

Course Summary

IS-36 - Multihazard Planning for Childcare

Lesson 1: Course Overview

Course Goal

As a childcare provider you are responsible for the safety of the children at your site. You must have plans and processes to keep children safe from everyday hazards and to respond and recover when an emergency happens.

The goal of this course is to provide childcare providers, of all sizes and with responsibility for children of all ages, with the knowledge and tools to analyze the hazards and threats at the site, to develop a plan to address these hazards and threats, and to implement processes to update and practice the emergency plan.

This course is intended for all types of childcare providers including, but not limited to, home childcare sites, childcare facilities, nursery schools, camps, scouts, sports programs, faith-based programs, and after-school programs.

Overall Course Objectives

At the completion of this course you should be able to:

- Describe why it is important to be prepared.
- Identify hazards and threats that impact your childcare site.
- Describe how to prevent or mitigate the impact of likely and high-consequence hazards and threats.
- Describe procedures for when an emergency occurs.
- Identify how your childcare site will recover from an emergency.
- Describe how to develop and maintain your plan.
- Describe how you will communicate, train, and practice your preparedness procedures.
- Identify the emergency preparedness information you will share with your community.
- Describe when to update your plan.

Why Do Childcare Providers Need To Be Prepared?

Nearly two-thirds of children under the age of six are cared for by someone other than their working parents.

This means that children spend most of their awake time away from home in places like home childcare sites, childcare facilities, nursery schools, camps, scouts, sports programs, faith-based programs, and after-school programs.

As someone who is taking care of these children, you need to be ready to keep them safe.

Are You Ready?

Are you ready for an emergency?

As a childcare provider, you are responsible for one of the most vulnerable populations – children. Caring for children is serious business, and their safety is your number one priority.

News headlines are full of examples illustrating why you need to be prepared. Some stories we know with just the mention of a name – 9/11, Oklahoma City, Katrina. But others, less publicized, are just as devastating. For example:

- A fire breaks out in a home childcare facility, and two children perish in the fire.
- While on a hike with his troop, a Boy Scout dies of heat stroke.
- A childcare facility takes a direct hit from a powerful tornado.

Consider this scenario: A gas line is hit in front of a childcare center. Firefighters praise the center's evacuation process and attribute the successful evacuation to the center having a comprehensive plan and practicing it.

It is not a matter of **if** something will happen, but **when**.

This course provides you with three easy steps to ensure you are prepared:

1. **knowing** your hazards,
2. **developing** a plan, and
3. **testing and updating** your plan.

What Can You Do?

The video emphasized the importance of being prepared, to help you:

- Save lives—the lives of the children in your care and your staff, as well as your own life.
- Prevent incidents from happening.
- Minimize injury.

- Decrease damage to your property.
- Reduce fear and the emotional impact of an incident.
- Recover more quickly.

What Do Parents Expect?

An important aspect of being prepared is meeting parents' expectations that you will keep their children safe. Parents want to know that their child's safety is a priority at all times. Parents expect you to:

- Have a plan for emergencies.
- Be able to safely evacuate the children in your care when necessary.
- Notify them when something happens.
- Care for their children if they cannot get to them.
- Teach their children what to do during an emergency.
- Have supplies to meet their children's needs.
- Have relationships with emergency management officials and first responders before something happens.

What Steps Can You Take?

Taking some simple steps to be prepared will help you meet parents' expectations, and will also give you confidence that you can prevent incidents or lessen the impact of incidents and act appropriately when something happens.

This course presents a process of three steps to get you ready.

- Step 1: Knowing Your Hazards
- Step 2: Developing a Plan
- Step 3: Testing and Updating Your Plan

Lesson Summary

This lesson presented the importance of emergency preparedness for anyone who cares for children, and introduced the steps you can take to ensure you are ready, including knowing:

- Why you need to be prepared,

- Parents' expectations, and
- The steps you can take.

In the next lesson you will learn how to accomplish the first step in the process: knowing your hazards.

Lesson 2: Knowing Your Hazards

Lesson Overview

This lesson presents information on different types of hazards that you may need to consider to make your childcare site safe. At the completion of this lesson you should be able to:

- Identify hazards and threats that impact your childcare site.
- Describe how to prevent or mitigate the impact of likely and high-consequence hazards and threats.

Facing Your Hazards

Focusing on all the hazards you might encounter can be overwhelming. Dwelling on all the everyday hazards that surround us might make it difficult to get out of bed! Nonetheless, it is necessary to be aware of hazards to develop strategies to prevent them, prepare for them, and/or minimize their impact.

Being aware of hazards helps you prioritize them and take the appropriate actions. For example, driving your car is dangerous, but you wear your seatbelt to minimize injury and you purchase insurance to help you recover from an accident.

Who Can Help?

An important part of being aware of your hazards is including the whole community in the identification process. Include community members in all of your preparedness efforts because they have access to information or subject-matter expertise about threats, hazards, and emergency procedures. People who will bring valuable information to your planning include:

- Your **local/county emergency manager** has historical information about hazards and threats in your community.
- **Parents** can provide expertise based on their experiences and professional knowledge (e.g., in the medical field, in the construction business), or may have had response training.
- **First responders** (e.g., fire marshal, law enforcement) can check your facility for safety hazards and identify vulnerabilities.

- **Local schools and the local school district** can provide information about their planning efforts.
- Your **State department of health** may have requirements for emergency planning and may be able to provide guidance and training.
- Your **childcare site insurance carrier** can provide information about potential risk reduction measures and procedures for claims.
- **Utility company personnel** can identify how to shut off utilities and who to contact with issues or questions.
- **Local business and industry personnel** can provide expertise based on their knowledge and areas of expertise.
- **Childcare organizations** can provide best practices information around preparedness for childcare sites. Childcare resource and referral agencies have resources to help sites with many aspects of running a childcare facility including emergency preparedness. The Web site for the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies has links to local resources.

An added benefit to including the community in your planning process is an increased awareness of the existence of your site, enabling you to be alerted to external emergency situations (for example if there is a hazardous materials spill near your site).

Identifying Hazards

With all the different hazards you face, what can you do to safeguard the children and staff at your site and prepare for incidents that may occur?

This lesson reviews different hazards and threats to help you identify which hazards to focus on, and gives you strategies to:

- Prevent the hazard, or
- Minimize the hazard's impact, and
- Prepare for the hazard.

Identifying Hazards and Threats

This lesson reviews the following hazards and threats:

- Fires
- General Safety, Hazardous Materials, and Explosions
- Utility Outages and Blackouts

- Criminal Activity
- Missing, Lost, or Abducted Children
- Severe Weather
- Geological Events
- Illness Outbreaks
- Food Safety

Fires

Fire is the most common of business disasters. Below are some sobering facts about fire:

- More than 4,000 Americans die and more than 20,000 are injured by fire each year.
- Fires can spread quickly and are dangerous not only because of the flames but also the heat, smoke, and poisonous gases emitted.
- Asphyxiation is the leading cause of fire-related deaths.
- Cooking is the leading cause of fires in childcare centers.
- It is difficult for young children to escape from fire because they lack the motor skills and mental capabilities needed and may be unable to awake from a sound sleep.

Addressing Fire Hazard

Now that you know why you need to be prepared for fire, here are some general steps to protect yourself and the children in your care from the hazards of fire:

- Have an evacuation plan.
- Practice your plan and make sure everyone can get out of each room.
 - Are windows painted or nailed shut?
 - Do you have escape ladders?
 - Can you evacuate children who cannot evacuate on their own?
- Install, test, and clean smoke alarms.
- Schedule visits from the fire department for fire safety information.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of fire at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: Fire

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):

None, Low, Moderate, or High

Steps to reduce my risk:

Comments

- Have properly working smoke detectors.
 - Place smoke detectors on every level of your facility and, if possible, in every sleeping area.
 - Test and clean smoke detectors once a month.
 - Replace batteries in your smoke detectors at least once a year. If the alarm chirps, replace the battery immediately.
- Have heating, cooling, gas, and electrical systems checked regularly.
- Use fire-resistant materials.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors.
- Install sprinklers, if possible.
- Install fire extinguishers in each room and check regularly (i.e., charge levels, mounted securely, within easy reach, staff and volunteers know how to use).
- Have plan to evacuate infants and toddlers (using evacuation cribs, wagons, strollers, etc.).
- Have a representative from the fire department visit facility regularly. (Ask about fire codes, regulations, and training for children and staff.)
- Keep portable heaters at least 3 feet away from things that can burn – paper, curtains, furniture, bedding, clothing, etc. Ensure they are turned off when adults are not in the room.
- Keep matches and lighters up high and, if possible, in a locked cabinet.

- Train on STOP, DROP, and ROLL and evacuation procedures.
- Check for overloaded outlets.
- Have a site diagram.
- Clear exits and ensure there are two exits for evacuation, clearly marked.
 - All windows open.
 - Doors are unobstructed.
 - Escape ladders are available for higher floors.
- Have a designated meeting area.
- Cut back bushes and trees.
- Ensure street address is clearly visible.
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General Safety, Hazardous Materials, and Explosions

Let's now look at what you can do to address risks related to general safety, hazardous materials, and explosions in and around your childcare site.

