Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program
Updated: July – 2014

"No one stands so tall as when they stoop to help a Child"
Abraham Lincoln

The Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program is part of the United States Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation (USSVCF). The USSVCF is the charitable arm of the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. (USSVI). It was formed to further the creed of the USSVI by assuming the responsibility of some of our USSVI activities which are charitable in nature.

From the USSVI Creed:
…”The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice”…
...
“…That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments”…

The goal of Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program is to bring comfort and joy to Children with challenging medical conditions anywhere they are being treated. Many Sub Vets voluntarily do this by giving these Children caring attention, Honorary Submariner caps, certificates, and submarine related items during visits.

The K4K Program has proven to provide a meaningful reason for Sub Vets to be involved in USSVI activities. Many Sub Vets have shared that they probably would not attend meetings if not for the rewards they receive from working together with other Sub Vets in giving joy to ailing Children.
Because of the positive and informative interaction with the Children, their families, Child Care Facility staff and through the media coverage of many of these events, we let communities know about the USSVI, and why we exist. This also attracts more Submarine Veterans to our organization.

The K4K Program was started by Submarine Veteran T. Michael Bircumshaw in 2007. It has evolved from one that focused primarily on bringing comfort and joy to Children with cancer, into one that also includes bringing comfort and joy to any Child who is challenged medically (broadly interpreted).

Each Base can tailor their K4K Program to match their own unique situation, resources and location. Many Bases go to hospitals, some large, some small. Other options include visiting Children in Hospices, Child Psychiatric Facilities, Camps for Children with medical issues, Ronald McDonald Houses, Out Patients at many facilities...in essence, any place where a Child is medically challenged.

The number of Children visited is not important (even though we want to bring this program to as many Children as we can). Bringing comfort and joy to just one Child is a Home Run, as long as no other Child feels left out. In fact, starting small is probably the best way to get into the program, especially for a small base with limited resources.

We have experienced firsthand that a patient's siblings also need the joy and comfort that K4K brings, as much (and sometimes more) as the sick Child. Though the number of patient siblings we see is small we include them if they are visiting the patient.

The K4K Program is really pretty simple; Sub Vets get some Kaps and go and give them to Kids who have challenging medical conditions. Sometimes it is easy to get access and implement the program and sometimes it's more challenging, but it is always worth the effort.
Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program Guidelines

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1. **Building A K4K Team**

A base needs a K4K Chairman to manage the program. That person can be a Sub Vet, a wife of a Sub Vet, or an Associate Member. Base Commanders seem to find that a one on one discussion with a potential K4K Chair is usually more fruitful than asking a group of Sub Vets for a volunteer. The Base Chaplin, Vice Commander or someone who was a Hospital Corpsman, is a good place to start looking.

It is recommended that K4K Chairs get as many Sub Vets as possible to sign up for K4K visits. This gives flexibility in scheduling visits. Again, a one on one request with a Sub Vet is much more productive than asking a group for volunteers.

Each Base Secretary can list the Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Chairman in the “Officers” section of the base’s page on the USSVI website.

Please send me the name and contact information for your Base K4K Chairman so that I can provide future K4K information updates.

2. **Obtaining Kaps & Other K4K Items**

Each Base can choose whatever Kap supplier they wish.

Ordering of K4K “Honorary Submariner” Child, Toddler or Adult Ball Caps, Doo Rags, and Infant Knit Caps, can be done through the USSVI National Storekeeper’s website. You can also order K4K Pins & Patches for vests and K4K Wristbands and Temporary Tattoos for the Kids and for Fundraising.

3. Picking a Facility to Visit

The staffs at most facilities are very protective of their Children (as they should be). They also want their Children to benefit from the kind of comfort and joy our program provides. Our challenge is to effectively communicate the value of our program to them and their Children and convince them that we are not a health or confidentiality risk.

After identifying a facility you might want to visit, call and ask to talk to whoever is responsible for Child activities in the facility (titles such as Child Life Coordinator, Child Life Specialist, Child Arts Coordinator, Activities Coordinator, Arts Program Coordinator, etc., are used at many facilities). When you get to the right person explain that the Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program is a United States Submarine Veterans National Program proven to bring joy and comfort to Children fighting for their health and that you would like to discuss bringing the program to their facility.

