



# EFMP Exceptional Family Member Program

Henderson Hall Marine Corps Community Services

November, 2023



# Happy

# BIRTHDAY!

November 10th, 2023 marks the 248th birthday for the United States Marine Corps. The anniversary will be celebrated by Marines and families across the world. Events to mark the occasion across the NCR include the family-friendly Birthday Ball at Quantico on 2 November and the CMC run on 8 November at Henderson Hall. Happy birthday, Marines!

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# GRATITUDE

Science-based strategies for  
your mental health



The beginning of a busy social season and darker days, November is the perfect time to add a mental health strategy to your family's toolbox. One internet search will return dozens of studies on the health benefits of gratitude and mindfulness. It's easy to see why—even weekly practices have been associated with decreased symptoms of [depression](#),<sup>1</sup> lower risk of [heart disease](#),<sup>2</sup> [improved sleep](#),<sup>3</sup> and [decreased stress](#).<sup>4</sup> Henderson Hall EFMP encourages you to consider practicing gratitude all season long.

## Gratitude How-to:

Including gratitude into your routine doesn't have to add to your already-full schedule. Research suggests three times a week is a sweet spot. What matters most is finding a practice that works for you

- **Routine:** Pair your routines. For example, intentionally think of 1-3 things you are thankful for on the commute into the office or as you pour your first cup of coffee.
- **Journal:** Write a list of specific things for which you feel grateful on a regular basis. Daily journaling is not necessary for a benefit.



- Prompts: Search for online gratitude prompts if you find yourself struggling to identify something to write about. It will become more natural with practice.
- Write: Send a thank-you letter, text, or email to a coworker, friend or family member. Try to be as specific as possible.
- Alert: Set a reminder in your phone to practice gratefulness. Shoot for 3-5 times per week.
- Thankful Jar: For a visual reminder, try placing slips of paper with things you are grateful for in a clear jar. Place the jar and writing supplies in a place you will see it often.



## Practicing Gratitude with Young Children

Go beyond teaching your children to mind their manners by saying “please” and “thank you.” Engage them activities to help them understand the meaning behind the words as they grow their social-emotional skills. The best way for kids to learn? Model! Share what you are thankful for out loud and encourage your children to do the same. Dinnertime and the ride from daycare/school back home can be key opportunities to engage. Ask your children to name one or two positive things that happened today or ask them to notice their senses (i.e., “What do you hear? I like that I can hear the fall leaves”). If they have a favorite color, practice spotting it while out and about and express your gratefulness that you get to see that favorite color.

### Music:

“I’m Thankful” by Super Simple Songs  
 “Thank You Song” By Cocomelon Nursery Rhymes

### Books:

“Llama LLama Gives Thanks” by Anna Dewdney (0-3)  
 “Apple Cake: A Gratitude” by Dawn Casey (2-5)  
 “The Last Stop on Market Street” by Matt de La Peña (2-6)  
 “Gratitude is my Superpower” by Alicia Ortego (5-8)

Craft: Glue paper leaves onto a tree cutout or string them together for a holiday garland using yarn. Prompt your child and either write on the leaves or draw/glue pictures on them.



You can cut out pictures from magazines, too. For nonspeaking children, consider offering choices of two pictures and following their cues to select the picture (i.e., reaching, eye gaze). Display the tree or garland at your child's eye-level. Children may enjoy sharing their craft with family and friends over a video call.

Try the following prompts:

- What's your favorite food?
- What's your favorite animal?
- Who lives at home with us?
- Who do you like to videocall?
- What's your favorite show?
- Who is your friend at school?
- What made you smile today?

## Gratitude Pitfalls

Intentional gratitude is not for everyone-If it feels forced or or shameful, put this strategy to the side. Those feelings can be red flags for "toxic positivity." Toxic positivity may feel similar to gratitude because it involves focusing on the positives, but it rejects authentic negative thoughts and feelings.