- **General safety** includes childproofing. For sites with young children, follow the American Academy of Pediatrics process of taking a "child's-eye view" survey, going from room to room and addressing the hazards at the level of a curious toddler.
- **Hazardous materials** can be found in all homes and businesses and include cleaning products, pesticides, paint supplies, and lawn and garden products. Make sure hazardous materials are clearly marked, kept in their original containers, and stored out of children's reach.
- **Explosions** are an important risk associated with having hazardous materials at your site.

Note: Ensure that the safety measures you take are in accordance with local/State childcare licensing requirements.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the general safety and childproofing at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: General Safety

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): **None, Low, Moderate, or High**

Steps to reduce my risk:

Comments

- Childproof the facility.
 - Protect electrical outlets.
 - Remove access to electrical cords.
 - Place safety locks on cabinets.
 - Place door knob covers on doors.
 - Place safety gates at top and bottom of stairs.
 - Ensure window blind strings do not have loops.
 - Secure tall furniture to walls.
 - Lock up cleaning products.
 - Lock medicines in high cabinets.
 - Place locks on toilets.
 - Place guards on windows.
 - Place corner and edge bumpers on sharp edges of furniture.
 - Place houseplants out of reach of children.
 - Remove choking hazards.
 - Keep cribs away from draperies, blinds, and electrical cords.
- Ensure children cannot access water features (e.g., ponds, fountains, pools).
- Ensure trash is not accessible to children.
- Remove broken or unsafe play equipment.
- Designate any unsafe areas as off-limits to children.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow established standards for the care of infants with respect to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	
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Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of hazardous materials and explosions at your childcare site and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: Hazardous Materials

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): **None, Low, Moderate, or High**

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lock up chemicals, poisonous/toxic items, medicines, and flammable items. ■ Dispose of hazardous materials correctly. ■ Keep products containing hazardous material in their original containers. Do not remove labels. Do not store hazardous material in food containers. ■ Know who to call when there has been contact with a hazardous chemical. ■ Know what to do if there is an explosion. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	
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Utility Outages and Blackouts

Utility outages and blackouts can occur anywhere, to anyone, at anytime. For prolonged utility outages of more than 2 hours, the main concerns—beyond the safety of children and staff—are minimizing food loss and maximizing comfort.

To prepare for utility outages and blackouts:

- Know how to use emergency shutoffs for water, gas, and electricity—and mark the shutoffs clearly.
- Have surge protectors.
- Have a land-line phone that does not require electricity.
- Consider purchasing an emergency generator, especially if your building is located in an area where power losses are frequent.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of a utility outage at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Utility Outages/Blackouts	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High	
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Know how to use emergency shutoffs for water, gas, and electricity—and mark the shutoffs clearly. ■ Turn off and unplug all unnecessary electrical equipment. ■ Have surge protectors. ■ Prepare frozen water containers. ■ Know how to keep food safe and how to identify if food is safe. ■ Have a land-line phone that does not require electricity. ■ Consider purchasing an emergency generator, especially if your building is located in an area 	

where power losses are frequent.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Criminal Activity

Crime is a problem in every environment. To keep the children in your care safe, follow general crime prevention rules.

- Conduct background checks to ensure people working at your site have not been arrested or convicted for crimes involving children.
- Ensure doors and windows lock.
- Be familiar with people who should be and should not be around your facility.
- Build a relationship with local law enforcement in your area.
- Contact police about criminal activity, areas of concern, and prevention recommendations.
- Have a process for reporting anything out of the ordinary.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of criminal activity impacting your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Criminal Activity	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High	
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take precautions to ensure people working at your site have not been arrested or convicted for crimes involving children. ■ Ensure doors and windows lock. ■ Be aware of people around your facility. 	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build a relationship with local law enforcement in your area. ■ Contact police about criminal activity, areas of concern, and prevention recommendations. ■ Have a process for reporting anything out of the ordinary. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ | |
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Missing, Lost, or Abducted Children

“As a parent, I cannot imagine anything more difficult than not knowing where your children are or how they are being treated. Every day across America, children are abducted by family members and acquaintances, and sometimes by strangers. Families traumatized by abduction are faced with the simultaneous challenge of quickly marshaling all available resources to recover their missing child while dealing with the devastation of their loss.”

– Assistant Attorney General Laurie O. Robinson

Most children are taken by someone they know. It is essential that childcare centers:

- Have a process for releasing children only to designated individuals.
- Have a process for accounting for children at all times.
- Conduct background/reference checks on all staff.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
<p>Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of children being abducted from your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.</p>	
<p>Hazard/Threat: Missing Child</p>	
<p>Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):</p>	<p>None, Low, Moderate, or High</p>
<p>Steps to reduce my risk:</p>	<p>Comments</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Have a process for releasing children including documenting who they can be released to and ensuring any legal orders against a parent or guardian are documented and easily identified before releasing children.■ Have a sign-in/sign-out process that also identifies who can be in areas with children.■ Conduct background/reference checks on all staff.■ Designate how children will be accounted for when in and out of the facility—on field trips, at the playground, during drills.■ Do not share information about a child with anyone but parents or guardians.■ Establish a notification process if a child is missing.■ _____■ _____■ _____ | |
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Severe Weather

Severe weather can happen anywhere and at any time. It is important to know the types of severe weather risks in your area in order to be prepared.

First let's review some general preparedness steps for all types of severe weather events. Then you can select severe weather events that are common to your area and get specifics on how to prepare for those.

General Preparedness for Severe Weather

You can do some simple things to keep the children at your site safe and your property protected when severe weather strikes. When there is a threat of severe weather:

- Listen to the radio and NOAA Weather Radio (a radio with a special receiver to receive information from the network of radio stations that broadcast continuous weather information from the National Weather Service).

- Follow instructions from local officials.
- Stay inside, postpone outdoor activities, and bring children and staff indoors.

It is also important to have a process for closing your facility and to know the meaning of weather terms such as watch, warning, and advisory.

Weather Terms

- **Watch:** A watch is used when the risk of a hazardous weather event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so that those who need to set their plans in motion can do so.
- **Warning:** A warning is issued when a hazardous weather event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property.
- **Advisory:** An advisory highlights special weather conditions that are less serious than a warning. They are for events that may cause significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, the conditions could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.

Source: <http://forecast.weather.gov/glossary.php>

Types of Severe Weather

Now that you have some information on general preparedness for severe weather, the next step is to learn more about weather events common to your community. Click on the topics below for more information:

Excessive Heat

In recent years, excessive heat has caused more deaths than all other weather-related events. A heat wave is a prolonged period of excessive heat, often combined with humidity. Excessive heat contributes to heat disorders, like heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Older adults and young children are more likely to be impacted by excessive heat. Excessive heat can happen anywhere but people in urban areas may be at greater risk for prolonged heat waves.

How can you prepare for excessive heat in your area?

- Ensure air conditioners are installed and insulated properly.
- Install temporary window reflectors.
- Cover windows with drapes, shades, or awnings.
- Keep yourself, your staff, and children hydrated.
- Learn the signs of heat-related health concerns.
- Plan activities that limit exposure during the hottest part of the day.

Floods

Flooding is the most common disaster in the United States. Floods develop differently and can be caused by extended periods of heavy rain, tropical storms and hurricanes, warming after a heavy snow, or flash floods. Every State is at risk of flood hazards. Be especially aware if you live in low-lying areas near water or downstream from a dam. Know your risk of flood and flash floods and be familiar with the terms that identify floods: flood watch, flash flood watch, flood warning, and flash flood warning.

What can you do to prepare for floods?

- Protect your building: elevate furnace, water heater, and electrical panel; seal basements with waterproofing; install "check valves."
- Talk with your insurance representative about flood protection insurance.
- Identify evacuation places that are on higher ground.
- Identify how you will transport children to evacuation sites.

What can you do if a flood happens?

- Keep informed about whether water is safe to drink.
- If you have to evacuate, secure your site and turn off utilities, if instructed.
- Avoid floodwaters and moving water.
- Keep children out of the water.
- Stay away from downed power lines.

Hurricanes and Tropical Storms

Hurricanes and tropical storms have high sustained winds and can produce torrential rains. Hurricane-associated floods, landslides, and mudslides along with high winds cause damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. All of the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas and parts of the Southwest and Pacific Coast are subject to the impact of hurricanes and tropical storms. The Atlantic hurricane season lasts from June to November, with the peak season from mid-August to late October.

What can you do to be prepared for hurricanes and tropical storms?

- Know the differences between the hurricane categories.
- Secure outside items or bring them inside.
- Cover windows with pre-cut plywood or shutters.
- Remove damaged/diseased limbs from trees.

- Turn off utilities as instructed; otherwise, turn refrigerators to highest setting.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Ensure you have a supply of water for sanitary purposes; fill bathtub and other large containers.
- Evacuate when instructed by local officials.

Thunderstorms

Every thunderstorm produces lightning and, on average, lightning kills 300 people and injures 80 people per year in the United States. Lightning is unpredictable; it can strike as far as 10 miles from any rainfall. Other thunderstorm-related dangers are tornadoes, strong winds, hail, wildfire, and flash flooding.

What can you do to lessen the impact of thunderstorms?