When discussing the program with a Child Care Facility Administrator it is helpful to view our K4K DVD with them or email them the link to the K4K Video. (you can copy this link and paste it into an email to send as appropriate) http://www.youtube.com/embed/DaHOrDe4U5E

It may be useful to have a lap top computer that plays DVDs with you in case DVD players are not available. I have extra DVDs if you need one.

You can also see the K4K Video, read K4K Stories and access these K4K Guidelines on line, go to www.ussvi.org and click on the blue “Kaps 4 Kids” button in the menu on the left side of the page.

K4K DVD / You Tube Video:
I asked Gary Galiher, who’s law firm is responsible for the Honor Navy Vets.com Program, if his firm would make a DVD about our Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program. I explained the program to him and shared that a DVD would help in communicating the importance of the program to Child Care Facility administrators, USSVI Sub Vets, donors, media, etc. His daughter Mari had leukemia as a child so he immediately understood how important our program is to Children who are challenged medically.
Additionally, his dad was a WWII Submariner. Gary agreed and graciously funded and produced the DVDs for us!

Gary’s Honor Navy Vets.com Program records individual Submarine Veteran stories at our Conventions and Anniversaries. DVDs are made from the recordings and sent to the Sub Vet at no charge. See: http://honornavyvets.com/

In your communications, work to build a good relationship with the coordinator. Discuss facility guidelines regarding health and confidentiality risks. Obtain any forms they may require to be signed by the Sub Vets. **Make it clear to the facility that you fully understand, and all K4K visitors will comply with, their health and confidentiality requirements.** Here is a link to the Visitors Guideline sheet we were given at the Yale New Haven Children's Hospital (YNHCH):

It is a good idea to review it prior to visiting the administrator to understand their concerns. It is also a good idea to have your K4K Team review it prior to a visit.

Also review the information regarding the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) that most facilities must comply with. See http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/summary/index.html

They can get into serious trouble if they are found to violate this act, and it helps if they know that we are sensitive to this issue.

Not all facilities fully explain the rules and it is up to us to ask what they are, and understand the basic guidelines - the YNHCH Guidelines are the basics. After you have a good relationship with the coordinator, explore the possibility of getting photo releases from parents or legal guardians. Emphasize that this would be fully under the facility's control and direction and is not a requirement for the visit. Be careful not to give the impression that we are visiting for publicity.

Many facilities have their own photo release forms. If the facilities release form is used ask for a copy with any photo you get. Here is a link to a K4K photo release form that you can print out and use if necessary: https://www.usssi.org/Documents/Charitable_CFDocuments_k4k_photo_release_form.pdf
Sub Vet Ted Hussey, who is the K4K Chairman for the Denizens of the Deep Base, shared a great idea for obtaining photos; if the Child's parents are taking photos of the visit (many do) he asks if they will email them to him and give him permission to use them. It is a good idea to have them sign a photo release form there, this form covers the legal bases and again lets the facility see that we are sensitive to confidentiality issues.

Work with the facility's Public Relations Rep and let local media know when you will be making a K4K visit to a facility. You can also contact the media separately and share the DVD / website Video & Stories with them.

If you believe it would help you get access to a Child Care Facility, I can facilitate communication with administrators at facilities we visit. They have enthusiastically offered to provide recommendation for our K4K Program. An example from one Connecticut Hospital:

“The group of submarine veterans is a national organization that brings comfort and joy to the children on our unit that are suffering from various medical and psychiatric illnesses. They abide by facility rules and regulations. The group of veterans has given so many wonderful experiences for our children that have not been fortunate to be exposed to this type of learning. The children have been engaged throughout the programs and continue to talk about their experiences. They are repeatedly asking “when are the sub vets coming back.” Staff and parents have been touched as to how the children respond to this wonderful group of caring, compassionate and enthusiastic veterans. We look forward to their return soon to our unit.”

