



EFMP Exceptional Family Member Program

Henderson Hall Marine Corps Community Services

January 2025



HAPPY NEW YEAR

Nothing like the start of a new year to set personal and family resolutions! What's on your list this year? Have you thought about increasing your knowledge of healthcare, special education or disabilities? Consider adding a couple EFMP classes to your goals this year!

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SMART GOALS

HOW DO YOURS MEASURE UP?



SPECIFIC

What exact skill will be targeted?

MEASURABLE

Will you know when the goal is met? This may be a number, a specific accomplishment (i.e. complete a marathon) or even the absence of a behavior.

ATTAINABLE

Is this goal realistic considering current skill level, life circumstances, and time?

RELEVANT

Will meeting this goal make a difference in learning or day-to-day life?

TIMEBOUND

When should this goal be completed?

No matter your personal resolution, IEP goal or family objective, the best way to make sure a goal is achievable is to make sure it's written in a SMART format (see left). This helps make sure a goal isn't too big and is actually targeting the intended outcome. This is a great time of year to take a second look and make sure IEP goals and personal resolutions meet all of the SMART criteria.

Try it out! Which sample goal below hits all of the SMART targets? Can you find what the samples may be missing? **(Answers on the last page)**

- A. In 2025, our family will improve our fitness together by participating in at least 3/6 of the Henderson Hall Semper Fit fun runs
- B. In 2025, our family will eat together every night
- C. Our family will leave the house on time



Are you hoping to meet some new health or fitness goals? Consider scheduling an appointment at your closest [Armed Forces Wellness Center](#) for free wellness coaching (located at Fort Meade, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall and Fort Belvoir), call Military OneSource for [health and wellness coaching](#) or consider hiring a personal fitness trainer at the Cpl Terry L. Smith Gym on Henderson Hall.

Don't forget-there are plenty of professionals available to support in identifying and writing both SMART goals and short-term objectives to improve your personal and family readiness. Some of these organizations will also support long-term accountability with regular check-ins, which can be associated with increased goal achievement. Do you have a financial goal for 2025? Reach out to Henderson Hall's Personal Financial Management Program (PFMHH@usmc-mccs.org).

If you need help writing goals specific to long-term planning with disabilities, special education or other medical care contact your EFMP family caseworker to request a Family Needs Assessment and Support Plan. EFMP family caseworkers can also help you review your IEP or IFSP if you have questions about the goals.

Grant for Exceptional



Thanks to sponsorship from the submarine Officers' Spouses' Association of Washington, the Fort Myer thrift shop, and the Hurlburt Spouses' Club, the Exceptional Families of the Military charity has recently opened a grant to support EFMP-enrolled families with some of the financial burdens that come along with medical appointments. Grants are available for parking (\$10) and for meals (\$10 for adult meal, \$10 for child meal). Grants can be requested online and should be submitted at least 7 days prior to your medical appointment. Proof of appointment is required to receive funding. For more information: [Link](#).

NOTE: The Exceptional Families of the Military charity is not affiliated with the DOD Exceptional Family Member Program. Please access the [website](#) with any questions.

Patient Advocates and Beneficiary Counseling & Assistance Coordinators: Your Guides in Military Healthcare



Have you ever found yourself struggling to figure out what exactly Tricare covers or frustrated after a less-than-stellar appointment at your local military clinic? Did you know there are expert Tricare support specialists for both of those common concerns?

You may never have heard of patient advocates or Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance coordinators (BCACs), but they exist solely to improve your experience with military healthcare. Knowing *who* to contact *when* will allow you to better take control of your healthcare experiences.

Patient advocates may be the better known of the two. Found in every military hospital or clinic, the patient advocate should be your first stop when you have concerns or questions regarding care you or a loved one received. Patient advocates are able to provide and explain the Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. They are responsible for responding to complaints in a timely manner

and can mediate concerns between a medical team and patient. They are experts in the military hospital/clinic policies, procedures and operations and can help you understand them. If you are being seen at a non-military affiliated facility, the facility may have their own patient advocate, patient relations, or customer experience specialist. Before working with a private patient advocate, make sure you know if there are charges for the services.