- Remove dead and rotting trees.
- Secure outside objects.
- Shutter windows (or close blinds, shades, curtains) and secure outside doors.

What can you do when there are thunderstorms?

- If you can hear thunder, take everyone indoors.
- If thunderstorms are forecasted, limit or cancel outdoor activities.
- During a thunderstorm, do not take baths or showers, or use plumbing or electrical appliances.

Note: Lightning can occur without rain. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Severe Storms Laboratory, dry lightning is cloud-to-ground lightning without any rain nearby. This kind of lightning is more likely to cause forest fires.

Tornadoes

Tornadoes are the most violent of storms with winds that usually exceed 100 mph and can devastate a neighborhood in seconds. A thunderstorm is the first step in the development of a tornado; if conditions are right, then a tornado may develop. Tornadoes can appear without warning and can be transparent until dust and debris are picked up. Tornadoes have been reported in every State and can occur at any time of the year. Danger signs of tornadoes are dark or greenish skies; large hail; large, dark, low-lying clouds; and a loud roar, similar to a freight train.

What can you do to prepare for tornadoes?

- Prepare a safe room in advance: storm cellar or basement, interior room or hallway on lowest floor possible.

What can you do if there are tornado watches or warnings?

- If you are under a tornado warning, immediately take everyone to safe shelter.
- Keep everyone away from windows, doors, outside walls, and corners.

Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

The National Weather Service calls winter storms “deceptive killers” because of the number of deaths indirectly related to the storms, including traffic accidents, fire, and hypothermia. Even areas that normally experience mild winters can experience major winter storms and extreme cold. Primary concerns with winter storms are the potential loss of heat, power, and telephone, and a shortage of supplies.

What can you do to prepare for winter storms?

- Have rock salt, sand, and snow shovels.
- Ensure you have extra blankets and adequate clothing for children.
- Make sure your site is well insulated.
- Insulate pipes and allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather.
- Know how to shut off water valves.
- Be careful when using alternate heat sources. The U.S. Fire Administration has issued tips on fire safety during and after a winter storm.
- Have a supply of extra food and water.

Severe Weather Worksheets

Now that you have information on severe weather in your area, you can print the worksheets for these hazards and determine what you need to specifically address at your site to be prepared.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of severe weather impacting your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Severe Weather – General	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):	None, Low, Moderate, or High

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Know the weather hazards common to your area. ■ Have a NOAA Weather Radio onsite. ■ When there is a threat of severe weather, listen to the radio or television and a NOAA Weather Radio for information. ■ Listen to instructions from local officials. ■ If severe weather has been forecasted, stay inside, postpone outdoor activities, and bring children and staff indoors. ■ Have a process for closing the facility and notifying parents/guardians and staff. ■ Know weather terms—watch, warning, advisory. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of excessive heat impacting your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Excessive Heat	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):	None, Low, Moderate, or High
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure air conditioners are installed and insulated properly. ■ Install temporary window reflectors. ■ Cover windows with drapes, shades, or awnings. 	

- Keep yourself, staff, and children hydrated.
- Be aware of signs of heat-related health concerns.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of floods impacting your childcare site and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: Floods

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): **None, Low, Moderate, or High**

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
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- Protect your building: elevate the furnace, water heater, and electrical panel; seal the basement with waterproofing; and install "check valves."
- Talk with your insurance representative about flood protection insurance.
- Keep informed about whether water is safe to drink.
- Have plans to move to higher ground.
- If you have to evacuate, then secure your site and turn utilities off, if instructed.
- Avoid floodwaters and moving water. Keep children out of the water.
- Stay away from downed power lines.
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Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
<p>Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of hurricanes and tropical storms impacting your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.</p>	
<p>Hazard/Threat: Hurricanes/Tropical Storms</p>	
<p>Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High</p>	
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Know the differences between the hurricane categories. ■ Secure outside items or bring them inside. ■ Cover windows with pre-cut plywood or shutters. ■ Remove damaged/diseased limbs from trees. ■ Turn off utilities as instructed; otherwise, turn refrigerators to their highest setting. ■ Turn off propane tanks. ■ Ensure you have a supply of water for sanitary purposes; fill bathtub and other large containers. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
<p>Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of thunderstorms at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.</p>	
<p>Hazard/Threat: Thunderstorms</p>	
<p>Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High</p>	

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remove dead and rotting trees. ■ Secure outside objects. ■ Shutter windows (or close blinds, shades, curtains) and secure outside doors. ■ If you can hear thunder, go indoors. ■ During a thunderstorm, do not take baths or showers or use plumbing. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of a tornado at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Tornadoes	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):	None, Low, Moderate, or High
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Prepare a safe room in advance: storm cellar or basement, interior room, or hallway on lowest floor possible. ■ If you are under a tornado warning, immediately take everyone to safe shelter. ■ Keep everyone away from windows, doors, outside walls, and corners. ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

■ _____

Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of winter storms and extreme cold at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: Winter Storms and Extreme Cold

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): **None, Low, Moderate, or High**

Steps to reduce my risk:

Comments

- Have rock salt, sand, and snow shovels.
- Ensure you have extra blankets and adequate clothing for children.
- Make sure your site is well insulated.
- Insulate pipes and allow faucets to drip a little during cold weather.
- Know how to shut off water valves.
- Be careful when using alternate heat sources.
- Have a supply of extra food and water.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Geological Events

You may be in an area where geological events are also a concern. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, geologic hazards, such as earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions, coastal erosion, and floods, result in considerable human suffering and billions of dollars in losses in the United States every year. For more information on a geological event, click on the image below:

Earthquakes

An earthquake is one of the most frightening and destructive incidents that can happen. An earthquake is the sudden movement of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface. One can occur without notice any time of the day and year. Every region of the United States is at risk of earthquakes, with 45 States and territories at moderate to high risk.

What can you do to prepare for an earthquake, and what should you do if one happens?

- Familiarize yourself with earthquake terms.
- Fasten/secure heavy items and furniture to wall studs and brace overhead light fixtures.
- Place cribs, sleeping mats, and sitting areas away from hazards that can fall in or on them (pictures, mirrors, lamps, etc.).
- Clear exits and ensure there are at least two exits for evacuation. Make sure all exits are clearly marked.
- Know how to shut off gas valves.
- Have emergency kit ready.
- When shaking starts, drop, cover, and hold; keep everyone away from windows; and stay inside until the shaking stops. (Be prepared for aftershocks.) Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.

Landslides and Debris Flow

Landslides can be caused by natural incidents (earthquakes, storms, fires, or volcanoes) or human modification of land. In a landslide, masses of rock, earth, or debris move either slowly or rapidly, destroying property and possibly taking lives. Landslides occur in all States and territories of the United States.

What can you do to prepare for landslides or debris flow?

- Be familiar with whether debris flow has occurred in your area.
- Watch how water flows during storms.
- If in imminent danger, evacuate your site immediately.

Tsunamis

Tsunamis are enormous waves caused by underwater disturbances such as earthquakes. The waves created travel in all directions and waves that approach the shore build in height. The first waves can reach the shore before any warning has been issued. A tsunami can strike anywhere along the U.S. coastline, but the most

destructive have been along the California, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii coasts. A dramatic recession of water is nature's warning of a tsunami. Hazards from tsunamis include drowning, flooding, contamination of drinking water, and fires.

What can you do if there is the possibility of a tsunami?

- Listen to local officials.
- Be prepared to act quickly and evacuate inland.
- Stay away from low-lying coastal areas, if there is a tsunami warning.

Volcanoes

A volcano is a vent in the earth that, when pressure builds and it erupts, releases dangerous molten rock and gases. Volcanoes are mainly a concern for Hawaii, Alaska, and the Pacific Northwest.

What can you do if a volcano in your area may erupt?

- Listen to local officials.
- Bring children inside.
- Shut windows and doors to maintain air quality.
- Be prepared to evacuate quickly.
- Include goggles and nose and mouth protection in your emergency supply kits.

Geological Events Worksheets

Now that you have information on geological events that may impact your community, you can print the worksheets for these hazards and determine what you need to specifically address at your site to be prepared.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of earthquakes at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.	
Hazard/Threat: Earthquakes	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):	None, Low, Moderate, or High

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Familiarize yourself with earthquake terms. ■ Fasten/secure heavy items and furniture to wall studs and brace overhead light fixtures. ■ Place cribs, sleeping mats, and sitting areas away from hazards that can fall in or on them (pictures, mirrors, lamps, etc.). ■ Clear exits and ensure there are at least two exits for evacuation. Make sure all exits are clearly marked. ■ Know how to shut off gas valves. ■ Have emergency kit ready. ■ When shaking starts, drop, cover, and hold; keep everyone away from windows; and stay inside until the shaking stops. (Be prepared for aftershocks.) ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of landslides and debris flow at your childcare site.	
Hazard/Threat: Landslides and Debris Flow	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one):	None, Low, Moderate, or High
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow proper land-use procedures. ■ Be familiar with whether debris flow has occurred in your area. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch how water flows during storms. ■ If in imminent danger, evacuate your site immediately. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	
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Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of tsunamis at your childcare site.	
Hazard/Threat: Tsunamis	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High	
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to local officials. ■ Be prepared to act quickly and evacuate inland. ■ Stay away from low-lying coastal areas, if there is a tsunami warning. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of volcanoes at your childcare site.	
Hazard/Threat: Volcanoes	
Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High	

Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to local officials. ■ Bring children inside. ■ Shut windows and doors to maintain air quality. ■ Be prepared to evacuate quickly. ■ Include goggles and nose and mouth protection in your emergency supply kits. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	

Other Hazards and Threats

Two other hazards you may need to prepare for are:

- **Illness Outbreaks:** When children get sick it is important that your site is prepared to manage the illness by knowing which illnesses require the child be excluded, how parents will be notified of illnesses that arise at the childcare site, and how regular health checks will be conducted.
- **Food Safety:** Because childcare providers are often in the role of serving children food, it is important that you also take steps to prevent food-borne illness and are careful about what you serve children in your care.

