

## They Need Our Help

Youth experiencing deployment of a parent are incredibly strong and resilient, but they do need the support of all Nebraskans during the time they serve our nation by supporting their parent. The following are issues identified by youth with which OMK can help them adapt.

- ¶ Lack of connection with other youth in similar situations.
- ¶ Concern for the safety of their parent.
- ¶ Deployed parent misses birthdays, holidays and significant events.
- ¶ Limited opportunities to attend and participate in extracurricular activities.
- ¶ Teachers aren't prepared to recognize and meet their new needs.
- ¶ Less parental involvement from the parent at home.
- ¶ Behavioral changes and lower self esteem.



Nebraska Operation Military Kids  
[www.nebraskaomk.org](http://www.nebraskaomk.org)

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# Nebraska



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# What is Operation: Military Kids?

Operation: Military Kids (OMK) is a nationwide initiative designed to provide support to the children and youth of Nebraska servicemen and women whose lives are impacted by the Global War on Terrorism. This includes those served by Army installations, Air Force bases, and those families of the National Guard and Reserves who are geographically dispersed across the State.



## Objectives

- ¶ Raise community awareness of “suddenly military” kids.
- ¶ Build community capacity to deliver outreach services to impacted youth.
- ¶ Implement outreach support services for youth.

## Nebraska Programs

In Nebraska several programs are being planned and conducted to achieve our objectives. Those programs include:

- ¶ Hidden Heroes Training—Community training sessions to educate Nebraskans about realities of life for military families and prepare those communities to support youth during a parent’s deployment.
- ¶ HERO Packs—Nebraskans are compiling care packages for children of deployed military personnel. These packs contain items to thank the youth for being heroes while their parent is away.
- ¶ In Your Shoes—Mentoring and pen pal programs designed to match youth with another young person who has previously experienced a deployment and can relate to the unique stresses of their lives.
- ¶ Mobile Technology Labs—A wireless computer lab that will travel the state to aide young people in communicating with a deployed parent through creating DVD’s, electronic cards and other personal messages.
- ¶ Speak Out for Military Kids—A speakers bureau of both 4-H and military youth who are available to speak to community groups about the life of “newly military” families.
- ¶ Youth Escapes—Camps, lock-ins and other events specifically designed to give youth with a deployed parent a chance to meet others experiencing the same things.
- ¶ Guard/Reserve Institute—Reaches out to educators to make them aware of the unique challenges faced by children of deployed parents and assist them in supporting those youth.



## Partners

- ¶ U.S. Army Children and Youth Services and Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service
- ¶ University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, 4-H Youth Development Programs
- ¶ Nebraska Army and Air National Guard
- ¶ American Legion
- ¶ American Legion Auxiliary
- ¶ Boys & Girls Clubs of Omaha
- ¶ Reserve Branches of U.S Military
- ¶ Military Child Education Coalition
- ¶ Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

## A Call to Action

When military personnel are deployed, not just the serviceperson, but their entire family answers the call to serve our Nation. OMK is Nebraska’s way to thank the young heroes at home. Visit [≤www.nebraskaomk.org>](http://www.nebraskaomk.org) to learn more about the program, to schedule a program in your community, or to make a donation supporting OMK efforts in Nebraska.