



Vermont National Guard Child & Youth Program Annual Report FY2017



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The mission of the Army National Guard Child & Youth Program is to positively impact Soldier and family readiness, resilience and retention by providing secure, timely, flexible and high-quality youth development opportunities and resources which promote the overall well-being of ARNG children and youth.

Mission

Goals

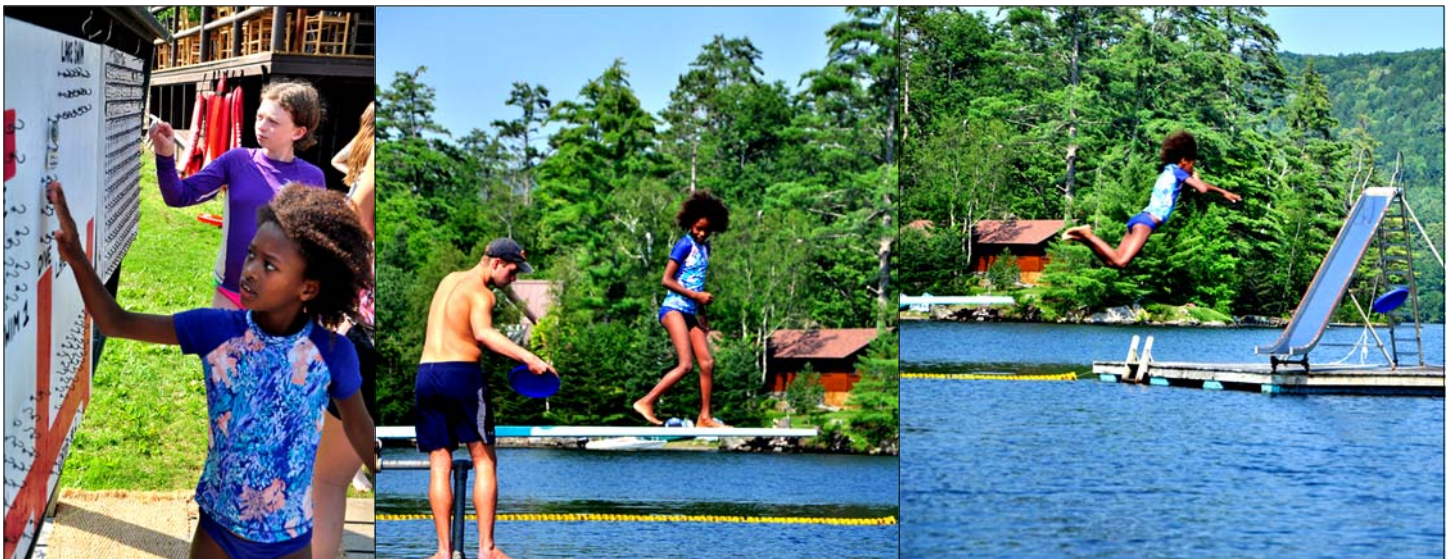
Provide life-skills and peer-to-peer connections to increase overall Soldier and family readiness

Build community capacity by developing partnerships with education and community resources that support geographically dispersed military youth and families

Expand access to and awareness of Federal, State and community benefits that support military youth

Utilize leadership and service learning opportunities in ARNG children and youth

Utilize research based curriculum as a means of increasing the resilience skills in ARNG youth to promote soldier and family readiness and retention



Event Summary



• 524.5 Total Hours of Programming Provided



- 8th Annual VTNG Family Camp at Ohana Camp with 65 participants
- 9 Day Camp/Youth Development Workshops for 147 youth
- 4 Residential/Overnight Camp experiences for 135 youth



- 19 Community Outreach Events/Briefings
- 7th Annual "Operation Polar Express" with 163 participants
- 1 Yellow Ribbon Event
- 6 Family Readiness Group events



Children & Families Served



308 = 6-12 year olds
239 = 13-18 year olds
568 = Adults
1,115 Total



7 = 6-12 year olds
2 = 13-18 year olds
19 = Adults
28 Total



13 = 6-12 year olds
4 = 13-18 year olds
29 = Adults
46 Total

1,189 US Army Youth and Families



230 = 6-12 year olds
126 = 13-18 year olds
494 = Adults
850 Total



0 = 6-12 year olds
1 = 13-18 year olds
25 = Adults
26 Total



5 = 6-12 year olds
1 = 13-18 year olds
1 = Adults
7 Total

2,072 Total US Armed Forces Youth and Families

Teen Resilience Training

With the knowledge that this curriculum can be challenging to comprehend, let alone put into practice, we have put forth significant effort to combine it with more engaging, age appropriate activities. This has been accomplished through combining it with Experiential Education activities: Rock Climbing, High & Low Ropes Courses, Backpacking, and Canoeing. Youth have provided positive feedback regarding adaptations. VTNG Teen Council requested to be provided the Full Curriculum via 2-hour lessons. It has been reported from SMs and parents that teens are actively honing these skills on the home front.