Hazard/Threat Worksheet	
<p>Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of an illness outbreak at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.</p>	
<p>Hazard/Threat: Illness Outbreaks</p>	
<p>Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): None, Low, Moderate, or High</p>	
Steps to reduce my risk:	Comments

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. Advise staff to stay home when they are sick and ask parents to keep sick children home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- Clean your hands often.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Practice good health habits: Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, get your flu shot, and eat nutritious foods.
- Require proper immunization of children in your care.
- Have disinfectant/cleaning processes for bathrooms (including changing tables and children’s potties), food preparation areas (including dishes, high chairs, and utensils), toys, beds, and bedding.
- Establish a policy for handling sick children: exclusion, dismissal, and care.
- Clean/sanitize hands between handling of children.
- _____
- _____
- _____

Hazard/Threat Worksheet

Use this worksheet to assess the risk level of food safety hazards or threats at your childcare site, and to identify steps you can take to minimize your risk and prepare your site.

Hazard/Threat: Food Safety

Identify Hazard/Threat Risk Level (circle one): **None, Low, Moderate, or High**

Steps to reduce my risk:

Comments

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you prepare food at your site, follow food safety procedures: clean, separate, cook, and chill. ■ Know how to properly store foods – including breast milk, formula, and baby food. ■ Know foods not to serve due to child choking hazards. ■ Inform everyone about children’s food allergies, specifics on the allergies, and how to respond to an allergic reaction. ■ Know when to save and when to throw out food after power outages. ■ _____ ■ _____ ■ _____ 	
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Mitigating Hazards

Now that you have considered the hazards and threats facing your childcare site, you also need to consider how to mitigate (lessen) hazards specific to the structural and nonstructural elements of your facility’s building and grounds.

- **Structural elements** include any component of the building whose primary function is to support the dead load (e.g., building, roof).
- **Nonstructural elements** include any portion of the building or grounds not connected to the main structure (e.g., bookshelves, file cabinets, furnishings).

Building and Grounds Mitigation Checklist	
	Area:
	Surveyed By:
	Date Surveyed:

Hazard	Mitigation Measures
<p>Building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extended, unsupported roof spans ■ Large windows or panes of glass, especially if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Not composed of safety glass ■ Located near exits or evacuation routes ■ Suspended ceilings and light fixtures ■ Incompatible chemicals stored in close proximity or not stored in a manner to withstand falling and breaking ■ Hazardous materials located in areas that do not have warning signs ■ Paper or other combustibles (e.g., greasy rags) stored near heat source ■ Unsecured heavy or unstable items, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Portable room dividers ■ Appliances (e.g., water heaters, space heaters, microwave ovens) ■ Filing cabinets, bookcases, and wall shelves ■ Athletic equipment ■ Vending machines ■ TV monitors ■ Wall-mounted objects ■ Aquariums ■ Table lamps ■ Hanging plants above seating areas ■ Electrical equipment <p>Grounds:</p>	

- Equipment in need of repair
- Rocks or other material that could cause injury
- Fences in need of repair
- Exposed nails, screws, or bolts
- Trees or shrubs that present a fire hazard or wind hazard or provide areas for an intruder to hide
- Streams in close proximity
- Electrical wires
- Gasoline or propane tanks
- Natural gas lines

Now What?

You now have information on many different hazards and threats. Your next steps are to:

- Identify hazards and threats that are of the highest consequence and most likely for your site.
- Develop strategies to address those hazards and threats. (Use the hazard and mitigation worksheets for guidance.)
- Identify members from the community to review and comment on your strategies and identify hazards or threats that are missing. Include community members such as:
 - Local/county emergency manager,
 - Parents,
 - First responders,
 - Local schools/school district,
 - State department of health,
 - Childcare site insurance carrier,
 - Utility company personnel,
 - Local business and industry personnel, and
 - Childcare organizations.

- Develop and implement a process to regularly check for new hazards and address them as needed.

More Resources

This lesson provided information on identifying and preparing for hazards. Below are some additional resources that can help you address hazards.

- The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has information on including the whole community to help you prepare to address hazards: www.fema.gov
- The National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) has information for childcare sites: www.naccrra.org
- The U.S. Fire Administration site has a smoke alarm safety quiz you can take: www.usfa.dhs.gov
- Ready.gov and the American Red Cross provide information on additional types of hazards and threats and how to address them:
 - www.ready.gov
 - www.redcross.org
- The FloodSmart.gov Web site provides additional information on flooding and flood risks: www.floodsmart.gov
- The Food and Drug Administration, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and FoodSafety.gov have information on food safety:
 - www.fda.gov
 - www.fsis.usda.gov
 - www.foodsafety.gov
- Flu.gov provides updated information on the flu: www.flu.gov
- FEMA's Multihazard Emergency Planning for Schools Toolkit has tools and resources that can be useful for emergency planning: training.fema.gov/emiweb/emischool

Lesson Summary

This lesson described how to identify threats and hazards in and around your childcare site, and how to address them. Now you can:

- Identify high-consequence and most likely hazards for your site.
- Track prevention and mitigation steps to take for those hazards.
- Engage members of your community to help with hazard identification and prevention and mitigation

steps.

The next lesson presents processes to include in your emergency plan and different types of plans to use to ensure you are ready.

Lesson 3: Developing Plans

Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces you to the second step in being prepared: developing plans. During this step, you will take the hazards and threats that you determined to be of high consequence and most likely and identify what you will do when something happens. Developing processes and procedures to put in place will help you respond effectively in emergency situations.

At the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- Describe procedures to follow when an emergency occurs.
- Identify how your childcare site will recover from an emergency.
- Describe how to develop and maintain your emergency plan.

Having a Plan

You've learned about many different hazards and threats, and about prevention, protection, and mitigation measures to address those that are likely and of high consequence. But in spite of your best efforts, some emergencies may still impact your childcare site. You are responsible for protecting yourself, the children in your care, and your staff, and for getting back to business quickly. To meet these responsibilities, you need a plan.

Let's look at some key pieces to building a comprehensive emergency plan.

First, it is critical in an emergency that you are able to contact parents and emergency services. Your plan should include ways to collect, maintain, and easily access contact information. Depending on what happens, you may have to evacuate your site, or stay put to keep everyone safe. To prepare for an evacuation, identify evacuation routes and exits, where you will go, what you will take with you, and how you will account for children.

If sheltering, identify safe locations in your site, supplies to have, and if necessary, how to seal a room. Whether you stay or go, you will need emergency supplies. Do you have an adequate amount of water, food, flashlights, batteries, radios, medicine, and first aid supplies? Regularly check to make sure everything works and nothing has expired.

A comprehensive plan needs to address the different needs of the children and staff to ensure everyone is protected. And no matter the size of your site, someone is relying on your services. If an emergency impacts your site, your plan needs to include ways to recover quickly.

To put together an effective, comprehensive plan, include people from your community at all stages in the process. Members of your community bring skills and expertise. Get input from emergency management officials, first responders, parents, local businesses, and organizations. Finally, update your plan regularly. A plan that sits on the shelf is not effective.

Emergencies happen. You need to have a plan—to be ready.

Activity: Self-Assessment

Let's look at what processes you have in place, and which ones you need to add, by completing this self-assessment.

My childcare site has:	Yes	No
Child contact information that includes:		
Parent/guardian contact information.		
Emergency contact information (not parent or guardian).		
Medical conditions and allergies.		
Pediatrician contact information.		
Child's personal preferences.		
Permission for medical transport.		
Permission for medical treatment.		
An emergency contact sheet that:		
Is posted in obvious locations.		
Includes local contact information for fire, emergency, and police.		
Includes contact information for water, utility, and gas companies.		
Documented procedures for:		
Tracking entry and exit of children and visitors.		
Site closure.		
Sheltering-in-place.		
Evacuation.		
Meeting care/support requirements during emergencies for children with		

access and functional needs.		
Emergency supplies that include:		
Food, water, and basic emergency supplies.		
First aid.		
Supplies specific to the children at my site (diapers, formula, games, toys, personal care and hygiene).		
NOAA Weather Radio.		

Know Your State's Requirements

Many States require that childcare sites have an emergency plan and specify what it must include. Make sure you are familiar with these requirements in order to develop a plan that is in accordance with your State's regulations.

How Will You Communicate With Parents?

Do you have all the information you need to quickly contact parents or guardians? You need to have processes in place to collect and regularly update contact information for children:

- When they initially sign up at your site.
- When information changes.
- At predetermined intervals—for example, at the beginning of your community's school year.

