



## Your Inventory for Keeping Everyone Safe

Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide is designed with brief explanations of emergency planning steps and with lists of resources. Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide should be used before the emergency and when annually updating your plan.

This Planning Guide is an update of the work initially completed in 2005. The revised Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide includes material to address all of the requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization of 2015 and the recommendations of Save the Children. It also includes new resources and updated links, which are compiled in a new appendix for ease of access.

The two goals of the Planning Guide are first to reduce the risks of emergencies and second to help you to respond to emergencies that occur. Many sections in the Planning Guide include a checklist or activity for that step in the planning process. This format will assist you in developing your customized emergency preparation plans for:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication with Parents</li><li>• Evacuation</li><li>• Relocation</li><li>• Emergency Closing</li><li>• Safe Place (sometimes called “Lock Down”)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shelter-In-Place</li><li>• Continued Operations</li><li>• Reunification</li><li>• Planning for Vulnerable Children</li><li>• Providing Support After a Crisis</li></ul>
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Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide lists specific disasters that may occur in Maine (e.g., earthquake, flood, severe weather, bomb threat, power failure, fire, hazardous materials, abduction, transportation incident, medical emergency, building collapse).

A separate flip chart has been developed to complement this planning guide, but simply filling out that flip chart is **NOT** creating a plan. Creating a useful plan involves thinking, research, planning with others, and practicing! The flip chart should be filled out **AFTER** completing the exercises in this guide. It is for use during an emergency and can be kept in your emergency backpack, or posted in your child care room. Electronic copies of this Guide will be available for download at the Maine state child care websites:

Office of Child and Family Services:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/cclicensing.htm>

Division of Licensing and Regulatory Services:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/dlrs/Licensing/children/daycare-nursery.html>



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## Introduction

People in Maine are no strangers to emergencies. In recent years, floods, ice storms, and toxic spills from overturned trucks and railroad cars have required temporary closure, evacuation, and relocation of children from child care facilities. In such emergencies, children may or may not understand what is happening and may not be physically or developmentally able to rescue or protect themselves. Child care programs that have followed the steps toward preparedness and planning are better able to protect lives and to return to normal operation in a shorter time period.

### **Child Care is an Essential Service**

During and in the aftermath of a disaster, all children need a place to be safe while their parents piece their lives back together. Even parents who did not previously need child care may need it temporarily in order to job hunt, clean up and repair homes, and put their life back together. Child care needs after a disaster can far surpass pre-disaster demand. When parents can go back to work knowing their children are safe and cared for, local businesses can rebuild and thrive. Child care is critical to restoring the economic vitality of the community. If child care is not available after a disaster, the recovery process takes longer.

Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide serves as a planning tool for Maine Child Care Programs. It provides basic preparedness and planning information that can be customized to fit the size and needs of your program. All programs must have a written emergency response plan.

Emergency plans are only effective if they are used. Here are three suggestions as you begin your planning:

- Keep it simple so that people (you, staff, parents, town officials, etc.) will be able to recall the necessary steps when faced with an emergency situation.
- Make your plan easily available for reference.
- Practice. Practice. Practice. During emergencies, thinking shuts down and people act on instinct. Once you have your plan, practice your plan so that everyone instinctively knows the right things to do.

Develop personal relationships with local town emergency managers, fire, law enforcement, and public works personnel. These people would most likely respond to an emergency at or near your facility. They can assist you in your determination of potential disaster threats and hazards close to your program and help you develop appropriate responses.

Your emergency response plan is a part of the larger plan your local Emergency Management Director maintains. You may want to consider your willingness to have your facility available to assist other children and families who may need immediate shelter. Additionally, there may be an immediate need to provide child care for emergency responders. If you are able to provide such assistance, notify town officials.



## Step One: Developing Your Plan: Who Can Help?

The best emergency response plans are developed with a lot of input from other people. There are many people in your area who can help you develop a good plan, based on their expertise of what may already exist in your area, or who can help you think through things that you may overlook.

**1. Collaborators:** Who could collaborate in planning with you? For example, parents, other nearby child care programs or local child care associations may also be working on emergency planning. You could work together to develop plans, making sure to customize the general plans to fit your individual needs. Involve the other people living in your household to include spouses, significant others, adult family members and your own children. The more people in the home or center that know the plan, the more likely it is that everyone will remain safe and calm. If your child care is located among other businesses, collaborate with other business owners to share resources and ideas.

**2. Resource People:** Who could be a resource to you? Your licensor, Child Care Health Consultant, the local Fire Department, local and county Emergency Management Agency (EMA), town emergency officials, Red Cross, hospitals, churches, law enforcement, health department personnel, emergency medical services, school personnel, local businesses, and neighbors may all have information regarding hazards, emergency assistance, or emergency plans in your area.

Contact your local town officials or select person to discover who has a copy of your town's emergency plan, if there is one. It will help to identify hazards in your area. Resource people may participate by helping to write your plan, collecting or sharing information you need to write your plan, providing you a copy of local emergencies plans, or reviewing your completed plan.

**3. Participants:** Who could you ask to be part of your planning group? Anyone who has a possible task to do in your plan should be part of your planning group. For example, think about inviting:

- The child care program down the street which could become your emergency relocation site.
- A neighbor who could provide emergency transportation.
- The landlord who may need to mark outside doors for easy identification by emergency personnel.
- Other people who live in your home, if you operate a family child care.

**4. Implementers:** Who could be affected by your emergency response plans? Staff, parents, volunteers, and the board of your child care program will all be affected by decisions made by the planning group. Each group should have some representation to share its unique point of view and concerns.

**5. Special Knowledge:** Do you have a child with special health care needs? If you have a child with a special health care need, the parents and medical provider need to assist you in developing an individual emergency care plan.



## Planning Checklist

Begin a list of people to invite and how each will contribute to your plan development. Do not invite someone without knowing what you want them to contribute. Remember, there are ways they can contribute other than attending a meeting, such as reviewing your plan or providing you with a copy of the town plan.

Name:                      Representing:                      Contact Information:                      Task/Information:

Organize a meeting. Be sure to consider the time and place that will be easiest for all those involved to attend. Schedule the meeting far enough in advance that calendars may be clear.

Date:                      Time:                      Place:

Develop an agenda. Know what you want to accomplish before you invite your potential planning group members. Sharing the agenda with them before the meeting will help them to know what to expect and what they need to bring to be prepared.

