







# EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM AND SPECIAL EDUCATION







# Protecting the Rights Of Military children In Special Education

through educating and advising the legislative agendas of military service organizations, Department of Defense and public officials.

All children receiving special education are entitled to a free appropriate public education.

The data shows there are systemic problems with special education for military families across the US and the trend is many school systems are not providing the required standards of education.

So, we created the P.R.O.M.I.S.E. Act.



### **Telling Our Stories**

- 17 year old daughter with 21 disabilities including cerebral palsy, ADHD, and anxiety
- Family has been geographically separated for 3 years with 7 deployments
- Parents forced to sue school district, place daughter in private school
- Severe mental, fiscal and emotional burden over 5-year legal battle, \$220K+ in attorney/advocate fees





### **Telling Our Stories**

- Met a would-be Naval
   Aviator while working in
   Washington, DC
- Married in 2006
- Two OCONUS tours
- Military family reporter
- Joined Partners in PROMISE in February 2020



### **BLUF: WHAT IS EFMP?**

- A program that assists military families with special needs
- Special needs includes:
  - Specialized medical and dental care
  - Developmental requirements
  - Special education requirements
  - Accessibility/Adaptive equipment
  - Assistive technology
  - Specific mental health condition





### EFMP TOOLBOX

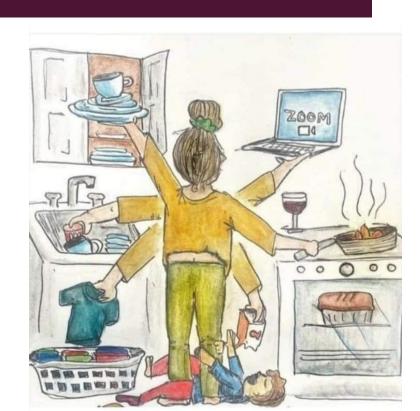
- Identification and enrollment tool
  - MTF EFMP
  - Through self-identification, schools or Navy/civilian medical provider
- Assignment coordination tool
  - NPC EFMP ensure your duty station has adequate and educational support
- Family support tool
  - FFSC case liaisons provides resources
  - Medical and non-medical case management
  - May be eligible for ECHO



### WHAT IF I'M NOT SURE?

### NOT KNOWING IS OKAY

- TALK TO YOUR CARE PROVIDER
- TALK TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER



### WHO SHOULD ENROLL?

- Does your exceptional member:
  - Require special medical services for a chronic condition?
  - Receive ongoing services from a medical specialist?
  - O Have significant behavioral concerns?
  - Receive early intervention or special education services through an individualized education program (IEP) or Individualized family service plan (IFSP)?



If you said YES to any of the above, then it is mandatory to enroll.

#### HOW DO I ENROLL?

- Service member must enroll eligible family member
- Two forms:

DD 2792 Family Member Medical Summary DD 2792-1 Special Education/Early Intervention Summary (dependent children 3-18) or 23 if enrolled in full time school

- Send paperwork to Central Screening Committees (CSC) -
  - Portsmouth, San Diego, Yokosuka
- CSC makes decision, enters into EFMP database at PFRS- 454
- Detailers use EFMP data to aide in recommendations
- Re-eligibility every 3 years

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING DD FORM 2792. FAMILY MEMBER MEDICAL SUMMARY

The DD Form 2792 and attached addenda are completed to identify a family member with special medical needs The addenda to the medical summary are completed only if noted in

Item 10 of the Demographics/Certification section (p.3).

The Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)/ Special Needs Identification and Clearance (SNIAC) Screening Coordinator and the Parent/Guardian or Person of Majority Age sign Items 6.b and 13.b only after all addenda have been completed and the form reviewed for completeness and accuracy.

#### AUTHORIZATION FOR DISCLOSURE (Page 1).

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

Each adult family member must sign for the release of his/her own medical information. The sponsor or spouse cannot authorize the release of information for those dependent family members who have reached the age of majority. Please consult with your military treatment facility (MTF or dental treatment facility (DTF) privacy/HIPAA coordinator about questions regarding authorizations for disclosure.

