# EFMP Exceptional Family Member Program

Henderson Hall Marine Corps Community Services

October 2024

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Henderson Hall EFMP Family Support and the DOD EFMP are always looking for feedback on how to better serve our families. Do you know all the different ways you can share your comments, questions or concerns? Besides contacting your EFMP family caseworker or EFMP program manager directly, there are a number of anonymous options including ICE comments and the EFMP Family Support Feedback Tool through Military OneSource. Twice a year, every USMC EFMP Family Support office also offers an open forum to speak to to staff and installation stakeholders (e.g., housing, emergency services, command teams etc.). This October MCB Quantico and Henderson Hall EFMP offices will be collaborating on a free guided painting class for adults paired with our fall family needs forum. We hope to hear from you soon!

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# VARSITY OR SECOND STRING?

## Does Your Healthcare Team Make the Cut?

Developmental Behavioral Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Jennifer Hensley starts every Autism Resource Clinic on Fort Belvoir with a sports metaphor. As she puts it, primary caregivers are the head coach on their child's team. As coach, parents or caregivers need to assess teamwork, individual performance and strategies to focus on. This may involve benching players who are underperforming, trying a new play or even bringing back an old one to see if it might work now. Remember, a provider can be perfectly qualified and skilled but still not be the right provider for your family.

As head coach, don't be afraid to ask the "why" behind a current treatment plan or a strategy. Many types of therapy, including speech therapy and occupational therapy may *look* like play especially for very young children. If you ask for clinical reasoning your provider should be able to give you specific examples of skills being targeted during the treatment. Some questions you could ask include:

- What skills does this activity support?
- How can I carryover strategies at home?
- What kind of data are you tracking?
- How can we tell if we are making progress?

Lineup: Who is on the team? What is their previous experience with your family's needs? What are their credentials? If you have a particularly large team you may want to consider enlisting the support of a case manager through your insurance

Goals: Do you know what healthcare or educational goal each team member is working toward? Do you agree with those goals? Is the purpose of each visit clear?

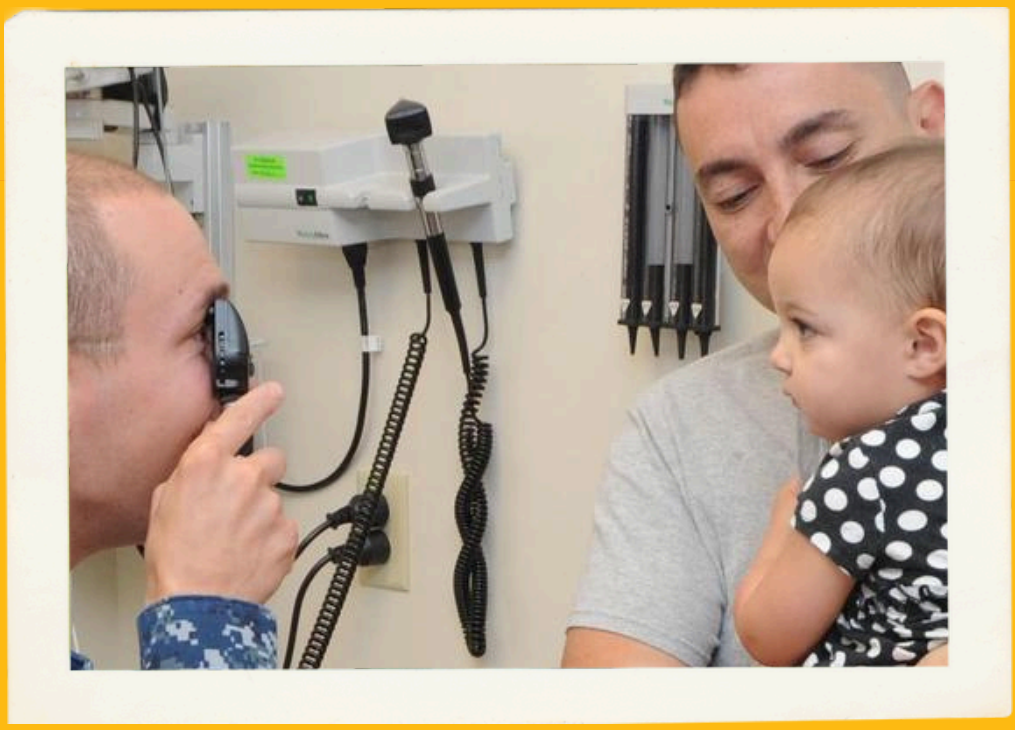
Communication: Is your team communicating with you and with each other? Is communication professional, clear and include open dialogue?