Possible Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. State purpose/goals of meeting
3. Outline what has been done and ask for input from others
4. Outline what needs to be done
5. Develop a plan to get the work accomplished
6. Make assignments/get commitments
7. Set date for next meeting.



Invite. Share the agenda. Be sure to ask for an RSVP. Call those you have not heard from to encourage them to attend or contribute in other ways.

## Step Two: Hazard Analysis

The first step for your planning group is to determine which hazards you are most likely to encounter in your area, including natural events and man-made dangers.

The Maine Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) has identified 24 significant emergencies that may occur in Maine. Fourteen have been identified as potentially threatening to a child care program.

Most Likely:	Less Likely:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Severe weather</li><li>• Energy shortage/Power/Utility failure</li><li>• Flood/ Dam failure</li><li>• Wildfire or forest fire</li><li>• Severe medical injuries</li><li>• Pandemic illness</li><li>• Building collapse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earthquake</li><li>• Bomb threat</li><li>• Hazardous materials</li><li>• Transportation incident</li><li>• Missing or abducted child</li><li>• Intruder (can include domestic violence)</li><li>• Contamination of air/water/soil/food</li></ul>

There may be other hazards you want to consider, such as uncontrolled animals like dogs or coyotes, or rabid animals like skunks or raccoons.

Think about hazards in a four step evaluation: 1. building/site, 2. surrounding area, 3. community, and 4. state vulnerabilities. For instance, hazards can exist in your child care building (e.g., stairs, heavy furniture that could fall, wood stoves, etc.), on your property (e.g., opening to a well, power lines, pond or river, disgruntled parent, etc.), in your neighborhood or community (e.g., chemical plants, dams, etc.) and in your state (e.g. hurricanes, ice storms, tornados, high winds, etc.)

Some hazards you will encounter only if your child care program is located in specific areas of Maine (e.g., dam failure/flooding/landslide/wildfire/tidal surge) or close to transportation routes, production sites or storage sites of hazardous materials (contamination of air and water). Some hazards are more universal, such as a loss of water, flooding from broken pipes, gas outages, power failure or fire.

As you consider the types of significant emergencies that may occur at your location, make a list of what may occur due to the emergency. That list will help you in developing a response plan. For instance, if you are in an area that may be flooded by a dam failure, you may need to evacuate and relocate to get the children to a safe location, or your water supply may become contaminated and you will need another water source. So, in your planning you will need to plan how to conduct an evacuation and relocation and identify an emergency source of water.

Think about how you could help or collaborate with others. What other child care providers are close to you and may be encountering the same problems? Could you be a relocation site for others? Could you combine resources with other providers to continue to provide child care for other families?



**Please see Appendix C for additional resources on Hazard Analysis.**

## Hazard Analysis Worksheet

The examples don't include everything that can happen and are only to get you thinking!

What types of hazard are most likely to occur in child care settings (e.g., missing children, intruders, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

What types of hazards exist within my building (e.g., heavy furniture that could topple, blocked exits, ordinary glass in windows, deck collapse, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

What types of hazards exist outside my building (e.g., rivers or ponds, open wells, power lines, gas pipelines, dead trees, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

What types of hazards exist in my neighborhood (e.g., dams and reservoirs, chemical plants, highways where chemicals are transported, flood plain, power lines, gas pipelines, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

What type of weather extremes may occur in my region (e.g., blizzards, ice storms, high winds, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

What health issues do my staff/children have (e.g., asthma, diabetes, allergic reactions, limitations in mobility, etc.) and what could be the consequences?

**What else did you just think about??**



### Step Three: Reducing the Potential Impact of Emergencies

You may not be able to stop a fire, flood, earthquake, hurricane or other disaster from occurring but you can take steps to ensure greater safety for the children in your care and to protect your building and your business. Such steps are called mitigation. Mitigation can make the difference between having to close your child care program due to a disaster, and being able to keep it open and provide safe care for your children. A checklist is provided for you to help start thinking about how to make your child care site safer. Some items are simple, such as selecting lower shelves for the blocks. Some items require more work but can be done without great skill or expense. A few items will need the assistance of a professional. For a more complete list of mitigation ideas and instructions, “Protecting Our Kids from Disasters: Nonstructural Mitigation for Child Care Centers” please see Appendix C.

#### Loss of Income

An emergency may close your child care business for a short or extended period of time. This loss of income will have some impact on your overall finances. If the income is essential, you might consider setting up a contingency fund to be used if you need to close for an emergency. By definition, a contingency fund is an amount kept in reserve to guard against possible losses during a period of one to three months.

Make sure you are adequately insured and know what your insurance will and won't cover. Most property policies will not cover floods, so if you are in a flood plain you will need separate flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program.

Make sure you have copies of vital records and important information, like business records, children's records, insurance policies, etc. backed up to an off-site location so you can access them if you lose your computer or paper records. Some easy ways to do this are to use a free service such as Drop Box or a Google account. You can even create a draft email with your scanned files as attachments and just keep in the “draft” folder of your online email account.

**Bank account:** You should plan for situations where your income may be affected by an emergency, when fewer children may be attending, but your expenses remain the same. Having a reserve fund may help you to stay open and continue to meet children's needs. You should consider supplies, salaries, and utilities. A good rule of thumb would be to have a reserve sufficient to cover your operating costs for three months.

**Cash on Hand:** In some emergencies, power may be out for extended periods. In those situations, electronic transactions like ATM withdrawals, pay-at-the pump gas purchases, and credit or debit card payments will not work! Having a supply of cash on hand that would cover a few days' worth of supplies and food may be a good idea. If you are taking out a loan for another reason (like home improvements), consider adding an amount that you will keep on hand (and in savings) as your emergency fund.

In certain declared states of emergency following major or catastrophic events, the Federal or Maine Emergency Management Agency (EMA) may have loans or grants available to help with restoring operations or repairing damages. This happens only rarely but you should look for media announcements or keep in touch with your local or county emergency manager after major disaster events.

## Preparedness and Risk Reduction

### General:

- ✓ Is the street number of the center/home clearly and legibly visible from the road way? In larger centers, is each internal/external door numbered or lettered for identification?
- ✓ Do you have sign-in and sign-out procedures for everyone entering your building?
- ✓ Are the building's safe place and shelter-in-place locations and evacuation assembly areas marked on your posted floor plan?