In setting up a visit date I find it useful to ask the facility for a number of dates to choose from. This allows you to canvas K4K Sub Vets for their availability, then pick the best date for the visit.
4. What to Bring and Wear to A Visit

For Sub Vet vests, I will provide each Base’s Kaps 4 Kid(SS) Chairman with a “KAP(SS) 4 KID(SS) CHAIRMAN” and 7 “KAP(SS) 4 KID(SS) TEAM” Patch. I will also provide the Chairman with 7 each, “Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS)” Pins & Patches. Any additional Pins or Patches can be ordered through the National Storekeeper.  [http://ussvinationalstorekeeper.com/](http://ussvinationalstorekeeper.com/)

Bring as many Sub Vets as the facility will allow to participate. Wear your vests and hats. Sub Vet vests with patches and Dolphins are impressive to many Children and can prompt interest and questions. Though not mandatory, it would be neat to wear one. Those without vests should wear hats, Dolphins and anything that might get the Kids interest.

Bring enough Kaps, Doo Rags, etc., for all the Children you expect to see (get a number from the facility for a maximum number of boys and girls you will see and bring a little more to cover that). Again, we don’t want any Child to feel left out. It is better to wait until you have enough Kaps for a facility visit than to go in without enough.

If you decide to use one color Kap, such as only the Blue Kap, bring enough for all. However, it is important to understand that in facilities where a girl has lost her hair due to chemotherapy, the Pink Kap is a welcomed choice because it will let everyone know that she is in fact, a girl!

You can make your own Honorary Submariner Certificate, or use the one at this link: [https://www.ussvi.org/Documents/Charitable_CFDocuments_Honorary_Submariner_Certificate.PDF](https://www.ussvi.org/Documents/Charitable_CFDocuments_Honorary_Submariner_Certificate.PDF)  Using your computer, you can type names and dates on this certificate.
Note that, because of HIPAA confidentiality issues, Child Care Facilities don’t give out names before a visit, and if they do, usually only first names. However, there are times, such as during a visit to a location that is not restricted by HIPAA requirements, this option comes in handy.

Ask the facility administrator you are working with what the facilities guidelines and preferences are. Greater than 95% of the certificates we give out are printed by hand with a Sharpie marker just prior to giving to a Child. And we generally only write in their first name.

Bring Submarine models, and other Submarine related items.

K4K BANNERS:
I had an "Honorary Submariner" Banner made up for our Base that gives us great visibility at facilities and during fundraisers:
https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/K4KTeamWithBanner#5654502205406307954
The Navy Vet owned company I worked with to come up with the K4K Logo and Honorary Submariner Certificate also made me a K4K Banner. On his website you can obtain a banner at a reasonable price. When you open this link click on the K4K Banner to go to the K4K page:
http://www.mcmahon-tate.com/index.html

Sub Vet Vincent Flaherty also has a business which offers K4K banners as well as other items including customized business cards for Submarine Veterans. Check the options out at http://www.designed4submariners.com/.

You can also go to a local shop that makes banners to have one made up.

SUB LIFE DVDS:
I have copies of a "COOL" (in the words of some of the Kids) "looped" Submarine action DVD that I obtained from the Nautilus Submarine Force Library Museum, in Groton CT. The Museum’s Executive Director, and retired Submarine Captain, Michael Riegel, graciously shared the DVD with us.
It shows a variety of Submarine and Submariner activities, plays over and over and has great background music. This can be played nicely in the background during group visits. I will send one with the K4K Pins, Patches, Chairman, Team Patches, etc., I give to new K4K Chairmen. I will also send it to anyone who requests one.

SUB COLORING BOOKS:
Here is a link to Submarine related coloring book sheets I found on the internet: https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/SubColoringSheet1#5654503268316586306
We offer these to young Children who want to draw or paint them. We also suggest they draw or paint their own Submarine if they want. We get some really neat, and unique, drawings this way.

ENGAGING KIDS:
Pictures of Submarine related things can be used to engage the Children (and adults) by asking them to identify the items. This is very useful with Children in a group. You can also use pictures that are easy to identify but interesting or funny (see links to photos of Polar Bear Attacks USS Connecticut Rudder... Popeye the Submariner Man... Sub Escape Trainer... & Sub Depth Control: https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/PolarBearAttacksSub1Of2#5654502389610173810
https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/PolarBearAttacksSub2Of2#5654502614125743362
https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/SubEscapeTrainer#565450119523386594
https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/PopeyeTheSubmarinerMan#5654502838792499346
https://picasaweb.google.com/jprjer0/SubDepthControl#5654503052547442322
If you search the internet you can find lots of pictures that can be used to engage the Children. The more photos you have with you the better.

