



AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
Department of Ohio

2011-2012
NATIONAL SECURITY
PLAN OF ACTION

Department of Ohio National Security Chairman

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Shining Stars
Vi Grzybowski
2011-2012 Department President

NATIONAL SECURITY

2011-2012

Mission Statement: The mission of the National Security Committee is to maintain and promote a strong defense by providing the necessary means to strengthen our military families and prepare for response to natural and man-made disasters. Individual Units can accomplish the mission statement by using the materials, information, and programs already established for us. As Department President Vi Grzybowski says, we can all be **Shining Stars** for our military and their families.

OBJECTIVES

1. **OBJECTIVE**—Develop, implement and monitor programs and activities that contribute to the practical and emotional well-being of military service members and their families.

Action Steps:

A. Participate in Department of Defense and other outside programs that support our military and their families throughout the entire deployment cycle.

a) **Promote Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program:** a program organized by the Department of Defense to provide National Guard and Reserve members and their families with information, services, referral and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the entire deployment cycle. Log onto www.yellowribbon.mil for more information about this program.

b) **Operation Homefront:** a nonprofit organization that provides emergency and morale assistance for our troops, the families they leave behind and for wounded warriors when they return home. Operation Homefront provides aid to families struggling not only with emergencies, but also with the problems of everyday life. Potential activities that Units may undertake are assembly of service member care packages and family member support packages; provision of hospitality, refreshments or children/youth activities at Operation Homefront spouse support events; or volunteering at an Operation Homefront activity.

c) **Family Readiness Groups:** their mission is to help military families manage the challenges that are often faced following a deployment. Many of these families do not know about the Auxiliary, therefore, it is **imperative** that we reach out to them. We need to let them know that we are willing and able to help. Ways that Units can help include:

- ✓ Distributing the Sesame Street Video “*Talk, Listen, Connect: Helping Families During Deployment*”.
- ✓ Helping at sendoff ceremonies.
- ✓ Holding social events for families.
- ✓ Mowing lawns or fixing a leaky faucet.
- ✓ Babysitting or grocery shopping.

Units need to compile a list of members and the services that each can supply to a military family. Hold a Teen Summit for military teen family members, teens are being affected in more ways than thought of before. Offer to host a Teen Dance for this same group of military children.

- d) **Family to Family Support:** Auxiliary Units may offer practical and morale support to military families by matching an ALA Unit to a Family Readiness Group. Units can contact nearby military installations, Reserve facilities or National Guard facilities to offer assistance.
 - e) **USO:** provides morale, welfare and recreation-type services to military members and their families. Units can contact local USO centers for opportunities to get your members involved.
- B. Participate in the Military and Family Support programs of The American Legion.**
- a) **Family Support Network:** provides a broad range of services to help families cope with unique challenges of deployments. We have been mobilizing military units in record numbers since Sept. 11, 2001. As a result, the families of these men and women often find themselves unable to meet normal monthly expenses, and assistance is needed for a variety of everyday chores. These tasks include grocery shopping, child care, mowing the grass, fixing the family car and other routine household jobs. To address these issues, The American Legion has a nationwide toll-free number, (800) 504-4098, for service members and their family members to call for assistance. They also accept email requests at www.familysupport@legion.org. Auxiliary Units can work with their Legion Posts to respond to requests that come through the Legion's Family Support Network.
 - b) **Operation Comfort Warriors:** a program that is dedicated to meeting the needs of wounded and ill warriors, either hospitalized or in warrior transition Units, with comfort items not usually supplied by the U.S. government. Auxiliary Units can work with their Legion posts to raise funds.
 - c) **Heroes to Hometown:** The American Legion is further assisting returning heroes through its Heroes to Hometown program which focuses on addressing issues for newly returning heroes, ranging from employment to emergency monetary assistance, to renovating homes for handicap access, to family counseling. Service members and their families seeking assistance can call (202) 621-9924 or email www.heroestohometowns@legion.org. This program provides numerous opportunities for Auxiliary Units, SAL Squadrons and Legion Posts to work together.
 - d) **Gold Star Banner and Blue Star Banner Programs:** The Blue Star Service Banner was designed and patented in 1917. It quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service. Today, Blue Star Service Banners are displayed by families who have a loved one serving in the Armed Forces including National Guard and Reserves. The American Legion Family is rekindling the spirit of pride in our military men and women following the horrific terrorist attacks of 9-11-01, by providing banners to families in communities across the nation. Auxiliary Units can work with The American Legion to present Gold Star/Blue Star Banners to individuals and the corporate flag to businesses. Units also can hold receptions or events for Gold Star/Blue Star family members. The Blue Star Mothers' was founded in 1942 and its original goals were to bring sons home, to ensure they received the benefits they deserved, help service member's families, help each other and to be there if something happened. Over the years, the goals

have broadened to include rehabilitation, hospital work, children's welfare and civil defense.