### In the event of a fire:

- ✓ Are fire extinguishers properly charged, mounted securely, within easy reach and does everyone know how to use them properly?
- ✓ Are exits clear from obstructions such as locked doors, storage, or possible obstructions such as large nearby objects (e.g., bookcases, filing cabinets) that could fall and block the exit?

### In the event of loss of power:

- ✓ Do you have battery back-up lights or flashlights for an emergency? Are exits marked and lit?
- ✓ Does your site need a generator for back-up power (a generator must be installed by a licensed electrician)?
- ✓ Are at least two staff trained to start and operate the generator?
- ✓ Do you know where the emergency shut-offs are, how to operate them, and have the tools needed handy?
- ✓ Does the emergency shut off for the water supply, electric service, and/or natural gas supply have a sign placed by the control identifying it as the primary disconnecting/shutoff means?

### In the event of the building moving or shifting:

- ✓ Are appliances, cabinets and shelves attached to the wall studs or braced by being anchored together?
- ✓ Are heavy or sharp items stored on shelves with ledge barriers? Are blocks and heavy objects stored on the lowest shelves?
- ✓ Are television sets, fish bowls, and similar items restrained so they won't slide off?
- ✓ Are pictures and other wall hangings attached to the wall with wire and closed screw-eyes?
- ✓ Are cribs located away from the tops of stairs and other places where rolling could endanger them or where heavy objects could fall on them?
- ✓ Are blackboards and bulletin boards securely mounted to the wall or hung safely from the ceiling?
- ✓ Are lightweight panels, rather than shelving units or other tall furnishings, used to divide rooms?
- ✓ Are large windowpanes safety-glazed or covered with clear contact paper? Do partitions have plastic or safety glass panels, rather than ordinary glass?
- ✓ Do fluorescent lights have transparent sleeves to keep shattered glass pieces from scattering?

### Financial:

- ✓ Do you have enough savings or a credit line to carry you through a temporary suspension of your child care business?
- ✓ What will it take to develop an appropriate contingency fund?

## Step Four: Planning for Children with Functional and Access Needs

There may be a time when, or you may already have, children at your child care who need special assistance in a time of an emergency.

There are many factors that you need to take into consideration regarding safely evacuating children with disabilities. Some examples include:

- ✓ Having a way to alert a child with a hearing impairment to an emergency.
- ✓ Safely moving children with mobility limitations, including infants and toddlers who cannot walk.
- ✓ Safely escorting children with intellectual disabilities.
- ✓ Keeping exits clear for children with mobility limitations and evacuation cribs.
- ✓ Assigning staff specifically to children with disabilities.
- ✓ Keeping a supply of extra medications on hand for children in the event you need to go to a different location.
- ✓ Anticipating the reactions of children with behavioral support needs and providing additional practice for potential emergencies.

You may need to teach other people how to use any lifesaving equipment or medicine in case of an emergency. If a child uses a wheelchair, oxygen, or other medical equipment, show friends/staff how to use these devices so they can help you evacuate. Practice your plan with your personal support network. Talk to the child's service provider about their emergency plans if children undergo routine treatments at a clinic or hospital, or if they receive regular services such as home health care, have special dietary needs, or use oxygen. Work with the provider to identify back-up service providers within your area and the areas you may use as an evacuation site. If children use medical equipment at your childcare that requires electricity to operate, talk to your health care provider about a back-up plan.

There are many ways to assist children with disabilities. Here are a few ideas that may assist you when an emergency happens:

- ✓ Some children have conditions that may be aggravated if they are moved incorrectly. Always ask someone with a disability how you may help them.
- ✓ Have a "buddy system" to assist children with intellectual disabilities or behavioral support needs. The "buddy system" designates a specific volunteer to assist that child.
- ✓ Do not grasp a child who is visually impaired/blind. Instead, ask them if you can assist them and have them hold on to your arm.
- ✓ Give verbal instructions to visually impaired children (Ex: twenty feet forward, turn right).

Children with special needs may be particularly sensitive to new people and distressed with changes in their routine or surroundings; may be extra sensitive to sounds, lights, or temperature changes; or have difficulty expressing their feelings. The children may require activities that are adapted to their needs and work within their behavior or safety plans.

**See Appendix C for additional resources.**



## Protecting Especially Vulnerable Children in a Crisis

Depending on the needs of the children, additional items to consider or take if you must evacuate might include:

- Planning for transportation needs if you need to evacuate off-site.
- Copies of medical prescriptions, doctors' orders, and the style and serial numbers of the assistive devices they use with at least a week's supply of any medication or medical supplies they use regularly, or as much as you can keep on hand.
- Written descriptions of the child's disability and support needs, in case you are unable to describe the situation in an emergency.
- Medical insurance cards, Medicare/Medicaid cards, physician contact information, list of the child's allergies and health history.
- A list of the local non-profit or community-based organizations that know you or assist people with access and functional needs similar to the children you serve.
- Extra eyeglasses; backup supplies for any visual aids.
- Extra batteries for hearing aids; extra hearing aids if the child has them.
- Battery chargers for motorized wheelchairs, or other battery-operated medical/assistive technology devices.
- Supplies for service animals.
- If a child uses a motorized wheelchair, have a light weight manual chair available for emergencies. Know the size and weight of the wheelchair, in addition to whether or not it is collapsible, in case it has to be transported.
- If children have allergies or chemical sensitivities, be sure to include items that they are able to use for personal hygiene and for cleanup.
- Additional diapers and formula/breast milk for infants and baby food for toddlers.
- Activities for children with behavioral support needs.

**Other things I might need for the children I am currently serving:**

## Step Five: Emergency Closure

There will be times when it is not safe for the children to come to the child care program, such as severe weather or power outages that occur before you open for the day, or the children may begin the day at the child care program and then it becomes unsafe to stay due to an emergency situation. In order to reduce confusion when closing, it is important to have an emergency closing plan with which everyone is familiar.

### **Determine Who Will Decide.**

In a family day care home where the teacher, director, and owner are all the same person, who makes the decision is easy. However, in large centers, who makes the decision needs to be clear. Does a teacher, the director, or the owner make the decision?

### **Making the Decision.**

First, how will you know when it is wisest to close? Will you go by your local school system's closing (and how will you know)? Will you listen to a weather radio and monitor for severe weather and local emergencies? Will you call 511 or check the DOT website for road reports and emergency situations information?

Second, determine at what time to make the decision to close. It may be too late to decide not to open only 15 minutes before the first child is due to arrive. That decision needs to be made in time for parents to be contacted before they leave the house. Similar issues need to be taken into account when considering closing early.

