

# YOUTH ACTIVITIES

2025-2026

Why is youth an important time?

"Youth is happy because it has the capacity to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old." — Franz Kafka

As members of the VFW Auxiliary, it is our job to encourage our youth to do things to enlighten them, broaden their experiences and give them courage to do what they aim for. We are in a unique position to help teach our youth the skills to become responsible adults who are patriotic through the work they will do. What are things that we can do?

## *Sponsoring and Working with Youth Groups*

Sponsor a youth group: church group, Boy or Girl Scouts, sports club, school clubs or organize one of your own. Programs should include activities to honor veterans or assist with our service member and their families. Students can earn community service or activities that earn merits. Some of these youth will be eligible to become a member of the auxiliary so encourage them. Include families to help foster Americanism and patriotism through the youth groups. Once you have established working with groups recognize their endeavors to help in service projects honoring veterans and assisting service members and their families. Citations are available at [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources) under Youth Activities.

Youth can also help with other young people by volunteering their time. Youth is a term that speaks to our young, but it also is a state of mind. Many youth face difficulties in their lives and other youth can help with that, but they can also help recruit other young people to help in their community, helping veterans and their families, helping senior citizens, and helping their own. This can be done in many ways: Collect for food donations, collect for clothing drive, help with fundraising for a special concern, promote holiday drives, read to young children as in our Patriotism through Literacy. Remember our youth is always willing to help.

## *Youth Groups Supporting Our Veterans Citations*

What better way to honor our youth than by giving them a citation for working, helping or honoring our Veterans. These students are always recognized for their endeavors, so remember them when working with our youth groups. Resources for this can be found on the National Auxiliary website

## *Patriot Youth Award*

What better way to honor our youth than to award them with the Patriot Youth Award to recognize individual youth for their patriotism and/or support of our veterans, service members and their families. Award form is available at under MALTA: [vfwauxiliary.org/resources](http://vfwauxiliary.org/resources) under Youth Activities.

### *Patriotism through Literacy*

Remember reading to your children or grandchildren, and how they sat and listened to you read. You can promote and support reading among youth, by using your library and take the time to have a "reading session" where you can introduce students to historical figures, important dates in history and our own nation's history. This is a good opportunity to involve children, your local community, and give exposure to the VFW Auxiliary.

### *Illustrating America*

Children love to draw and color. Giving them the opportunity to do that and receiving a prize is also is fun to do. This is open to any student in grades K-8. Deadline is March 31. These students can be enrolled in public, parochial, private, or home study programs in the United States, its territories and possession, or dependents of US military or civilian personnel in overseas schools. Children can use their imagination to create a picture that gives the essence of America. Coloring sheets, digital art and photography are not accepted.

**INVOLVE YOUTH IN ALL AUXILIARY PROGRAMS** What better way to introduce our youth to the VFW and its Auxiliary. To show them all the things we do and how important they are to the future of America. We have so many programs that they can become involved with: Buddy Poppy, learn about National Home, Legislation, Hospital, Americanism, Veterans and Family Support, and auxiliary protocol.

### *VFW Scout of the Year Program*

The VFW has been working with the scouting organization for many years and has had its earliest involvement with them. These scouts are recognized for their standout citizenship, patriotism, and love of country. To make these scouts (both girl and boy scouts) stand out, recognize these students by nominating them. Information available for forms at:

<https://www.vfw.or/community/youth-and-edcuation/scout-of-the-year>

***MAKE YOUR AUXILIARY ACCESSIBLE TO TODAY'S YOUTH!*** Use social media: Facebook|Twitter|LinkedIn|YouTube|Pinterest|Instagram|Snapchat|TikTok to see what's new and upcoming. Include them in your special events and services for patriotic holidays and remembrance ceremonies. Letting our Youth know that "*From Sea to Shining Sea we honor our Veterans Who Keep Us Free*" are who we are and with "*Forever Serving Veterans*" is what we do.

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# Youth Activities Department Awards

- ❖ A Department Citation for the auxiliary chairman that participated in the promotion of youth activities throughout the year.
- ❖ An award to the auxiliary chairman for the best program in "Illustrating American Program"
- ❖ An award for the best promotion of "Patriotism through Literacy"
- ❖ A citation for the best promotion of Supporting and working with youth groups.
- ❖ An award for the best overall Youth Activities program.

To receive an award, all must be in a two-pocket folder with proof of what you did. Preferable one for each program or divided according to activity.

## National Awards for Auxiliaries

- ❖ Most creative and/or unique activity and/or event of the VFW Auxiliary working with a youth group.
- ❖ Citation and \$25 award to one VFW Auxiliary in each of the 10 Program Divisions for most creative and/or Unique activity and/or event of the VFW working with a youth group.

Entry form is required and available in MALTA Member Resources.

VFW Auxiliaries must send the required entry form to the Department Youth Activities Chairman by March 31, 2026, for judging.

The Department Youth Activities Chairman must sign and send a copy of the completed Department winning entry form to the National Youth Activities Ambassador by April 30, 2026.