



Week 4: September 19 -24 Teach Youth About Preparedness

Youth Preparedness

Teach Emergency Preparedness in the Classroom

Emergency situations can occur at any time or place. These may include natural or man-made disasters such as earthquakes, wildfires, or residential fires. When these situations do arise, people have the best chance at survival when everyone, including children, knows what to do to ensure their own safety. Teachers have a unique opportunity and an obligation to impart their emergency preparedness knowledge on to their students, particularly in areas where disasters are common, so they can take appropriate and potentially life-saving action during a disaster, even if their parent is not present. Educational videos and drills are some of the ways in which you can instruct children about the basics of how to respond when emergencies happen.

Earthquakes

Earthquakes generally strike without warning and have the ability to leave widespread damage in their wake. When earthquakes occur, children can easily be taken by surprise when things begin to shake and



fall. To prepare children for this natural disaster, teach students how to seek cover away from windows and under desks or tables. It's important to instruct children to further protect themselves by bending their heads to their knees and covering their necks with their hands. Articles of clothing such as coats may also be used as shields to prevent injuries from shattered glass and debris. Classroom drills can allow children to practice how to do this quickly. As a part of their training, children should also be taught that when they are indoors, they should remain inside and under cover until at least a full minute has passed without further shaking. Those who are outside when an earthquake starts should not try to run inside buildings; instead, move to open land far away from potential hazards such as buildings and power lines.

House Fires

Children need to know what to do when fires break out in the home or at school. Explain to students that first and foremost, they need to know where the escape routes are and to get out of the building as fast as possible. Whether in school or at home,



these escape routes should be clearly designated so that they can be memorized easily; the paths of escape are typically doors or windows. Encourage students to speak with their parents about creating a home fire escape plan for their family. Another important point for children to remember is to avoid opening doors where they see smoke or where the door knobs or walls are hot. Children should also stay low to the ground and cover their mouths and noses with clothing to filter out smoke. If the only way out of a burning building is a window, children may need to use furniture or a heavy object to break the window, put clothing or bedding over the window frame to protect against injury from broken glass, and then climb out. Remember, if a child comes into contact with a fire, the first thing to do is stop, drop, and roll while covering the face, as this will prevent the fire from spreading and doing serious injury.



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Tornadoes

Powerful tornadoes can strike with very little warning and pose a severe risk that children need to be made aware of. Students should be taught that whenever there is a hurricane nearby, or even if they are in the middle of a thunderstorm or a hail storm, there is a chance that a tornado can happen. Teach your students to watch for a sky with a greenish color or the presence of a funnel-shaped cloud that is either beginning to form or has touched down on the ground somewhere nearby. A more ominous sign of a tornado's presence is the sound of a powerful roar. If a tornado is suspected or known to have touched down while a child is near a building or indoors, they should immediately move to a closet, the lowest room in the building, or a room with no windows and seek cover under a table. After a tornado has passed, kids should know to avoid power lines of any sort, stay away from collapsed buildings or downed trees, and avoid walking through water. Children should also contact a trusted adult as quickly as possible so that people know they are OK.



Violent' Minnesota tornado packed 170 mph winds.

Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Winter storms and cold snaps bring with them the risk of hypothermia. During extreme winter conditions, proper training will help children recognize the importance of staying indoors and as warm as possible. This means eating regularly and drinking adequate amounts of water to help the body produce its own heat. If a child does go outdoors, they should avoid staying out for too long and change out of wet clothing as soon as possible to preserve body heat. While outdoors, wear multiple layers of clothing, which provide insulation. Wear thick socks, gloves, and a winter cap to prevent heat from leaving the body from the extremities.

Additional ways to prepare:

- [How to Prepare for Emergencies](#)
- [Youth Emergency Preparedness Curriculum: Ready Kids](#)
- [Prepare My Family for a Disaster](#)
- [Evacuating Yourself and Your Family](#)
- [Prepare for an Emergency](#)
- [Earthquake Safety Activities](#)(PDF)
- [Emergency Preparedness and You](#)
- [Guidance: Preparing for Emergencies](#)
- [Emergency Management: How to Prepare for Emergencies](#)
- [Medication Tips and Tools: Preparing for Emergencies](#)
- [Emergency Preparedness for Children](#)
- [Teaching Children to Be Prepared in Emergencies](#)



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Additional ways to prepare continued:

- [Let's Get Ready: Planning Together for Emergencies](#) (PDF)
- [Getting Your Family Prepared for a Disaster](#)
- [Early Childhood Disaster-Related Resources for Children and Families](#)
- [A Disaster Preparedness Activity Book](#)(PDF)
- [10 Tips for Keeping Children Safe in a Tornado](#)(PDF)
- [Fire Safety](#)
- [How to Prepare to Evacuate From a Wildfire](#)
- [What Do I Need to Know to Become a Flood-Safe Kid?](#)
- [Extreme Cold](#)(PDF)
- [Winter Storm Safety Tips](#)
- [What to Do During a Home Fire](#)
- [Tornado Safety and Preparedness for Adults and Kids](#)

BE READY FOR HURRICANE SEASON



Before the 2020 hurricane season, there are actions you can take to be ready.

TODAY YOU CAN:



Make a list of supplies for your hurricane kit. Check to see what you already have. Restock during the next several weeks.



Organize important documents and confirm coverage with your insurance agency.



Determine if you live in a hurricane evacuation zone. Make a plan of action with multiple options.