

## **Guidelines and Samples for Letter Writing in Hero Packs**

The handwritten notes of encouragement and thanks are for the receiving youth and their deployed parent. The letters will be provided by your 4-H members, Torch or Keystone club members, community members, teens, families and whomever else participates in the Hero Packs Project.

The goal is to have one letter for each recipient and their parent in each Hero Pack. Please encourage the writers to keep the message in the letters positive, politically neutral, and do not include personal identifying information (phone number, email address, street address, etc). Sample letters are included below. Remember the most important thing is to write from your heart. Think about what a civilian youth may say to a military youth if they were to talk in person. Share some of your favorite experiences and pastimes. Encourage military youth and their families to join partner programming in their area.

### **Please remember the following when writing letters:**

- Keep it positive
- Have fun and thank our everyday heroes
- Good words to use: grateful, most appreciated, sacrifice, unselfish, service, patriotism, national honor, pride, love of country, devotion to freedom, token of appreciation, small symbol of support
- Thank the youth for the sacrifices they are making - Remind the military youth that they are heroes, too
- Do not tell the military youth how bad you think their situation is or how sorry you may feel for them
- Keep it politically neutral
- No personal information (last name, phone #, email, etc.)

*Dear Friend/Neighbor,*

Thank you for supporting our country. I really appreciate all of the services and sacrifices that you are making while your parent is gone. I made this Hero Pack for you because you are one of my Heroes. Yes, you and your parents are heroes for making such a big contribution to our country. I hope you can use some of the items in this care package to keep in contact with your parent while he or she is gone.

My 4-H club made this Hero Pack for you. As a member of 4-H, which is a youth organization open to everyone ages 5 to 19 years, I take part in lots of fun activities. My favorite part of 4-H is 4-H camp. Each summer I get to go to 4-H camp for five days with my friends. We spend time dancing, swimming, doing a high ropes course and making things to take home. One year I got to make a lamp out of wood and marbles to take home and give to my parents. My favorite part of 4-H Camp is my counselors. The 4-H camp counselors are high school kids who are lots of fun. 4-H is in every county in Ohio. I encourage you to join 4-H in your county. It is a youth organization from The Ohio State University and I hope you will join in the fun.

Thanks for being a hero!  
*Your First Name / Your State*

*Or*

*Dear Friend/Neighbor,*

Thank you for supporting our country. I really appreciate all of the services and sacrifices that you are making while your parent is gone. I helped with the Hero Pack for you because you are one of my Heroes. Yes, you and your parents are heroes for making such a big contribution to our country. I hope you can use some of the items in this care package to keep in contact with your parent while he or she is gone.

*A group of kids from my martial arts class are helping to write these letters and salute you for your sacrifices. We are learning about commitment and respect in our class and I'm sure you understand those things. Martial arts is great exercise for both the body and mind, and you may want to consider participating to have fun, meet new friends, and learn a new skill that you can share with your parent when he or she returns.*

*I hope you enjoy the things in this pack, and do consider joining karate or keeping active in some other way.*

*Sincerely,*