

April 2011



# South Dakota Family Focus

A Monthly Update for South Dakota National Guard Service Members and Families

SDNG Family Programs

1-800-658-3930

<https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### APRIL

- 2-3- Family Readiness Volunteer & Military Training- Rapid City
- 3- Youth Council Conference Call- Rapid City
- 7-10 Region 8 Youth Leadership Conference- Salt Lake City, UT
- 9-10- 139th BSB Final SRC- Brookings
- 10-16- National Volunteer Week
- 16-17- 139th BSB Yellow Ribbon Pre Mob Event - Watertown
- 28- Junior Officer Development- Mod Flash Forward - Sioux Falls
- 29-1- 200th ENGR Strong Bonds and Yellow Ribbon Pre Mob Event - Huron

### MAY

- 7- C Co 189th AVN Yellow Ribbon Pre Mob- Rapid City
- 7-8- 4H Summit Training for Teen Camp- Brookings
- 15- Spring Fling Event- Sioux Falls, SD
- 15- Youth Council Assisting with Air Guard Spring Fling- Sioux Falls
- 21- Living In the New Normal: Helping Children Thrive In Good and Challenging Times Practicum

### JUNE

- 6-10- SD Military Teen Camp- SDSU Campus in Brookings

### JULY

- 18-22- SD Military Youth Camp- Camp Bob Marshall near Custer

## AIRMEN AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

The weather is getting warmer, we are melting the snow! We hope that everyone is enjoying the new spring weather. However, with spring comes a wide variety of ups and downs. Please remember that The Airman and Family Readiness Center is here to help you with a variety of services. Our Family Assistance Specialist, Rachel can help with DEERS/ID, community resources/outreach and referral to financial and legal support systems.

The tax time is near! April 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline! If you are still looking to get your taxes completed look towards Military OneSource. MOS offers tax preparation and e- filing for FREE. Check them out at [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com) or call our office for more information. They can also link you up with scholarships that would benefit you or your family members.

We are excited to be recognizing our wonderful volunteers for the 2010 year. Volunteering is not only helping improve the quality of life but can be very rewarding. We have a great group that is ready and willing to put their best foot forward. A HUGE thank you goes out to anyone who gives up their time for the benefit of someone else. Our newly recognized volunteers will go up for the National Volunteer Award in Kentucky in late July.

Our office is located in Sioux Falls at the Air National Guard base. Please call us with questions or concerns. Everyone's mission is important to their community. Let us serve you in your mission whether that be TRICARE/DENTAL, needing a new ID card or just needing some information. Our Team at the Air Guard looks forward to serving you and your family soon.

Nikki Wajer

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## Transition Assistance Advisor

The South Dakota National Guard in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and the SD Division of Veterans Affairs will be hosting **Veteran and Retiree Summits** in several communities in the southern part of South Dakota on 12-14 April. For a list of locations, dates, and times, check out this link: <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/news/Forms/Allitem.aspx>. The summit will include brief presentations followed by opportunities for attendees to meet individually with representatives to discuss specific questions and concerns such as TRICARE, retirement and survivor benefits, as well as veteran entitlements. Future summits for communities in northern South Dakota will be scheduled in Fall of 2011.

**Tax filing deadline** for Individual Tax Returns is quickly approaching. Filing deadline must be postmarked by midnight of April 18, 2011. The normal April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline has been extended due to special holiday in Washington, D.C. The IRS has provided a website for members of the U.S. Armed Forces located here: <http://www.irs.gov/individuals/military/index.html>. There is a lot of good information for military families to include tax exclusions and extensions for members who served or are still serving in a combat zone. H&R Block is offering FREE Tax Filing Services through your MilitaryOneSource website. You can find more information here: <http://www.militaryonesource.com/MOS/FindInformation/Category/TaxFilingServices.aspx>.

**DoD Transition Assistance Program (TAP)** now hosts Virtual Learning Opportunities for demobilizing members of the National Guard, Reserve, our Wounded Warriors and their families. For a complete listing of seminar topics and dates, see the attached visit: <http://www.turbotap.org/register.tpp>.

**Stop Loss Extended.** The deadline for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for special retroactive pay as compensation for involuntary extensions of their military service contracts has been extended to April 8, Defense Department officials announced March 21. For more information and eligibility determination, please go to: [http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0710\\_stoploss/](http://www.defense.gov/home/features/2010/0710_stoploss/).

Are you a **Military Retiree** living in South Dakota? Do you know of a Retiree living outside of South Dakota but would like to stay informed on what is happening back home? The South Dakota Military Retiree Council is looking for you! Drop by their website and sign up. They can be found here: <http://sol.lunarservers.com/~ngasd3/SDMR/news.php>. Stay connected!