#### DEMOGRAPHICS/CERTIFICATION (Page 2).

Items 1. Self-explanatory.

Item 2.a. Family Member (FM). Name of family member described in subsequent pages.

Item 2.b. Self-explanatory.

Item 2.c. Applies to Military medical beneficiary only. The Family Member Prefix is assigned when the family member is enrolled in DEERS.

Items 2.d. - i. Self-explanatory.

Items 3.a. - j. All items refer to the sponsor. Self-explanatory.

Item 4.a. Answer Yes if both spouses are on active duty; otherwise

If Yes, complete Items 4.b. - e. All items refer to the active duty spouse.

Iltem 5.a. - d. If Yes, enter Social Security Number, name of sponsor and branch of Service. Military only.

Item 6.a. - c. Parent/Guardian or Person of Majority Age. Parent/guardian or person of majority age certifies that the information contained in the DD. Item 6. Cancer. Self-explanatory 2792 is correct. Individual must ensure that all forms are completed and attached before signing.

Item 7. Purpose for Completing the Form (X one). Initial Screening Enrollment - Review of medical history for the family member noted for the purpose of determining eligibility for EFMP. Request for governmen sponsored travel and/or command sponsorship review of projected location(s). Update to previous evaluation for the family member. Qualifies for a change in EFMP status. Used to diserroll an EFMP when he/she no longer has the medical condition that requires enrollment, or when the EFM no longer qualifies as a dependent.

Item 8. Indicate status of medical condition.

Item 9.a. If yes, complete b. - c.

Item 10. Required Addenda. This addendum is completed only if applicable to the patient described. Indicate in block 1 Yes or No. If Yes proceed with addendum and sign. If No, do not complete addendum. SIGNATURE of Qualified Medical Provider is REQUIRED. Each Military Service may additionally indicate need to complete addenda in item 10, page 3, when determining the purpose of completing this form and may be completed by a different provider than pages 4 - 7, if

Items 11.a. - h. Mark (X) all services being provided to the family member.

Item 12.a. Additional Family Member. Answer Yes if there is any member of the family, not including this patient, who has been identified as having

Item 12.b. Indicate the number of other family members who have been identified as an EFM. Do not include the individual named in this summary in the count of family members.

Items 13.a. - e. EFMP/SNIAC/Screening Coordinator or Advisor name, signature, date, facility address, telephone number. Self-explanatory. Coordinator must ensure that all forms are complete and attached

Item 13.f. This area is reserved for Service-specific guidance to validate the

MEDICAL SUMMARY beginning on page 4 must be completed by a qualified medical professional

Sponsor, spouse, or family member of majority age must sign release authorization on page 1 before this summary is completed.

Item 1.a. - c. Pertains to children under 6 years of age. Self-explanatory.

Items 2.a. - d. Temporary Conditions. Self-explanatory.

Item 3.a. Diagnosis. Enter the diagnosis(es), one per line. With the exception of asthma, cancer or mental health, identify all diagnoses that have been active within the last year. For asthma, cancer or mental health, identify all diagnoses active within the last 5 years.

Item 3.b. ICD or DSM. Enter ICD-9-CM or DSM IV designations.

Item 3.c. Medications and Therapies. Self-explanatory. Additional information may be included in item 11 if more space is required.

Item 3.d. Enter per diagnosis the number of outpatient visits, ER visits, hospitalizations and ICU admissions for the last 12 months.

Item 4. Prognosis. Self-explanatory. Additional information may be included in item 11 if more space is required.

Item 5. Treatment Plan. Self-explanatory. Additional information may be included in item 11 if more space is required.

