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## America Supports You: 'Little Patriots' Embrace Military Families

[America Supports You](#) ^ | Dec 17, 2005 | Jim Garamone

Posted on 12/17/2005 3:58:43 PM PST by [SandRat](#)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 17, 2005 – A Missouri-based nonprofit organization uses the power of teddy bears to comfort young military family members with one or both parents deployed in the war against global terrorism. Little Patriots Embraced Inc. was incorporated in 2004 "to show support from the American people to the immediate family members of military personnel," according to the organization's Web site.

The group solicits donations from individuals and corporate sponsors to buy and assemble gift packages, including teddy bears, that are distributed to service families at military bases, said Michelle Williams, president of Little Patriots Embraced for about a year.

"It's just very important to let the children know and the families know that they're not left behind--that there are people out here who truly do appreciate the sacrifices that they go through each and every day," Williams said.

Williams, an Army veteran who lives in St. Louis, noted that her father also served in the military. She joined Little Patriots after meeting Mary Frost, one of the group's co-founders.

"We just got into a great conversation about Little Patriots Embraced," Williams said, "and her passion for the organization was such that I told her I wanted to do whatever I could do."

Williams said her group sends care packages containing teddy bears, blankets, compact discs of soothing music, writing journals, patriotic quilts and other items to young military family members adjusting to the absence of a military parent who's serving overseas. Little Patriots just sent 10 care packages to the U.S. Marine Base at Cherry Point, N.C., she said.

"There's nothing that's going to give comfort like a teddy bear," Williams said. "It's kind of like having a friend there."

Donations are also used for the group's Military Dependent-Tuition, Emergency, and Childcare fund, Williams said. This enables military spouses to pursue educational goals, as well as providing funds for family financial emergencies.

Williams said the group's vice-president, Kimberly Sexton, recently visited the White House and the Pentagon to spread the word about Little Patriots Embraced.

And, "we're hoping to get a lot of the bigger corporations--the Toyotas, the Wal-Marts--to really take Little Patriots as one of the charities they want to give to," she said.

Anyone wishing to contribute to Little Patriots Embraced can do so via the organization's Web site. The family members of deployed servicemembers deserve the support, Williams said.

"We just want to say: 'Thank you so much,'" she said.

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