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National Volunteer week is April 10-16. The military is always grateful to all the volunteers that help the families as well as the military members. Volunteers are always welcome, if you have any questions please contact your lead volunteer. Please enjoy this excerpt from an article regarding Volunteer Vacations.

### Volunteerism

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, about 60 million people performed some kind of volunteer work last year. Of this number women were more likely than men to volunteer, and individuals between 35-54 years old made up the largest group. Each volunteer donated an average of 52 hours in activities like fundraising, coaching, teaching, serving food, providing information, and general labor.

Volunteering has even become hip. There has been a trend among college students to spend their Spring Break building houses for Habitat for Humanity, an organization that provides housing for poor families.

With 26% of the population helping others, there must be something to all this giving.

### Creating a Sense of Well-Being

It seems intuitive that helping others would make you feel good, but what about actual health benefits? Studies have shown that volunteering can play a role in increasing your overall sense of well-being, alleviating chronic pain, and even reducing [depression](#).

In a study led by Peggy Thoits, Professor of Sociology at Vanderbilt University, data was used from the Americans' Changing Lives Study to examine how volunteering affected six different aspects of well-being.

The study divided the 3,617 respondents into two groups, those who volunteered and those who did not. Comparisons were then made for levels of happiness, life satisfaction, self-esteem, sense of control over life, physical health, and depression.

Thoits found that "people who were in better physical and mental health were more likely to volunteer, and conversely that volunteer work was good for both mental and physical health. People of all ages who volunteered were happier and experienced better physical health and less depression."

### Volunteer Vacations

If you decided to volunteer on your next vacation, consider the following points:

**Location:** Some people choose a location close to home or within the country, while others want to go abroad.

**Type of challenge:** There are many types of challenges ranging from physically grueling to intellectually stimulating. You'll have to decide which is best for you.

**Your skills:** Your professional skills may be in great demand in less developed countries. Helping others may also help to prevent job burnout and improve job satisfaction.

**Language:** If contemplating travel to a foreign country, take into consideration the language spoken and your ability to communicate.

**Length of time:** Most volunteer vacations run from 1-3 weeks. Decide how much time you can donate.

**Free time:** Ask the organization you are volunteering for about their policy on free time. Will you have time to go off on your own and explore?

# HAPPY EASTER!!

## YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM

Deployment can be hard on all family members; whether you are a parent, sibling, or child of a Service member. The Yellow Ribbon Program (YRP) recognizes this and seeks to provide information relevant to all family members. Spouses and parents of Service members can learn about the services available to them and their Service member by attending a Yellow Ribbon Event. By hearing and learning about the services and gaining the information firsthand, a parent, family member or spouse is better aware and informed of how they can help the deployed Service member before, during, and after deployment. This firsthand information also allows family members to know where they can turn should they need help themselves. Yellow Ribbon Events can provide an opportunity for family members to meet other unit members and their families and form a bond that can help through the deployment cycle as well. For more information on upcoming Yellow Ribbon events in South Dakota, contact the Yellow Ribbon team at [yellowribbon@sd.ngb.army.mil](mailto:yellowribbon@sd.ngb.army.mil)

## YOUTH PROGRAM

Hello from the Youth Program! April is **Month of the Military Child** – please join us in celebrating and thanking our SDNG children and youth. There are over 3,600 children affiliated with the South Dakota Air and Army National Guard. Take time to honor them and the sacrifices they make as military children.

For certificates you can print to recognize your child, please visit our Family Programs website at <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/famsup/default.aspx> - select “Youth Program” on the left-hand side and then “Month of the Military Child.” You will also find information regarding the Month of the Military Child Photography Contest.

It’s time for **Youth and Teen Camp!** For further information and camp applications, please visit the Family Programs website at the link listed above. Select “Youth Program” and then youth camp or teen camp. Don’t miss out on the fun – we look forward to seeing you there!

- SD Military Youth Camp – July 18-22<sup>nd</sup> at Camp Bob Marshall near Custer
- SD Military Teen Camp – June 6-10<sup>th</sup>—SDSU Campus in Brookings (in conjunction with 4H)

### Tutor.Com

Tutor.com provides eligible military youth and teens access to highly trained educators who can provide help with homework, writing assignments, study skills, resume writing, and more. For National Guard families, this is available to dependents of personnel on active duty in a deployed status. There is no charge for this program and K-12, college, and adult students can connect to a live tutor online at anytime. Access to the program is free and unlimited 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Eligible military members can get details and create an account at [www.tutor.com/military](http://www.tutor.com/military).

