

Ohio 4-H Foundation Grant Impact Report

Title of Grant: Operation Military Kids Camp

Applicant Name & Title: Jermaine Kennedy, Program Coordinator (Grant was originally written by Theresa Ferrari who is a one year leave)

Unit Reporting:

Amount Funded: \$ 3500

Amount Used: \$ 3500

Grant Funds Remaining: \$ 0

Calendar Year of Grant: January 1-December 31, 2008

Type of Grant (please mark all that apply):

State Grant	Priority Area Grant
Cashman Grant	Lewis/Barnhart/Jenkins Grant
Cleveland Grant	Ebling Urban Extension Grant
Helt Family Grant	Nationwide Volunteer Development Grant
Sauder Grant	Wadlington Grant
Ulrich Grant	

Please use as much space as needed to answer the following requests for information.

Please give an overview of your project. Assume the reader knows nothing about the program.

Please list the objectives of the project and evaluate the measurable objectives achieved. Explain how you measured those objectives.

Describe the population(s) or target audience(s) served. List how many individuals benefited or were impacted by this program.

Which of the 8 critical elements were realized in the program and how was this accomplished?

Provide a **detailed** budget and actual expenditures. Original receipts or copies are not necessary, but be sure that your expenditures are detailed with specific dollar amounts.

If this is a continuing program, please describe future plans/program objectives.

Project Overview: Please give an overview of your project. Assume the reader knows nothing at all about the program.

In recent years, the nature of military service includes increased deployments of service members. The war in Iraq and the Global War on Terrorism have changed expectations

for all service members, but in particular those of the National Guard and Reserves. These families are facing more stressors than ever before, and the youth in these families are particularly affected. A recently released report on youth with deployed parents indicated that deployment is linked with several negative outcomes (Huebner & Mancini, 2005). This presents a number of implications for youth development professionals.

Youth with deployed parents often indicate that they feel isolated, and thus can cope better with deployment stress when they are around others who are experiencing the same stressors. One way to offer suddenly military youth new ways to cope is participation in residential camp programs. Participation in camp programs is known to provide positive benefits to young people, thus the camp setting is an ideal environment to foster the goals of Operation: Military Kids, 4-H's national initiative to reach out to this audience. Furthermore, it builds on the strengths of one of Ohio 4-H's core delivery methods, and introduces youth to positive youth development experiences available through on-going involvement in 4-H.

The camp funded here builds on the success of the first three OMK Camps held in 2005, 2006 and again in 2007, hosted at Kelleys Island 4-H Camp, and supported by the Ohio 4-H Foundation. This camp combined force with the National Guard and Reserves to recruit military kids as campers and to conduct one residential 4-H camp from August 10-16, 2008. Counselors arrived on the 10th and gained specific training on deployment issues and campers arrived on the 11th.

Campers were recruited from across the state and all branches of the military were represented. Evaluation results from this camp found that "meeting new friends" and "seeing people from last year" were two of the best things about camp. The majority of youth reported that they made friends, did something new and had fun. Counselors were recruited from 4-H (current 4-H members, Collegiate 4-H members, and 4-H alumni), and again former campers became counselors; six of the counselors were campers at the 2006 and 2007 camps.

Military youth were connected to 4-H through the camping program and their camp counselors. Many military youth are interested in joining 4-H as a result of this camp.

Objectives: Please list the objectives of the project and evaluate the measurable objectives achieved. Explain HOW you measured those objectives.

Listed below are the program objectives:

1. Offer a five-day residential 4-H camp for military kids.
This objective was accomplished by offering a five-day residential camp from August 11-15, 2008.

Campers enjoyed typical camp activities such as canoeing, crafts, and campfires. Swimming in Lake Erie was also a favorite pastime. New this year was the involvement of the Navy Seals, including a Seal Hunt challenge with smoke bomb demonstrations. In keeping with the theme of *Camp Olympics*, team building and team challenges were infused throughout the programming for the

week and on the last day at closing circle; each camper was awarded a gold Operation Military Kids medal.

A special guest this year was Brigadier General Matthew Kambic, Assistant Adjutant General Army Ohio National Guard, who landed on the camp field in a Chinook. Campers were able to tour the Chinook before General Kambic headed back to Columbus. A number of adults on the camp staff were affiliated with the Ohio National Guard and others had military connections. Guard soldiers provided instruction in flag ceremonies and compass and land navigation, and the older campers had the opportunity to use night vision goggles.

