

# Russian Kids Learn Patriotism Through Paintball

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**"Po dorogam predkov" Press Service**

Hundreds of schoolchildren in the Russian Far East took part in a boot camp organized to instill in them a love for their motherland.

In 2016, President Vladimir Putin [declared](#) patriotism Russia's only national idea, a concept that has permeated the country's education system and state-run mass media. A national "Patriotic Education of Russian Citizens program" for the years 2016-2020 calls for an 8 percent increase in the number of Russians who are "proud of their country" and a 10 percent surge in new military recruits.

Friday marked the end of inter-city games organized by the Primorye region administration as part of "Patriotica," a project [designed](#) to shore up patriotic fervor. Some 450 children, aged 14-16, competed in events such as weapons assembly and disassembly, paintball marksmanship, and tent pitching, the Ussurmedia.ru news website [reported](#) Monday.

“We saw that kids barely know how to shoot, but there is unmistakable interest,” team chaperone Yevgeny Kovalenko said, Ussurmedia.ru reported.

“Patriotic education is undoubtedly an important element of becoming a citizen, which must be present in various formats,” Ussurmedia.ru reported, citing Alexander Kaidanovich, the regional administration’s youth affairs department head.

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