Information To Collect

If you have not been collecting information on parents or if you need to collect additional information, provide them with a form to obtain the information you need. At a minimum, request:

- Parent/guardian contact information:
 - Phone numbers: home, work, and cell.
 - Email: home and work.
 - Work: Supervisor contact information, address.
 - At least two emergency contacts—one local and one long distance or out of State.
- Designated people with permission to pick up child, other than parent/guardian.

- Designated physician and hospital.
- Child’s favorite toys, foods, and things to do.
- Comforting techniques for the child.
- Description from health provider of special health care needs including allergies, medications, and dietary concerns.

Child Information Sheet	
Child’s Information:	Date:
First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Address: _____ Allergies/Special Instructions/Comforting Techniques/Favorite Foods, Toys, Things To Do: _____ _____ _____	
Parent/Guardian Information (1):	
First Name: _____ Last Name: _____ Relationship to Child: _____ Address (if different from child): _____ Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ Home Email: _____ Work Phone: _____ Work Email: _____ Work Name and Address: _____ Supervisor Name: _____ Supervisor Phone: _____	

Parent/Guardian Information (2):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Relationship to Child: _____
Address (if different from child): _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Home Email: _____
Work Phone: _____
Work Email: _____
Work Name and Address: _____
Supervisor Name: _____ Supervisor Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Information (1):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Relationship to Child: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
Work Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Information (2):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Relationship to Child: _____
Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Emergency Contact Information (3):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Relationship to Child: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

People With Permission To Pick Up Child (always request identification):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Doctor Information:

Pediatrician Name: _____

Pediatrician Address: _____

Pediatrician Phone: _____

Additional Medical Information: _____

Other:

Other instructions, concerns, restrictions: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Who Do You Contact for Help?

In addition to knowing how to contact parents or guardians, you need to be able to quickly contact emergency personnel when something happens. Post emergency contact information in obvious locations and include names, phone numbers, and email addresses for the following resources:

- Medical personnel and hospital
- Police, fire, and rescue
- Poison control
- Local emergency management
- Utility companies
- Emergency information sources (radio stations, TV stations, NOAA radio frequency for your area)
- Insurance
- Neighbors

Sample Emergency Contact Sheet

Who To Contact in Case of an Emergency (Sample):			
Post this sheet in obvious locations in case of an emergency.			
	Name	Phone	Email
Medical Emergency (911)			
Police (911)			
Fire (911)			
Rescue (911)			

Hospital			
Poison Control (800-222-1222)			
Local Emergency Management			
Electric Company			
Gas Company			
Water Company			
Waste Disposal			
Insurance Provider			
Emergency Information Sources			
Local Television Stations	Channel:	Phone:	Contact:
	Channel:	Phone:	Contact:
	Channel:	Phone:	Contact:
	Channel:	Phone:	Contact:
Local Radio Stations	Station:	Phone:	Contact:
	Station:	Phone:	Contact:
	Station:	Phone:	Contact:
	Station:	Phone:	Contact:
NOAA Weather Station	Frequency: _____ For your area frequency go to:		

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/listcov.htm>

Who Is at Your Site?

Another simple but important process to ensure the safety and security of your children and site is implementing sign-in and sign-out procedures. These procedures are necessary so you know who is at your site and who is not, especially during an emergency. You need to be able to easily account for children during an emergency. You do not want to spend valuable time looking for a child who has left or did not show up that day.

If you have a large population of children at your site, you may need to implement attendance procedures for each group of children. In such circumstances, ensure your staff knows which children they have the responsibility to track.

If you have many visitors that stay on site, you may need to include them in your sign-in/out procedures.

Sample Sign-In/Out Sheet

Sign-In/Out Sheet (Sample)				
As children are dropped off and picked up, have the authorized parent or guardian sign the child in or out.				
Child's Name	Time In	Time Out	Parent/Guardian	Staff Releasing

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How Will You Let Parents Know You Are Closed?

You may need to close your site because of weather, utility outages, emergency situations, or extreme illness. In case of a site closure, effective procedures for notifying parents or guardians are essential. Identify:

- Who will make the decision to close the site.
- How the decision will be made (for example, weather, road conditions, local school district closings, etc.).
- How you will notify parents or guardians.
- When parents, guardians, and staff will be notified of site closing.

Site Closing Procedures (Sample)
Use this list to identify roles, responsibilities, and processes for when you need to close your childcare site.
Specify how each of the following procedures will be implemented.
The decision to close the facility will be made by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■ ■
The decision will be based on (weather forecasts, school closings, road reports, etc.):
Time by which the decision to close will be made (night before, early morning before first child arrives):

Parents will be notified of the closing by:

- Text message to parents/guardians.
- Television (identify station(s)):

- Radio (identify station(s)):

- Phone calls to each parent (telephone trees are helpful if your facility serves many families):
 - Who will call?
 - How will you note the call was made?
 - What is the process if you cannot contact a parent?

The following message will be placed on the facility phone line with closing information:

List additional procedures for your site below:

What If You Need Everyone To Stay Put?

In some emergency situations it may be best to stay in your site to remain safe—for example, when a tornado has been spotted or if local officials tell you the air outside is unsafe or if there is a police chase in your neighborhood.

Start by identifying where you will take everyone for:

- **Weather concerns (e.g., tornado).** Select a room in the basement or an interior room on the lowest level away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.
- **Contaminated air.** If local authorities say that air is badly contaminated and recommend sheltering, you will need to shelter in a room where you can create a barrier between you and the contaminated air.

- **Outside dangers (e.g., threats from criminals or dangers from wild animals).** If there is a threat outside, you will need to bring and keep everyone inside to keep them safe. This practice or procedure is often called a reverse evacuation.

Sheltering Procedures

Now you know where you will go when sheltering. What will you do if you need to shelter?

- If outside, have children and staff go inside as quickly as possible.
- Notify everyone of the need to shelter.
- Account for all children and staff.
- Have everyone go to the identified shelter location.
- Ensure you have emergency kits, first aid kits, phones, and radios in the shelter location.
- Listen to the radio for instructions.

Shelter-in-Place Procedures (Sample)

Use this list to identify roles, responsibilities, and processes for sheltering-in-place at your childcare site.

Specify how each of the following procedures will be implemented.

Identify shelter locations (Who will identify? How will they be identified? Will there be multiple locations?):

Ensure shelter locations:

- Are clearly marked.
- Are free of items that may fall during sheltering.
- Have emergency lighting and sufficient ventilation.

The decision to shelter-in-place will be made by:

The decision to shelter will be based on (notification from local officials, weather forecasts, etc.):

911 will be called by:

Staff will be notified of sheltering and where to shelter by (announcement, phone call, etc.):

Staff will account for the children under their care, including:

- Bringing children inside.
- Taking attendance at appropriate points in the process (designate).
- Getting children to designated sheltering rooms.

Designated staff will bring to the shelter location(s):

- Emergency kits.
- First aid kits.
- Supplies for sealing rooms, if necessary.
- Activities for children.

Designated staff who will monitor the radio for instructions:

For contaminated air scenarios, designated staff will:

- Seal the room.
- Close curtains or blinds.

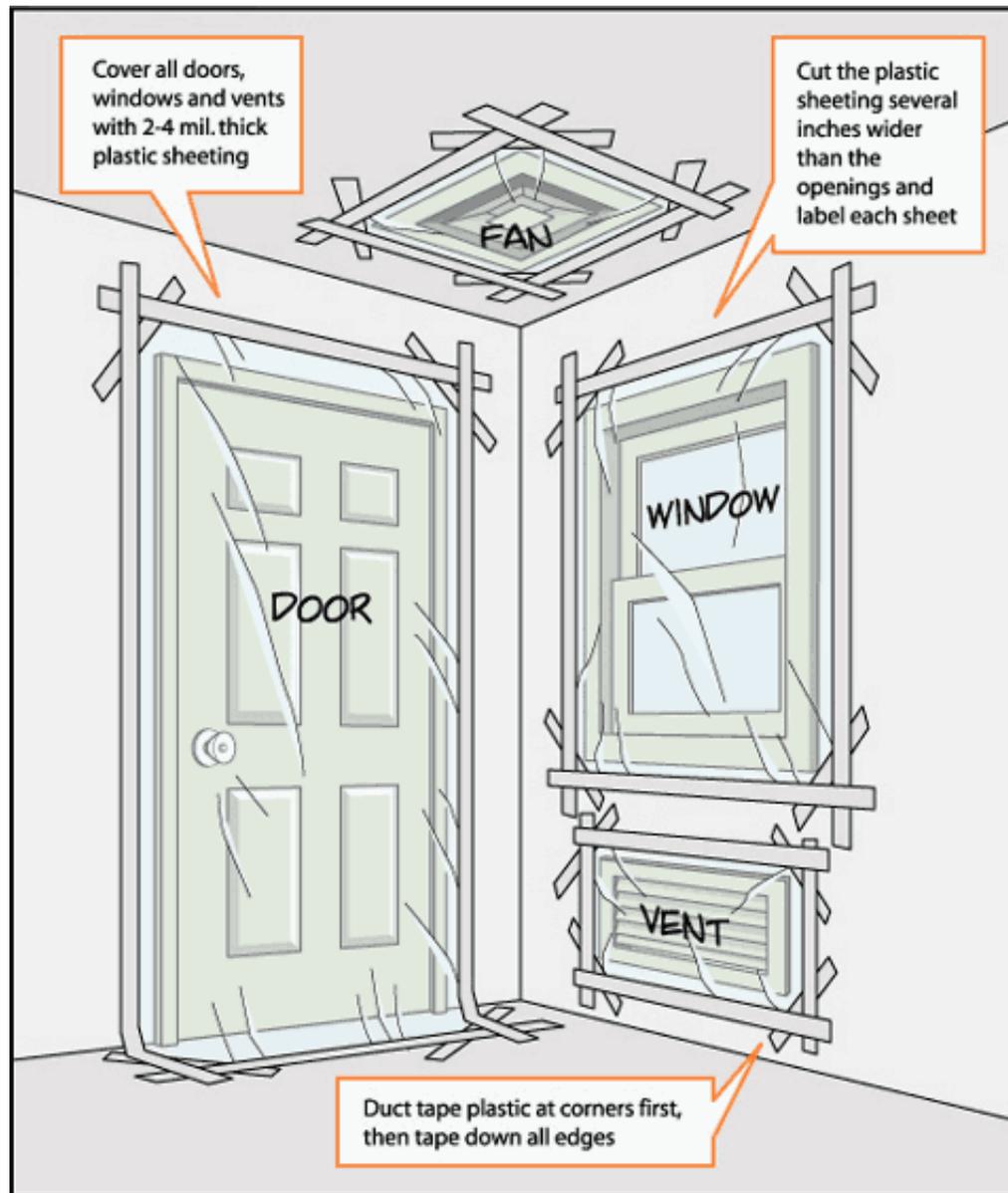
- Shut off HVAC systems.

