



EFMP Exceptional Family Member Program

Henderson Hall Marine Corps Community Services

July 2024



Building Connections

Happy Social Wellness Month and happy Fourth of July! This month is the perfect time to fill your social cup with a cookout or with an evening of fireworks with friends. In fact, a little fun can be good for you! This month's EFMP newsletter focuses on the benefits of caring for your social wellness as a crucial component for overall wellbeing. Reach out to your EFMP caseworker if you have questions on local-to-you opportunities for connection

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Social Wellness



Between work, school, appointments and all the “must-dos”, it is still important to attend to the needs of a social life, too. Engaging with others during an activity you enjoy helps develop support networks. Strong support networks are associated with increased resilience as well as improved physical and mental health for both adults and children. It’s key to accurately assess how you feel during and after an activity to determine if it is serving the intended purpose or if it’s just overloading your plate. For more tips, visit the [NIH Social Wellness Toolkit](#).

The next EFMP virtual training on networks of support is scheduled for 10/08/2024, but you can reach out to your caseworker for referrals and suggestions any time!

Support Groups are perhaps an obvious opportunity for connections. You can find in-person or virtual support groups to fit your needs like Fort Meade’s hybrid [single parent support group](#), ASN’s virtual [group](#) for military families with children who have special needs or DC PEERS’ [adult neurodiversity support group](#).

Volunteering can be a great way to meet like-minded individuals and build your networks, especially if it’s an ongoing commitment. One-time clean-ups or other events can all fill your cup.

Recreational Sports can be found for virtually all ages and abilities. Check out HH EFMP’s [newsletter](#) (March 2024) on inclusive recreation for some great opportunities across the NCR.

Social Clubs like military spouses groups, teen groups, or scouting clubs often have a variety of activities to enjoy with the same groups of people so you are able to develop meaningful connections.



BLUE STAR FAMILIES

Blue Star Families is a nonprofit dedicated to supporting military families in building communities of support both inside and outside of the military community. You are able to join a virtual “neighborhood” that will connect you with nearby Blue Star members and virtual/in-person events. Regular Coffee Connects are offered in VA and in MD as an opportunity to connect with others who understand military family life, typically with a complimentary beverage. Other programming includes Blue Star Outdoors, Blue Star Museums (partnership offering free museum visits to military families across the US), and Blue Star Books. Blue Star Families offers career training among other perks, like a free Masterclass subscription for a year and assorted discounts.

You can also become a Blue Star volunteer if you would like to plan or host events. As mentioned previously, volunteering can be an excellent way to build networks of support.



PLAYGROUPS

[Henderson Hall Playgroup](#): Arlington, VA. Ages 0-5. Every other Wednesday.

[Fort Meade Sensory Playgroup](#): Fort Meade, MD. First Thursday of the month. Specifically for EFMP-enrolled families. Fort Meade also has general playgroups including [Romp and Stomp](#) and [A-Z Come Play with Me](#)

[Dandelion Club](#): Fort Belvoir, VA. Ages 0-5. See [Facebook](#) for up-to-date information on dates.

[Strong Start Community Playgroups](#): DC. Offered by the DC Early Intervention Program at a variety of DC locations and dates with early education specialists

Playgroups are an excellent source of connection for both children and parents. Often held at libraries, you may continue to see the same families at different activities throughout the year, too!





PROJECT EVERGREEN

Networks of support are especially crucial during deployments and other temporary separations. Military families with a deployed servicemember can apply to the non-profit [Project EverGreen's](#) GreenCare for Troops or SnowCare for Troops programs. If there is an available volunteer, that family will receive free lawn care or snow removal throughout deployment. If you happen to have the time, you can register as a volunteer and support your own military community.

OPERATION: HOMEFRONT

You may be separated from close friends and family during the big moments in life. [Operation Homefront](#) is one of many non-profits dedicated to surrounding military families with support. Family events hosted by Operation Homefront include holiday meals, baby showers, back-to-school materials drives and giveaways and holiday toy drives. You may also recognize the name from the annual Military Child of the Year award. Operation Homefront also offers critical financial assistance, veteran housing assistance programs and transitional housing.

PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

If regular volunteering is part of your social wellness routine, don't sleep on the [President's Volunteer Service Award](#). This formal recognition of your service to the community can support promotions, too! U.S. citizens (or lawful permanent residents) who are five years or older are eligible. The amount of certified hours needed for an award vary by age. MCCS Marine Corps Family Team Building (MCFTB) is a certifying organization and can also help you identify the perfect volunteer opportunity for you or your family. To learn more or to submit hours, contact Henderson Hall's MCFTB at 703-693-8906 or mcftbhh@usmc-mccs.org.