### The First Tee Life Skills Program

The First Tee Golf Program has partnered with the Department of Defense to provide National Guard children with golf and life skill instruction from trained coaches. The program is comprised of six to nine core lessons that are delivered in fun and interactive classes. Life skill instruction is integrated into each class, focusing on topics such as interpersonal skills, managing emotions, goal setting, and overcoming obstacles. Classes also include age appropriate golf activities and golf skill instruction. There is no charge for National Guard youth at this time.

In South Dakota, this program is offered at three locations:

- The First Tee of **Rapid City** at LaCroix Links POC - Randy Stanton (605-718-9953) or [randy@rcymca.org](mailto:randy@rcymca.org) website: [www.rcymca.org](http://www.rcymca.org)
- The First Tee of South Dakota in **Sioux Falls** at Elmwood Golf Course POC is Julie Jansa (605-338-7499) or [jrjansa@yahoo.com](mailto:jrjansa@yahoo.com) website: [www.thefirstteesouthdakota.org](http://www.thefirstteesouthdakota.org)
- The First Tee of **Pine Ridge** at Pine Ridge Golf Learning Center POC is Chris Heiser (308-360-1995) or [thefirstteeofpineridge@hotmail.com](mailto:thefirstteeofpineridge@hotmail.com)

Contact the above POC’s for further information on their summer programs and download a brochure at:

[http://www.thefirsttee.org/club/scripts/library/view\\_document.asp?](http://www.thefirsttee.org/club/scripts/library/view_document.asp?)

Taryn Broomfield, State Youth Specialist



## Military One Source

Greetings All,

As spring approaches, it is time once again to celebrate the month of the Military Child and Child Abuse Prevention month. This month we celebrate our youngest heroes, our military children who proudly support their military family member through deployments, training, moves, and changes. Though they have no say in their ever-changing world they are brave, proud, and strong, an inspiration to us all. Military OneSource has tools, resources, and even fun for our Military kids and their parents. Please go to <http://www.militaryonesource.com/> to access a flyer featuring:

- \* Enhanced Military OneSource Overview Presentation with Month of the Military Child specific slide
- \* Digital Literacy for Kids, New TRICARE Young Adult Program Overview, and iCAN Achieve Teen Weight Management Program overview webinars
- \* Special Needs Military Families Moderated Chat
- \* Links to the Helping Your Baby Sleep Safely, Special Needs Military Families, and Summer Child care/Camps pages on Military OneSource
- \* Kids Info Bits, Info Track Junior, TumbleReadables, Tumble Talking Books, and Student Resources Online Libraries
- \* Your Teen’s Online World, Parenting as a Team, and Surviving the First Three Months toolkits
- \* Tutor.com, Staying Involved in Your Child’s Life When You’re Deployed Recorded webinars

You may also want to check out information on Paying for Childcare, Financial Aid, and Scholarships, or talk with a Financial Planner on the best 529 plan to help you save for your child’s education.

Taxes are also due in April! Military OneSource provides free access to a customized version of the basic H&R Block at Home® electronic tax- filing product. This customized product allows for free federal filing and free state filing (up to three states). In addition, free telephonic tax consultations are available to help with tax- related issues.

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### Living in the New Normal: Helping Children Thrive

You are invited to the Living In the New Normal: Helping Children Thrive In Good and Challenging Times Practicum.

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC)<sup>TM</sup>, a nonprofit organization addressing the educational needs of children in military families, presents the training. This training is designed for Family Readiness Group leaders, first responders and other concerned adults to gain strategies and practical applications to increase resilience in military-connected children.

The LINN Practicum has the following outcomes:

1. To acquire a basic knowledge of the elements of resilience and its application to military-connected children.
2. To identify and apply resilience-building skills to prepare children for good and challenging times.
3. To identify tools and resources to foster resilience in children.

**Date: May 21, 2011**

Registration and Breakfast: 8:00-8:30 am Institute Training: 8:30-4:00 pm

Place: Spearfish Holiday Inn Convention Center

305 North 27th Street – 190 Exit 14

Spearfish, South Dakota 57783

Attendance Requirement: 95% attendance is required to receive institute credit and course materials No cost for class or materials to participants—Funded by Office of Secretary of Defense

For more information about LINN or this training, please contact Laura Wood at 254-953-1923 or [Laura.Wood@MilitaryChild.org](mailto:Laura.Wood@MilitaryChild.org). Please visit [www.MilitaryChild.org](http://www.MilitaryChild.org), click the Upcoming Trainings tab to register.

REGISTER TODAY - Slots will fill up fast. Go to [www.militarychild.org](http://www.militarychild.org) to register.

Please let me know if you have any questions you may have:

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