



LA National Guard Emergency Management Bulletin

August 2023
Volume FY23 Issue 11



Purpose

The National Guard (NG) Emergency Management (EM) program is responsible for all activities and operations related to preparing for, mitigating the potential effect of, preventing, responding to, and recovering from all multi-agency and/or multi-jurisdictional emergencies on or impacting NG installations nationwide. The NG EM Program functions within an all-hazards environment consisting of all natural, technological (man-made), and terrorism hazards.

Vision

To provide the NG EM services when and where they are needed with the joint and interagency capacity necessary to effectively and efficiently protect the NG community and mission capabilities from all hazards.

Mission

To provide integrated and comprehensive NG EM services necessary to protect our community and mission capabilities from all hazards in a cost effective, implementable, and sustainable manner through resiliency.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO KNOW

**EMERGENCY
Fire-Police-Ambulance
911**

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GWLC EM Manager
christopher.a.letendre.nfg@army.mil

CPT Jason Medcalf 318-299-4151
Camp Minden EM Manager
jason.a.medcalf.mil@army.mil

LA National Guard Joint Operation
Center 888-278-8748

GOHSEP 225-925-7500

American Red Cross
1-800-RED-CROSS

Federal Emergency Management
Agency 1-800-621-FEMA

National Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222

National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

This month's bulletin will focus helping children cope with disasters and traumatic events. Regardless of your child's age, he or she may feel upset or have other strong emotions after an emergency. Some children react right away, while others may show signs of difficulty much later. How a child reacts, and the common signs of distress can vary according to the child's age, previous experiences, and how the child typically copes with stress.

Children react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with a disaster calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared.

Please use the information in this month's bulletin to better prepare your kids for disaster. Always Remember "Be Prepared".

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LANG EM WEB PAGE:
<http://geauxguard.la.gov/resources/emergency-management/>





Helping Children Cope with Disasters and Traumatic Events From Michigan Medicine, University of Michigan

Disasters like tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, fires, or violent acts can be very scary for children. Children may relate what they see on the news to themselves and their lives. How children understand the event depends on their stage of development.

Pre-School

Young children often mix up real and pretend. They might not know quite what happened in the disaster, but they will know that people around them are upset or sad. When preschool children see the news on TV, they may not know that the news often shows the same event again and again. They may think the scary event keeps taking place.



When disaster or trauma directly affects children this age, they will need help adjusting to loss, change, and fears. Young children rely on parents, family and teachers to help them through tough times. They may regress and start to suck their thumb again or wet the bed. Problems with eating, sleeping, and complaints of pain are also common. They may be scared of monsters, strangers or the dark. They may also act out or pull into themselves. Sometimes they want to talk about the event a lot and even add parts that did not really happen.

School age

School-age children can understand more about the disaster than preschool children can. They may want to hear about what happened from trusted adults and receive comfort. Children this age can feel personally affected by news stories.

When the disaster affects them directly, they may have many of the same responses as preschool children. They may also pull into themselves, refuse to go to school, do poorly in school, act out, or have trouble paying attention.

Teens

Teens aged 12-17 will understand the event much better than younger kids. They may want to share their feelings and thoughts about issues raised by the disaster.

When the disaster affects teens directly, they may react to the stress with aches and pains, pulling into themselves, acting out at school or home, seeking attention or taking up risky behavior like using drugs or alcohol. Teens are concerned about what their friends think and may act less engaged in the family. But they still count on their family's love and support being there when they need it. Older teens may want to take action and get involved in helping.





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How to Help Your Child

Children's questions

- Answer questions at a level the child can understand.
- Answer questions honestly, but don't dwell on details.
- Do not be afraid to admit that you cannot answer all of their questions.
- Don't give more information than your child asks for.
- Don't force discussion on children; instead, follow their lead.
- Be available. Provide ongoing chances for children to talk. They probably will have more questions as time goes on.

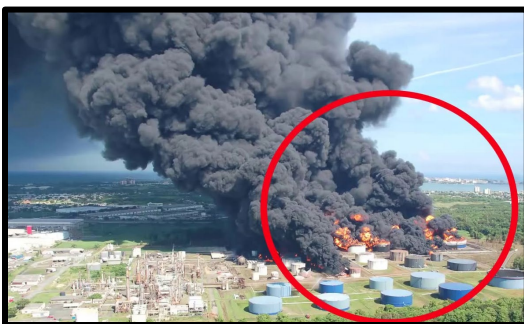


Dealing with feelings

- Teach kids that all emotions are okay. A range of feelings is normal. Feelings can be very strong.
- Help your children voice their feelings and pay attention to what they say.
- Allow children to discuss other fears and concerns about unrelated issues. This is a good chance to explore these issues also.
- Give lots of physical reassurance like hugs and cuddles.
- Keep your family routine.
- Be careful not to focus on blame for the disaster.
- Explain that the chance of a disaster happening to your child is very small.

