



Working Together to Support U.S. Military Children Through Reading

Lions in the U.S. have an amazing opportunity to promote reading and impact the literacy of military children. As part of the Reading Action Program Lions can support the USO and United Through Reading's Military Program by providing assistance to the children of military families.

Separation from a parent is one of life's most stressful events for children, affecting their sense of security, their relationships, and their ability to learn. As U.S. troops are asked to leave again on their third, fourth and even fifth deployments, the USO recognizes the urgent need to help the family members that are left behind. For the children of wounded, ill and injured troops the stressors of getting good grades while coping with a parent in a military hospital can be even more challenging.

That's why the USO, along with its partner United Through Reading®, offers troops stationed at forward operating bases in the United States or overseas the opportunity to read a story aloud to their child. Mom or Dad's special story time is recorded on camera, and the USO mails this priceless DVD and book home.

"We have a two-year-old son, and this is the first time his dad has been away from us. At Christmas, he sent home a children's book and a DVD of him reading it through United Through Reading's Military Program at the USO. I can't tell you what a thrill it was for both of us. It really made our Christmas. My son watches it every night before he goes to bed," said an Army spouse.

For young children, the book and DVD not only encourage reading but it helps them remember what a parent looks like during a long deployment.

The USO recently celebrated its 250,000 United Through Reading's Military Program recording at a USO location.

Lions can make a difference in the lives of military children. Here are some ways your club can get involved:

- **Organize a Book Drive**
Host a [book drive](#) to support United Through Reading's Military Program. Books collected for this program must stay to the [list provided](#) which is a broad list of over 100 books. Only **new** books on that list are accepted for this program.
- **Organize a Virtual Book drive**
Host an online book drive to provide personalized book and DVD packages to military children. Register your virtual book drive at <http://www.teamuso.org/Lions> Ask each club member to make a contribution online or have club members register and email friends and family asking them to support the program.
- **Adopt Your Local USO Center's Children's Reading Area**
Help your local USO Center promote reading. Provide new books, coloring books and crayons for your local USO's children's reading library.



To learn more, visit the USO Web site at www.uso.org For questions about the partnership and project opportunities, contact the LCI Program Development Department at programs@lionsclubs.org.