Evidence-Based Practice: Does your team have scientific reasoning behind the treatment plan or strategies? Is it explained to you in words you can understand?

# OPEN SEASON

Tricare Open Season is just around the corner. This year families will be able to enroll in, change or disenroll from a TRICARE Health plan from *November 11th through December 9th*. Enrollment changes will take effect January 1st, 2025. Do you know the differences between TRICARE Select and TRICARE Prime? Did you know there are two TRICARE Prime options available in the National Capital Region? Now is the perfect time to explore the different options available to you before the deadline so you can make an informed decision about your health insurance. You can find out which plans are available to you by using the TRICARE Plan Finder tool and explore the website for more information, including recorded webinars.

Open season also applies to the new financial benefit open to AD service members as of January 2024: the Dependent Care FSA (DCFSA). This is a pre-tax benefit account used to pay for eligible dependent care expenses like preschool childcare or adult daycare. You can learn more about eligible expenses here. To enroll in the DCFSA, you will make an election in FSAFEDS. Because FSA funds can only be used within the plan year and 2.5 month grace period, it is important you estimate your eligible expenses as close to the accurate number as possible. Funds do not rollover between plan years. Visit FINRED to learn more specifically about the DCFSA for service members.



Resource Highlight

# Disabilities & Voting

Thanks to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), all voting is a protected activity for individuals with disabilities. If you need accommodations, it would be a good idea to contact your local election office so you know what to expect at your polling place. Voting by mail, known as absentee voting, is also an option but federal law requires that in-person voting be accessible. Accommodations include wheelchair-accessible voting booths, voting equipment for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and handrails on all stairs. Individuals with disabilities may seek help from poll workers trained to use accessible voting machines and may bring someone to help them vote. The assistant must not be the voter's employer, agent of the employer. or an officer/agent of a voter's union.

In some cases, curbside voting no more than 150 feet away from the polling place entrance may be used.

If an individual with a disability is under permanent guardianship, they may no longer have the right to vote depending on the state of residence and the wording of the guardianship documentation. For example, Maryland prohibits voting if an individual is under guardianship for a mental disability. When pursuing permanent guardianship, it is possible to request the right to vote *not* be removed.

The ARC has resources specifically for individuals with disabilities including plain language PDFs on who can vote, how to register, etc. They also have resources available in simple Spanish.

## Help for the Holidays

If you or a fellow service member needs a little extra help this upcoming holiday season, consider registering for Soldier's Angels "Adopt-A-Family." This program is designed for E1-E6 families in financial need with at least one dependent child under the age of 18 living in the home. It is intended to supplement a holiday meal/gifts for children rather than cover the entire cost. Registration is open until December 1st or when registration has reached 1900 families.

If you are interested in "adopting" a family yourself, that is also an option through the program. Visit this link to earn more.

# Let's Get Social!

Being a military kid, tween or teen can be a tough gig. On average, military-connected children will attend 6 to 9 schools from kindergarten through 12th grade. That's a lot of first day jitters and needing to start over at a new school with no familiar faces. One of the ways you can support your military child is to connect them with social groups or special interest clubs, especially if these groups involve other military youth. Groups that may appeal to your child include the Boys and Girls Club of America (BGCA), YMCA, 4H, Anchored 4 Life or even JROTC. While Anchored 4 Life and JROTC are specifically military-affiliated, BGCA, YMCA, and 4H all have military partnerships in specific locations. If your teen prefers online connections, Bloom is a website by military teens for military teens, sponsored by National Military Family Association. Bloom includes blogs, poetry and art by teens as well as a Discord community. Groups like these focus specifically on leadership skills, self-esteem and building resilience. Sports, the arts or other after-school activities can be a great way for your youth to grow these skills and develop into confident adults.

## Marine Corps Family Team Building B.U.I.L.D. Tween & Teen Series

Military tweens and teens aged 10-18 are invited to Belong Understand Inspire Lead and Develop with Henderson Hall Marine Corps Family Team Building's new B.U.I.L.D series. Events are designed to support resiliency skills and social network development through engaging activities. The next B.U.I.L.D. event will be hosted in partnership with Henderson Hall EFMP on November 5th from 1300-1430 with LEGO. Contact MCFTB for more information on the series at 703-693-8906 or mcftbhh@usmc-mccs.org.

## Virginia

06, 13, 20 OCT, 1000-1300: MoCA on the Move at Met Park
*Free.* All ages are invited for live music, hands-on art, bubbles and chalk. For more information: link.

