

OPERATION OHIO KIDS

2026–2027 PROGRAM BOOKLET



OPERATION OHIO KIDS
Every Post. Every Child. Every Community.

The American Legion • Department of Ohio • Children & Youth

 **AMERICAN
LEGION**

DEPARTMENT
OF OHIO



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A statewide Children & Youth initiative

Mission

Mobilize American Legion Posts across Ohio to positively impact children through service, education, mentorship, citizenship, and partnerships.

Vision

Every Post. Every Child. Every Community.

The Four Pillars

- EDUCATE — Learning, literacy, citizenship and life skills.
- SUPPORT — Resources and assistance for children and families.
- INSPIRE — Leadership, character, service and mentorship.
- CONNECT — Partnerships among Posts, schools, youth organizations and communities.

Participation Standard

The standard is simple: ONE POST. ONE PROJECT. ONE IMPACT. Posts may participate at a level appropriate to their size and resources. Meaningful service—not dollars spent—is the standard.



STATEWIDE PROGRAM TIMELINE

September 2026 – August 2027

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>FOCUS</u>	<u>POST ACTION</u>
September 2026	Program Launch	Appoint a Children & Youth contact and identify a school or youth organization.
October	Adopt-a-School	Meet with the partner, ask what children need, and select at least one achievable project.
November	Veterans in the Classroom	Veteran speakers, JROTC engagement, service, patriotism and Americanism.
December	Operation Holiday Hope	Provide locally needed holiday or winter support for children and families.
January 2027	Mentorship & Literacy	Reading, tutoring, mentoring and career-readiness activities.
February	Americanism & Black History	Citizenship, Constitution, American history, Black military history and local veteran history.
March	Special Olympics Ohio	Volunteer, support athletes/events, fundraise or build local partnerships.
April	Military Children	Recognize Month of the Military Child and support military-connected children.
May	Celebrate Our Youth	Recognize students, JROTC cadets, youth volunteers, scholarship recipients and partners.
June	Boys State & Youth Leadership	Support Buckeye Boys State, citizenship, leadership and summer mentorship.
July	Impact & Recognition	Collect results, photos and stories; recognize outstanding service.
August	Operation Back-to-School Ohio	Backpacks, supplies, clothing, teacher support and preparation for the next cycle.

First 60 Days

September: appoint a Post Children & Youth point of contact and identify a potential partner. October: meet with that partner and ask, “What do your children need that our Post can realistically help provide?”





CHILDREN & YOUTH



FOUR STATEWIDE ANCHOR CAMPAIGNS

FALL — Adopt-a-School

Build a sustained relationship with a school or youth organization and respond to an identified local need.

WINTER — Operation Holiday Hope

Support children and families during the holiday and winter season.

SPRING — Military Children & Special Olympics Ohio

Focus statewide attention on military-connected children and meaningful Special Olympics engagement.

SUMMER — Operation Back-to-School Ohio

Prepare children, families, schools and teachers for the next school year.

Monthly themes supplement these four anchor campaigns; they are opportunities, not requirements.

ADOPT-A-SCHOOL

Fall 2026 Anchor Campaign

Adopt-a-School is the immediate Operation Ohio Kids launch focus. The goal is a sustained relationship with a school or youth organization—not simply a one-time donation.

How to Start

- Identify a nearby school or youth organization.
- Contact its leadership and request a brief meeting.
- Ask: “What do your children need that our Post can realistically help provide?”
- Select one achievable project.
- Recruit volunteers and community partners as needed.
- Complete the project, document results and maintain the relationship.

Possible Projects

- Mentoring or tutoring
- Winter coats/clothing
- Food-pantry assistance
- JROTC support
- Career-day participation
- Veterans in the Classroom
- Attendance or achievement incentives
- School-event volunteers
- Citizenship/Americanism activities



CHILDREN & YOUTH

BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Posts are encouraged to listen first, learn what local children need, and then identify a meaningful project they can realistically complete.

Ready-to-Use Partnership Letter

Dear Community Partner,

On behalf of [POST NAME/NUMBER], we would like to introduce Operation Ohio Kids, a statewide Children & Youth initiative of The American Legion Department of Ohio. Its vision is simple: Every Post. Every Child. Every Community.

Our Post is seeking opportunities to support children and youth in our community through education, service, mentorship, school readiness, citizenship, and practical assistance. We would welcome an opportunity to learn about your organization's needs and identify a project where our Legionnaires can make a meaningful contribution.

Possible partnerships may include volunteer service, mentoring, youth activities, family support, school resources, Americanism programs, or another need identified by your organization. We believe the strongest projects begin by listening to the community we serve.

We look forward to working together for Ohio's children.

Sincerely,

[NAME / TITLE]

[POST NAME & NUMBER]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]

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SPECIAL OLYMPICS OHIO

Spring Anchor Component

Posts are encouraged to support Special Olympics Ohio through meaningful local engagement.

- Volunteer at local or statewide events
- Support athletes and families
- Assist with event logistics
- Fundraise or provide in-kind support
- Explore Unified Sports opportunities
- Build an ongoing relationship with a local Special Olympics program
- Report volunteer hours, participation and impact



CHILDREN & YOUTH



COMMUNICATIONS & STORYTELLING

Tell the Story of Veterans Continuing to Serve

Every project should capture the project name, partner, date, children served, volunteer hours, one or two strong photographs, and a short description of the difference made.

Suggested Social Media Copy

Operation Ohio Kids is putting service into action. [POST NAME/NUMBER] partnered with [PARTNER] to [PROJECT/ACTION], serving [NUMBER] children in our community. Every Post. Every Child. Every Community. #OperationOhioKids

Statewide Storytelling

- Share successful Post projects regularly
 - Highlight partnerships and volunteers
 - Use measurable impact numbers
 - Collect testimonials when appropriate
- Prepare a year-end statewide impact story

Please contact the Department Children & Youth Office for additional materials, information, and other assistance:

The American Legion, Department of Ohio
ATTN: Children & Youth Office
60 Big Run Rd.
Delaware, OH 43015

Telephone: 740-362-7478
E-mail: programs@ohiolegion.com

American Legion Websites:
National American Legion Headquarters:
www.legion.org

Ohio American Legion Headquarters:
www.ohiolegion.com

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