

Austin Carrigg is the Founder and Chief Executive Officer of The Youth and Children's Advocacy Network (THEYCAN). She has spent the last seven years tirelessly advocating on behalf of children, youth and families. Her experiences span complex medical needs, adoption, surrogacy, military life, and finding accessibility in an inaccessible world.

In 2018 Austin founded The Youth and Children's Advocacy Network (THEYCAN) with an intense desire to help guide families who feel lost in the diagnosis their family is facing, and to be a voice for those who cannot yet speak for themselves. The Youth and Children's Advocacy Network works to educate and advocate on behalf of families to policymakers and our communities. We seek to empower families who are navigating the complex world of specialized health care needs and educational needs. The Youth and Children's Advocacy Network serves a large military population and has established peer to peer support groups at sixteen major military installations across the globe that serve a multitude of families enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP).

2017-2018 Austin was the Vice President and a founding board member of Little Lobbyists, an organization whose vision is to ensure that all children with complex medical needs have access to the health care, education, and community inclusion they need to thrive. The Little Lobbyists share healthcare stories of children from across the country with their members of congress.

Austin has been nominated as Military spouse of the year for her work with the Little Lobbyists, the Tricare For Kids coalition, and her individual work with military families across the country. Austin was a 2018 Heroes at Home Awardee and was recognized by Virginia Governor, Ralph Northam, for her work supporting military families. Austin is a certified Army Family Team Building Trainer, which helps Army families acclimate to military life and build resiliency across their lives. She has also received numerous awards for her hard work and dedication to military families and her service as an Army employee.