Third, you need to consider when it is safer to stay than to have children and their parents on the road traveling. Closing early and sending children home in a snow storm may be more risky than staying open and allowing time for the snow plows to clear the road.

Fourth, child care has been determined to be an "essential service". First responders such as emergency personnel, firefighters, and police may still need child care. You need to decide in advance if you will stay open in bad weather or declared emergencies, and share that information with parents.

### **Things to consider are:**

- ✓ Who is responsible for making the phone calls or other contact? To staff? To parents? To local TV or radio stations?
- ✓ How much time will it take to make the phone calls or other contacts? (Telephone trees may help decrease the time it takes for everyone to be notified.)
- ✓ Who knows the numbers? (Those responsible for making the calls need to have access to the phone numbers both at the child care program and at their home.)
- ✓ Who else might need to know that you are closing? If you're serving school-age children, the school will need to know if your after-school program is closed, so they don't send kids on the bus.

**Now, complete this section on the flipchart provided.**

## Step Six: Evacuation and Relocation Planning

Even with mitigation, there will be times when your child care building will not be safe for you and your children to remain there. You may need to evacuate the building for either a short time or may even need to relocate to a safe place. You need an evacuation plan, relocation sites, and a plan for getting the children to the relocation site.

### Evacuation Plan.

Child Care Licensing already requires that all licensed child care programs have an evacuation plan in case of fire. This evacuation plan can work in other emergencies also. Once you are out of the building, meet at your evacuation meeting place, and take a head count of your children. You can then assess the need to relocate to an alternative site for safety. Review your evacuation plan to ensure that it includes grabbing the emergency backpack and taking the emergency supplies, if there is time. Do not put yourself or children at risk in order to get your emergency supplies!

### Relocation Sites.

Two relocation sites will be needed. One evacuation site should be a neighborhood site close to the child care program so that you and the children can walk to it if your building becomes unsafe. The second site needs to be out of the neighborhood, to use in an emergency that involves the entire neighborhood. It is recommended (for many reasons) that the relocation site be about one mile away from the original site.

Things to consider when choosing a relocation site:

- ✓ Consider the number of children you serve when looking for a location site. The neighbor's house may work as an evacuation site if you are a family day care home or small facility with a few children but not if you have a large center serving 50 children.
- ✓ There may be a building or site that is open to the public during your hours of operation that will accommodate the number of children you serve and would be willing to offer you shelter (like town halls, community centers, churches, and libraries).
- ✓ You may consider another child care facility that would be willing to develop a mutual relocation site agreement with you.
- ✓ Make sure you know the location of the closest regional emergency shelter. Your town EMA person can tell you where that is located.
- ✓ How you will transport the children from your site to a relocation site.

### Relocation Planning.

First, contact the owner or other appropriate person to determine their willingness for you to take shelter in their site. Arrange a meeting with them to develop an agreement. The agreement needs to clarify:

- ✓ What the owner is offering to provide (e.g., relocation for a few hours only or longer if needed, use of their phone to contact parents, a place to store emergency supplies, etc.),
- ✓ What the child care program will provide (e.g., compensation, etc.),
- ✓ Address release from liability (see the sample form in Appendix A), and
- ✓ Access information (e.g., how to gain access to the building if closed, a key, etc.).

## Employees and Their Families

Human behavior during any type of emergency is the critical factor in determining the ultimate success or failure of an emergency response. During an actual emergency in the workplace, employees will either be part of the problem or part of the solution. Individuals who have prepared a family communication plan and have thought through their roles and responsibilities in different disaster scenarios are more likely to remain calm, cooperate, and help others than those who are caught off guard by the situation.

Involving employees early can play an important role in the overall preparedness/response cycle. People who participate in planning are much more likely to cooperate during an actual emergency and help facilitate an effective response than those who did not have a voice in plan development.



Employees faced with conflicting obligations between the home and the workplace are less likely to cooperate during an emergency because of a pull to leave for home to care for others. Depending on the nature of the emergency, employees who leave the workplace against the advice or direction of the employer might put themselves and many others at greater risk.

Employees who have worked through issues of emergency childcare, family communications, and transportation prior to an emergency are more likely to stay the course during a disaster since they know that their loved ones, as well as their homes, are secure. Employers should actively promote personal and family preparedness as part of the organizational planning effort to help reduce the possibility that employees will feel torn between loyalties during an emergency.

## Know a Safe Place to Take Your Pets

Children will be concerned about any pets at the program. During hurricane Katrina, some people did not move to safety because they could not take their pets! The federal Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act of 2006 requires state and local governments to accommodate pets and service animals in their plans for evacuating residents facing disasters. Ask your county EMA about their plan or whether they have a community animal response team. You should ask friends, relatives or others outside the affected area whether they could shelter your animals, or ask local animal shelters if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets during a disaster.



### **Assemble a Pet Emergency Preparedness Kit**

Keep your pet's essential supplies, including their vaccination records, in sturdy containers that can be easily accessed and carried (a duffle bag or covered trash containers, for example).

### **Help Emergency Workers Help Your Pets**

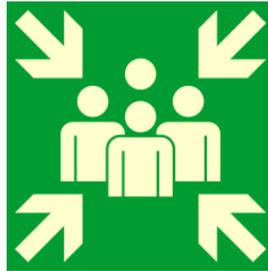
The ASPCA recommends using a rescue sticker alert to let people know that pets are inside your home. Make sure it is visible to rescue workers, and that it includes the types and number of pets in your household and your veterinarian's phone number. If you must evacuate with your pets (and if time allows) write "EVACUATED" across the stickers so rescue workers don't waste time looking for them.

## Step Seven: Safe-Place and Shelter-in-Place

**Safe-Place:** Some emergencies may make it unsafe for you and your children to leave the shelter of your child care building. If there is a threatening person outside, you need a 'Safe-Place' to protect your children. If the air is not safe to breathe outside, then you will need to 'Shelter-in-Place.'

The primary difference between the two situations is how tightly you need to secure the building to keep the children safe. Safe-Place means staying inside the building during an emergency while keeping others out and Shelter-in-Place means staying inside the building AND trying to keep the outside air out. Shelter-in-place is used only during emergencies when the air outside is contaminated.

