



Beyond pages, consider other paper-crafting projects that appeal to military families, like this box to store Letters From Home. Photo courtesy of Memories in Uniform.

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neighbors are being affected.

The good news is that there is plenty you can do without doing much work – because a number of other organizations already have the required partnerships to reach directly to military families. Join their existing teams for the biggest impact.

Where will you find these groups? The largest number of them can be found through America Supports You, a nationwide program organized by the Department of Defense to showcase Americans' support of the Armed Forces and their families. At [www.americasupportsyou.com](http://www.americasupportsyou.com), you can find information on more than 225 groups who could use your help. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

## THE TROOPS

- **Adopt a squadron.** Give your efforts a face by adopting

a squadron, then collect cards, food, and other care package items that can be sent to your squadron from time to time.

- **Raise money for postage.** There is a huge need for funds to send care packages and cards to the troops. Consider a special fundraising effort for this cause.

## THE SPOUSES

Consider hosting crop events specifically for military spouses. If you're near a base, contact families with service members who are going to be deployed soon and help them to create a memory album that can go with their loved one. Then invite them for special “escape” cropping during the deployment.

## THE CHILDREN

A deployment is a hard time for children, and many groups have embraced crafting and scrapbooking as a means for kids to communicate their feelings and maintain a connection to their deployed parent.

One example is the National Guard Youth program. Virginia state director Kay Baber is passionate about programs for military kids and loves including crafts in her events.

“Crafting is a non-threatening way for kids to express their feelings,” she says. “Especially for young kids who can't write; they can draw and create things that help them show their pride and

work through their feelings.”

One recent project included providing children with disposable digital cameras, and then printing images in Epson Storyteller books to create bound volumes of what's happening in their world. “We also gave them supplies to make more books,” Baber says. “It's important that they keep telling the story.”

Every state has a youth coordinator. Find yours at [www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org), and then call to see how your product donation, time, or expertise can be used to reach the children of military families.

In April, the American Legion and Connect And Join are promoting the Month of the Military Child, followed by A Salute to the Military and their Family in May 2007. Promotions for independent retailers are in the works. Discover more details at [www.connectandjoin.com](http://www.connectandjoin.com).

## THE VETERANS

It is not just those currently serving in the military that deserve support through scrapbooking and cards. Consider programs that work with the various wonderful veterans associations, too.

There are a multitude of other ways to use scrapbooking and papercrafts for our troops. We hope this list has inspired you to get involved in some form. Help our military families keep in touch. ■