Objectives were measured by direct camp observations, along with a camp evaluation that took place at the end of camp. The instrument used was developed by the National Camping Research Consortium. Specific camp outcomes and impacts are listed below.

2. Give children of deployed service members the opportunity to come together in a fun environment, learn from each other, and forge new relationships.
 - 94% said they built friendships that will last after camp.
 - 74% said they learned something new from another camper.
 - Youth now have friends who are experiencing similar experiences.

3. Develop personal and interpersonal skills.
 - 82% said they accomplished something they couldn't do on the first day of camp.
 - 91% said they felt good about something they accomplished.
 - 77% said they improved skills in different activities.
 - 80% said they pushed themselves harder because of challenging activities.
 - 82% said they were part of making group decisions.
 - 74% said they had the opportunity to learn about different careers.
 - 87% said they learned skills that will be useful in the future.

4. Connect these military youth to on-going 4-H programs in their county.
 - Numerous youth asked their counselors about how to become 4-H members and what they do as 4-H members.
 - Military youth now want to become 4-H members through the OMK counselor-in-training program.

1. Develop new and improve existing leadership skills in 4-H and military teens who serve as camp counselors.

Critical to the success of camp are the counselors. OMK camp counselors were recruited from around the state from the ranks of experienced 4-H camp counselors,

Collegiate 4-H members, and 4-H alumni. Like the campers, many of them are returning for a third or even fourth year, and they volunteer their time to attend. As noted by a parent, "The young adults that you placed in charge of the cabins were also amazing. Their service to our children is immeasurable." This year three former campers served as camp counselors. They've had the experience of having a parent being away from home, and they understand what campers are facing.

- 4-H members served as camp counselors, which allowed them to work with youth in situations they had never experienced. These camp counselors gained awareness of a new audience.
- 87% said the adults were people they could trust.
- 83% said they could go to the adults if they had a problem.
- Several camp counselors took camp ideas back to their counties to use at their home 4-H camp.
- Life lessons 4-H camp counselors learned:
 - Never pre-judge a camper.
 - Talk to everyone openly to learn their background.
 - Appreciate other 4-H members' perceptions and camp program ideas.

Other Impacts

OMK Camp rated high with parents as well. This was the first year we had a Family Day Event. The last day of camp, parents/guardians were invited to camp to share some of the experiences the campers had. As one mother expressed the benefit of camp, she said, "He realized that he's not the only kid in Ohio that has a parent who has been deployed and who will be deployed again. He felt like he "belonged" with the group of kids from the camp. He has been more open in talking about his worries and concerns with the upcoming deployment - which is something he didn't do with the first one." Parents expressed a heart-felt thanks to all involved. "I truly believe your camp has lessened the burden tremendously. Please express my gratitude and appreciation to all those that support this project."

Target Population: Describe the population(s) or target audience(s) served. List how many individuals benefited or were impacted.

A total of 168 youth ages 9 to 14 participated in camp. They represented all branches of the service (Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, and Navy) and all components (active duty, National Guard, Reserves).

- 168 youth, ages 9-14, from across Ohio
- 94 Males, 74 Females
- Deployment Status

Deployment Status	Frequency
Have a parent currently deployed	33%
Have a parent preparing for deployment	15%
Have a parent who has returned from a	44%

deployment	
Have a parent who has not deployed and is not currently preparing for deployment	8%

- Branch of Service

Branch of Service/Component	Number
Army National Guard	107
Army Reserve	12
Army Active	14
Air Force National Guard	24
Air Force Reserve	2
Air Force Active	2
Navy Reserve	5
Marines Active	1
Coast Guard Reserve	1
Total	168

- **Returning Campers:** Approximately half of the campers returned for a second year, one-third for a third year.
- There were 32 camp counselors; they were trained 4-H camp counselors and adolescent youth who had a parent or family member in the military (three former campers). Counselors represented 17 counties.

Key Elements: Which of the 8 critical elements were realized in the program and how?