BCACs assist military families in understanding and accessing TRICARE benefits and services, including getting health care services “out in town.” They can work with patients directly as well as medical staff, regional contractors and claims processors. Reach out to the [BCAC](#) for questions about TRICARE eligibility, enrollment, claims processing delays and other questions specific to TRICARE services.

SEPTA

How to find or form your own Special Education Parent Teacher Association

Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) advocate for students, build community and increase parental involvement through lobbying, fundraising and events. While PTAs are for all families within a school, parents of children with special education needs have additional advocacy needs and benefit from connecting directly with parents who share the same lived experience. In recognition of this need, many school districts also have Special Education Parent Teacher Associations (SEPTA), with multiple schools represented under one organization. SEPTAs often plan events and workshops with consideration specific to special education and disabilities. Within the National Capital Region, several school districts have established SEPTAs, including [Fairfax County Public Schools](#)

and [Arlington County Public Schools](#). If your school/district does not have its own SEPTA but does have an established PTA, consider asking for a subgroup to be made within the PTA. This can add inclusive voices to the PTA conversations and help ensure all families can access events and community-building opportunities. If you would like to form a SEPTA, there are a few recommended steps from the [National PTA organization](#):

1. Identify other interested parents/guardians and stakeholders including teachers, resource professionals and therapists. Don't forget the special education director and a representative from the Board of Education.
2. Contact the local state [PTA](#) to answer all your questions.

Virginia

03, 10, 17, 24 JAN: ACS Fort Belvoir Play Morning

Free. Fort Belvoir, VA. Join the library with your child (5 and under) for a fun community playtime including indoor play, nutritious snack time, and a craft. For more information, call 571-231-7001.

22 JAN, 0900-1500: New Year, New Relationship Refresh

Free. Henderson Hall, building 12. Join Marine Corps Family Team Building for a workshop on communicating effectively, working as a team to solve problems, managing conflicts without damaging closeness, communicating expectations, promoting intimacy and persevering through hard times. Contact 703-693-8906 to register.

29 JAN, 1000-1900: Dr. Temple Grandin Presents at George Mason

Free. Fairfax, VA. Take the change to hear Dr. Temple Grandin, renowned professor and autism advocate on neurodiversity and humane livestock handling. Multiple sessions available. Seating is limited. Reservations required. [Link](#).

Virtual

14 JAN, 1130-1200: Knowledge Nugget: Intro to EFMP & Respite Care

Free. Learn the ins and outs of the Exceptional Family Member Program. Maximize the benefits of EFMP Family Support & learn about the respite care benefit available to eligible families through EFMP. Contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org to register.

21 JAN, 1200-1300 CST: Healing through Art Integrated Self-Help Techniques

Free. In this session, learn an integrated approach to personal growth and healing that utilizes the arts. Participants will learn how the arts interact with trauma and the body, and walk away with some creative tools for responding to stress and trauma. Offered by the Veteran Spouse Network through Blue Star Families. Registration required: [Link](#).

28 JAN, 1130-1200: Inclusive Recreation

Free. The National Capital Region has a plethora of accessible recreation opportunities from wheelchair basketball to adapted climbing. Tune in to learn about them and laws on inclusion. Contact efmphh@usmc-mccs.org to register.

Maryland

11 JAN, 0900-1000: Joint Base Andrews SIBSHOP

Free. For siblings only. Ages 6-17. Sibshops provide siblings of kids with disabilities peer support and resiliency skills in a lively, recreational setting. Refreshments will be provided. Registration required: [Link](#).

15 JAN, 1800-1930: Advocating for Your Child: Educational Support and Disability Awareness.

Free. Baltimore, MD. Join the Enoch Pratt Free Library in discussing disability awareness and advocacy in the educational setting. Winifred Winston from Dyslexia Advocation and the Black and Dyslexic Podcast will facilitate this conversation with panelists of diverse backgrounds, expertise, and perspectives. For more information or to request accommodations, contact 410-396-5494.