List additional procedures for your site below:

Sheltering Procedures—Contaminated Air

If you are notified to shelter because of contaminated air, you will need to take some additional precautions:

- Shut and lock all outside doors, windows, and as many internal doors as possible.
- Turn off air conditioner, heat, and/or fans.
- Seal the room by taping up windows, vents, and exhausts—any opening to the outside—with plastic wrap, aluminum foil, or wax paper and duct tape.
- Close curtains or blinds.
- If air starts to bother children or staff, hold wet cloths over the nose and mouth or go into the bathroom, close the door, and turn on the shower.



What If You Have To Evacuate?

In some emergency situations—fire, explosion, and some weather and geological events—it will not be safe to stay in or around your facility. You should designate three different locations for evacuation, based on the type of emergency:

- **Neighborhood/area evacuation site.** This location is someplace close to your facility and will be used when you need to evacuate but your neighborhood is still safe (for example, there's a fire at your facility).
- **Out-of-neighborhood/area evacuation site.** This site is further away from your facility and would be used for a more widespread threat (for example, wildfire, gas leak, or flooding).
- **Out-of-town evacuation site.** This site would be a place to go when your town or city is inaccessible or being evacuated (for example, in the event of an environmental hazard, widespread flooding, or a hurricane).

Evacuation Procedures

Your evacuation procedures should address:

- Who determines when an evacuation is necessary?
- Who will call 911?
- What evacuation routes, sites, and exits should be used?
- How will you get children out (e.g., using a buddy system; identifying people to assist; using cribs, wagons, and strollers to enable one person to evacuate several children; etc.)?
- Who will take emergency kits?
- When and how will you account for children?
- How will children be transported to long-distance evacuation sites?
- Any special considerations.

Evacuation Procedures (Sample)
Use this list to identify roles, responsibilities, and processes for evacuation at your childcare site.
Specify how each of the following procedures will be implemented.
Evacuation routes and exits will be designated and posted by:
Evacuation site locations will be communicated to parents by:

Evacuation sites are:

- Neighborhood:
- Out-of-neighborhood:
- Out-of-town:

We will get to the sites by:

- Walking
- Using staff or facility vehicles

Evacuation specifics for:

- Infants (e.g., use evacuation cribs or have infant carrying devices)
- Children with access and functional needs

The decision to evacuate will be made by:

The decision to evacuate will be based on:

911 will be called by:

Staff will be notified of evacuation and where to evacuate to by (announcement, phone call, etc.):

Emergency kits and medications will be brought to the evacuation site by:

Utilities will be shut off by:

Facility will be secured by:

Staff will account for the children in their care:

- Prior to evacuation by:
- At an initial safe location by:
- At the evacuation site by:

Parents will be notified of the evacuation by:

- Person responsible:
- Process for notification (phone, email, local media notification):

List additional procedures for your site below:

Do You Have Supplies for an Emergency?

The previous sections described the need for an emergency kit when sheltering and evacuating.

What should these kits include?

- **For sheltering:** Include enough food, water, and other items to last for 72 hours for each child and adult.
- **For evacuating:** Include supplies in something easy to carry (e.g., backpacks or roller bags).

Emergency Kit Checklist for Sheltering (Sample)		
Use this checklist to identify items you need for your emergency kits.		
✓	Item	Quantity Needed (supply to last 72 hours)
✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emergency contact information for children and staff 	
✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Disposable diapers 	
✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Water (1 gallon per person per day – 3 gallons per person total) 	
✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Food (do not include any items that any of the children have allergies to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Flashlight and batteries (in each room)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Non-electric can opener	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Medications	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Disposable cups, bowls, plates, utensils	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Paper towels, toilet paper	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Hand sanitizer	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Blankets	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Whistle to signal for help	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Dust mask	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Cell phone with charger, inverter, or solar charger	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Clothing for each person (jacket, pants, shirt, shoes, hat, gloves)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Blanket or sleeping bag for each person	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rain gear 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fire extinguisher 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Matches in waterproof container 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signal flare 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Paper and pencil 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Household chlorine bleach (keep in a secure location, away from children's access) 	

Emergency Kit Checklist for Evacuation (Sample)

Use this checklist to identify items you need for your emergency kits for evacuation.

	Item
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emergency contact information for children and staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First aid kit
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Medications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dry or canned infant formula
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Granola/energy bars (remember to take into consideration children's food allergies when packing the go kits)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Books, games, toys

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Safety blankets
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cell phone
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Money (cash or traveler's checks)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compass
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Matches in waterproof container

How Will You Reunite Children With Their Parents?

If you have to evacuate your site and cannot return to it, you need to know how you will reunite children with their parents or guardians. Your reunification procedures should address:

- How you will identify reunification locations.
- Parent notification of your designated evacuation sites.
- Requirements for release of children (showing identification, filling out child release forms, being listed among those who can pick child up, etc.).
- Process for documenting that the child was picked up.
- Procedures if child is missing or was not present that day.
- Procedures for children not picked up, e.g., identifying other contacts (grandparents, relatives), notifying authorities, etc.

Reunification procedures are closely linked to your other procedures. If you have clearly defined evacuation procedures, clear sign-in and sign-out processes, and updated contact information, you will more likely have a seamless reunification process.

Reunification Procedures (Sample)

Use this list to identify roles, responsibilities, and processes for reuniting children with parents/guardians if you have to evacuate your childcare site.

Specify how each of the following procedures will be implemented.

Notify parents/guardians of evacuation sites (identify who will tell parents/guardians, how will they be notified, etc.):

- In advance of evacuation:
- When evacuating:
-

Children can be picked up by:

- Parents/guardians designated on contact sheets.
- Others identified on contact sheets.
-

Designated staff will account for the children under their care and have a record of who was picked up by whom by (identify the staff, process, documents, etc.):

Special procedures for when child is transported for medical care (identify who will accompany children, where they will go, how you will account for them, etc.):

Children With Access and Functional Needs

Children, especially young children (infants and toddlers), often require additional assistance in an emergency. It is important that your preparedness planning addresses how you will support each child in

your care.

Your plan also needs to address those children in your care with other additional needs such as medication, equipment (service animals, wheelchairs, glasses, crutches, etc.), and communication requirements.

During your planning, think about what children with access and functional needs might need if there were:

- No water or electricity.
- No access to medication.
- Separation from family.
- Lack of health care or emergency services.
- No access to formula, baby food, or other dietary items.

Children With Access and Functional Needs (Sample)

Use this list to identify roles, responsibilities, and processes to ensure the needs of all children are included in your emergency plan.

Specify how each of the following procedures will be implemented.

Track any access and functional requirements and how they will be addressed:

- Create a list of children with access and functional needs and identify if the needs are temporary.
- Identify accommodations for:
 - Normal operations.
 - Sheltering.
 - Evacuation.
 - Drills and practice.
 - No water or electricity.
- Include information on medications, equipment, and allergies.
- Assign staff to the child.
- Identify and track any training required to care for the child.

Identify processes for medications and other equipment during an emergency:

- Included in emergency kit.

- How to transport.
- How to store.

How you will ensure medical personnel are aware of child's needs:

- Forms you will provide.
- Who will get copies of forms? Emergency transport? Doctors? Other caregivers?

Special procedures for when child is transported for medical care (identify who will accompany the child, any accommodations required during transport, etc.):

After an Emergency

After an emergency you will want to return to operations as quickly as possible. Careful planning can help make recovery more efficient. You need to consider how you will restore your physical site, business operations, and the physical and emotional well-being of both children and staff after a disaster.

