

## They Need Our Help

Youth experiencing deployment of a parent are incredibly strong and resilient, but they do need the support of all Georgians during the time they serve our nation by supporting their parent. The following are issues identified by youth with which OMK can help them adapt.

- Lack of connection with other youth in similar situations
- Concern for the safety of their parent
- Deployed parent misses birthdays, holidays and significant events
- Limited opportunities to attend and participate in extracurricular activities
- Teachers are not prepared to recognize and meet their new needs
- Less parental involvement from the parent at home
- Behavioral changes and lower self-esteem



Georgia SOMK Ambassadors 2007-2008



Georgia SOMK Ambassadors 2005-2007

## Georgia Operation: Military Kids

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THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA  
**COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**  
Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Family and Consumer Sciences



## Georgia Speak Out for Military Kids Ambassadors



[www.georgia4h.org/omk](http://www.georgia4h.org/omk)



# What is Speak Out for Military Kids?

Speak Out for Military Kids (SOMK Ambassadors) is a core program of Georgia Operation: Military Kids. The SOMK Ambassadors help to generate community awareness of issues faced by youth in National Guard and Reserve families and to foster community activism in solving the problems faced by these youth and their families.



Military and non-military youth and adults may become SOMK Ambassadors. Through simulations, interviews and research, participants find out first hand what military families go through during deployment. Based on their experiences, SOMK Ambassadors develop a community awareness wherever they go. SOMK Ambassadors develop public service announcements, videos and newspaper articles as well to build public awareness and support of all military youth and families.

## Description of the Program

The SOMK Ambassador program is in its fourth year for youth and adults associated with youth development organizations in Georgia. The program is designed to provide youth with a strong research base foundation about issues facing military families and youth. In turn, youth will develop individualized action plans to continue the education of others through speeches, exhibits, service and leadership activities.

During the Ambassador Training weekend, youth and adults will receive hands on learning in the issue as well as information in developing action plans, creating key messages, leading others, and service learning.

SOMK Ambassadors will serve a one year term. During the year, each ambassador will be responsible for completing his/her own action plan that includes a minimum of 8 educational sharing activities as well as continued learning experiences. Ambassadors will complete monthly reports and may be asked to serve as representatives and leaders in their issue for each of their respective youth organizations.

SOMK Ambassadors will receive educational information and training and SOMK materials to assist with their plans. Each Ambassador receives scholarship funds to participate in the training weekend. The \$40 registration fee will be reimbursed after successful completion of the weekend, pending available scholarship dollars.

Following the training, grants from \$25 to \$200 will be available to Ambassadors to assist with educational activities throughout the year. Ambassadors will need to apply for grants as needed.

## A Call to Action

**Georgia**  
**SOMK Ambassador Training**  
for youth in grades 7-12 and adults

**Applications Due August 5, 2008**

**Training Weekend - August 15-16**  
Registration Begins 6:30 on Friday  
Program Concludes 6:30 on Saturday  
**Rock Eagle 4-H Center**  
**Eatonton, Georgia**

**Cost: \$40 Registration Fee**  
**\* Scholarship Available**

**For registration information,**  
**visit: <http://www.georgia4h.org/omk>,**  
**contact your local County**  
**Extension Office or contact Casey Mull,**  
**State Military Coordinator at**  
**[oper4h@uga.edu](mailto:oper4h@uga.edu)**

