

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Operation Kids Crafts offers creativity and support to military families**

Rochester, NY ... On Saturday, December 10, 2011, from 10:00 a.m. to noon, children of military families can share their creativity and make new friends with others who are also experiencing the challenges of deployment. Operation Kids Crafts is a free arts and crafts day that will take place at Children's Institute, 274 N. Goodman Street. The event is open to children four to twelve years old who have a parent serving in the military.

"Local military families have expressed feeling isolated from each other, with few opportunities to meet other military families. This event will provide both parents and children with a fun and relaxed environment in which to meet and interact with peers who have gone through similar experiences and who understand what life as a military family is like," said Deborah Johnson, Director of National Services at Children's Institute.

Operation Kids Crafts is part of a larger initiative led by Children's Institute called Same Sky Sharing. "The effort is designed to help children get the support they need from their communities," said Johnson. Same Sky Sharing includes support groups for children based on a research-based curriculum, and training for school personnel, parents, and those who interact with children to help them better understand children's needs throughout the family's military experience.

Operation Kids Crafts is a collaborative event sponsored by Children's Institute in partnership with Strong Teachers After Retirement (STAR). STAR is a group of retired teachers who enjoy being active and doing service projects in the community.

Children's Institute is a national not-for-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children by strengthening their social and emotional health. Through sound research and evaluation, the organization develops and promotes effective prevention and early intervention programs, materials, and best practices for children, families, schools, and communities. Children's Institute is affiliated with the University of Rochester and has served the community for over 50 years.

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