- e) **POW/MIA Initiatives:** The American Legion and Auxiliary are committed to achieving a full accounting of **all** POW/MIAs from the Gulf War, Vietnam War, Cold War, Korean War and World War II. This means returning living POWs, the repatriation of their remains, or finding convincing evidence why neither of these is possible. Units can join with the Legion to host a ceremony on National POW/MIA Recognition Day on September 16, 2011. This commemoration is set aside to honor the commitment and sacrifices made by this nation's prisoners of war and those who are still missing in action, as well as their families. National POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies can be held on military installations, ships, schools, churches and post homes. The focus is to ensure that America remembers its responsibility to stand behind those who have not returned. The POW/MIA Empty Chair Resolution 288, adopted at the 67th American Legion National Convention, calls for designating a POW/MIA Empty Chair at all official meetings of The American Legion as a physical symbol of the thousands of American POW/MIAs still unaccounted for from all wars and conflicts involving the United States. Units should follow this resolution at all official meetings and events.
- C. Support implementation of homeland security programs of The American Legion and the American Legion Auxiliary.
 - a) **Citizen Corps:** This is the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) grassroots strategy to bring together government and community leaders to involve citizens in all-hazards emergency preparedness and resilience. Citizen Corps asks every citizen to embrace the personal responsibility to be prepared, to get training in first aid and emergency skills, and to volunteer to support local emergency responders, disaster relief and community safety. Units should reach out particularly to military families transferring into their communities and include them in the Citizen Corps initiatives.
- D. Provide recognition and support for ROTC and JROTC groups.
 - a) ROTC and JROTC provide leadership opportunities for future military personnel. Students learn firsthand what it takes to lead others, motivate groups and conduct missions. Units can support these future leaders by presenting recognition awards and by inviting them to participate in Post and Unit events.

Additional Activities

American Legion Auxiliary Gateway to Services: Accessed through the Auxiliary's website at www.alaforveterans.org, this portal contains valuable information on how to connect veterans, military service members and military families to resources and support that enhance their lives. It is also a useful resource for Units and members to use to find more information about all of the programs identified in the National Security Plan of Action. Information is available in the following areas: **family, community and social support, health and wellness, career, training and education, and financial and legal support.**

National Military Appreciation Month (May): Units can partner with The American Legion and other community organizations during May to increase awareness of and show appreciation for military families. To maintain a strong, all-volunteer fighting force, it is imperative for our National Security that we help to sustain our military families. Hold a special event for the military spouses to recognize the sacrifices that they make start planning your activities early and send me a report about what you do, by May 1st, 2012. Make sure to get your events into your local newspapers early.

AWARDS

DEPARTMENT

Avonelle Clinger Plaque – A plaque will be presented to the Unit Chairman report with the “Best All Around National Security Program” based on the annual report form. Report form must be completed and mailed to Department National Security Chairman Mona Shipley, 632 S. Elizabeth Sreet, Lima, Ohio 45804. This report form deadline is May 1, 2012.

Phyllis Nickoson Plaque – A plaque will be presented to the District President with the highest percentage of Units reporting on National Security. This report form deadline is May 1, 2012.

NATIONAL

Military Support Unit Award – A citation will be presented to a Unit in each Division that reports the Most Outstanding Overall Program serving and supporting military families with special emphasis on helping them through times of family member deployment and/or injury (severely wounded). Entry must be typewritten in narrative form, not to exceed 1,000 words. Please include pictures and news articles. The cover page must have the Department name, District number, Unit name and the number, Chairman’s name and address and the name of the award entry. Entries are to be sent to Department National Security Chairman Mona Shipley, 632 S. Elizabeth Street, Lima, Ohio 45804. The entry deadline is May 1, 2012.

Yellow Ribbon Program Unit Award – A citation will be presented to a Unit in each Division that demonstrates the best project incorporating yellow ribbons in support of military and military families. Please include a type-written narrative (not to exceed 1,000 words), pictures and news articles. Entries are to be sent to Department National Security Chairman Mona Shipley, 632 S. Elizabeth Street, Lima, Ohio 45804. Entry deadline is May 1, 2012.

RESOURCES

- 1) American Legion Auxiliary Gateway to Services
 - www.alaforveterans.org
- 2) Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program
 - <http://www.yellowribbon.mil/>
 - www.jointservicesupport.org/YRRP
- 3) Operation Homefront
 - <http://www.operationhomefront.net/>
- 4) Family Readiness Groups (FRGs)
 - www.armyfrg.org/skins/frg/home.aspx United States Army FRG homepage

- <http://www.hooah4health.com/4life/hooah4family/frg.htm> Includes FRG Hndbk
 - <http://familyreadinessgroup.org>
 - www.navyfrg.com Navy Family Readiness Groups
 - Many States have National Guard Family Readiness Groups which can be found by doing an internet or “Google” search using “National Guard Family Readiness Groups”.
- 5) USO
- www.uso.org
- 6) ROTC/JROTC
- www.goarmy.com/rotc
 - www.afrotc.com
 - www.nrotc.navy.mil
 - www.mcjrotc.org
- 7) American Legion Programs- www.legion.org
- Family Support Network- www.legion.org/familysupport
 - Operation Comfort Warriors- www.legion.org/troops/operationcomfort
 - Gold Star and Blue Star Banner Program- www.legion.org/troops/bluestar
 - POW/MIA Initiatives- www.legion.org/powmia
 - The American Legion Publications for National Security- www.legion.org/publications
- 8) POW/MIA
- www.dtic.mil/dpmo/
- 9) National Military Appreciation Month
- www.nmam.org/
- 10) Citizen Corps/CERT Training
- www.citizencorps.gov/cert/training_mat.shtm
 - www.citizencorps.gov
- 11) Other miscellaneous Internet sites with valuable information for the National Security Program
- America Supports You- www.americasupportsyouth.mil
 - Blue Star Mothers- www.bluestarmothers.org
 - Gold Star Mothers- www.goldstarmothers.org
 - READY Program for Kids, Business and America- www.Ready.gov
 - Let’s Say Thanks- send military personnel stationed overseas a free postcard showing support and appreciation for their service to our country- www.letsaythanks.com
 - Military One Source- a resource for active and recently retired members of the military- www.militaryonesource.com
 - Homeowners Assistance Program for military- <http://hap.usace.army.mil>