16 JAN, 1100-1230: Joint Base Andrews Lego Club

Free. Joint Base Andrews. Library. Every 3rd Thursday join other master builders to create LEGO fun. For more information: [Link](#).

Washington, D.C.

08 JAN, 1100-1200: Strong Start Community Playgroup

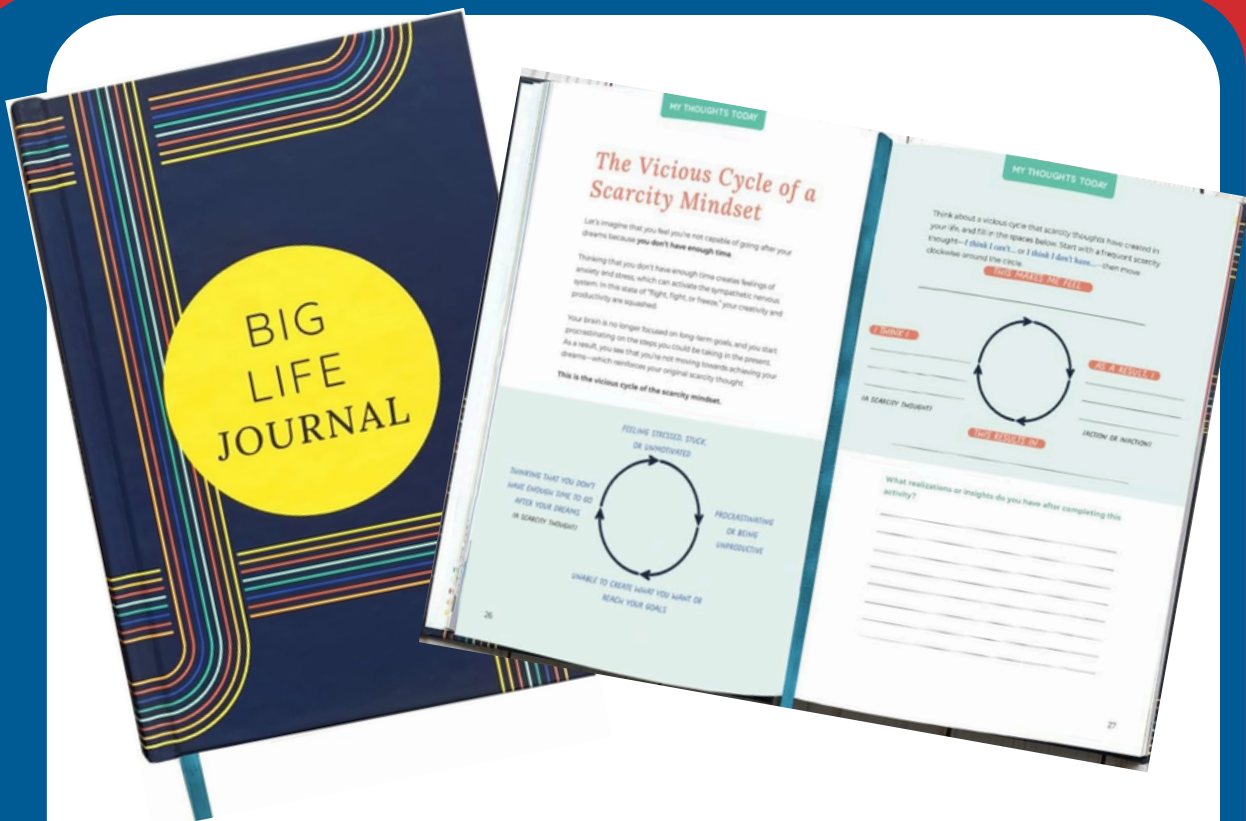
Free. Francis Gregory Library. For ages 0-12 months. The community playgroups are facilitated by early intervention professionals and provide a family-centered, child-interest driven environment for children to interact with their same-age peers, while families receive information about early intervention related topics. Register with Christopher Chapman at 202-741-0792.

11 JAN, 1300-1500: STEAM Saturday at the National Building Museum

Free. Every second Saturday of the month, families are invited to engage in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) activities that relate to the Brick City exhibit. For more information: [Link](#).

