

April 2008

For additional information on OMK and how County OMK Teams can be involved, visit:

<http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/omk/>

Or contact:

- **Judy Hauser at**
765-494-9516 or
jhauser@purdue.edu
- **Steve McKinley at**
765-494-8435 or
mckinles@purdue.edu

The purpose of The Bugle is to keep you updated on events, activities and information related to Indiana OMK and methods to support children and youth of military families.

We encourage you to share your success stories, suggestions and reports on military-related activities in your county. Submit stories and photos to Judy or Steve and they will be included in future editions of The Bugle.

Share The Bugle with other County OMK Team members and community supporters. They may be working with programs that can be adapted for use with military children.



Layout of The Bugle by
Ashley Broady

The Bugle



APRIL 2008 – THE MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

April is recognized nationally as the month for honoring military children. This practice was first established in 1986 by former Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger to recognize the courage, pride, and sacrifices made by military children.

If your office is contacted about providing a program for military children during deployment briefings and/or family support meetings, there are a number of resources available to help you develop some activities.

On the web site <http://www.monthofthemilitarychild.com/> are listed some event suggestions, arts and crafts projects, lesson plans and projects designed by teachers. Many of these ideas use commercial products but thanks to Stephanie DeCamp and others involved in Indiana OMK, there are two tubs of activities and the supplies needed to lead them in each area of the state. An "Activities to Assist" manual is also available that describes activities related to such topics as crafts, leadership, and seasonal projects.

Kids AT Camp

Indiana National Guard Family Programs Office

July 6-12, 2008 @ Camp Atterbury

The Indiana National Guard Kids AT Camp is for boys & girls ages 9-17 with at least one parent in the Indiana Air or Army National Guard. The cost is \$100 per child. Activities include firing range, archery, repel tower, rock wall, and fitness course. Additional information and registration forms can be found at www.inarng.org.



E-mail address: omk@ydae.purdue.edu

On February 9th, approximately 40 military kids attended a Valentine's Event hosted by the 384th Army Reserve in Fort Wayne. The kids were entertained by various activities such as cookie decorating, parachutes, and other games. The children also were able to make cards, videos, and take pictures through the Mobile Tech Labs to send to their loved ones. The event was a big success, and fun was had by all who braved the floods.



Funds for County-Sponsored Events!

Funds up to \$500 are available to support county-sponsored events for military children and their families. The funding application form is very brief but provides a great opportunity to start some community events that will show military children our support and appreciation for the sacrifices they are making. 4-H clubs, Junior Leaders, Extension Homemaker clubs, and other local service organizations and volunteers can

collaborate in these efforts. The funding application is available on the Web site <http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/omk/> or can be provided by jhauser@purdue.edu or mckinles@purdue.edu. Judy or Steve will also be glad to answer questions and assist in the process.



A VISIT TO THE LIBRARY

Sometimes we overlook free/low cost activities or services that are available in most communities throughout the state. Libraries are just one example. They frequently offer a wide range of information and activities for children and adults from books to computers to movies to special classes/programs on a variety of topics. Military children and their families might particularly benefit from information about the country where their loved one is stationed or information on ways to handle loneliness, fears, stress, pride and other strong emotions that most people feel when going through a challenging time. Local library staff may even be willing to speak at a family support group meeting and explain exactly what the local library has to offer.

Family Assistance Centers

Family Assistance Centers or FAC's are established in times of contingency call-up, mobilization, and large scaled deployment to provide support and assistance to service members and their families. The primary mission of a FAC is to inform and emotionally support families so service members can perform their mission. During times of deployment, the FAC is designed to be a focal point for families to get information and assistance with referral to the appropriate service agencies and meet the needs that are associated with deployment. Support services generally fall into the following categories:

- Help with legal matters
- Financial assistance
- Information and referral
- Local and national emergencies
- Coordination with rear detachments
- Problem solving
- Crisis resolution



Office locations and contact persons can be found at :

http://www.four-h.purdue.edu/omk/documents/FAC_Trifold_Brochure_IN2008.pdf

The Internet Keep Safe Coalition

The Internet Keep Safe Coalition group teaches basic rules of Internet safety to children and parents, reaching them online and in school. Governors and/or first spouses formed this coalition in partnership with a growing list of crime prevention organizations, law enforcement agencies, foundations and corporate sponsors. Studies show that 1 in 5 youth using the Internet receive an online sexual solicitation in a 1 year period, and 29% of children will freely give out their home address if asked.

