



# Department of the Air Force RESILIENCE

SUPPORTING BOTH OUR AIR AND SPACE FORCES AND FAMILIES



Prevention - #20

Personal/Family

## **SPECIAL FAMILY NEEDS**

Life stressors can be compounded for members with special needs family members, particularly when balancing the treatment and care associated with the special need. Developmental irregularities, chronic medical conditions, and special educational needs can create a significant imbalance between demands on the family and the family's ability to meet those demands. The totality of these demands can affect the military caregiver and other members within the family which can lead to work and life imbalance. Special needs situations can be particularly stressful, and require additional attention and coordination. Families may find it difficult to navigate the community resources available to improve the quality of life for everyone. Additional stressors such as a lack of personal time, hospitalizations, and chronic illness can be extremely stressful events for families.

### **Signs Wingmen Should Know/Look For**

- Any indication that personnel or family members are not coping well, such as signs of stress, depression, or anxiety
- Decreased work performance or changes in social functioning
- Comments suggesting problems at home or difficulty meeting responsibilities

### **Recommended Wingman Action**

- Encourage open communication so personnel feel comfortable discussing the family situation
- Periodically ask how the family is coping and if medical and educational support needs are being met

### **Leadership Considerations**

- Enrollment in EFMP is mandatory for all active duty military members when a family member meets criteria IAW DoD Instruction 1315.19
- Department of the Air Force Exceptional Family Member Program policy is managed by HQ Air Forces Services who oversees the three components of EFMP and include: EFMP-Medical, EFMP-Assignments and EFMP-FS (Family Support). All work together to provide comprehensive and coordinated support to families
- The Air Force Medical Readiness Agency (AFMRA) EFMP-M is the Air Force Medical Service function and supports the EFMP through screening, enrollment and assignment coordination through the Family Member Travel Screening process
- The Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) EFMP-A function considers the medical and educational needs of the family when processing an Airman for an assignment
- EFMP-FS is the community support function provided by Airman & Family Readiness Centers to enhance the quality of life of special needs family members. Services are available for all DoD ID cardholders and may include the completion of the Family Needs Assessment, assistance with enrollment in EFMP Respite Care and connection to local, state and federal community support resources
- Allow adequate time for medical appointments and other obligations
- Ensure dependent care plans and Special Needs Assignments Coordination (SNAC) files are updated as the family member's condition changes