

MCB Hawaii EFMP

The Exceptional 'Ohana

April 2024

Spotlight on SPIN – Special Parent Information Network

The Special Parent Information Network (SPIN) is a parent to parent organization in Hawaii that provides information, support, and referral to parents of children and young adults with disabilities and the professionals who serve them.

Parenting a child with special needs can be a puzzling journey. SPIN helps families put together the pieces of that puzzle, so they can have a clear vision of where they are heading.

Visit SPIN's website at <https://spinhawaii.org/>

and find information on:

- ◆ Family Support Groups
- ◆ Information & Referrals
- ◆ Health Services
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Conflict resolution
- ◆ Newsletters and infographics
- ◆ Parent resource guide
- ◆ ...and more!

It's not too late to register for SPIN's Annual Conference on 6 April 2024 from 9:00AM - 3:30PM at the UH Manoa Ballroom! EFMP will be there!

Windward Community Children's Council is sponsoring military families & registration is FREE!

To register, contact EFMP at 808-257-0290

Contact Us:

Main: 808-257-0290

Fax: 808-257-1650

Email: mcbh.efmp@usmc.mil

Facebook & Instagram: @EFMP Hawaii



HAWAII CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY CENTER
FAMILY FIELD TRIP

Join EFMP at the Hawaii Children's discovery center for a fun morning on April 19 @ 10:00am. The Children's Center provides an environment that encourages children to use their senses to understand the world around them.

Their exhibits include: Rainforest Adventures, Fantastic You, Hawaiian Rainbows, and more. Their goal is to provide positive self-concept and create an understanding of Hawaii's multicultural community and beyond.

It's interactive so that children can explore the concepts through hands on activities.

Admission is \$10.00 for Adults, Children under 1 are free.

Interested in joining us?

Please RSVP by Friday, April 12th.

Call 808-496-0290

Or email mcbh.efmp@usmc.mil



EFMP Exceptional
Family Member
Program

Early Identification Makes a Difference

Autism impacts an individual throughout the lifespan. However, research shows that early diagnosis can lead to improved quality of life. For more information on developmental milestones, visit the CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early" site.

Here are some signs to look for:

- Repetition in language or movement, such as repeating the same word or sounds, hand flapping, or any repeated movement
- Atypical nonverbal communication, including avoiding eye contact, giving few facial expressions, or having monotonous speech
- Prefers solitary or parallel play rather than engaging in associative or cooperative play with other children
- Extremely distressed by changes, including new foods or changes in schedule
- Preference for predictable, structured play over spontaneous or make-believe play
- Strong, persistent interest on specific topic, part of a toy, or item

To learn more about autism at every age, visit [our page about Autism Through the Lifespan](#)

April Is
Autism
Awareness
Month

What is Autism?

Autism is a complex, lifelong developmental disability that typically appears during early childhood, which can impact a person's social skills, communication, relationships, and self-regulation. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum condition" that affects people differently to varying degrees.

While there is currently no known single cause of autism, early diagnosis helps a person receive the support and services that they need, which can lead to a quality life filled with opportunity.

Characteristics & Diagnosis

According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V), which is used by clinicians to diagnose autism, "core features of autism must be present in early childhood but may not fully manifest until social demands exceed the person's capacity to cope with them, and challenges may be masked by learned coping strategies".

Autism is characterized in the DSM-V by:

Persistent differences in communication, interpersonal relationships, and social interaction across different environments

⇒ **What this can look like:** Being nonverbal or having atypical speech patterns, having trouble understanding non-verbal communication, difficulty making and keeping friends, difficulty maintaining typical back-and-forth conversations

Restricted and repetitive behavior, patterns, activities and interests

⇒ **What this can look like:** Repeating sounds or phrases (echolalia), repetitive movements, preference for sameness and difficulty with transition or routine, rigid or highly restricted and intense interests, extreme sensitivity to or significantly lower sensitivity to various sensory stimuli.

To learn more about receiving an autism diagnosis, visit the Autism Society at <https://www.autism-society.org/what-is/>

Celebrate Your Military Child

April is Month of the Military Child! Sponsored by the Department of Defense Military Community and Family Policy, this month celebrates military children of all ages by supporting and honoring them for the sacrifices they make.

Military children have a lot of challenges to overcome and stress to bear. Being the child of a parent in the military usually means having to deal with change on a regular basis, which can prove difficult for both younger and older children. There's frequent moves and relocations, which often means having to start a new school, make new friends, and get accustomed to a new state or country, and perhaps even a new language. When a parent is deployed, these brave children go months on end without one or sometimes, both parents. There is also the added anxiety and concern for a parent's safety, especially if he or she is deployed to a country in turmoil.

This can be a lot for a child to take in, and by letting them know that we support them, they'll know that they are never alone in their journey as a military child. (www.time4learning.com)

Ideas to celebrate YOUR military child:

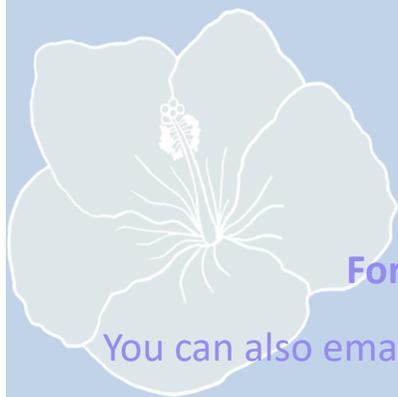
- ◆ Wear purple! Spread awareness of the sacrifices military children make, and let your child know you're wearing purple in their honor.
- ◆ Have a "date night"! Cook a special dinner together and get dressed up. You can even decorate to make the date more special.
- ◆ Write your child a letter or draw them a picture of what they mean to you!



Military kids are like dandelions:
They bloom where they are planted.

Themilitarywifeandmom.com





Training & Events

For event registration, call us at 808-257-0290.

You can also email us at mcbh.efmp@usmc.mil or contact your case worker.

Please register at least 1 day prior to the event.

DATE	TIME	TOPIC	LOCATION
April 2	2:00-4:00PM	Celebrating Autism Awareness— Join EFMP & CYP in celebrating Autism Awareness with fun Activities and Resources	MCBH— building 5082 in the Grassy area behind the building
April 18	11:00AM	Recreation Inclusion— Learn more about what inclusion looks like, and who benefits from inclusion. We will also discuss legal responsibilities and go over local community recreation resources.	Virtual on Teams Contact our office to RSVP and get the link to join.
April 19	10:00AM	Family Fun Field Trip— Join EFMP in our field trip to the Children’s Discovery Center.	Call the EFMP Office to RSVP by Wednesday, 17 April
EVERY TUESDAY	8:30- 11:30 AM	EFMP Family support services available at a second location	Branch Health Clinic Kaneohe Bay

Aloha

unconditional love

This month, we focus on the Hawaiian value of Aloha. Aloha is an essence of being: Love, peace, compassion, and mutual understanding of respect. Aloha means living in harmony with the people and land around you with mercy, sympathy, grace and kindness.

It is commonly used as a simple greeting, but has a deeper cultural and spiritual significance.