



Mission

Our Military Kids, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides grants to children three years of age through the 12th grade to cover fees for tutoring, athletic, or fine arts programs. Children must have a parent currently deployed with the National Guard or Reserve, or be the child of a Wounded Warrior. The grants allow these children to participate in a range of activities that might otherwise be unavailable to them because of economic hardships resulting from their parents' deployment or injury, or because they live too far from a military installation to avail themselves of the opportunities there.

Population Served

Currently, there are more than 100,000 children, ages 3 to 18 years of age, directly affected by the deployment of Guard or Reserve parents serving in the war on terrorism. Another 40,000 have a parent recovering from severe injury sustained in service. The grant program is offered to all children of deployed National Guard and Reserve military personnel, and to children of Wounded Warriors in all branches of service.

Goals/Outcomes

- Help children and families of deployed Guardsmen and Reservists and all Wounded Warriors maintain normalcy during a deployment.
 - The absence of a parent's daily presence in the home is a huge stressor. The worry over the deployed parent's safety and the disappointment over the parent missing family/school activities is significant.
 - Art, music, and theater are wonderful outlets for a creative mind. Kids can lose themselves in the creative process, resulting in a respite from their daily routine and stressful family concerns.
 - For the athletically-inclined child, participating in group sports is a wonderful way to balance the mind and spirit and often help a child through difficult times and situational stress.
- Provide assistance so children can more easily cope with the challenges and difficulties surrounding a severely injured parent.
- Recognize children of Service Members for the personal sacrifices they make, and acknowledge them with an award packet including a congratulatory letter, **Our Military Kids** certificate, patch, bandana, wristband and dog tags.
- Increase awareness in communities around the nation by raising additional grant monies through donations from local businesses.

A Proven Success

Survey responses from 642 families using the grant program conducted during March 2011 revealed:

- 79.1% noticed an increase in the stress or anxiety level of their child during the parent's deployment;
- 98.4% indicated that participation in an activity benefited their child;
- 99.2% found the grant application process easy;
- 98% believed the program contributed to improved morale for the Service Member and his/her family;
- 81.8% reported that participation significantly contributed to the overall well-being of the entire family;
- 99.8% thought the Our Military Kids program should be continued and made available to other families.

Between April 2005 and August 2011, **Our Military Kids** has provided nearly 32,000 grants worth \$12.6 million to children of deployed service members from every branch of the military living in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Guam and the District of Columbia. Through the generosity of its donors, **Our Military Kids** has thus far been able to provide at least one grant for each eligible applicant.