Your Safe-Place and Shelter-in-Place areas may be the same location in your building or may be different locations. The area you choose will depend on the emergency. For example, your Safe-Place from an intruder may be an upstairs room with only one door that can be locked. Your Safe-Place for a tornado may be in the basement. Your Shelter-in-Place room is going to be one with few windows and vents to cover. You may consider keeping your Safe-Place confidential from some people, but your local police and fire personnel need to know that location so that they can find you in a crisis.



### Things to consider when deciding a Safe-Place/Shelter-in-Place location for your child care

Think about what it would take to keep your children in one area of your child care for an extended length of time. Some things to consider are:

1. Limited and controllable access to the outside,
2. Access to communication such as a phone,
3. Access to emergency and shelter-in-place supplies (including food and water),
4. Access to a bathroom or other sanitation supplies, and
5. Quiet activities to keep the children occupied.

**Shelter-in-Place.** Local authorities issue orders for shelter-in-place during chemical emergencies. Local officials will relay emergency action steps to the media on a continual basis until the crisis is over. Once the order for shelter-in-place has been issued, do not leave your building location until you receive official notification that the danger has passed. If possible, bring outdoor pets inside. Do not worry about running out of air to breathe, as this is very unlikely in normal homes and buildings.

**Staying Informed.** Police and Emergency Services can help to keep you informed of events occurring in your area, but only if they know where you are, and if you have been asked to be notified. Your local Emergency Management official can tell you what options are available to you.

**For more information on Shelter-in-Place and Safe-Place please see Appendix C.**

## Safe-Place and Shelter-in-Place Checklist

### Choosing a location for a Safe-Place and Shelter-in-Place:

- ✓ Is there an area inside your facility with:
  - Telephone or other means to communicate with emergency personnel?
  - Cell phone coverage at that location?
  - Access to at least one outlet for charging a cell phone? (And is a spare cord kept there?)
  - Access to a bathroom or other sanitary facilities?
  - Limited access to the outside?
- ✓ Can all outside doors and windows be locked?
- ✓ Do your windows have drapes, curtains or shades for additional protection?
- ✓ Do you have access to your emergency supplies in the Shelter-In-Place and Safe-Place areas?
- ✓ Do the police and local emergency personnel know your safe place?
- ✓ What are the local protocols for safe place (closing blinds, locking doors)?

### In Your Shelter-In-Place

- ✓ Do you know where the turn-offs for the heating system are and how to operate them? Is the information posted?
- ✓ Do you know where the turn-offs for the air conditioning systems are and how to operate them? Can you switch intakes to the closed position? Is the information posted?
- ✓ Where are the exhaust fans in your child care (e.g., over the stove, bathroom)?
- ✓ Do you have duct tape and plastic sheeting to cover and seal fireplaces, bathroom exhaust and grilles, range vents, dryer vents, outlets, and other openings to the outdoors to the extent possible? Is the window sealing equipment stored in the Shelter-In-Place room and is it easily accessible?

**Now, complete this section on the flipchart provided.**

## Step Eight: Medical Emergencies, Reportable Illnesses, and Pandemics

Child care and preschool programs can help protect the health of their staff and the children and families they serve. Unfortunately, even with the best training and preparation, accidents happen, children get sick, and children pick up illnesses from other children.

### Medical Emergencies

The type of emergency that a child care provider is most likely to encounter is a seriously injured child. As in the section on reducing the impact of a crisis, the most effective defense for preventing the injury of a child is to make sure the environment is as safe as possible:

- ✓ Make sure your play area is free of hazards.
- ✓ Supervise children closely at all times.
- ✓ Keep toxins and hazardous materials where children cannot see or reach them.

Also, make sure that you are ready to deal with a medical emergency when it occurs:

- ✓ Have a cell phone with you when outside or on a field trip.
- ✓ Make sure that your first aid kit is well-equipped at all times.
- ✓ Assure that employees' first aid and CPR training is current.
- ✓ Have emergency numbers posted at all times.
- ✓ Know how to respond to allergic reactions, including food allergies and bee stings.



### Reportable Illnesses

The Maine Center for Disease Control maintains a list of diseases that must be reported to them when they occur. The list includes such diseases as Chickenpox (Varicella), Diphtheria, Hepatitis, Influenza-associated pediatric death, Lyme Disease, Measles, Meningitis (bacterial), Mumps, Pertussis, Smallpox, Streptococcus pneumonia, and Tetanus. The number for reporting diseases is 1-800-821-5821.

### Pandemics

A pandemic is a global disease outbreak that occurs when a new virus emerges that people have little or no immunity to and for which there may be no vaccine. Research has shown that children less than 5 years of age are at high risk of serious flu-related complications. It's estimated that more than 20,000 children less than 5 years old are hospitalized due to flu each year in the U.S. Many more have to go to a doctor, an urgent care center, or the emergency room because of flu. Some ways that you can prepare for an outbreak of the flu are:

- ✓ Identify all the ways a flu pandemic might affect your program and develop a plan of action. (For example, you might have problems with food service, transportation, or staffing.)
- ✓ Encourage parents to have a "Plan B" for finding care for their children if the program is closed during a flu pandemic. Give them ideas about where they might seek help based on your knowledge of the local child care community.
- ✓ Learn about services in your area that can help your staff, children, and their families deal with stress and other problems caused by a flu pandemic.

## Infection Control Policies and Actions

- ✓ Encourage parents of sick children to keep the children home and away from the child care setting until the children have been without fever for 24 hours, to prevent spreading illness to others. Similarly, encourage sick care providers to stay home.
- ✓ Encourage children and staff to use soap and water to wash hands when hands are visibly soiled, or an alcohol-based hand rub when soap and water are not available, and hands are not visibly soiled.
- ✓ Clean frequently touched surfaces, toys, and commonly shared items at least daily and when visibly soiled.
- ✓ Encourage children and staff to wash their hands to the extent possible between contacts with infants and children, such as before meals or feedings, after wiping the child's nose or mouth, after touching objects such as tissues or surfaces soiled with saliva or nose drainage, after diaper changes, and after assisting a child with toileting.
- ✓ Keep a good supply of things you will need to help control the spread of infection. (For example, keep on hand plenty of soap, paper towels, gloves, and tissues.) Store the supplies in easy-to-find places.
- ✓ Tell families that experts recommend yearly flu shots for all children 6 months to 5 years old and for anyone who cares of children in that age range.
- ✓ Encourage staff to get flu shots each year.
- ✓ Tell parents to let your program know if their children are sick. Keep accurate records of when children or staff are absent. Include a record of the kind of illness that caused the absence (e.g., diarrhea/vomiting, coughing/breathing problems, rash, or other).
- ✓ Teach staff a standard set of steps for checking children and adults each day as they arrive to see if they are sick.
- ✓ Make it clear that any child or adult who is ill will not be admitted.
- ✓ Observe closely all infants and children for symptoms of respiratory illness and have a plan for keeping children who become sick at your program away from other children until the family arrives, such as a fixed place for a sick room.
- ✓ Require staff members to stay home if they think they might be sick. If they become sick while at the program, require them to go home and stay home.