Training Provided

- 3 two-hour workshops provided to 45 teens
- Full Curriculum has been provided at Teen Council Quarterly Meetings. They have successfully completed 5 of the 14 MRT Skills



Volunteers

With an emphasis on Volunteer Recruitment and Retention throughout this year we saw a significant strengthening and expansion of volunteer opportunities! Our program was afforded **101 volunteers** that provided a total of **1096.8 hours** in support from generous individuals and community organizations. Volunteers were utilized in support of the following types of events:

- TAG Match-Youth Area
- Community Outreach Events/Briefings
- Vermont Lake Monsters Military Appreciation Night
- Day Camps
- Residential/Overnight Camps
- Defenders vs Enforcers Benefit Hockey Game
- VTNG Family Programs-Swing set

What's Being Said

I am extremely grateful for all the opportunities the Vermont National Guard Child & Youth Program has offered to us over the years. I have watched my kids grow into confident leaders and active/positive community members. More importantly it has better allowed us to manage the duties and responsibilities that come with having a soldier in the VTARNG.

- Heather Moultroup, Mother of 4 VTARNG Youth & Military Spouse

Today, 27 September 2017, marks a stepping stone in my Coast Guard Career... exactly 1 year ago today I left my home, family, friends and dog to start a new chapter of my life. I got sworn in to The United States Coast Guard by my dad. Then I hopped on a plane, took a bus and walked through the doors of Sexton Hall at the Training Center Cape May to begin my career. Since then I have moved twice, became a Petty Officer, got rated and moved into my first apartment. I could not have done any of this with out the love and support of my family, friends, and the Vermont National Guard Child & Youth Program. So, THANK-YOU for standing up for, by my side & behind in my efforts to succeed in this first part of my career. - Savannah Leffler, PO3 U.S Coast Guard & former VTARNG Teen Council Member

Teen Council

FY17 brought transition to the 10 (ten) member Vermont conclave. We saw two members graduate High School and move onto their next adventure. This allowed for two new members to join. The new members brought a fresh perspective, along with a passion to serve their peers and the VTNG CYP. The fresh groupthink has been inspired and thoughtful. This led them to organizing and hosting a peer connection & support event for the VT Air National Guard youth during their recent deployment in February 2017.

Every year they choose two themes with the intent that it be woven into all programming. First chosen was **Resilience** and requested that as Council members they would receive the entire Teen Resilience curriculum during their tenure. Efforts have been made to incorporate this into our In-Person Quarterly Meetings. The second theme was **Recruitment**.

Recruitment was chosen because they felt that since the large deployments in 2009-2011 there has been a steady decline in CYP participants and peer-to-peer connection. This led them to determine that attention be placed on maximizing attendance at our large group events and to reduce the overall offerings of the program. This proved successful in that our last five (5) multi-day camp experiences were FULL!

Best Practices

Connection has been one of our programmatic focuses throughout this past year. Increase mindfulness has been placed into improving the quality and transferability of content provided in our monthly newsletter. Our articles are providing tools for youth, and for parents on providing support to their children at home and school. Increased enrollment in programs is a direct correlation to this effort. Connection has also been employed in recruiting volunteers. This is done by utilizing our Community Partners to assist in this process. We have seen a more than doubling of our volunteers over the past 12 months!

Leadership Development and Youth Empowerment have risen as strengths. Thoughtful discussion and curriculum evolution with the Teen Council and Community Partners increased the amount of time spent and improved overall quality of this program area. Emphasis on honing individual strengths and leadership attributes has been a focal point of our teen oriented programs. This is found most notably in our day and overnight/residential camp where increased duties and responsibilities have been placed on Teen Council members and other strong youth as “Leaders In Training” or “LITs”. As well as, the launch of a 14-day Teen Leadership Wilderness Experience which strictly focused on individual leadership development while moving as a group of 10 teens and 2 facilitators/leaders through the wilds of Vermont’s Northeast Kingdom traveling via canoe, mountain bike, and on foot.

Community Partners



Ohana Family Camp has been providing a VTNG Family Camp which is a one-week long residential/overnight family camp experience. For the past **eight (8) years** their generosity along with that of an anonymous donor has afforded over **475** VTNG SMs and their families.



The Greater Burlington YMCA-Youth Development program has become one of our go to resources for day camp programming, as well as a resource for finding volunteers. It is through their assistance that our Chittenden County based day camps have **increased in capacity and programming ability**.



metroRock Vermont emerged as one this years crucial partners. They hosted a group of 30 youth for a 5-day February Vacation Day-Camp in which we began experimenting with combining **Teen Resilience** with rock climbing and challenge courses. They have also provided a venue for conducting Teen Council Meetings & Trainings.



The Vermont Lake Monsters have honored Military members for years. They offer a Military Appreciation Night which allows military members free tickets to a game and giveaways, and their mascot, “Champ” attends events in support of CYP & Family Programs.



VTNG Child & Youth Program Annual Report FY17



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