- Physical Site
- Business Operations
- Emotional Well-Being

Let's start by looking at what to do to quickly recover your physical site.

After an Emergency—Site Recovery

To get up and running quickly after an incident, you need to plan for how you will restore your physical site in both the short term and the long term.

- Identify where you will conduct both short-term and long-term operations if you are not able to use your site.
- List the supplies you will need to operate and where you will get them.
- Identify companies and resources for restoring your site (e.g., debris removal, repairs, painting, construction, and/or landscaping).
- Take photographs of the interior and exterior of your site and store them in a safe place. These photographs can be used for insurance claims.
- Maintain a current inventory of equipment and supplies for insurance.

After an Emergency—Business Operations Recovery

In order to return to operating your business as soon as possible, in your planning process identify:

- Where you will store your business records.
 - Store important documents in a waterproof, fireproof container.
 - Consider having duplicate records offsite in case those at your site are destroyed.
 - Have a backup plan for electronic files.
- How you will let parents and guardians know your site is closed and when it will reopen.
 - Have up-to-date contact information in your records.
 - Provide parents with emergency contact information for you and your childcare center.
- Contracts or agreements to put in place for alternate sites and services.

After an Emergency—Psychological and Emotional Recovery

After an incident, people may experience both psychological and emotional impacts. It is important to plan for how you will address children's needs, including the following considerations:

- Observe children's behavior and accept the changes.
- Listen to children's concerns and feelings.
- Keep normal routines.
- Be calm and reassuring.

- Limit media exposure.
- Teach calming techniques.
- Provide support to the child's family.

Find out if your local community or schools have psychological recovery information and tools available for your site.

Tips for Managing the Psychological Impacts of an Incident

Childcare providers have a role in managing psychological trauma following an incident, including:

- **Identify at-risk children.**
Victims that have been physically or sexually abused may be at a higher risk of developing post-traumatic stress.
- **Develop partnerships with local mental health practitioners.**
Immediately after an incident, there are often enough caregivers to assist victims with short-term grief. Over time, the availability of resources for long-term treatment dwindles. Reaching out to social workers, psychologists, and other mental health practitioners in the community helps you secure access to these long-term services.
- **Strengthen and encourage peer support.**
Victims can draw strength and develop coping strategies from friends in their peer group. Additionally, these friendships help decrease isolation and encourage discussion.
- **Look for symptoms of psychological stress, including:**
 - **Preschool:** Thumb sucking, bedwetting, clinging to parents, sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, fear of the dark, regression in behavior, and/or withdrawal from friends and routines.
 - **Elementary/middle school:** Irritability, aggressiveness, clinginess, nightmares, school avoidance, poor concentration, and/or withdrawal from activities and friends.
 - **High school:** Sleeping and eating disturbances, agitation, increase in conflicts, physical complaints, delinquent behavior, and/or poor concentration.
- **Support recovery by designing activities that:**
 - **Encourage students to talk about disaster-related events.**
Children need an opportunity to discuss their experiences in a safe, accepting environment. Although group discussions are a good vehicle for validating children's feelings about their experiences, it is important to end such discussion on a positive note by focusing on things that promote a sense of security, mastery, or preparedness. This positive wrap-up may come from students themselves, and teachers can reinforce or elaborate on these points.
 - **Promote positive coping and problem-solving skills.**
Activities should teach children how to apply problem-solving skills to incident-related stressors.

Children should be encouraged to develop realistic and positive methods of coping that increase their ability to manage their anxiety, and to identify which strategies fit with each situation.

■ **Encourage friendship and peer support among students.**

Children with strong emotional support from others are better able to cope with adversity. Relationships with peers can provide suggestions for how to cope with difficulties and can help decrease isolation.

Example Activities:

■ **Preschool and Elementary School Activities:**

- Encourage class activities in which children can organize or build projects (scrapbooks, replicas, toys, etc.) to give them a chance to organize and process what may be chaotic and confusing feelings and events.
- Encourage games and physical activity to relieve tension and anxiety.
- Ask children to draw pictures of the incident or whatever comes to their minds. Talking about the picture later with a teacher or in a small group may help them to process their experiences and discover that others share their fears, sadness, etc.
- Have children either write or listen to short stories about the incident. This activity can help children verbalize fears as well as get back in touch with previous positive associations about a disruption.
- Children can draw, write, or talk about what they remember, or respond to questions or topics such as:
 - What happened after the storm hit?
 - How did you help your family during or after the disaster?
 - How could you help your family if you were in another disaster?
 - Did anything good or positive happen because of the disaster? Did you learn anything from what happened to you?

■ **Middle School/Junior High and High School Activities:**

Childcare providers can use many of the basic principles outlined in the suggestions for younger children with older students. In addition:

- Give children opportunities to use art, music, or poetry to describe experiences and express feelings.
- Encourage children to keep a journal, or write and produce a play or a video.

Psychological and Emotional Recovery—Parents and Staff

Your plan also needs to address how you will support parents and staff after an incident. This part of your plan might describe how you will:

- Assist others in regaining a positive attitude and reducing stress (e.g., encourage exercise, identify support groups, and encourage making time for family and friends).
- Know the recovery resources that are available in the community (e.g., shelters, childcare resource and referral agency).

Putting Your Plan Together

Now that you understand the procedures you need to develop to be prepared, let's look at how to put these together in a plan. The type of plan you choose for your site is based on the number of children cared for and the complexity of your site.

Emergency Action Plan

Small sites may develop a simple emergency action plan that includes:

- How to contact parents/guardians.
- What medical information you need to collect on each child.
- How to contact emergency services.
- What to do if you need to stay put, shelter-in-place.
- What to do if you need to leave your site, evacuate.
- How to get children back to their parents/guardians, reunification.
- How you will accommodate the needs of each child in your care.

Emergency Operations Plan

Large sites may develop an emergency operations plan (EOP) that includes:

- A **basic plan**: Describes expected hazards, outlines roles and responsibilities, and explains how you keep the plan current.
 - Introductory Material
 - Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions
 - Concept of Operations

- Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities
- Direction, Control, and Coordination
- Communications
- Administration, Finance, and Logistics
- Plan Development and Maintenance
- Authorities and References
- **Functional annexes:** Describe procedures and missions for many hazards. Examples include: evacuation, shelter-in-place, and parent-child reunification.
- **Hazard-specific annexes:** Describe strategies for managing specific hazards.

Sample Plans

Below are two sample plans to help guide you in the development of a plan that is right for your site. Click the image below to view and print a plan.

- Emergency Action Plan: A simple set of procedures
- Emergency Operations Plan: A formal, comprehensive plan

Who Reviews Your Plan?

Once you have a plan, it needs to be reviewed; whether it is a simple emergency action plan or a more formal emergency operations plan. Include those people in your community that you solicited for input into your plan as part of your review and approval process, including:

- Local/county emergency manager,
- Parents,
- First responders,
- Local schools/school district,
- State department of health,
- Childcare site insurance carrier,
- Utility company personnel,
- Local business and industry personnel, and
- Childcare organizations.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) encourages engaging the whole community in your planning process. Click here for more information.

Incorporating ICS

As part of your emergency plan, your site may want to include Incident Command System (ICS) principles. ICS provides a standardized incident management approach to ensure effective response during an emergency and to protect the children and staff.

To become familiar with ICS principles, structure, and roles FEMA has the following independent study courses available:

- IS-100.SC: Introduction to the Incident Command System for Schools
- IS-700: National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction

Resources

Some resources to assist your childcare site with the development of your plan are listed below:

- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children & Families has information on States' requirements about emergency planning for childcare sites: www.acf.hhs.gov
- The U.S. Department of Education has information on crisis planning and recovery for communities and schools: www.ed.gov
- The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities has information on emergency planning, preparedness, and response: www.ncef.org
- The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has an emergency preparedness toolkit with general planning tips and information on evacuation and sheltering: www.hhs.gov
- Click on the link for the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) for information on developing an emergency operations plan: Comprehensive Preparedness Guide, CPG 101 ver. 2.0
- Click on the links below for sample plans from this lesson:
 - Sample childcare emergency operations plan
 - Sample childcare emergency action plan

Lesson Summary

This lesson presented information to include in an emergency plan, including:

- Communication processes.
- Evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures.
- Reunification procedures.
- Processes for assisting children with access and functional needs.
- Emergency kit contents.
- Recovery processes.

The next lesson presents the last step in being prepared: testing and updating your plan.

Lesson 4: Testing and Updating Your Plan

Lesson Overview

This lesson introduces you to the third step in being prepared: testing and updating your plan. During this step, you communicate, train, and practice the procedures you identified. You then use information from training, exercising, and communicating to update your plan.

At the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- Describe how you will communicate, train, and practice your preparedness procedures.
- Identify the emergency preparedness information you will share with your community.
- Describe when to update your plan.

Why Communicate, Train, and Practice?

Once you have identified procedures to address your hazards, you then need to identify who needs to know the procedures, how you will tell them, and how you will make sure they work.