## Step Nine: Emergency Supplies

Once a disaster hits, you won't have time to shop or search for the supplies you will need. You can best cope with a disaster by preparing for it before it strikes. One way to prepare is to assemble emergency supplies in advance.

### Things to Consider

The items and amounts needed in your emergency supplies will vary based on the number and ages of the children you serve and the needs of your confinement and evacuation locations. However, there are 3 primary considerations:

1. How long will the disaster last?
2. What supplies does your group need?
3. How will you store them?

### How Long Will the Disaster Last?

In a disaster situation, it may just be a few minutes until you can get help, or it may be 72 hours or more before you can receive help from local officials and relief workers. You need to plan and store supplies for both time frames.

### What Supplies Does Your Group Need?

When determining what you need in your short-term and 72-hour emergency supplies, think in 8 basic categories:

1. Important papers
2. Water (Information on how to safely store water can be found in Appendix C.)
3. Food
4. Clothing and Bedding
5. First Aid
6. Sanitation
7. Comfort and Safety
8. Communication\*



### How Will You Store Them?

Your container needs to be easily portable and sturdy. If you are storing your short-term emergency supplies, an easy to carry backpack may be large enough. For large centers, a backpack per classroom would be appropriate. The backpack should be placed near an exit and taken on field trips as well as in an Emergency Evacuation. The additional supplies for your 72 hour emergency kit may need to be stored in a larger container such as a plastic covered tote with handles, or a trash can with a lid. You will want something sturdy, waterproof, covered, and with handles for carrying.

### \*Special Notes: National Weather Radio

National Weather Radio requires a special radio receiver or scanner capable of picking up the signal. When a potentially harmful event may occur, such as weather (hurricane, blizzards, ice storms), natural (earthquake, forest fires, dam breach), civil (Amber Alerts), technological (chemical release, oil spill), and national emergencies (nuclear, biological, chemical), the National Weather Service broadcasts a special tone that causes all weather radios to sound a loud ten second alert tone. The weather radio is then turned on to hear the broadcast. This item is highly recommended for each child care program and emergency backpack.

## Checklist for Emergency Supplies

Develop a list of emergency supplies. The following table will get you started.

	<b>Short-term Emergency</b> <i>Backpack</i>	<b>72-Hour Emergency</b> <i>Sturdy, waterproof, container with a cover</i>
Important Papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency information on each child in a small notebook or on cards</li> <li>• Emergency plan and numbers</li> <li>• Medical releases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency information</li> <li>• Emergency plan and numbers</li> <li>• Medical releases</li> <li>• Emergency transportation permission</li> </ul>
Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One gallon of water for every four people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One gallon per person</li> </ul>
Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-perishable food items such as granola bars and crackers</li> <li>• Formula for infants</li> <li>• Disposable cups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-perishable food items such as canned fruit and meat</li> <li>• Appropriate eating utensils</li> <li>• Special food for infants</li> <li>• Non-electric can opener</li> </ul>
Clothing and Bedding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aluminum safety blankets</li> <li>• Pair of work gloves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change of clothes per person, especially socks</li> </ul>
First Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small first aid kit</li> <li>• Any needed medications</li> <li>• Any durable medical equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any needed medications</li> <li>• Large first aid kit</li> </ul>
Sanitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diapers and wipes</li> <li>• Toilet paper</li> <li>• Hand sanitizer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional diapers and wipes</li> <li>• Additional toilet paper and emergency toilet facilities, if possible</li> <li>• Hand soap</li> <li>• Paper towels</li> <li>• Plastic bags (varied sizes)</li> <li>• Feminine supplies</li> </ul>
Comfort and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one age appropriate play activity</li> <li>• Flashlight with batteries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several age appropriate play activities</li> <li>• Extra keys</li> <li>• Battery operated lanterns</li> <li>• Duct tape and plastic sheeting (for sheltering-in-place)</li> <li>• Utility knife</li> </ul>
Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weather radio and extra batteries</li> <li>• Charged cell phone, calling card, or change for pay phone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walkie-talkie</li> <li>• Cell phone</li> <li>• Signal/flare</li> <li>• Whistle</li> </ul>

Date your supplies and keep an inventory.

At least once a year, and preferably every six months:

- ✓ Rotate your food, water, and medical supplies
- ✓ Update the important papers
- ✓ Check the size of clothes and age appropriateness of activities

**Please see Appendix C for additional resources.**

## **Step Ten: Communicating Your Plan before an Emergency**

### **Parents.**

Before the emergency parents will want to know that you have a plan for keeping their child safe. Be sure to share the details with them. Some information that will be essential for parents to have:

- ✓ Which radio/television stations to listen to for closings and relocations (arrangements must be made with stations in advance!),
- ✓ Where the relocation sites are located, and
- ✓ What alternative phone numbers to use in an emergency.

When parents enroll in your program inform them of your emergency procedures. Include the information in your parent handbooks for easy reference. Newsletters, e-mail and parent meetings are all effective methods for communicating these elements of your emergency response plan. If you make changes mid-year, be sure to keep parents advised of the changes. It may be a good idea to provide parents with this information prior to an impending storm or before winter as a reminder.

You should have Emergency Contact information for all children, to know whom to contact in the chaotic aftermath of a disaster. It should identify a non-local point of contact, so someone outside the affected area can step in if parents are unreachable, and it should contain information about the child's allergies and medication needs. Please see Appendix C for an online option at Save the Children that parents can use to create an Emergency Contact Card.

### **Communication within Your Organization.**

Develop a staff protocol that meets the needs of your organization that includes:

- ✓ A telephone tree (if there are many staff to call): Who the director or operator will call.
- ✓ A staff call-down telephone roster with multiple numbers: Who employees will call.
- ✓ Who is responsible for calling 911, utility companies, parents, relocation site, etc.

