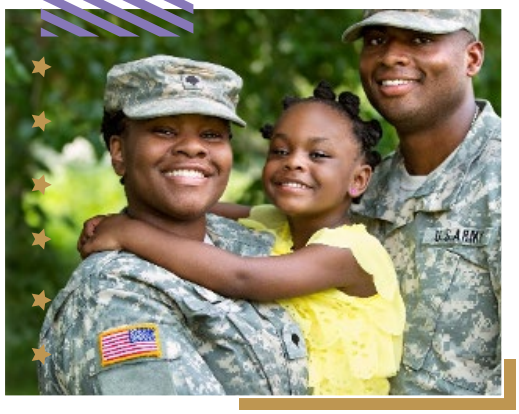
MISSION: Youth Outreach

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA
AFFILIATED
MILITARY YOUTH PROGRAMS
BETTER TOGETHER

MISSION YOUTH OUTREACH

THE NEED

Today, approximately 70-75% of all military families live in over 4,000 munities “beyond the gates.” These families often do not have access the typical services offered on installation where important services support military youth and their families are readily available. On aver- military youth move six to nine times between kindergarten and 12th grade. Often leaving behind the familiar-- friends, fami- ly, and community. Non-military Boys & Girls Clubs have the unique ability to offer military youth, equitable connections with consistency, and a place to belong, no matter where they move.



OUR COMMITMENT

Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) commitment to military families is to provide military youth, ages six to 18, scholarships for membership through MISSION: Youth Outreach (MYO). Our goal is to increase the daily participation of military youth in local Boys & Girls Clubs and provide essential services for those families that serve our nation.

ABOUT MISSION: YOUTH OUTREACH

Since 1991, through a partnership with the Department of Defense and the Armed Forces, BGCA provides free membership opportunities to military-connected dependents of active-duty Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Space Force families, in addition to Army Reserve & National Guard families as well.

Each year the Armed Services fund memberships for a pre-determined number of military youths through MISSION: Youth Outreach. Currently, there are over 4,000 memberships available for military youth. Participating Clubs, offering free membership are eligible to receive $231 per participating youth.

Our primary goal is to connect military youth with programs that fit their needs and provide support during all phases of their parents’ military career to include deployment and reintegration, Mission: Youth Outreach provides the following services and more:

- Offer military-connected youth an opportunity to participate in community-based youth development programs at Boys & Girls Clubs or Youth Centers.
- Educate or inform military-connected families on the latest news while increasing their knowledge of Boys & Girls Club programs and other programs for military youth.
- Educate staff and volunteers who interact with military youth.
- Establish beneficial connections between military communities and the Club.
- Offer equitable access to programs and activities in rural areas.

MISSION: Youth Outreach

WHAT ARE SOME CHALLENGES MILITARY KIDS FACE WHEN MOVING TO A NEW COMMUNITY?

Military families and military children are amongst the most transient of populations. It is not uncommon to see kids who have grown up in military families who have been in 5, 7 or 9 different schools by the end of their high school career. There is very high mobility. With high mobility comes issues of engagement, disengagement, and reengagement. These can be stressors for military kids.

Joining extracurricular and sports programs can be another challenge. In their previous community the child may have been a gifted athlete, but in the new community he or she may not have those opportunities. Some children may have spent their entire lives in a foreign country and in most cases, become adapted to the culture of the country in which they live. When returning to the states, it can be hard for that child to re-adjust to the American culture.

NOW MORE THAN EVER...

The need to support military youth and families has never been greater. Today, nearly 2 million American children have a parent serving in the military. While these children may not wear the uniform, they make significant sacrifices every day for the sake of our country's national security. Too often, those sacrifices go unrecognized...their struggles unacknowledged. Overall, America's military youth are strong, resilient, and independent as a result of their experiences. They understand sacrifice, education, and the value of public service. But many are also struggling academically, emotionally, and socially. These young people bear with bravery the significant demands of a life of service to others. And so, it is our nation's solemn responsibility to help them cope with the challenges they face. Supporting military youth and families is mission critical; it's essential for the future of our Armed Forces and our national security. Strong military families improve mission readiness and the overall well-being of military families.

STRATEGY FOR SERVING MILITARY FAMILIES

To assure that youth from military families receive the support they need, BGCA has implemented the following strategy:

- A dedicated team to work with Clubs and partner organizations – including government agencies, community organizations, schools, and others – to provide membership opportunities to military youth living in geographically-dispersed areas throughout the United States.

- Expand access to over 500,000 military-connected youth to a wider range of resources that promote youth development, build resiliency, and foster connections in the community for adolescents and their families.