This means you need to communicate, train, and practice your procedures to:

- Enable rapid and effective response in times of stress.
- Familiarize children, staff, parents, emergency management officials, and first responders with your procedures.
- Raise awareness of potential crisis situations.
- Identify areas for improvement and update your plan.

Activity: Self-Assessment

Let's look at how you currently communicate, train, and practice your emergency plan procedures.

	Yes	No	N/A
Training and Practice			
My site conducts training with staff.			
My site conducts training with children.			
My site conducts training with first responders and emergency management officials.			
I have taken first aid training.			
I have taken Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training.			
My site encourages staff to take first aid training.			
My site encourages staff to take CERT training.			
My site conducts fire drills.			
My site conducts shelter-in-place drills.			
My site conducts site evacuation drills.			
My site conducts training on drop, cover, and hold.			
Communication			
My site communicates closing procedures to parents.			
My site communicates evacuation sites to parents.			
My site communicates evacuation sites to staff.			
My site communicates evacuation sites to first responders and emergency management officials.			
My site lets our parents know how to contact us in an emergency situation.			
My site encourages families of the children in our care to have emergency plans.			

Types of Training

Training can be delivered in different ways to accommodate the schedules and needs of your site. Some types of training include:

- **Briefings:** Short meetings that provide information about a specific topic (e.g., new evacuation sites, tips on how to contact parents).
- **Seminars/classroom training:** Used to introduce new programs, policies, or procedures. Provide information on roles and responsibilities. This may also include training presented outside of the site.
- **Workshops:** Resemble a seminar but are used to build specific products, such as a draft plan or policy.

Types of Practice

Exercises are tools to practice the processes and procedures in your plan. Once you have conducted the necessary training, then you can begin to conduct exercises. Types of exercises are listed below:

- A **tabletop** is an exercise in which a scenario (often based on actual incidents at the site or recent events in the news) is presented and participants respond as if the scenario were really happening.
- A **drill** is an exercise used to test a single specific operation or function. Drills are often used to test new policies or equipment or practice current skills. Drills can test how well your site responds to simulated emergencies including intruders, fire, or severe weather.
- A **functional exercise** is the simulation of an emergency event that involves site and emergency management personnel "acting out" their actual roles.
- A **full-scale exercise** is a multiagency, multijurisdictional, multidiscipline operations-based exercise involving functional and "boots on the ground" response (e.g., firefighters decontaminating mock victims).

Sharing Your Plan

Now you know about different types of training and exercises. Let's look at how to communicate, train, and practice with staff, children, parents, emergency management officials, and first responders.

Sharing Your Plan With Children

- **Communicate:** Tell children the importance of being prepared, and describe how your site is prepared.
- **Train:** Conduct training with the children on how to react in an emergency; for example, teach them:
 - Stop, drop, and roll.
 - Drop, cover, and hold.
- **Practice:** Include the children in your emergency drills practicing procedures for:
 - Evacuation.
 - Fire.
 - Shelter-in-place.

Sharing Your Plan With Staff/Volunteers

- **Communicate:** Ensure everyone who works at your site knows your emergency procedures.
- **Train:** Conduct internal training on your procedures and also consider external training, like:
 - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training (training on disaster preparedness for hazards in your area).
 - First aid training.
- **Practice:** Conduct drills on your procedures including:
 - Shelter-in-place.
 - Fire response.
 - Evacuation.
 - Stop, drop, and roll.
 - Drop, cover, and hold.

Sharing Your Plan With Parents

- **Communicate:** Let parents know your procedures to make them confident in your ability to protect their children. Include information on:
 - Where you will evacuate to.
 - How you will shelter when necessary.
 - Where you will take any injured children—doctors, hospitals, clinics.
 - What you need from them for emergency kits—clothes, blankets, medicine.
 - How you will notify them of site closure.
 - The importance of family preparedness plans.

Emergency cards are a good way to get important information to parents.

Sharing Your Plan With Emergency Management Officials and First Responders

- **Communicate:** Provide emergency management officials and first responders with information on your procedures, so they:
 - Know your plans to respond.

- Know your evacuation locations.
- Know how to communicate with you.
- Can provide input to improve your plan.
- **Train:** Invite emergency management officials and first responders to train your staff and children in their areas of expertise.
- **Practice:** Include emergency management officials and first responders in your drills to get input on ways to improve and feedback on what you are doing.

Sharing Your Plan with Staff and Volunteers

Everyone who works at your site must be ready to act if something happens. To ensure preparedness:

- **Communicate:** Talk to staff and volunteers about your site's emergency procedures and encourage them to have personal/family emergency plans.
- **Train:** Conduct internal training on your procedures and also consider external training, such as:
 - Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training (training on disaster preparedness for hazards in your area; check for local availability through your local emergency management office).
 - First aid training.
 - FEMA independent study courses.
- **Practice:** Conduct drills on your procedures including:
 - Evacuation.
 - Shelter-in-place.
 - Drop, cover, and hold.
 - Reunification.

Example Drill Procedures

Evacuation Drills:

1. Take the emergency kit on the way out.
2. Take the closest and safest way out.
3. Do not stop for personal belongings.
4. Go to the designated area and wait for instructions.

5. Check for injuries.
6. Take attendance.

Shelter-in-Place Drills:

1. Clear the hallways immediately.
2. Close and tape all windows and doors, and seal the gap between the bottom of the door and the floor (simulate).
3. Take attendance. Report missing children.
4. Do not allow anyone to leave the shelter location. Allow emergency bathroom use only, using the buddy system.
5. Stay away from all doors and windows.
6. Permit use of telephones in emergencies only.
7. Wait for further instructions.

Drop, Cover, and Hold Drills

1. **DROP:** Take cover under a nearby desk or table, and face away from the window.
2. **COVER:** Cover your eyes by leaning your face against your arms.
3. **HOLD:** Hold on to the table or desk legs.

Reunification Drills:

1. Notify parents in advance.
2. Set up Request and Release areas.
3. Request identification to release child.

Sharing Your Plan With Children

You want children to be informed and prepared, but you do not want to scare them when you share information about your plan and emergency procedures. Some things to consider before communicating, training, and practicing are:

- Give children advance warning about drills and what to expect; also explain what happened at the completion of the drill.
- Stay calm.
- Use games, rhymes, music, art, and other activities to make emergency preparedness fun and memorable.

- Make your communication age-appropriate. For example, for:
 - **Toddlers:** Include toddlers in the drills. Provide them with simple instructions, and use rhymes and games to help them learn.
 - **Preschool children:** Give simple instructions and reassure these youngsters that they and your site are safe.
 - **Elementary and middle school children:** Allow the children to ask questions. Make sure they understand the difference between reality and fantasy.
 - **High school children:** Include high school children in discussions about how to keep the site safe.

Sharing Your Plan with Parents

It is critical that parents know the details in your plan. Telling them what your procedures are will make them confident in your ability to protect their children. Include information on:

- Your evacuation locations.
- How you will shelter when necessary.
- Where you will take any injured children—doctors, hospitals, clinics.
- What you need from them for emergency kits—clothes, blankets, medicine.
- How you will notify them of site closure.
- The importance of family preparedness plans.

Note: Emergency cards are a good way to get important information to parents.

Sharing Your Plan With Emergency Management and First Responders

Including emergency management and first responders in your training and practice will enable them to:

- Be familiar with your site and plans.
- Know your evacuation locations.
- Know how to best communicate with you and alert you to area emergencies.
- Provide input to help you improve your plan and your procedures.
- Provide training for your staff and children in various emergency response areas of expertise (fire, police, etc.).

Creating a Schedule

Once you have identified the training needs for each audience (staff, children, parents) and how to practice the procedures, the next step is to prepare a schedule that identifies dates for training and practical exercises.

Updating Your Plan

Another important part of emergency planning is knowing how you will keep your plan and procedures up-to-date. Your plan and procedures need to be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect new information and lessons learned, based on:

- **Training and exercise results:** Identify improvements based on the results of training and exercises. See link below for sample exercise evaluation checklists.
- **Community input:** Ask community members for input based on areas of expertise.
- **Changes in information/resources:** Make updates based on changes in contact information for parents/guardians, emergency management, first responders, and others in your community.
- **Incident after-action findings:** If an emergency happens, review your procedures immediately after to determine what worked, what did not work, and what to change.

Resources

To help you as you prepare to communicate your emergency plan, and to train and practice it at your facility, check out the following resources:

- Resources for communicating with children:
 - Ready Kids: www.ready.gov
 - Sesame Street: Let's Get Ready!: www.sesamestreet.org
 - U.S. Fire Administration for kids: www.usfa.dhs.gov
- Resources for staff and parent training:
 - FEMA independent study courses: www.training.fema.gov/is
 - CERT training: www.citizencorps.gov/cert
- The American Red Cross for first aid training: www.redcross.org
- Resources for family preparedness plans: www.ready.gov
- Drill checklists from this lesson

Lesson Summary

This lesson presented information on how to communicate, train, practice, and update your emergency procedures. Remember to:

- Include children and staff in preparedness communication, training, and practice.
- Share information on your preparedness procedures with parents, emergency management, and first responders.
- Update your plan based on changes to information, exercise results, lessons learned from an incident, and community input.

The next lesson provides a summary of the topics presented in this course.