When visiting groups in an Activity Room it helps to use a projector to show pictures as well as interesting Submarine related videos. We use a laptop connected to a projector to show ours.

**HONORARY SUBMARINER CERTIFICATE FRAMES:**
We frame our Honorary Submariner Certificates to protect the certificates. The frame also stands on its own on a Child’s desk. We use Proframes Broadway Easel Gray size 8 1/2 x 11 inch. $1.54 each.

If you order you should get at least a 10% discount off of these prices if you tell them that you are part of the Submarine Veteran Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program; (they will give you a volume discount at the next level above what you order).


A great idea from another Base is to glue the certificate to poster board material, cut to a size suitable for framing. This gives the certificate a nice border and protects it from getting folded and damaged.

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### 5. Conducting A Visit

(The below is based on Groton Base K4K Team visits, please tailor your visits as you choose)

For visits with a group of Children, an early afternoon visit seems to work best for our K4K Team. It allows us to meet up for lunch (we use the facilities cafeteria if they have one) and get organized prior to the visit. It also allows us to easily set up our banner, sub models and organize our "stuff" in the Activity Room.

During visits to a group in the Activity Room we will individually introduce ourselves, explain what Dolphin Pins represent, briefly share our experiences related to Submarines. We then conduct a group question and answer period.
Using our Submarine action DVD, our Submarine models and photos of various Submarine related items, we address questions and share the history of our Submarine heritage. As stated before, we now are using a computer and a projector to show sub related pictures and videos.

Styrofoam wig holders, that you can get from many beauty salon supply stores, work good to let kids see and get excited about choosing a Kap or Doo Rag.

We ask Children to pick the Kap or Doo Rag they want. We make a point to "formally" present a certificate to each Child. We ask each Child to spell his or her first name (again, confidentiality sensitivities) and write it on the certificate with a Sharpie felt pen. We then "formally" read each word on the certificate, fill in the date, etc. and then present it to the Child (for a large number of Kids we wait until all of them have their certificate, we have them all stand up holding their certificate, then we read it). We all (Sub Vets, parents, facility staff) then clap and congratulate the child on now being an "Honorary Submariner".

After an Activity Room visit we split up into two groups and visit Children in their rooms. These Children are those who were not able to attend the group session. We do this accompanied by staff members. When we enter a room we say something like "Hi! we are Submarine Veterans and we are here to make you an Honorary Submariner!" We then go through the same "formal" presentation in making them an "Honorary Submariner" and ask the Child if he or she has any questions about Submarines or life aboard a Submarine, and share stories and information that we think they may find interesting.

We give each Child we see a Submarine photo signed by the visiting Sub Vets (one source of these photos is old USSVI calendars, another is to make copies of photos you have). In visits to a large group we sign them before the visit to save time.

We provide each Child a map showing the locations of all US Submarine Museums:
https://www.ussvi.org/Documents/Charitable_CFDocuments_sub_museum_locations.pdf
We give them a brochure from the Historic Ship Nautilus and Submarine Force Museum in Groton CT. We then tell them that if they wear their Kap to the Museum and present themselves to the on duty Sub Vet Docent they will receive "special" treatment.

If approved that photos can be taken for us to keep (with a signed photo release form), Sub Vets take them standing by the Child who is holding the certificate and wearing their Kap.

At a number of facilities the staff have cameras to take photos of the Children with us, print them and give them to the Child (we do not get or control these if no photo release form is signed)

If a facility's Public Relations Rep takes photos you should ask for copies of any photos taken with signed release forms.

A list of questions and answers about Submarines that is useful to review for discussions with Children can be found in this web site:  
http://usmilitary.about.com/od/navy/l/blsubfaq.htm

6. After the Visit

Please send your write up and photos (if any) and include names of Sub Vets involved, to:  
Chuck Emmett, American-Submariner@cox.net, editor of the American Submariner Magazine, and to me at kaps4kids@subvetsgroton.org.

A reminder: All photos need to have photo releases signed by a parent or legal guardian, either our own (see internet link in section 3. above) or at the facility visited.