Handling TV news

- Watch the news with your children that gives a chance to see your kids' reaction and make sure they understand well.
- Provide children with chances to talk about what they see on TV and to ask questions.
- Don't let kids watch the news footage over and over. It can make them more stressed and fearful, or dull their feelings about the event.
- Don't assume that just because you don't have the news on at home your child has not heard about or seen the news elsewhere.
- Make sure they are not keeping fearful feelings to themselves.





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How to Help Your Child (Continued)

- **Take care of yourself**
 - Be aware of your own feelings.
 - If you are having trouble coping, find support.
- **Find the positive and take action**
 - Help children find the good things within the tragedy. For example, when people help each other, take heroic action, and donate medicine and food to survivors.
 - Show your children how the world organizes to work together. For example, through the International Red Cross or the United Nations Relief Fund.
 - Teach children about the science used to predict, stop and deal with natural disasters.
 - Make a family emergency plan, so your kids know your family is ready, and they know what to do.
 - Help your child find ways to show their care for survivors of disaster, especially other children.



Risk Factors

Some kids are at higher risk for problems in coping with disaster. Children at risk may:

- Have reacted strongly in the past to disasters.
- Live in or have relatives in places that have had natural disasters.
- Have had stressful events in their family, like divorce, serious illness, or death of a family member or friend.
- Have an emotional or learning problem.



To help these kids, reassure them. Explain what your family and local and government officials are doing to make sure they are safe. Watch for signs that they are not coping well.

Warning Signs

Children react in different ways to disasters. Some react right away, and others react weeks or months later. How they react depends on their age, risk factors and personality or temperament. Watch for warning signs like these:

- Staying very close to parents at all times (“clinging”)
- Fear of being apart from parents
- Fears that do not go away
- Sleep problems like nightmares and bedwetting
- Refusal to go to school
- Acting out at home or school
- Being irritable or jumpy
- Trouble paying attention or concentrating
- Headaches, stomachaches or other physical problems
- Pulling into themselves, not doing normal activities
- Feeling very sad or low energy
- Thinking about the disaster all the time





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How to Help Your Child (Continued)

If you are concerned about your child, ask their health care provider for advice and referral to someone who can help. Sometimes counseling for the whole family is a good idea. Parents need to know that they, too, can suffer from trauma after a disaster.

Resources

- [What Parents Can Do: For Parents of Children Exposed to Violence or Disaster](#) a booklet from the National Institute of Mental Health.
- Child Welfare League of America [resource list](#) for talking with children about disasters and violence.
- [Helping your child build inner strength](#) (resilience)

Organizations and Hotlines

National Mental Health Information Center

Toll-Free: 1-800-789-2647 (English and Español)
TDD: 1-866-889-2647
Web Site: www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information

Toll-Free: 1-800-729-6686 (English and Español)
TDD: 1-800-487-4889
Web Site: www.ncadi.samhsa.gov

Mental Health Services Locator

Toll-Free: 1-800-789-2647 (English and Español)
TDD: 1-866-889-2647
Web Site: www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/databases

Substance Abuse Treatment Facility Locator

(Find a drug or alcohol abuse treatment program)
Toll-Free: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) (24/7 English and Español)
TDD: 1-800-487-4889
Web Site: www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

Toll-Free: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
TTY: 1-800-799-4TTY (4889)
Web Site: www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Office for Victims of Crime

Toll-Free: 1-800-851-3420
TTY: 1-877-712-9279
Web Site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/ovcres/welcome.html

National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Web Site: www.nctsn.org

National Association of School Psychologists

Phone: (301) 657-0270
Web Site: www.nasponline.org/NEAT

National Center for Children Exposed to Violence

Phone: (203) 785-7047
Toll-Free: 1-877-49-NCCEV (496-2238)
Fax: (203) 785-4608
Web Site: www.nccev.org/violence/children_terrorism.htm





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Making a plan is simple.....think of the 5 W's!

Who: Creating an emergency plan is a family activity. Open a Family dialogue about preparedness and include all members in your preparedness planning, Consider special needs and pets. If you require medical assistance or special transportation for your Family or pets, contact your local emergency manager prior to an emergency for advice. Choose a contact person living elsewhere, whom you and your Family can contact if an emergency strikes when you are separated. Keep all contact information up to date and keep a written copy of phone numbers in your wallet or purse.



What: Plan for all hazards that can affect your Family. Consider regional weather patterns and local industrial facilities. Think through each possible emergency situation and determine how your Family will respond.

Where: Think about all the places you and your Family may be throughout the day, such as home, office, school, installation, and in transit. Establish plans for evacuation and meeting places. Discuss when to employ your plans.

When: Emergencies can happen anywhere, at anytime. Make your Family emergency plan immediately. Use the Family emergency plan template at this link: [Family Emergency Plan](#) Review you plan biannually and whenever there are major changes in your Family situation, schedule or activities.

Why: Establish and practicing a Family emergency plan will strengthen your Family and give you a piece of mind that you have a designated procedure. Having a plan will enable your Family to respond to an emergency more quickly.

