



LA CROSSE COMPOSITE SQUADRON
Civil Air Patrol – Wisconsin Wing
United States Air Force Auxiliary
2606 Fanta Reed Road
La Crosse, WI 54601



PARENTS' FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about Civil Air Patrol and the La Crosse Composite Squadron. Your son or daughter has shown an interest in our unit, and we wanted the chance to answer some questions that many parents have. Besides this FAQ, you can also visit our website for more information www.lacrossecap.org and you can find us on Facebook under "La Crosse Composite Squadron, Civil Air Patrol".

Is this the military? Is this somehow part of the Guard or Reserve?

Civil Air Patrol (CAP) is an all volunteer, non-profit organization where members voluntarily give their time and talents. We are not part of the US military. Members are not required to serve nor are they paid for their time. We are the official auxiliary of the United States Air Force, but that designation brings with it no military duty requirements or service.

Why are there uniforms, saluting, and military customs?

CAP has chosen to use a quasi-military structure for its programming; this choice stems from our storied history in defending the nation's coastlines during World War II and from our proud relationship with the United States Air Force. Our youth program uses a system of earned promotions as youth move through the different levels of leadership education and maturity. We use military customs and courtesies because they teach respect, attention to detail, and adherence to a moral code.

Can my son/daughter learn to fly through CAP?

Yes, yes yes! Learning to fly is probably one of the greatest benefits of CAP membership! However, in order to learn to fly your cadet must meet requirements created by the FAA as well as our squadron. Cadets must be 16 years old and be active and contributing participants in the squadron and the CAP Cadet Program. Please note that learning to fly is not free, however can be accomplished through CAP at a cost that is dramatically lower than anywhere else.

What does it mean to be an "active member"?

We know that youth today are often very busy. Between sports, CAP, hobbies, and family life there is a lot to accomplish. Our expectation is that cadets communicate with us about their commitment and that they try and grow and engage in the program as best they can. At the same time, the squadron must evaluate each cadet's progress and involvement when making decisions about who can earn promotions, who can attend events with limited enrollments, etc... Another way to say this is "you get what you put into it!"

What do “cadets” do besides fly?

The CAP Cadet Program is designed to help youth prepare for the rest of their lives. At the core of the program is training cadets to be tomorrow’s leaders. We do this through academic instruction combined with hands-on learning. Cadets can train to be members of ground-based search and rescue teams, they can lead groups of 15-20 other cadets in week-long summer trainings, they can have staff positions within the squadron that teach accountability, responsibility, and leadership, and there are many more opportunities. While the flying is what captures the imagine of many a young person, it is the leadership lessons learned through the Cadet Program that are perhaps the most valuable throughout life.

What is expected of parents?

We love it when parents want to be involved and active, however we also understand that parents may not have the time or ability to do so. There is no requirement for parent involvement, nor are parents expected to participate. We do ask that you educate yourself on the Cadet Program and that you support your son or daughter as they grow and mature within the program.