# **Extending Service Shark Style**2024-2025 National Veterans & Family Support Ambassador Evan Smiley

#### From Our Roots to Our Branches, Extending Service to Our Veterans – Shark Style!

Ahoy, VFW Auxiliary family! Dive into our latest blog post where we make waves in Veterans & Family Support, all while channeling our inner sharks! Whether you're a seasoned sea captain or a newbie to our aquatic adventures, this post is for you. Today, we're zooming in on a crucial aspect of our mission: childcare for active-duty military, veterans and their families. So, buckle up, grab your snorkel and let's swim through the tide of support we provide with a splash of shark-themed fun!

#### **Making Waves in Child Care Support**

In our ocean of outreach, one of the most vital services we offer is child care support. Activeduty military members, veterans and their families often face unique challenges, and finding reliable, affordable child care is a significant one. Think of our support as the lighthouse guiding these families through stormy seas to calmer waters.

#### **Why Child Care Matters**

Imagine a busy sailor navigating the seven seas. Between the waves of deployments and the tides of transitions, finding a safe haven for their little ones can be a daunting task. Child care support isn't just a convenience; it's a lifeline that helps these families *keep moving forward*.

For active-duty military members juggling deployments and duty shifts can be overwhelming. Our support ensures that their children are well cared for, allowing service members to focus on their missions with peace of mind. Veterans transitioning from military to civilian life can also face uncertainties. Reliable child care provides stability, making it easier for them to navigate this new chapter without added stress. Family members of both groups also benefit from this support. Whether it's a spouse managing daily routines or a grandparent taking on caregiving duties, having dependable child care options helps everyone stay afloat.

### **Shark-Infused Support**

Just like sharks are known for their impressive swimming abilities, our Auxiliary is renowned for its unwavering commitment to support. Let's break down how we're making an impact with our "shark-tastic" approach:

## 1. Chomp Down on Barriers

We're working to eliminate barriers that make accessing child care challenging. From connecting families with local resources to advocating for more flexible options, our mission is to ensure that no one is left floundering.

#### 2. Streamline Services

We're streamlining the process of finding and accessing quality child care. Think of it as our streamlined dorsal fin cutting through the water – fast, efficient and purposeful. We can partner with local child care providers to offer military and veteran families priority access and special rates. – Can you an example or link to where members can find this?

#### 3. Support and Resources

Our shark squad is always on the lookout for new ways to support families. Whether it's through funding programs, informational resources or community events, we're here to help families find the right fit for their child care needs.

### **Keeping the Current Flowing**

As we navigate these waters together, remember the mantra of every successful shark: "*Keep Moving Forward!*" This isn't just about swimming in place; it's about pushing ahead, making a difference, and creating a ripple effect of positive change.

So, let's rally together to ensure that our active-duty military, veterans and their families have the child care support they need to thrive. From our roots to our branches, we're extending service with the strength of a shark and the heart of a helper.

Dive in, get involved, and let's keep our commitment strong. The tide is high, and with our collective effort, we can keep moving forward, making waves of positive change for our veterans and their families.