04 OCT, 1700-1900: First Friday Free Admission @ Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum
*Free.* Winchester, VA. Pre-registration required: link.

18 OCT, 1730-1930: Brushes & Bites with Special Needs Forum
*Free*. Quantico MCB. Enjoy a night of self-care with MCB Quantico and Henderson Hall EFMP offices. Make your own masterpiece during our guided painting class. Take the opportunity to share thoughts/concerns with EFMP and stakeholder. 18+ only. Supplies provided. Event is non-alcoholic. Registration required: link.

25 OCT, 0730: OOHRAH Run Series-Haunted Hill Halloween 5k
*Free.* Cpl Terry L Smith Gym, Henderson Hall. Free t-shirt to the first 100 registrants. Registration closes at 6:45. Pre-registration encouraged: link

25 OCT, 1600-1800: Teen Activity Night-Costume Party
*Free.* Belvoir Library. Youth are welcome to drop in at any time and leave as they please. Teens will talk about books, play games, get crafty, watch movies and have fun. For more information, call 703-805-4244.

## Virtual

08 OCT, 1130-1200: Knowledge Nugget: Building Networks of Support & Managing Deployments
*Free.* Join Henderson Hall for some bite-sized learning! This workshop offers an overview of the preparing for deployment and explores the supports available through EFMP as well as how to build networks of support. Pre-register at ombefmp.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org

20 OCT, 1000-1100: Fibro Support-Fibromyalgia Support Group
*Free.* For individuals diagnosed with fibromyalgia or for those seeking a diagnosis. Every Sunday virtually. Link here.

22 OCT, 1130-1200: Knowledge Nugget: Successful PCS Transitions
*Free.* Join Henderson Hall EFMP for some bite-sized learning. Planning is the key to making a smooth transition for your family during a PCS move, especially if you have a family member with special needs. This workshop will step you through the process Pre-register at ombefmp.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org

## Maryland

12 OCT, 1000: Dementia Friendly America-Family Caregiver Conference
*Free.* Capitol Heights, MD. Enjoy a day of informative sessions, interactive workshops and networking activities to support your loved one with dementia. Lunch will be served. Link.

16 OCT, 1200-1300: ARC of MD Speaker Series-Management of Challenging and Dangerous Behaviors
*Free.* Waldorf, MD https://www.eventbrite.com/e/management-of-challenging-and-dangerous-behaviors-tickets-1009762184877?aff=ebdssbdestsearch

17 OCT, 1030-1300: National Disability Employment & Awareness Month Job/Resource Fair
Free. New Carrolton, MD. Connect with employers who are committed to diversity and inclusion and explore career opportunities that align with unique skills. Link.

19 OCT, 1000-1600: Biggest Playdate Ever
*Free, tickets required*. Annapolis, MD. This free event includes indoor and outdoor activities, touch-a-truck and trick-or-treating. Costumes encouraged. For tickets: link

## Washington D.C.

19 OCT, 1330: Sensory-Friendly "Spells of the Sea" Performance
*$25 and up*. Kennedy Center. Enjoy this family musical with sensory modifications to make the performance enjoyed by all families. Most enjoyed by ages 6+. Tickets required.

20 OCT, 1130-1830: Turkish Festival
*Free entry*. 300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Visitors will enjoy other much-loved aspects of Turkey such as its delicious cuisine, traditional Turkish coffee, cultural activities and a bustling bazaar. For more information: link.

26 OCT, 1100-1400: Bulb Sale and Garlic Planting Party
*Free entry*. Washington Youth Garden. Join the National Arboretum for a garlic planting party, bulb sale, kid-friendly crafts, garden tours and food tastings. Costumes encouraged. For more information: Link

27 OCT, 1400: Sensory-Friendly NSO Family Concert-Halloween Spooktacular
*$25 and up*. Enjoy a sensory-friendly concert with ghoulishly attired National Symphony Orchestra playing a selection of spooky classics and new works. Arrive early for trick-or-treating and a special Haunted Hall Musical Playspace where children can try out the instruments they'll see onstage.

Sensory Friendly Activities across the NCR

*LEGO Discovery Center Sensory-Friendly Mornings*
$25.99 per person. You may be eligible for one free ADA caregiver ticket. Enjoy the LEGO center from 1000-1100 with reduced lighting and music. This event is held the first Wednesday of every month. For all ages. Link.

*Accessible Adult Fans of LEGO Nights*
$24.99 per person. Ages 18+ only. Enjoy the LEGO center from 1800-2000 with reduced lighting and music. This event is held the Wednesday of every month. For adults with special needs or sensory differences.