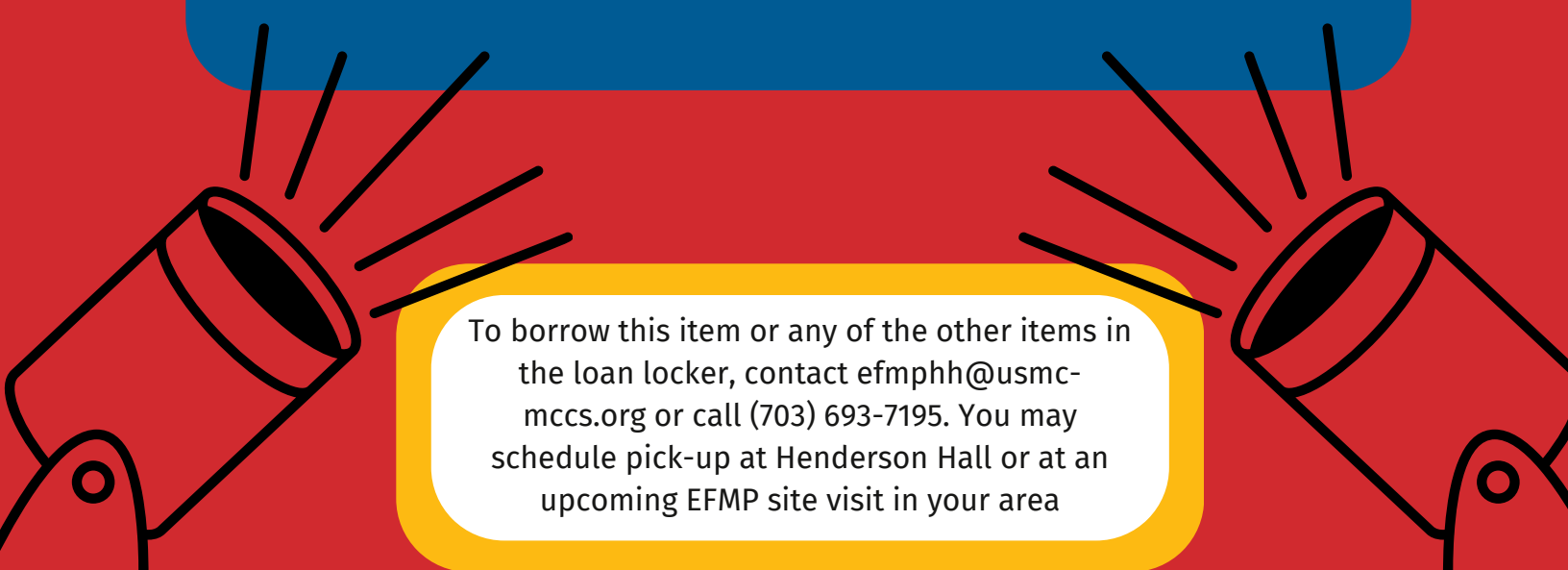
20 JAN, 1000-1400: MLK Day of Service with Anacostia Riverkeeper

Free. Join like-minded volunteers to clean up the Anacostia river. This day of service supports Anacostia Riverkeeper in their efforts to restore Anacostia to a swimmable and fishable river. There are two volunteer shifts and all supplies will be provided. For more information: [Link](#).



If you need a little guidance as you set goals and develop a growth mindset, come pick up a free copy of the Big Life Journal from Henderson Hall (or order a copy from Military OneSource).

This science-based journal includes easy-to-ready pages on different theories and techniques, paired with opportunity for self-reflection activities.



To borrow this item or any of the other items in the loan locker, 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

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](#).

