



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.