Item 7. Minimum Health Care Specialty. Codes in the first column are used by Army coding teams only. In column 1, indicate with an X those specialists essential (required) to meet the needs of the patient. For example, if a developmental pediatrician is a child's primary care provider, but a pediatrician can meet the needs, do not mark developmental pediatrician. In column 2, indicate frequency of care. Enter A - Annually; B - Biannually; Q - Quarterly; M - Monthly; Bi - Bimonthly; W - Weekly.

Item 8 - Artificial Openings. Self-explanatory

Item 9 - Environmental/Architectural Considerations. Self-explanatory.

Item 10. Adaptive Equipment/Special Medical Equipment Self-explanatory.

item 11. Comments. Enter any additional information that would assist in determining necessary treatment.

Item 12.a. - f. Provider Information. Official Stamp or printed name and signature of the provider completing this summary, and the date the summary was signed. Self-explanatory.

### EFMP MYTHS - DEBUNKED

- Promotion and selection boards DO NOT look at EFMP Status
- Detailers look at EFMP Status to align orders with EFMP category
- Assignments are case-by-case, OCONUS is still possible
- Marine Corps Study does not hinder career progression
- EFMP is for all family members, not just children

Remember: EFMP is a program to help support YOU



### **NEW ROLE: ADVOCATE**





### SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Federal Law Individuals with Disabilities
   Education Act (IDEA)
- Signed in 1974 and reauthorized in 2004
- Entitles eligible students with disabilities a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)
- Individualized Education Programs (IEP) is the vehicle for delivery
- Governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services



### THE PROBLEM

Schools failing to Military children meet *minimum* "Waiting out" start at an military families standards of educational special education disadvantage No mechanism to enforce special Glaring lack of Acts of reprisal effective resources silence parents education protections

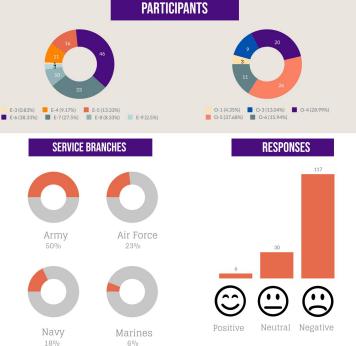
# 2020 MILITARY SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDY



# MILITARY SPECIAL EDUCATION [ 2020 SURVEY RESULTS ]

132,000 military dependents have special needs. Without a solution readiness, retention & children will continue to suffer.





# INCONSISTENT SUPPORT ACROSS SERVICES

Remote enrollment not assured

IEPs not standardized

SLOs and coordinators are not trained – ineffective help

In states that require parental consent to change IEP, public schools sue parents who don't agree to substandard IEP

When parental consent not required, school districts reduce goals and services well below legal standards of education

Legal Assistance: only USMC provides attorneys

### LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY



Districts give inflated grades/awards to placate parents



IEP meetings not collaborative



SPED Advocate is expensive meetings more adversarial



Education
Department is a regulatory agency - no enforcement authority



Many enlisted service members cannot afford to fight



Due process is the only option but outcomes vary

## LACK OF TRANSPARENCY

### Impact Aid Funding

- 1. Payments for Federal Property
- 2. Basic Support Payments
- Military connected children with Severe Disabilities (7003d)
- No auditing or tracking of any funds
- School districts can use Impact Aid for dual language programs, add to their general fund- or to pay attorneys to fight military families

### THE RESULT



MILITARY CHILDREN
WHO ARE NOT
PREPARED FOR LIFE
AFTER SCHOOL
YEARS



MENTALLY,
PHYSICALLY AND
OFTEN FINANCIALLY
EXHAUSTED FAMILIES



DECREASED
MILITARY
READINESS AND
RETENTION

	Directing	Directing a Government Accountability Office (GAO) study that identifies school district usage of 7003(d) impact aid funds
THE SOLUTION?	Ensuring	Ensuring remote school enrollment for all military families
	Tasking	Tasking DoD to provide annual report to Congress on special education challenges facing military children
THE PROMISE ACT	Allowing	Allowing families to maintain IEPs at the gaining duty station after a PCS for up to 6 months
	Requiring	Requiring parental consent to all IEP changes before changes can be implemented
	Providing	Providing special education attorneys and advocates across all service branches in densely populated EFMP locations
	Instructing	Instructing State Education Agencies and the U.S. Department of Education to gather and provide data on special education disputes involving military children