If you or a family member is struggling with mental health concerns, contact Henderson Hall Behavioral Health Military Family Life Counselor (MFLC) at 703-414-9885. You may also access free, short-term support at [Military OneSource](#).

## HH Marine and Family Programs is Thankful for:

"I am so grateful for my family, especially my dad who is 102!"

-Claudia Quinby, EFMP Family Case Worker

"I'm excited for my first East Coast fall! I love the colors that have started already. "


-Sarah Kruszon, EFMP TEO

"I'm thankful for my family and all the things I got to cross off my vision board for 2023. "

-Yecica Mazariegos, EFMP Family Case worker

# RECAP

## Fall, 2023 EFMP Special Needs Forum



Speakers, Marines, and families from the NCR joined Quantico and Henderson Hall EFMP staff both in-person and virtually for a forum on special needs and emergency preparedness. Read on for a brief recap of presentations. Want the details? Head to MCCS Henderson Hall Facebook page to watch the recorded session. [Link](#)

*Stay tuned: The spring EFMP Special Needs Forum dates will be announced at a later date!*

### Quantico Prevention and Education Specialist

LaToya Lynn detailed the impact of emergencies on victims and survivors of abuse and shared the following recommendations:

- Professionals who plan for organizational preparedness should consider this unique population by providing ways for victims to have physical space from abusers.
- Develop a safety plan either with a professional or using a free resource like Military OneSource or National Domestic Violence hotline
- Everyone, even those not in an abuse situation, should have an emergency “go-bag.”

Ms. Lynn encouraged use of installation Family Advocacy Programs including victim advocates. Contact HH FAP Victim advocates at 703-614-7204. For after hours, contact the 24/7 Victim Advocacy Hotline at 202-439-6038



## Provost Marshall Office

Master Sergeant Daniels spoke about the importance of building a relationship with law enforcement, EMTs, and other emergency personnel prior to an emergency whether you live on or off-base. He noted this is especially important when there is an EFM in the home. MSGT Daniels invited EFMP families contact the PMO for a visit and encouraged families to engage with them during community events to help children be more comfortable in an emergency situation.

## Quantico Fire Department

Captain Scott Border of the Quantico Fire Department shared a form used on-base to disclose medical information. This form can be accessed via your EFMP family case worker.

CPT Border recommended the following:

- Introduce your family to emergency workers in your area, sharing specific information on your EFM as appropriate (e.g., ventilator use, mode of communication).
- Prepare medical information in case you aren't present or aren't able to communicate. First responders are trained to look for "File of Life" magnets and other information like medical alert jewelry.
- Update your In Case of Emergency (ICE) information on your personal devices



## EFMP Special Needs Attorney

Christina Jones, attorney for EFMP in the NCR, spoke about emergency drills and safety plans

- Children with special needs should participate in all drills so they know what to do in a real emergency
- Special needs should be accommodated before, during and after drills (ex., scripted stories or advanced warned of drill, medical go-bag, sensory kit)
- All accommodations can and should go into child's IFSP/IEP/504 plan
- Safety plans should be developed before an unsafe situation if possible (i.e., elopement, aggressive behaviors)
- Safety plans address the steps to take in the event of an unsafe situation, including who and when others are contacted (i.e., parents, police)



## Autism Society of Northern Virginia

Scott Campbell is the current president of the ASNV, a parent of a child with special needs, and a retired lieutenant colonel of the Army. He distilled his years of experience into ten top tips for Virginia residents with regards to safety, recapped below:

- Disclose the presence of an individual with special needs and get your neighbors and community familiar with your child. This may include use of stickers, alert bracelets, shoe inserts, and other awareness tools
- Provide pre-notification information sheets to emergency medical personnel and neighbors

- Complete a missing child packet through your local police station
- Consider enrollment in [Project Lifesaver](#)
- Explore GPS tracking/locating systems
- Apply for a blue, handicapped parking placard if your child elopes
- Teach your child to swim
- Check the sex offender registry for your zipcode
- Invite your school resource officer to your child's IEP
- Contact Mr. Campbell directly at 703-969-6730 if you have concerns about safety issues for your EFM

## DID YOU KNOW?

The [Autism Society of Northern Virginia](#) holds a support group for military families on the second Tuesday of every month from 1900-2000. They also host virtual support groups for caregivers and adults on the spectrum as well as in-person social groups for young adults and teens in Oakton, VA.