Please keep the photo release forms in your records.
7. **Fundraising**

Many individuals and organizations will donate to K4K once they see what the program is doing for Children in need.

When discussing the program with a potential donor it is helpful to view the K4K DVD with them, and/or send them the K4K You Tube link: [http://www.youtube.com/embed/DaHOrDe4U5E](http://www.youtube.com/embed/DaHOrDe4U5E)

**JUST ASK!** You will be surprised by the positive responses, and the donations! And you allow those donating to be part of making a difference in the lives of Children!

Don’t overlook any funding sources: Base Treasury, Base Members, Mothers, Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, Children, Grandchildren, Cousins, In-laws, Ex-Wives, Friends, Neighbors, VFWs, American Legions, Masons, Employers, Kiwanis Clubs, Elks Clubs, Chiefs Clubs, Knights of Columbus, Doctors, Dentists, Lawyers, Car Dealerships, Costcos, Walgreens, Subways, Walmarts, Fundraisings outside of Walmarts, Fundraisings by School Children, etc...etc...etc...

Note: Many stores have corporate guidelines for donations. They will give you forms or a website address to use in applying for funds.

Here is a link to a website that provides some guidance on “How to Ask” [http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/fundraising-basics/how-to-ask/](http://www.thefundraisingauthority.com/fundraising-basics/how-to-ask/) Again, the important thing is not to forget to ask!

**TAX DEDUCTIBILITY OF DONATIONS:**

The below (in blue) is from the USSVI website explaining the coverage of the USSVI War Veteran's status. It can be found by going to the USSVI website main page, clicking on "Documents" in the left column, then clicking on "Organization" then going to page 3 of Organization. The below was found at the top of page 3.

It points out that as long as the USSVI maintains War Veterans Organization status annually, each base can offer tax deductibility under IRS Tax Code 501(c)(19)-170(c)(3) for donations given to the base.
Shipmates,

As of June 30th 2011 USSVI is a War Status veterans’ Organization. This status allows USSVI and the individual Bases to be Tax Deductible under 170(c)(3) IRS Code. This is a yearly qualifier that states 90% of the membership must be War veterans’ Status. Our present status runs from June 30th, 2011 to June 30th, 2012, at which time we must requalify (War Veteran status is presently good for the year 2014)

What does this do for you? Your Base can accept Tax Deductible Donations for your Base and Base Projects. As part of this Donation you must keep records of your Base Donations for your End of Year report and send out a Donor Thank You letter for all Donations received. A Donor Thank You sample letter is on page two in Word Format for you to down load and fill out. It has the USSVI Logo on it, but you can substitute your base Logo.
Page 3 has an explanation of the IRS Tax Deductions for a 501(c)(19) Veterans’ Organization under IRC 170(c)(3).
If you are presently using the CF Fund for Scholarships, Memorial projects over $2000.00 or Kap(SS)4KID(SS), you might consider staying with the CF as our War Status “MAY” change next year. This will be a yearly qualification and there is “NO” guarantee we will have 90% War Status each year.
Please print this document for your records, and send out Donor Thank you letters.
If you have any questions or need more information please e-mail me at al@ssbn657.com
or call me at 518-355-2119
Pride Runs deep,
Al Singleman, Jr. NJVC

Also, the USSV Charitable Foundation is a 501(c) 3 tax deductible charity. Larger companies generally want only to donate to 501(c)3 charities. Here is a link to a copy of the IRS letter which shows our 501(c)3 status that you can share if a company asks for proof:
Any donor who wants to use the 501(c)3 deduction should make their check out to "USSV Charitable Foundation" and the check should be mailed to me for tracking. I will log it in and forward it to the Charitable Foundation. This is so I can keep track of what Base gets credit for it in the Foundation and can later use those same funds for their Base's K4K Program. Let me know when a donation is coming so I can look for it (the check should have a memo stating what Base it is for).

"We begin by imaging that we are giving to them; we end by realizing that they have enriched us" - Pope John Paul II

Please send me your comments and ideas on how to improve our program. For those who are involved, thank you for your support of Children in need, and the USSVI!

John Riley
National and Groton Base Chairman
Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) Program
US Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation
K4K Video: http://www.youtube.com/embed/DaHOrDe4U5E
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