## SUPPORT IS ON THE WAY: EFMP CONGRESSIONAL HEARING

- February 2020 House Armed Services Committee Military Personnel Subcommittee Hearing on EFMP Challenges
- One of two military spouses to testify among three military service organizations
- Discussed our personal experience and PROMISE Act solutions



### 2021 NDAA

- Incorporates many of PROMISE Act initiatives
  - Standardizes EFMP across branches
  - Special education attorneys
  - Surveys
  - GAO Study

#### House



 Provision to provide special education attorneys to EFMP-centric locations. (H.R. 6395, Subtitle G, Section 570A)

#### Senate



- Reporting & data collection mechanism to track disputes filed by servicemembers and their families.
- Detailed GAO study to collect data on military children and their access to Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and tracking the use of federal impact aid. (S. 4049, Subtitle G, Section 564



 Individual Service Plans no longer required, but optional

### 2021 MILITARY SPECIAL EDUCATION SURVEY

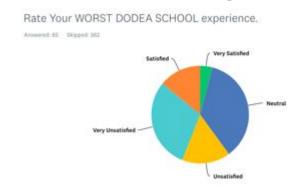


# Why Another Survey?

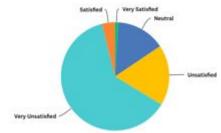
- Military children in special education are under-studied
- Do military families have a harder time recieving a free and appropriate public education (FAPE)?
- What impact do frequent PCS moves have on FAPE?

### 2021 MILITARY SPECIAL EDUCATION SURVEY

"We had a school get rid of supports without a plan to fade them, and then had to 'collect their own data' when my son started suffering and we wanted them back. This process took a year and a half before they had the 'data' to reinstate the support. My argument was that the incoming out of state IEP was all the data that they needed. While all of this was happening, my son exhibited new extreme behaviors that we'd never seen before. His regression is still evident to this day." – Survey Participant



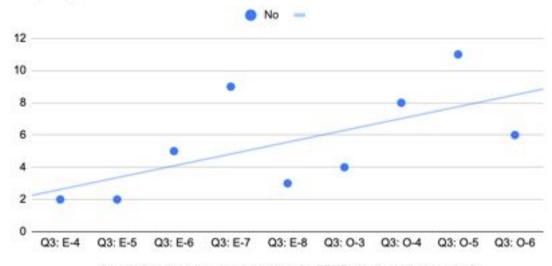




### 2021 MILITARY SPECIAL EDUCATION SURVEY

- Statistically stigma is being reduced in the lower enlisted and officer ranks
- For those who did not register their children in EFMP, the reason most cited for not registering them was "Didn't know about EFMP"
- Knowledge is the key to removing stigma.

Are all of your children who are eligible for EFMP enrolled in the program?



Are all of your children who are eligible for EFMP enrolled in the program?

#### **Special** Education **Checklist**

A GUIDE FOR MILITARY FAMILIES DURING COVID-19 Partners in PROMISE





Partners in PROMISE www.thepromiseact.org

**RESOURCES - COVID** 

SPED Checklist

Organize/Document!

Share Your Story!

#### RECOMMENDATIONS



WAIT FOR PCS DATES

If you are scheduled to PCS, do not offer that information to the IEP Team. All PCS moves are on hold until the summer and that is always subject to change. Your child could be eligible for ESY services during the summer and you will want to preserve your child's ability to receive those services.



