

March 2026

FEC Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities NEWSLETTER



Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a time to celebrate our children’s strengths and recognize that children learn, communicate, and grow in their own unique way. Disabilities may be visible or hidden, temporary or lifelong, and they are a natural part of the diversity in our families, schools, and communities. Learning about disabilities helps reduce stigma and encourages everyone to support inclusion.

This month also reminds us of the importance of belonging. When children feel accepted and valued, they gain confidence and are better able to learn and thrive.

Families play a key role by modeling empathy, encouraging self-advocacy, and teaching that differences are to be celebrated. By working together, families, schools, and communities can ensure all children have the support and opportunities they need. Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is a reminder that inclusion is an ongoing commitment to understanding, compassion, and celebrating every child.



MARCH IS DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

Upcoming FEC Events



Special Education Navigation Training: Join us on **Wednesday, March 18th**. Come learn how to improve Home to School communication with the *Communication Bridge - Teachers & Families*.

Zoom sessions: 9:30 AM–10:30 AM or 6:00 PM–7:00 PM.

Parent/Caregiver Support Group: Join us on **Wednesday, March 25th**, to share understanding, encouragement, and support with other parents and caregivers of neurodiverse children.

Zoom sessions: 9:30 AM–10:30 AM or 6:00 PM–7:00 PM.

Email fec@changingtidesfs.org for Zoom links to the training or support group.



PCP = Person-Centered Planning: A process that puts your child with a disability in the center of their own education plan and future goals. It focuses on their education, supports, and life after high school. Instead of starting with what your child can’t do or what services are usually offered, PCP begins with what your child can do, what they like, what they want, their dreams, and their goals. It helps your child have a real voice in decisions about school and life (as much as they are able). This builds self-confidence and makes plans more personal and exciting. PCP creates stronger, happier paths forward for students and families. Contact one of our FEC Navigators for more information to help you try it in your child’s IEP.

Visit our Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities Resource Padlet for helpful information on Special Education, Parenting, Early Start services, training opportunities, and both local and virtual Events. Check back regularly to stay informed and up to date!



Click or Scan for FEC Resource Padlet

Open Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Closed 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

2249 Myrtle Avenue
Eureka, CA 95501

Phone (707) 444-8293
FEC@changingtidesfs.org
www.changingtidesfs.org

Community Spotlight

Tri-County Independent Living (TCIL) has been a strong and steady presence in our community since 1978, supporting individuals and families across Humboldt, Del Norte, and Trinity Counties. As a nonprofit Center for Independent Living, TCIL is led by people with disabilities and offers non-residential services for individuals of all ages and disability types.

At its heart, TCIL believes in the power of independent living. Their team connects people to meaningful resources, provides guidance and advocacy, and works to make our community more accessible for everyone. Through this work, they help individuals with disabilities maintain control over their lives and fully participate in the world around them.



To explore their full range of services, including assistive technology, housing assistance, and advocacy, you can reach their team by calling 833-866-8444 or visiting one of their local offices: Eureka Main Office at 139 5th St. or their Del Norte office in Crescent City.

Parenting Tip ~

As parents, we sometimes find ourselves navigating comments or questions about our child who learns and thinks differently. While not everyone knows the right words, you can respond in ways that feel calm, confident, and empowering. *Here are 5 tips:*

1. **Don't overexplain.** Sharing some information about how your child learns and thinks differently can be a good thing, but giving too much detail can be confusing. Keep it short and simple.
2. **Highlight strengths.** Center the conversation on what your child does well. When people hear about your child's gifts and talents, it helps shift the focus from disability to ability and potential.
3. **Say only what you're comfortable sharing.** You get to decide what's private. If someone asks about your child's therapy or services, you can simply say, "It's going well, thank you."
4. **It's okay to redirect.** You don't have to engage in every conversation. If someone offers advice, you might respond with, "We've explored what works best for our family, but I appreciate your concern."
5. **Stand firm with kindness.** If a comment feels hurtful or intrusive, it's okay to be direct and respectful: "Thanks for caring—we've got this."

You are your child's greatest advocate, continue to lead with confidence, warmth, and pride!❤️

We Value Your Feedback!



Please Click or Scan the Code to visit our FEC Virtual Suggestion Board and let us know what you would like to see more of at the Family Empowerment Center for Disabilities

Not on our mailing list?
Join by sending a request to
FEC@changingtidesfs.org

Local Events for Kids & Families

FREE ~ Telonicher Marine Lab ~ Monday-Friday 9:00 AM-4:30 PM. Open Weekends from 11:00 AM-4:00 PM, 570 Ewing St, Trinidad. Explore local ocean and beach ecosystems with a Marine Naturalist. Each tour includes activities.

FREE ~ Stories and Songs ~ Saturday, March 12th, 10:00 AM-10:30 AM McKinleyville Branch Library, 1606 Pickett Road McKinleyville. Enjoy preschool stories and songs.

FREE ~ Parent Cafe ~ March 24th, 5:30-7:30 PM, Manila CRC- 1611 Peninsula Dr, Arcata. Join fellow parents in learning to strengthen relationships with children, family, and community. Dinner and childcare provided. Please call 707-444-8293 to RSVP.

FREE ~ Discovery Museum Sensory Night ~ March 24th -5:00 PM-6:30 PM Discovery Museum- 612 G St, Eureka. For special needs families in partnership with Humboldt Autism Alliance. Please click here to [SIGN UP](#).

Bilingual Spanish Services Available
Community Resource and Referrals
Contact us for more information about our services!

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