The iKeepSafe.org Web site uses an animated icon/mascot named Faux Paw the Techno Cat to teach children the importance of protecting personal information and avoiding inappropriate places on the Internet.

The iKeepSafe.org Web site teaches children to safely navigate the Internet through a virtual playground, Faux Paw's adventures in storybooks, an animated video download, and educational games. Educational materials, including worksheets and tests, are also available for parents and educators.

The Internet Keep Safe Coalition is a non-profit organization founded by Jacalyn Leavitt, former First Lady of Utah 1993 - 2003 and founder of iKeepSafe.

Building Local Teams

Successful inter-agency team building must include:

A common goal with shared responsibility.

Everyone understanding the goal and feeling committed to it.

Participants in the February 27, 2008 Spring 4-H Youth Staff Skills Café training were asked to brainstorm ideas around the following questions:

What resources do you have in your communities to help military families?

People/organizations

Donors-funds and/or items

Companies that could make or contribute things locally

How would you determine local needs for military youth programs?

Number of families

Children affected

Which people would be good representatives on your OMK Team?

What types of programs/opportunities could you offer for children of military families in your community?

Existing activities

New activities



These same questions were posed to participants in the “Supporting Children of Military Families” training held in Noblesville on March 13, 2008. Some of the ideas shared included the following:

People/organizations:

Local DFS offices

United Way

Food Banks

Ministries

Mental Health Providers/Association

Indiana Extension Homemakers Club

Youth groups such as Scouts, Boys & Girls Club,

YWCA/ YMCA

Township Trustees

Civic Organizations

Veteran Service Organizations

Schools

4-H Groups

Habitat for Humanity

Hospitals

Foundations

Family Readiness Groups (FRG's)

Public Library Staff and Volunteers

Military Families

Donors-funds and/or items:

Direct solicitation of local businesses

Organize local organizations for fundraisers/events

Grocery stores to host food collections or donation of items for families

Apply to Community Foundations

Number of families and children affected:

Hold media campaign to enhance community awareness of military families. Include contact information for individuals to contact if they or a military family they know are in need of additional support.

Work with the local FRG's to find out needs.

Add questions on school enrollment forms or 4-H enrollment forms to ask military families to self-identify themselves.



Lt. Governor Skillman Announces Free YMCA Memberships for Military Families

Last week I found myself at a YMCA with Major General R. Martin Umbarger. Thankfully it wasn't for a workout session with the General. Instead, in the middle of the Fishers YMCA, I had the pleasure of announcing a program benefiting Hoosier military families.

The program, Operation: Indiana Partners, offers free one-year memberships to spouses and children of military personnel, who are currently on active duty. Operation: Indiana Partners is now at six greater Indianapolis YMCA branches. There are more than 80 YMCAs in Indiana with a majority already participating in Operation: Indiana Partners. Call your local branch to find out if they are participating. Click here to find a YMCA near you.

http://www.ymca.net/find_your_ymca/

Hoosiers taking care of Hoosiers is nothing new. We applaud the YMCA organization's commitment to military service members and their families through this program. It is a shining example of our commitment to care for those whose loved ones are serving in the military.

Our state has a long tradition of sending high numbers of its sons and daughters to serve in the Armed Forces. This tradition carries on with more than 35,000 Hoosier military service members on active duty. This is an incredibly large number considering Indiana's size, and I couldn't be more proud of our brave military men and women.

Their absence takes a huge emotional toll on the families they leave behind. I had an opportunity to talk with two military wives, Mrs. Curtis and Mrs. Witt. Mrs. Curtis, who has two small children, expressed how the YMCA will provide her time with her children as they wait to be re-united as a family.

The YMCA has always been a wonderful community partner in caring for our military and their families. Please join me in thanking them for their continued commitment to our military.

Sincerely,



Becky Skillman



Lt. Governor Skillman meets with military wife and mom, Colleen Curtis, and her 10-month-old daughter, Chloe. Mrs. Curtis received a recent free YMCA membership while her husband is on active duty.



Would you like to have the Mobile Technology Lab at one of your community events? Send an e-mail to omk@ydae.purdue.edu to request the MTL.

Consider hosting an MTL training in your county or area for Extension Staff, volunteers, and military representatives. Contact Steve to schedule a training.