## Virginia

02 NOV, 1600-2000: Quantico Military Family USMC Birthday Ball

\$20-\$30. Clubs at Quantico. Hosted by Marine Corps Family Team Building  
All ranks welcome at family event. Kid-friendly buffet options and activities provided.  
Open to all DoD Authorized Patrons. [Link](#).

06 NOV, 1300-1600: SIBTEEN: Workshop for Siblings of Children with Special Needs.

Free. Fairfax, VA. Registration required. Target audience is Middle School-aged students.  
Presented by FCPS school social work services. [Link](#)

11 NOV, 0900-1600: Mount Vernon Salutes Veterans

\$28/adult, \$15/youth (6-11). Mount Vernon, VA  
Free admission for AD, veterans, and military personnel.  
Special program of patriotic music and history presentations

12 Nov, 0900-1200: Special Needs Sundays at the Children's Museum of Virginia

\$5. Portsmouth, VA. Reduced number of visitors and adapted programs/exhibits.  
Note: Second floor currently under construction. Held the second Sunday of every month.

17 NOV, 0700: 2023 SemperFit OORAH Run Series: Joint Base Turkey Trot 5k Friday

Free. Cpl Terry L. Smith Gym at Henderson Hall. Onsite registration open 5:45-6:45.

## Virtual

01 NOV, 1830-1930: PEATC Online Training-Measurable IEP Goals

Free. [Link](#)

14 NOV, 1100-1230: Lunch and Learn: Special Education Overview\*

Free. Virtual or in-person. Pre-register at [ombefmo.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:ombefmo.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org)

14 NOV, 1900-2000: ASNV Support Group

Free. [Link](#). For military families with special needs dependents

15 NOV, 1830-1930: PEATC Online Training-Measurable IEP Goals

Free. [Link](#)

16 NOV, 1000-1100: Get Ready to Track IEP Progress in 3 Easy Steps

Free. Offered through Fort Meade EFMP. Email [liesa.jacobs.civ@army.mil](mailto:liesa.jacobs.civ@army.mil) or [Fershalla.Laing-Hodgeman.1@us.af.mil](mailto:Fershalla.Laing-Hodgeman.1@us.af.mil) to register. For additional information call 301-677-5590.

28 NOV, 1100-1230: Lunch and Learn: Managing Deployments\*

Free. Virtual or in-person. Pre-register at [ombefmo.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:ombefmo.eventregistration@usmc-mccs.org)

\*Indicates course offered by Henderson Hall EFMP



### **Washington, DC:**

03 NOV, 1900: Outdoor Movie Night at President Lincoln's Cottage

Free. Bring a picnic or popcorn to enjoy the movie "Lightyear." STEAM activities and family crafts available from 1730-1900 [Link](#)

03 NOV-24 NOV, 0700-0750: Free Yoga Fridays in Q Street Park

Free. Weekly yoga program at 20th and Q streets NW. Donations accepted.

11 NOV, 1100-1200: Veterans Day National Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery

Free. Solemn ceremony beginning with wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Continues with parade of colors and speeches in the Memorial Amphitheater.

18 NOV, 1200-1300: In-Gallery Portrait Signs: A Tour in ASL

Free. Deaf-led tour in ASL of the National Portrait Gallery. Topic TBD. [Link](#)

### **Maryland:**

04 NOV, 0900: Jug Bay Run for Wildlife at Patuxent River Park

\$20-30. 3k fun walk, 5k and 10k options.