Positive relationship with a caring adult	Camp counselors are an integral part of the success of this program. Positive relationships were fostered by enlisting 4-H teens, military teens, and Collegiate 4-H members as camp counselors. The trained 4-H camp counselors served as a caring role model, provided a welcoming camping environment, and engaged them in fun learning experiences. The camp evaluation indicated that the staff built positive relationships with campers
Opportunity for mastery and competency	Opportunities to develop skills were provided during camp workshop sessions.
Opportunity to value and practice service for others	The "keeping camp clean" service initiative was incorporated into the camp program.
Opportunity for self-determination	Campers had the opportunity to make choices about activities in which they participated. They were provided opportunities to develop leadership skills. Their responses on the evaluation form indicated these aspects were present in the camp program.
An inclusive environment	Counselors and camp staff worked to create a welcoming environment and foster belonging through camp practices such as meeting at the ferry, warm fuzzy boards, and cabin skits, and

	making sure that all members of the cabin are included in activities. Group photos and logo items also served to create belongingness. Activities at camp also reinforced military values, creating a sense of shared culture among the campers.
Opportunity to see one's self as an active participant in the future	A positive experience helps campers develop goals for attending future camps. In addition, they developed ways to cope with deployment that carries with them into future stressful situations.
Engagement in learning	Fun, hands-on activities engaged participants in learning and taught valuable skills. This was reinforced by the camp evaluation; campers indicated that they learned something new and participated in challenging activities. They indicated their favorite activities on the evaluation form and could be observed having fun throughout camp.
Emotionally and physically safe environment	Adult staff designed the program to take into account the particular needs of military youth regarding emotional safety. This element was also stressed in counselor training. This element was reinforced by campers indicating that felt safe.

Budget and Expenditures: Provide detailed budget and actual expenditures. Actual or copies of receipts are not necessary, but be sure your expenditures are detailed with specific dollar amounts.

The camp fees total \$36,098.53. The camp fee is based on a unit cost of \$7.05; a unit is either a meal or night's lodging. In addition, there are fees for insurance, crafts; camp endowment, ferry transportation, and parking that are added to the unit cost. Additional costs are incurred for supplies and transportation (rental of two vans for transporting counselors and staff). Based on these costs, we estimate that it takes \$250 to send one child to camp for five days. Campers pay a registration fee of \$45 that covers T-shirts and logo items. In-kind support was provided by the Ohio National Guard; they purchased many supplies and provided a van for transporting supplies.

Significant donor support (approximately \$23,000 in addition to the \$3,500 Foundation grant) and funds from the OMK grant (approximately \$10,000) comprised the total income for the camp.

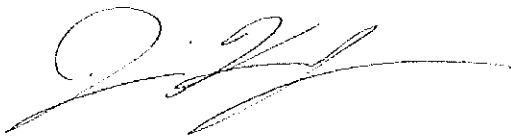
Amount of Grant	Actual Expenditures
\$3,500	Paid for portion of camper fees = 14 campers

Future Plans: If this is a continuing program, describes future plans/program objectives.

The 2009 Operation: Military Kids Camp date has been set for the second week of August at the Kelleys Island 4-H Camp. Each year the camp has increased in popularity and word-of-mouth has spread the news about the positive experience campers have had. Because of this past success, in 2009 the camping team will be planning two camps running concurrently; one camp for 9-11 year olds and the other for 12-15 year olds. We plan to expand the counselor-in-training program so that as more military youth families "graduate" from being campers, they can continue their involvement and develop leadership skills. They have seen former campers in this role this past year, and have expressed an interest in being counselors.

Major sponsors for this year's camp included AT&T Pioneers Ohio Life Member Council, Ohio 4-H Foundation, USO of Central Ohio, and various American Legion and VFW Posts. Other donations come from community organizations, private individuals, and businesses, including the Leland Foundation, Marine Corps Family Support Community, Military Officer's Club of Central Ohio, and the OSU Army ROTC Alumni Society.

We are working to increase funds to allow up to 250 campers for both camps combined to attend camp. The OMK team, Ohio 4-H, and the Ohio National Guard are working to gain private sponsorships to allow for this increase in campers. Donations of \$250 are being solicited. The Operation: Military Kids statewide team has been active in identifying potential donors. Veterans groups such as the American Legion, Am Vets, and VFW posts are potential local sources of funding. The potential for new 4-H Foundation donors exists – either those who have a current or past military connection or those who view this as an exciting new avenue of 4-H programming.



Grant Recipient Signature

11/19/08

Date