ARMED FORCES WELLNESS CENTERS



Started in 2008 and originally only for Army service members, the [Armed Forces Wellness Centers \(AFWC\)](#) have been open to service members of all branches, family members, retirees and DoD civilians since 2022. AFWCs provide education, services and resource referrals based on the DoD-recognized 5 pillars of wellness: emotional, social, mental, physical and spiritual. Programming includes biometric screenings, (including the use of a BodPod) as well as fitness testing like grip strength and VO2 max testing. AFWCs offer in-person and virtual classes on stress management, sleep and how to increase your metabolic rate, among other trainings.

There are 35 AFWCs across the world, including at Fort Belvoir, VA and Fort Meade, MD . As of 12 June 2024, there is now also a permanent AFWC housed in the DFAC on Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, VA. You may access an AFWC via self-referral or via referral from your medical provider or unit.

FORT MYER



FIRE STATION

Join Henderson Hall EFMP for a sensory-friendly visit to our local fire station. Go behind the scenes to tour the firehouse, meet the firefighters and get up close to the firetrucks.

Saturday, August 3

9:30 - 11:30 AM

Registration ends on 08/01 at midnight



**REGISTER
HERE**



Bldg. 415, Sheridan Ave., Fort Myer, VA 20319



For more information:
703-693-5353 or email at:
efmph@usmc-mccs.org



Open to all ages and all DoD ID cardholders (not only EFMP enrollees) We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations upon request. Please contact us at 703-693-5353 at least one (1) week in advance of the event.

Virginia

09 July 1700-1830: Rosslyn Trail Volunteer Cleanup

Free. Arlington, VA. Volunteers will remove vegetation along the Rosslyn trail. An optional social gathering at a nearby restaurant will follow. Registration recommended: [Link](#)

16 July, 6 Aug 1000-1100: Lake Fairfax Park Water Mine Swimmin' Hole Sensory Hours

Prices vary by height. Enjoy the sensory-friendly hours of the Water Mine on July 16th and August 6th from 1000-1100. Accommodations include limited attendance, no music, trained staff, and louder water features will be turned off. For more information: [Link](#)

17 July 1900-2000: Twilight Tattoo-U.S. Army

Free. Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall. Enjoy music and historical uniforms featuring the Old Guard and Pershing's Own Army Band. This event is accessible to individuals with disabilities. If you require accessibility support, please email us at: USArmyMDW@army.mil. Register on [eventbrite](#)

22 July 1800: USO Quantico Baby Shower

Free. Registration required. Open to expecting and new (6 months postpartum or less) mothers (AD or military spouse). [Link](#)

26 July 1830-2130: Fairfax Rock The Block with the Army Band

Free. Fairfax City, VA. Rock the Block is held the fourth Friday of the month all summer. Enjoy live music, beer garden, food vendors and more in the Old Town Square of Fairfax City. Bring your own seating. [Link](#)

Virtual

02 July, 1730-1900: All About the IEP

Free. Hosted by Advocates for Justice and Education. Learn to prepare and participate at your child's next IEP meeting. Registration required: [Link](#).

09 July, 1130-1200: Knowledge Nugget: Networks of Support

Free. From birth to 3, a child should reach milestones in how he/she plays, learns, talks and moves. for a bite-sized workshop on the early intervention process, typical milestones and steps to take if you have concerns. Led by EI SLP. Contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org to register.

23 July, 1130-1200: Knowledge Nugget: Service Animals

Free. What is the difference between a service animal and a therapy animal? What laws apply to service animals? Who can benefit from a service animal? Answers to these questions and more in a bite-sized format. Contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org to register.

Maryland

15 July, 1100-1200: Coffee, Crafts & Conversation for Adults with Chronic Illness
Free. Joint Base Andrews EFMP Family Support. Coffee, snacks, and craft provided. To register, [link](#).

20 July, 0830: Paddleboard 101

\$10. NSA Annapolis. Learn the basics of paddle-boarding at the Mill Creek Marina. Registration required. Call (410) 293-9200

20 Jul, 0830: Youth Basketball Clinic (Ages 5-16)

\$20. Bethesda, MD. Times vary by age. Registration required. [Link](#).

23 July, 1000-1200: Joint Base Andrews Play-Doh Party

Free. Joint Base Andrews Library. Make your own play-doh, including mix-ins and scents. Limited supplies available on a first-come, first-serve. For questions, call 301-981-6454

24 July, 1100-1200: Coffee, Crafts & Conversation for Caregivers

Free. Joint Base Andrews EFMP Family Support. Coffee, snacks, and craft provided. To register, [link](#).

Washington, D.C.