Register in advance. [Registration](#)

04 Nov, 100-1200: Autumn Art with Heart

Free. Joint Base Andrews M&FRC. Learn about using art as a coping skill and create your own masterpiece.

Open to all DOD cardholders, priority to AD enrolled in EFMP.

Preregistration required. [Link](#)

06 NOV, 1730-2000: Commission for Individuals with Disabilities Listening Session

Free. In-person event at Fort Washington, MD.

Individuals with disabilities, families, and advocates encouraged to attend to share their perspectives. [Link](#)

10 NOV, 1200-1330: Baltimore City Veterans Day Parade

Free. Washington Monument to War Memorial Plaza.

Free parking at Lexington St. Parking Garage.

16 NOV, 1700-1930: SpArc Tank IG-Nite at the Arc Maryland

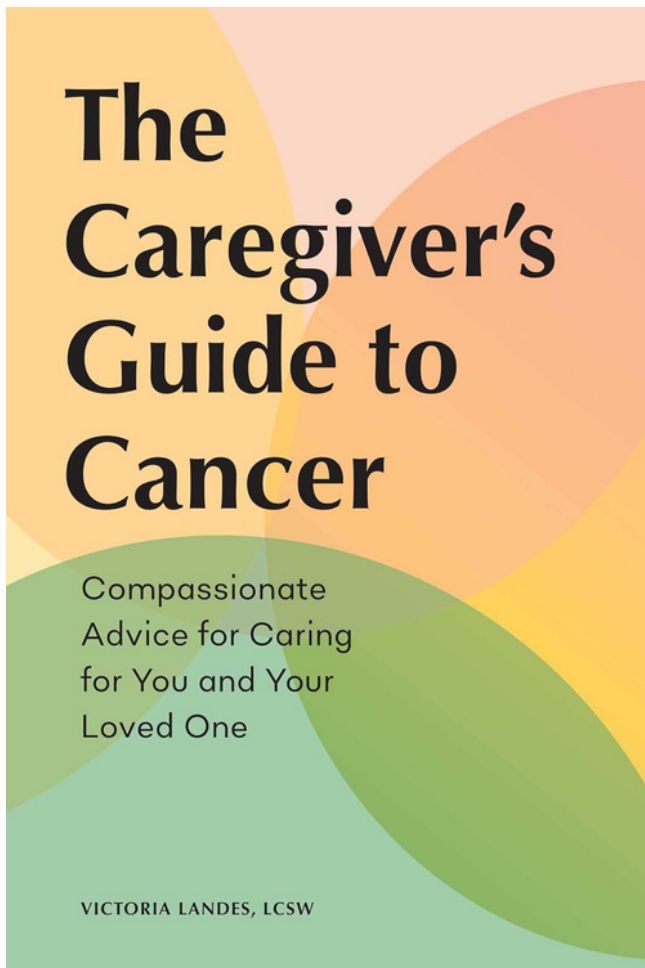
\$30.00. Join The Arc Maryland for a night of community and partnership as innovators pitch their ideas to "spArc" change in their communities.

Light hors d'oeuvres and cocktails will be served. [Link](#)