Train and retrain all of your staff in your emergency procedures at least once a year, and preferably at every staff meeting. Make sure they have access to the written plan. When you have a change in staff, orient them to your emergency response plan and their responsibilities within the plan. Volunteers should also be trained in your emergency response plan. Extra adults who can help out in an emergency can make the job of caring for the children easier.

Make sure that each staff person knows their responsibilities in the plan, where emergency supplies are stored, and where water/gas shut-offs are and how to close them.

### **Local Emergency Personnel.**

Share your emergency response plan with local emergency responders such as the local and county Emergency Management Director and your police and fire department. In reviewing the plans, emergency responders will appreciate knowing any special needs. Encourage parents to either provide medical information directly to emergency responders (e.g., EMS, Fire Departments, etc.) or provide you with written permission to share special needs. Due to confidentiality, you cannot share any information about the children in your care, even with emergency responders, without permission.

## Communicating Your Emergency Response Plan Checklist

### To Parents:

- ✓ Determine how to communicate your Emergency Response Plan to parents.
- ✓ Determine how to communicate mid-year changes or updates of your Emergency Response Plan to parents.
- ✓ Share your Emergency Response Plan with parents on enrollment.
- ✓ Share your Emergency Response Plan with parents at least yearly.
- ✓ Share changes to your Emergency Response Plan with parents as needed.
- ✓ Identify at least one local radio or television station to be your source of broadcast communications.
- ✓ Recommend to parents of children who are medically fragile or have special needs that they provide medical information to emergency responders (e.g., EMS, fire departments, etc.) in the locale of your child care.

### To Staff:

- ✓ When you have a change in staff, orient them to your Emergency Response Plan and their responsibilities within the plan.
- ✓ Train staff yearly in the Emergency Response Plan.
- ✓ Give a copy of the Emergency Response Plan to all staff.
- ✓ Give copies of any changes or updates in your Emergency Response Plan to staff.
- ✓ Train volunteers in your Emergency Response Plan.

### Local Emergency Personnel:

- ✓ Share the Emergency Response Plan with local emergency responders such as the fire department and EMS.
- ✓ Share the Emergency Response Plan with your local and county Emergency Management Director.



## Step Eleven: Communications during an Emergency

In planning your communications, consider first **HOW** to communicate and second **WHAT** to communicate. Remember, during an emergency, the phone lines may be down, local phone lines jammed, and/or electricity may be out. These problems can affect your phone and/or the person you are trying to call. You might not be able to connect locally in times of high usage, such as a local or national emergency; however, long distance circuits could remain available if the emergency is local in nature. The use of an out-of-state contact is highly recommended for your program's communications. Text messaging (by design) uses very little network capacity and therefore is more readily available than phone service. The quickest and most effective way to communicate is to set up a group text list using a cellular service. Have alternative back-up ways of communicating such as a charged cell phone, walkie-talkies, or a hand-held CB radio. Have multiple phone numbers that you can use to contact others in case their home phones do not work.

### Communication with Parents.

You will want to keep parents informed, as parents will be frantic to know the safety of their children. Here are a few steps that will help that communication to happen:

- ✓ Keep emergency contact information for each child easily accessible. Be sure to include home and work numbers, e-mail addresses, and cell phone numbers for parents and others who are authorized to be responsible for each child.
- ✓ Have an out-of-town contact number for each child and employee, so that if phone lines are down or jammed in a parents' work area, someone within the family's network can be contacted with notification that the child or employee is safe.
- ✓ Divide the parent list, if possible, so that parents can be called quickly rather than one staff taking hours trying to reassure a dozen parents. Have a prioritized list so the parents of infants and kids with special needs are called first.
- ✓ Identify a local radio or television station to be your source of broadcast communication for emergency information and know their procedures for public announcement availability.
- ✓ Plan for non-technological communications: Post your relocation sites on paper on your door when you leave.
- ✓ Plan for mass media options: radio or internet posts or messages that parents can access if you can't contact them directly.

### Communication with Emergency Personnel.

- ✓ During an emergency, call 911.
- ✓ Have other emergency numbers posted, such as the utility companies (electric, gas, oil, water), poison control, etc.

### WHAT to communicate:

- ✓ Always make sure that parents know that their children are safe!
- ✓ What the nature of the emergency is.
- ✓ Any changes in your relocation plan.
- ✓ Any changes to your schedule or plan.

Now, complete this section on the flipchart provided.



## Steps to Take to Make Sure You are Informed of a Potentially Dangerous Situation

1. Maine weather alerts and other state government announcements by email or text message
  - a. Go to [http://www.maine.gov/mema/mema\\_subscribe.shtml](http://www.maine.gov/mema/mema_subscribe.shtml) and select subscription type from the dropdown menu in the “Get Notified!” box, then enter your email or cell phone number. This can also be used to change or update subscriptions.
  - b. You will get all weather watches, warnings and advisories from the National Weather Service for the Maine county or Forecast Area you select. The Forecast Area messages are longer and more detailed than the county messages. The text message version is also simpler and less detailed than the email version. Be aware that in a severe weather event, you will get many alerts. The more boxes you check, the more alerts you will get, and many of them may be duplicative. Make your choices carefully! Be sure that you have selected specific Counties, and that you have not accidentally checked all the County boxes.
2. **CodeRED** Mobile Alert
  - a. Download **CodeRED** from the Apple App Store or Google Play for android.
  - b. The **CodeRED** Mobile Alert safety app delivers real-time emergency, community, missing person and severe weather alerts to users within the exact area of impact. Alerts are initiated by public safety officials who use the **CodeRED** community notification system to effectively alert and inform residents to save lives.
3. National Weather Service app
  - a. On your android phone or iPhone, go to [www.mobile.weather.gov](http://www.mobile.weather.gov).
  - b. You can set up weather forecasts and alerts for your address or ZIP code.
4. FEMA mobile app
  - a. Available for Apple (App Store or send a text message to 43362), Android (Google Play or send a text message to 43362) and BlackBerry (BlackBerry App World or send a text message to 43362) mobile devices.
  - b. Provides tips to survive natural disasters, customizable emergency checklists and meeting locations; alerts from the National Weather Service; where to locate open shelters and Disaster Recovery Centers; how to apply for FEMA assistance after federally declared disasters; and how to upload and share disaster photos.
5. Operation Predator App
  - a. The Operation Predator app enables users to receive alerts about wanted predators, to share the information with friends via email and social media tools, and to provide information to Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) by calling or submitting an online tip. Additionally, the app allows users to view news about arrests and prosecutions of child predators and additional resources about Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and its global partners in the fight against child exploitation.
  - b. Download Operation Predator to your mobile device from Android App on Google Play or Apple App Store for iPhone.