4 July, 1500-2130: A Capitol Fourth

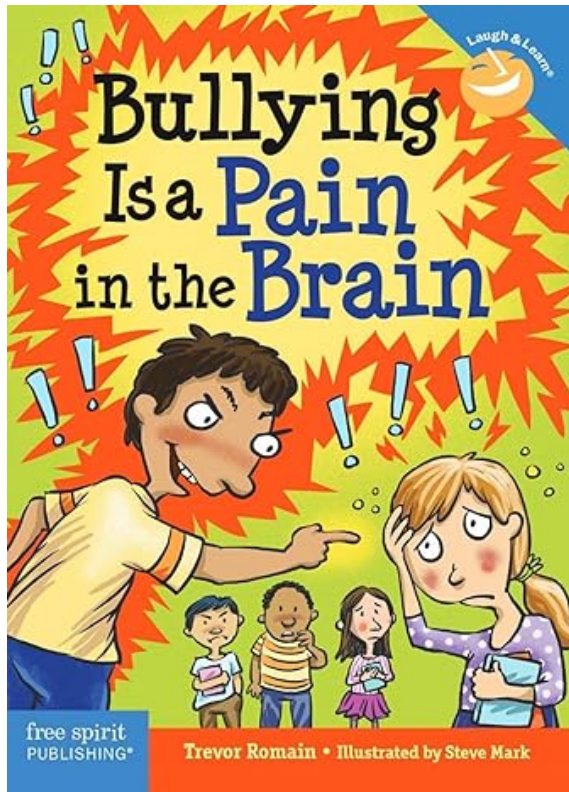
Free. Washington, D.C. Enjoy the national concert and firework show in honor of Independence Day. The concert is free and families may also attend the dress rehearsal on 3 July. There is a seating area for guests with disabilities (including monitor with closed captions). If you need accommodations, let a park ranger or event staff member in a yellow shirt you need to access the designated viewing area. For more information: [link](#).

11, 18, 25 July, 1930-2030: Summer Concert Series

Free. Glen Echo Park in the bumper car pavilion. Every Thursday through 22 August. Limited seating, so bring your own chairs. Snacks, soft drinks, beer and wine available for purchase. Bringing your own alcohol is not permitted. Reservations not required, but appreciated. For more information: [link](#).

19 July, 1200-1500: Drop-In Workshop-Paper Beads

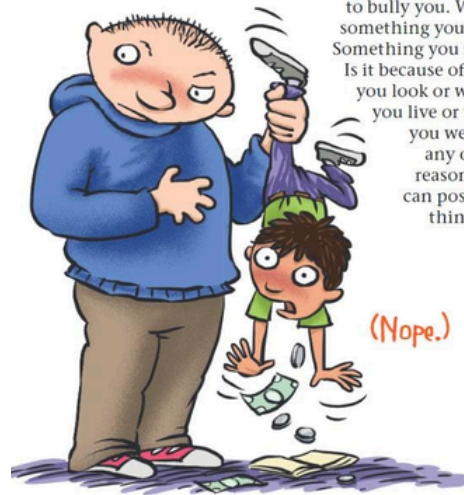
Free. National Portrait Gallery. Hosted by certified art therapist, all ages and abilities are welcome to make paper beads. If you have questions about the accessibility of this program, or if you would like to request real-time captioning (CART), sign language interpretation, or any other accommodations, please contact PedrickK@si.edu. Two weeks' advance notice is appreciated for requesting accommodations.



Here's the second thing you need to know about your bullying problem:

It's not your fault.

You're not doing the bullying. Someone else is. You didn't ask to be bullied. Someone else decided to bully you. Was it something you did? Something you said? Is it because of how you look or where you live or what you wear or any other reason you can possibly think of?



Does your tween struggle with being bullied or seem to be bullying others? Request a copy of "Bullying is a Pain in the Brain" to keep. This humorous, illustrated guide also includes advice for cyber-bullying and negative self-talk. It includes additional resources for both kids and adults.

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 site visit in your area

Sensory Friendly Activities across the NCR

Note: This is an ongoing list updated monthly. Please contact HH TEO if you know of a resource that should be included

Lake Fairfax Park Water Mine Swimmin' Hole

Prices vary by height. Enjoy the sensory-friendly hours of the Water Mine on July 16th and August 6th from 1000-1100. Accommodations include limited attendance, no music, trained staff, and louder water features will be turned off. For more information: [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](#).

Chuck E Cheese

Sensory-Sensitive Sundays. Participating locations open two hours early on the first Sunday of the month.

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. Every day, Sesame Place offers a low-sensory room, low-sensory parade viewing, and specially-trained staff. There will be two Low Sensory Days this summer on June 9th and June 23 with modified Sensory Dine and Show.



What is Tricare ECHO?

Tricare ECHO stands for “Extended Healthcare Option. This program pays for some healthcare services beyond what Tricare typically provides for eligible dependents, up to \$36,000/year/beneficiary. For example, ECHO pays for incontinence supplies depending on the age of the dependent, durable medical equipment and covers Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services (excluded from annual cap). Respite care and Expanded Home Health Care (EHHC) may also be available. Qualifying conditions to enroll in Tricare ECHO include Autism Spectrum Disorder, moderate or severe intellectual disability and serious physical disability.

To enroll in Tricare ECHO, you must be enrolled in EFMP and paperwork must be up-to-date, but ECHO is a separate program from EFMP. You can contact your EFMP family caseworker to learn more or explore the ECHO benefit on the Tricare [website](#).

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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