

## 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.



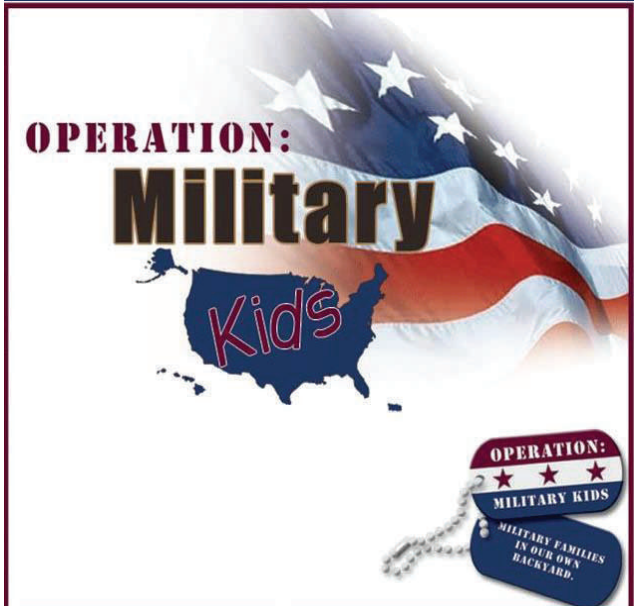
### Nebraska Operation Military Kids

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# Nebraska Speak Out for Military Kids



[www.nebraskaomk.org](http://www.nebraskaomk.org)

## What is Speak Out for Military Kids?

Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK) is a core program of Operation: Military Kids in Nebraska. SOMK is an on-going youth-driven community outreach program. Through SOMK, youth help to generate community awareness of issues faced by youth in National Guard and Reserve families and to foster community activism in solving the problems faced by these youth and their families.



SOMK is available to both military and non-military youth. Through simulations, interviews and research, participants find out first hand what military families go through during deployment. Based on their experiences, SOMK youth form speakers' bureaus through which community awareness is activated. The SOMK youth will develop public service announcements, videos and newspaper articles to build public awareness and support of military youth.

### Top Ten Reasons YOU (or your child) should become a member of Nebraska SOMK:

**10.** You are in grades 7-12 and are tired of hearing adults complain that "Kids these days don't care about anyone but themselves." Show them how wrong they are by helping spread the word about an important program that helps other kids.

**9.** You understand that kids whose parents are serving our Nation are heroes and you want to find a new way to say "THANK YOU!" to them.

**8.** Because being on a state-wide speakers' bureau to raise awareness about issues facing military kids will look VERY IMPRESSIVE on college scholarship applications and resumes.

**7.** You will have the chance to work with the team to develop DVD's and CD-Rom's to promote OMK in Nebraska.

**6.** You will meet others in grades 7-12 from all over the State who share a common interest in helping spread the message about supporting military kids in Nebraska.

**5.** You want to help plan and host day-camps, overnight events and other activities to make sure younger children who have a parent deployed know that Nebraskans appreciate the sacrifices they make when their parent is away.



**4.** Training sessions (held across the state) will be LOTS of FUN!!!

**3.** You will gain valuable skills in leadership, research, organization, technology and public speaking that will help you in high school, college and your career for the rest of your life.

**2.** Did we mention how great this will look on college scholarship applications? This is a biggie for parents too!

**And the Number One reason that YOU (or your child) should become a member of Nebraska SOMK is:.....(Pause for dramatic drumroll).....**

Over 3000 Nebraska youth have been affected by the Global War on Terrorism when their mom or dad is deployed to serve our Nation. SOMK is an important part of Nebraska's effort to raise awareness of that fact in communities across the state. We cannot do it without tapping into the skills that each of you can bring in spreading this news to all Nebraskans.

### A Call to Action

When military personnel are deployed, not just the serviceperson, but their entire family answers the call to serve our Nation. SOMK is the way for Nebraska's teens to thank the young heroes at home. Visit [www.nebraskaomk.org](http://www.nebraskaomk.org) to learn more about the program. SOMK is open to both military and non-military youth in grades 7-12. Contact Mark Simmons, OMK Program Director or Beth Kaiser, State OMK Coordinator, today to apply for SOMK.