho from recent deployments



“ **W**hen my husband was deployed the second time (in 2010) we had adopted three children (a sibling group) only three years before and it was an extremely trying separation for our little family. The children had already been in foster care prior to their adoption and experienced A LOT of loss and change in their young lives. To have their father gone for 14 months was frightening and unsettling to them. On top of all of that, we moved just days before my husband left the country. So we were in a new area with new people. My children greatly benefited from the help we received from Operation Military Kids. In particular, during that time the OMK fund helped pay for group sports at the Recreation Center that my children could participate in and express some of the energy that goes along with such a situation. Spending time with other youth helped too. They were adjusting to their adoptive family and to a military separation from their adoptive dad. I am so thankful for the help OMK has given us then and since then. We have regularly taken advantage of the activities offered through the OMK UI/4-H extension program. These well-planned events have exposed our children to other youth like them and helped them participate in interesting activities they might not have otherwise been able to do due to limited resources and priorities. THANK YOU OMK for your continued help to military families like ours. We have benefitted and greatly appreciate all that you do!!!”

- Holly Waite

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