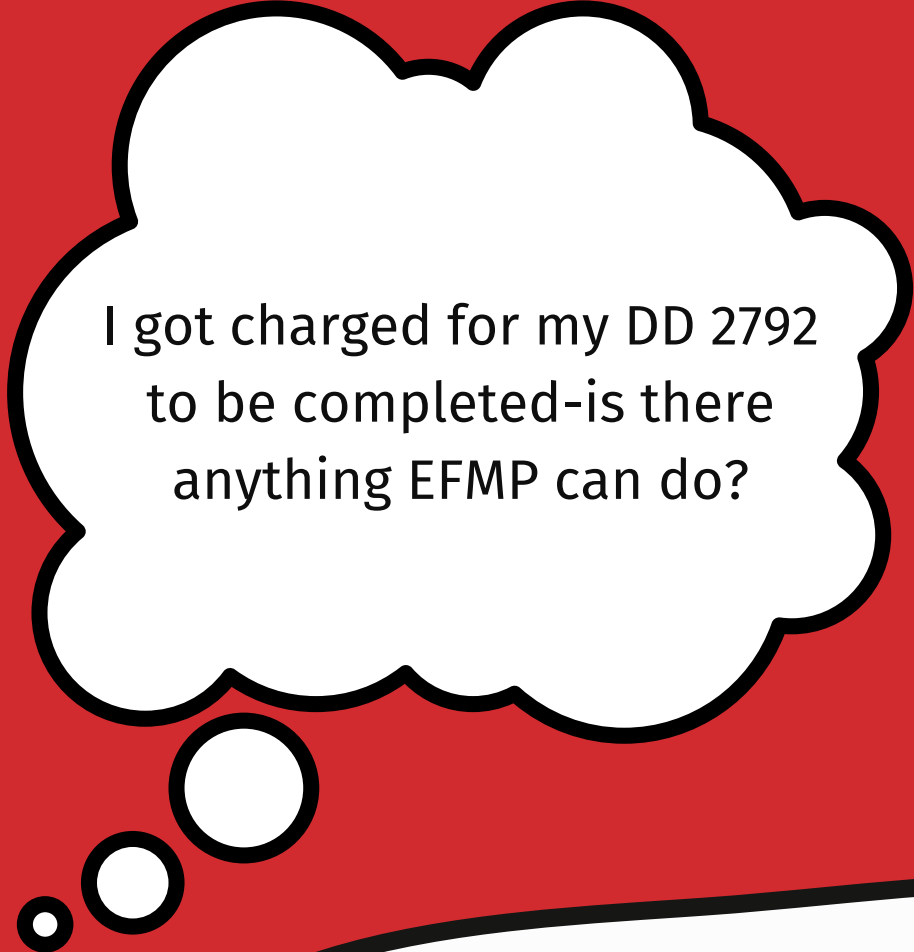
Regal Movies

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

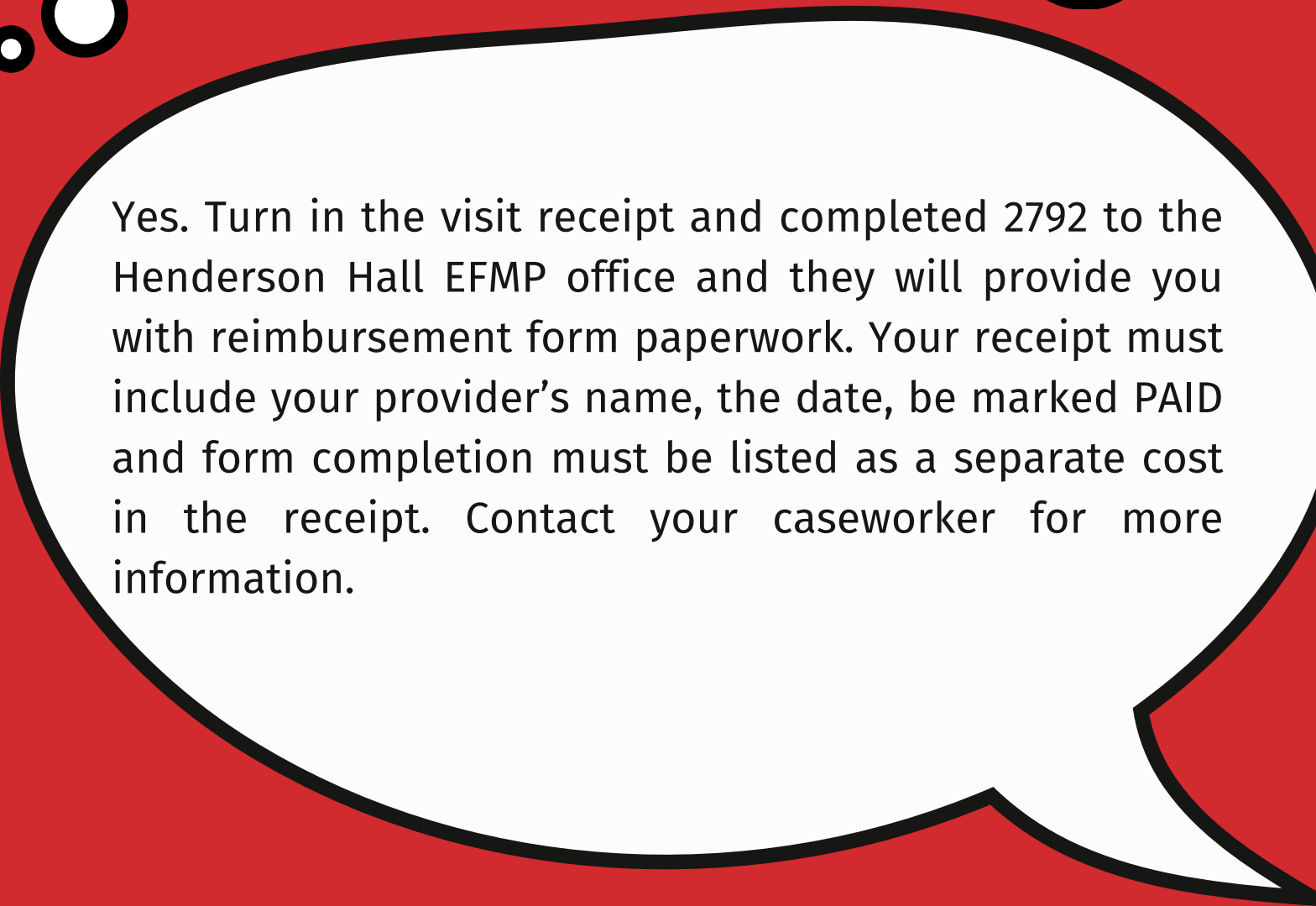
Philadelphia:

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.



I got charged for my DD 2792 to be completed-is there anything EFMP can do?



Yes. Turn in the visit receipt and completed 2792 to the Henderson Hall EFMP office and they will provide you with reimbursement form paperwork. Your receipt must include your provider's name, the date, be marked PAID and form completion must be listed as a separate cost in the receipt. Contact your caseworker for more information.

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

efmphh@usmc-mccs.org

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SMART Targets:

- A. In 2025, our family will improve our fitness together by participating in at least 3/6 of the Henderson Hall Semper Fit fun runs
- B. In 2025, our family will eat together every night
- C. Our family will leave the house on time

ANSWER:

Goal A is a SMART Goal. It is specific (participate in fun runs), measurable (3/6), attainable (50% attendance allows for schedule conflicts, health issues), relevant (family fitness) and timebound (by the end of 2025)

Goal B is specific (eat together), measurable (every night), relevant (togetherness) and timebound (by the end of 2025). Goal B is likely not attainable, depending on the current family baseline. Eating together *every* night is not usually realistic due to work schedules, extracurriculars and other commitments. This goal would be better if it set a smaller target number, like “once a week” or “at least 2/5 work nights” or set a shorter time frame when the family and service member schedules are more predictable like “during holiday block leave.”

Goal C could be more specific. Is this goal measuring just the morning commute or every time the family leaves the home? What time is “on-time?” This goal could be measurable, but without a set leave time (i.e., will leave the house at 6:45 a.m.) or set arrival time (i.e. will arrive at least 5 minutes early to events), it’s unclear. This goal is likely not attainable as-is unless smaller objectives are put in place to incrementally change the family’s current habits (ex. kids will start bedtime routine 10 minutes earlier for x weeks, then 20 minute earlier for x weeks). This goal is relevant. This goal is not timebound.