BE PROACTIVE

Email your child's case manager or special education teacher, if you have not already. Ask what their goal is during the pandemic and how they will be delivering services. Put in good faith effort to work with the case manager on their plan while noting issues with any part of the proposed plan (lack of internet, lack of technology, work schedules, etc). Did your school district print a Temporary Learning Plan and a PWN without holding an IEP Meeting? That information will be important to refer to during this time.

DO NOT SIGN

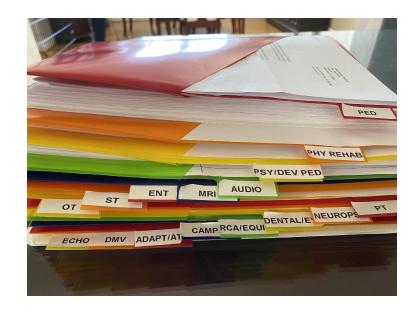
Do not sign any document that waives your child's right to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education during the school closure period. There has been no waiver of IDEA implementation requirements granted by the federal government during this time. Your signature may be used as evidence that you were in gareement to reducing your child's IEP goals and services during this time.

E HERE FOR YOU

W WE CAN HELP

### RESOURCES - COVID - GUIDELINES

- Collaborate as much as possible
- Have you convened an IEP Meeting since COVID began?
- Discuss data from last spring/Use SPED Checklist
- Ask who is delivering the services
- Discuss compensatory services



### RESOURCES - COVID - TIPS AND TRICKS

- Bring someone with you to IEP Meetings
- Record all IEP Meetings, notify school officials prior
- Put everything in writing
- DO NOT SIGN anything in a meeting
- Double check Prior Written Notice
- Know your procedural safeguards



### RESOURCES - NAVY EFMP PILOT PROGRAM

Pilot Program launched in 2 regions

Mid- Atlantic Region (Hampton Roads, VA) Southwest Region (San Diego, CA)

- Hired Special Education Personnel
  - Special Education Attorneys
     Special Education Liaisons (Advocates)
     EFMP Case Liaisons



Providing 3 tiers of Special Education support

# RESOURCES FOR ALL - NAVY SPECIAL EDUCATION BOOT CAMP



- Hosted all service branches at PELE - William and Mary Law School
- Over 140 JAGs, paralegals, and EFMP Coordinators attended
- Basic special education law discussed
- What to expect IEP Meeting, Eligibility Meeting, Due Process
- Each service branch is now offering SPED trainings, forms of legal assistance

# RESOURCES - NAVY EFMP APPLICATION

- Find it in the Navy Locker (applocker.navy.mil) or App Store
- One-stop shop for EFMP
- Enrollment, Benefits, FAQs
- Medical and Educational resources





Welcome to Navy EFMP





The Navy's Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) assists Navy families with special needs to include:

- Specialized Medical and Dental care
- Developmental requirements
- Special Education requirements
- Accessibility/Adaptive equipment
- Assistive Technology devices and services
- Specific mental health conditions

If you have an exceptional family member, EFMP enrollment is mandatory so that the US Navy can provide you and your family support, to include duty station recommendations that have adequate medical and educational facilities for your family.

Navy EFMP Coordinators, located in military hospitals and clinics throughout the fleet (also

### RESOURCES - GENERAL

Military One Source EFMP & Me

Wrightslaw

Partners in PROMISE Resource Partners

### Resource Partners

Our Partners (in PROMISE) have committed to helping our military special needs community. Their areas of expertise range from providing disabilityspecific resources, to advocating for improved services at the federal and state level. Learn more about our partnerships and the resources they provide below.























### RESOURCES - COMMUNITY - THE HELPERS

- \* Military Spouse community
- \* Navy Marine Corps Relief Society
- \* Hospital Patient Advocates



### SPEAK UP



### **NAVY ADVENTURE**

- Self care
- Be flexible
- Engage, engage, Engage
- Find your tribe
- Balance career and family
- Asking for help is not weakness
- Be your child's best advocate



### thePROMISEact.org



**QUESTIONS?** 

info@thePROMISEact.org



