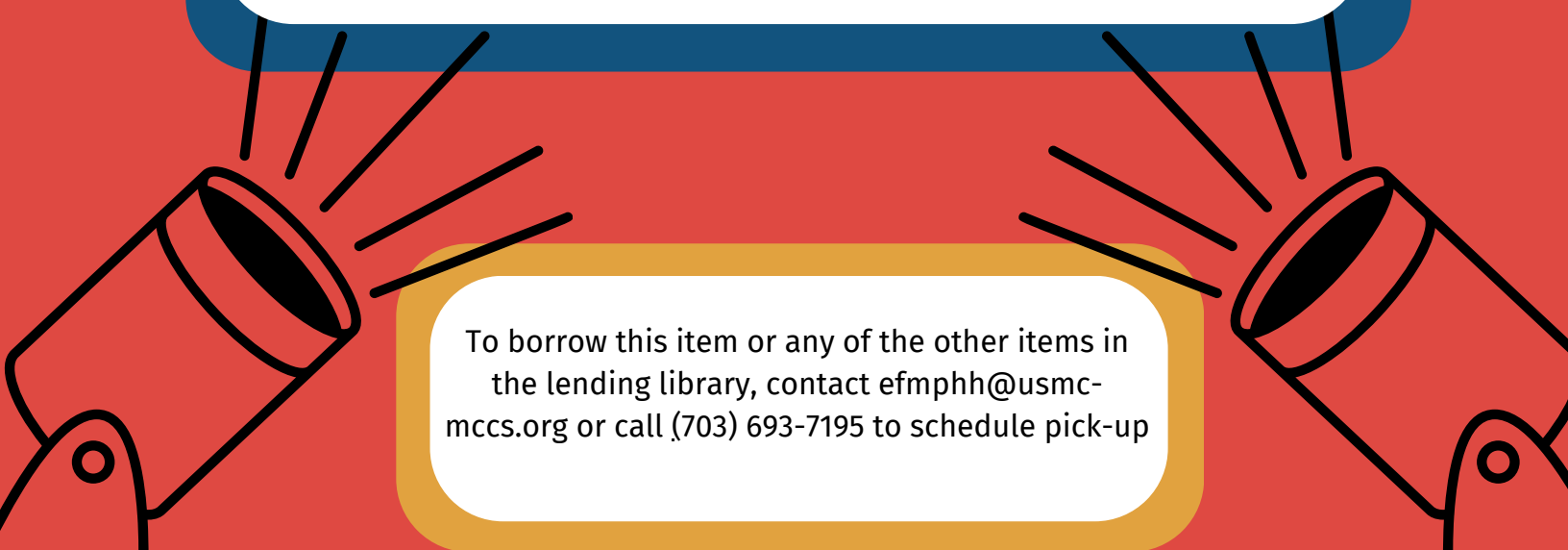
21 NOV 1600-2000 14th Annual 53 Families Thanksgiving Dinner

Free. Thanksgiving dinner, family-friendly event with children's activities.


Registration required. [Link](#)



An empowering guidebook for a difficult journey, “The Caregiver’s Guide to Cancer” includes sections on what to do, what to say and what to ask when faced with medical challenges. This guide is filled with practical advice and gentle reminders to caregivers on the importance of meeting their own emotional and physical needs.



To borrow this item or any of the other items in the lending library, contact [efmphh@usmc-mccs.org](mailto:efmphh@usmc-mccs.org) or call (703) 693-7195 to schedule pick-up



Who is eligible for respite care reimbursement through the EFMP?

Up to 20 hours of respite care reimbursement is available for sponsor families who care for EFM's with severe and profound special needs (Level of Need 3 and 4). Contact your family case worker (FCW) for more information. You must register at each new duty station's EFMP office following a PCS.

## **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, ETS)
- Workshops and Training
- Lending Library
- Loan Locker
- Family Needs Assessment

Henderson Hall MCCS is committed to providing accessible, inclusive events and services. Please contact us with concerns or suggestions  
efmphh@usmc-mccs.org  
(703) 693-7195  
1555 Southgate Rd.  
Bldg. 12  
Arlington, VA 22026

### **Program Manager**

**Amy Proce**

**703-693-6510**

**Amy.proce@usmc-mccs.org**

### **Administrative Assistant**

**Christina Chipman**

**703-693-7195**

**Christina.chipman@usmc-mccs.org**

### **Family Case Worker**

**Yecica Mazariegos**

**703-693-6368**

**Yecica.mazariegos@usmc-mccs.org**

### **Family Case Worker**

**Claudia Quinby**

**703-693-4172**

**Claudia.quinby@usmc-mccs.org**

### **Training, Education, Outreach Specialist**

**Sarah Kruszon**

**703-693-5353**

**Sarah.kruszon@usmc-mccs.org**

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## Citations

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