

# EFMP Coalition Launched

March 2021



Although the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) represents over 130,000 military-connected family members there has not been a unified voice that addresses the educational and medical concerns of family members until now. In March 2021, Partners in PROMISE, Exceptional Families of the Military, Military Kids – Special Education Alliance, Military Special Needs Network and the Modern Military Association of America met to form the EFMP Coalition.

EFMP Coalition unites existing EFMP-focused nonprofits who are helping to advance the cause of military families enrolled in the program due to medical and/or education concerns.

*"Despite tremendous progress made in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts, the disability community is often not included in the conversation," said Michelle Norman, founder and Executive Director of Partners in PROMISE.*

EFMP families need a unified voice more than ever, as the negative impacts of COVID-19 have disproportionately affected EFMP family members. *"We need to work together to ensure our families have access to reliable and medical care and educational services," said Jennifer Barnhill, Chief Operating Officer for Partners in PROMISE. "COVID-19 has flipped normality on its head, even for military families, but the denial of services should not be part of our 'new normal.'" The Coalition is closely monitoring all issues that impact EFMP families with special attention being paid to:*

AREA OF CONCERN	WHAT WE ARE HEARING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The FY21 NDAA establishes programmatic standardization of the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) across the service branches, provision of military special education attorneys, and assignment coordination.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support and services have stark differences across branches, especially at joint base locations, with the EFMP assignment coordination remaining a significant pain point.</li><li>Families report push back from military installations who do not have official "marching orders" for legal assistance, families are being denied supports.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The reduction in uniformed military medical billets and transition from Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) to the Defense Health Agency (DHA).</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Current civilian healthcare systems, especially specialty providers, are not capable of accepting the volume of requests, exacerbating documented delays in care.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Tricare's proposed reduction of ABA services for autistic family members.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decisions are being made with flawed data, with cost-savings vs. family care as a outcome.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Access to consistent healthcare for LGBTQ family members.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Families are reporting unclear EFMP registration processes and standardization for transgender youth and a lack of trans inclusive care and knowledgeable medical and mental healthproviders.</li></ul>



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Our mission priorities are focused on serving LGBTQ service members, veterans and families, including those in the Exceptional Family Member Program," said Jennifer Dane, Executive Director, Modern Military Association of America. "We proudly join this Coalition and are confident that our collective action will bring about positive changes for EFMP families."

Servicemembers should not have to fight a battle at the homefront. The Coalition is here to help families advocate for their right to basic healthcare and education. "In February 2020, the House Armed Service Committee promised our families that there would be systematic change in EFMP," said Austin Carrigg, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Exceptional Families of the Military. "We are hopeful that the newly formed Coalition will give EFMP connected families a 'seat at the table' as lawmakers and military officials work on Tricare and EFMP reform."

The Coalition is hopeful that this increased attention to the Exceptional Family Member Program and inclusion effort that have been taken by the DoD and political leadership will result in significant benefits for family members and are excited to have the support of so many other organizations within the military family community.

To request an interview with a member of the EFMP Coalition or for additional information please email [info@thepromiseact.org](mailto:info@thepromiseact.org).

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### **Partners in PROMISE**

Partners in PROMISE was founded in January 2020 by four mothers to Protect the Rights Of Military children In Special Education (PROMISE). Focusing on a strategy of educating and advocacy, Partners in PROMISE is the link between special needs families, established military service organizations, the Department of Defense, and legislators, working towards collaborative solutions to complex problems.

Website: <https://thepromiseact.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PartnersinPROMISE>

Twitter: @PartnersinPROM1 - <https://twitter.com/PartnersinPROM1>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/partners-in-promise>

### **Exceptional Families of the Military**

Exceptional Families of the Military's mission is to connect military families with Disabilities, Special Healthcare Needs, or additional Educational needs from all branches of the service in order to navigate within the Exceptional Family Member Programs and identify areas of improvement that affect the families we represent. Using the data we collect while simultaneously assisting our families, we endeavor to create long-lasting systematic changes in the laws and regulations that affect EFMP families. We look forward to the continued collaboration of the newly formed EFMP coalition to further improve the lives of all EFMP families.

Website: [www.ExceptionalMilitaryFam.com](http://www.ExceptionalMilitaryFam.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ExceptionalFamiliesMilitary>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/exceptional-families-of-the-military>

Instagram @EFMVoice: <https://www.instagram.com/efmvoice/>

Twitter: @EFMVoice: <https://twitter.com/efmvoice>

### **Military Kids - Special Education Alliance**

Military Kids-Special Education Alliance founded by a Military Kid with the mission of ensuring military connected students with special needs have equal access to public education. Supporting military connected students through education, advocacy, and homefront accountability.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/militarykidsspecialeducation>

### **Military Special Needs Network**

Military Special Needs Network was founded in 2010 as a grassroots organization for families who have a dependent with an identified medical, educational, or behavioral need. Our mission includes providing peer-to-peer support, education, and information for active-duty families enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) as well as assisting Reserve, Guard, and Retired families. Military Special Needs Network offers many online groups and programs and serves as an inclusive voice for the diverse needs of our military families.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/MilitarySpecialNeedsNetwork>

EFMP Support Group: <https://www.facebook.com/EFMPsupport>

EFMP for Adults Group: <https://www.facebook.com/EFMP4adults>,

EFMP to Retirement Group: <https://www.facebook.com/EFMPtoRetirement>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/militaryspecialneedsnetwork/>

Instagram: @MilitarySpecialNeedsNetwork

Twitter: @milspecialneeds: <https://twitter.com/milspecialneeds>

### **Modern Military Association of America**

The Modern Military Association of America (MMAA) is the nation's largest and oldest non-profit organization for LGBTQ service members, military spouses/partners, veterans, caregivers, and allies. Find out more at [www.ModernMilitary.org](http://www.ModernMilitary.org)

Facebook: @modernmilitary - <https://www.facebook.com/modernmilitary>

Instagram: @lgbtq\_military - [https://www.instagram.com/lgbtq\\_military](https://www.instagram.com/lgbtq_military)

Twitter: @LGBTQ\_Military - [https://twitter.com/LGBTQ\\_Military](https://twitter.com/LGBTQ_Military)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/modernmilitary>