*Sensory Sundays at the B & O Rail Museum*
$20/adult, $12/child. AD is free. First Sundays in select months. Environmental accommodations (no music, low lighting, quiet areas, increased signage for areas with sound effects), sensory-friendly events (kids craft, train ride, and tour) and resources (sensory kits, social stories, and community table) will be available. Link

*Morning at the Museum*
Free. Dates and Smithsonian museum vary. Registration required. Sensory-friendly program for children, teens, and young adults who are neurodivergent and their families. Participants enter the museum early and explore at their own pace. Link

*Alamo Drafthouse Cinema*
Alamo for All program is active in both Northern VA and DC. All shows on Tuesday before 2:00 p.m. are sensory-friendly. Additional shows are available on weekends.

*AMC Theatres*
Second and fourth Saturdays for family-friendly movies and Wednesday evenings of every month offer sensory-friendly showings

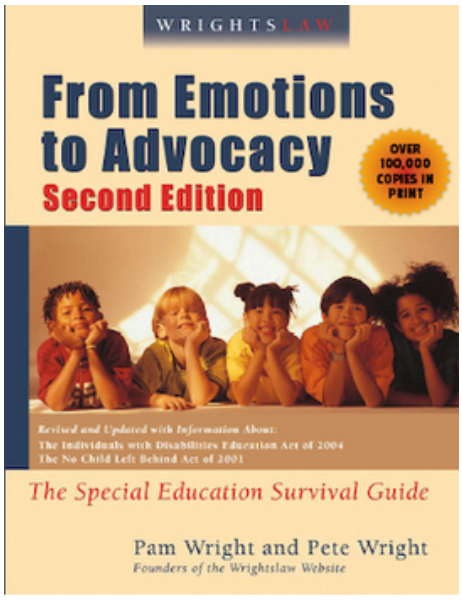
*Children's Museum of Virginia*
Portsmouth, VA. Reduced number of visitors and adapted programs/exhibits. Note: Second floor currently under construction. Held the second Sunday of every month. Link.

*Kennedy Center*
Price varies. Lower lighting during entire performance, reduced sounds, and designated quiet area of theater. Guests are welcome to talk and move throughout performances. Website includes scripted stories to talk about an upcoming visit. Link.

*Regal Movies*
My Way Matinee Program offers sensory-friendly showings as the first show on Saturdays on select Saturdays.

Philadelphia:

*Sesame Place*
Sesame Place Philadelphia is the first theme park to be designated as a Certified Autism Center. Sesame Place offers a low-sensory room, low-sensory parade viewing, and specially-trained staff.




With sections including “Getting Started,” Advocacy 101," “The Parent as Expert,” “Special Education Law” and “Tactics and Strategies,” Pam and Pete Wright’s “From Emotions to Advocacy” is a holistic guide to supporting your child through the special education system. Learn how to use information from evaluations to understand your child’s performance and strategies for creating paper trails. Dig deep into the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) so you know your child’s rights.

To borrow this item or any of the other items in the lending library, contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org or call (703) 693-7195. You may schedule pick-up at Henderson Hall or at an upcoming EFMP Meet and Greet in your area

# How do I disenroll from the Exceptional Family Member Program?

Disenrollment is possible only when the dependent family member no longer qualifies for EFMP. This occurs when:

1. The original condition has resolved (determined by medical/educational professionals). The service member should submit updated DD 2792 and/or DD2792-1 paperwork to the EFMP office

**or**

2. An individual is no longer a dependent family member of an AD service member (i.e., divorce, death, loss of custody, retirement or individual has reached age of majority with no guardianship in place). The service member should update DEERS and send documentation to EFMP office (no DD 2792 required)

**Out-of-date paperwork does not disenroll a family member** but may delay orders to your next duty station. Check with your FCW to make sure your records are current.

# HH EFMP Services

- Family support/non-clinical case management
- Informal Assignment Screening
- EFMP Attorney Assistance
- Resources and Referrals
- Support at IEP/IFSP meetings
- Respite Care Reimbursement Program
- Eligibility and enrollment for Tricare ECHO
- Transition Assistance (PCS, EAS)
- Workshops and Training
- Lending Library
- Loan Locker
- Family Needs Assessment

**DISCLAIMER:**
**The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of Defense, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial products, gift suggestions, or organizations imply endorsement by the USMC.**

Henderson Hall EFMP is committed to providing accessible, inclusive events and services. Please contact us with concerns or suggestions

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