For additional information on receiving information or staying informed on developing emergencies in their area, child care facility operators should check with their local or county police, fire, EMS, and Emergency Management Agency.

## Step Twelve: Emergency Drills and Procedures

In times of stress, people tend to go on autopilot. Unless you and your staff are very familiar with your emergency response plan, you may not remember what to do. Hold drills for a variety of emergencies at least every six months, in addition to monthly fire drills. Since many of the emergency responses begin with an evacuation (or fire) drill, building in a relocation drill to your identified evacuation site can satisfy both the state's requirement for fire drills and the need for other kinds of emergency drills.

People who must be included in drills:

- ✓ All employees, volunteers, and students.
- ✓ All children in care.
- ✓ All administrative staff (if any) at your location.



People to consider including in your drill:

- ✓ Consider including your neighbors, governing board, town emergency officials, local emergency planning committee, businesses, and volunteers.
- ✓ Involve parents in your practice sessions so they may see firsthand how well prepared you are.
- ✓ Contact your local Emergency Management Director, fire department, or local Chapter of the American Red Cross to assist with training you and your staff and with setting up a drill. Emergency personnel are usually very willing to be of assistance and often have excellent ideas for improving the speed and efficiency of your evacuation.

### **Talk it! Walk it! Run it! Repeat!**

Running a drill for the first time can be confusing. Hopefully you have thought of everything in your planning and everyone knows the plan. However, you might consider taking a multi-step approach to reduce confusion and locate missing elements.

- ✓ First, gather all your staff together and talk through the drill. Who does what? When? Where? And then what happens? Does the emergency response plan appear to work? Make adjustments as needed but be sure to document the changes.
- ✓ Second, and still with just your staff, walk through the drill. Does the plan still seem to work? Is the timing right? Can everyone get to their responsibilities and meeting places? Does it make sense? Is there an easier way to do the same thing? Make adjustments as needed but be sure to document the changes.
- ✓ Third, now is the time to include the children, and any others you might consider from the above list. Since you have tested your plan and acquainted the adults with the steps, there should be little confusion. The drill should go smoothly and leave the children with a sense of safety.
- ✓ Fourth, repeat the drill several times per year. Remember, in an emergency the brain shuts down and the situation is not ideal. Staff and children need to be able to run the drills without thinking, in the dark, and in all types of weather.
- ✓ Fifth, take the lessons you learned and incorporate them into your plan and share the changes with parents and guardians.
- ✓ Sixth, repeat the drill using the additional information. If you find it confusing, consider doing full relocation or safe-space/shelter-in-place drills more than twice a year.

### **Plan for the Emotional Needs of Children During and After Drills**

Conducting drills can be frightening to children and may communicate they are not safe. Be sure to talk about why you are practicing and that they are safe in your care. Let parents know when you have held a drill so they can follow up at home.

## Emergency Drills and Procedures Checklist

### Plan the Drill

- ✓ Contact your local Emergency Management Director, fire department, or local chapter of the American Red Cross to assist with training staff and planning a drill.
- ✓ Include your neighbors, board of directors, town emergency officials, local emergency planning committee, businesses, and volunteers in your planning.
- ✓ Plan drills for each type of emergency, including all necessary participants.
- ✓ Train staff at the time of hire, in monthly staff meetings, during in-service trainings, and yearly to know what to do for each type of emergency.
- ✓ In case the electrical system is not functioning, establish an alternative way to get an immediate message to all staff in all areas that they need to shelter-in-place or evacuate immediately.

### Talk the Drill

- ✓ Schedule a date for talking through your drill with all participants.
- ✓ Make staff participation in the drill training a requirement.
- ✓ Talk through the drill.
- ✓ Document any changes in the emergency response plan made during the drill.

### Walk the Drill

- ✓ Schedule a date for a walk-through of your drill.
- ✓ Make staff participation in drills, training, and reviews a requirement for employment.
- ✓ Walk through the drill.
- ✓ Document any changes in the emergency response plan made during the drill. Notify parents and guardians of changes.

### Run the Drill

- ✓ Schedule a date for a running your drill, and inform parents that it will be happening.
- ✓ Invite those you would like to assist in your drill training, including parents and guardians.
- ✓ Run through the drill.

### Evaluate the Drill

After a practice session schedule a debriefing session. You may wish to invite back parents and emergency personnel. Talk about what worked well and where you need to adjust and update your plan.

### Repeat with Other Types of Drills

- ✓ Practice for a fire
- ✓ Practice for a dangerous animal
- ✓ Practice for a medical emergency
- ✓ Practice for a chemical spill
- ✓ Practice for a tornado
- ✓ And so on...



## Step Thirteen: Providing Emotional Support to Children after a Trauma

Young children, toddlers, and preschoolers know when bad things happen, and respond to emergency events with limited understanding or are unable to talk about their needs. As the people, places and routines they depend on for safety and care are affected, children need help. The better prepared that caregivers are, the more helpful they can be to others around them, especially children.

Children depend physically and emotionally on their caregivers. Children's reactions depend on their age and how close they were to an upsetting event; their exposure to watching TV or hearing radio reports, and how they see their caregivers reacting. **During an emergency, young children need their caregivers to know how to respond, including where to go, what to do, things to take and how to reunite them with their family.** Children need help as they don't fully understand how to keep themselves safe. Young children may freeze, cry or scream. Mental stress from a crisis event can be harder on children as they feel less in control, and have less experience in bouncing back from hard situations.

After a scary event, we often see changes in children's behavior. Preschool children may feel helpless, upset, or frightened about being separated from their parent or caregiver. They may develop aches and pains, such as stomach or headaches. It is common for preschool children to become clingy with a caregiver or need to stay in a place they feel is safe. They may fear strangers, darkness or monsters. They may cry more, have temper tantrums, withdraw from people and not play with their toys, hit others, have problems sleeping or bedwetting, become afraid of the dark or things that did not bother them before, or lose skills they previously had. **These changes are a sign that they need extra help.**

In most children, these common changes will be temporary. Children who were directly exposed to a disaster or have special needs can become upset again and these changes may resurface if they see or hear reminders about what happened. If they continue to be very upset, if their behaviors hurt their activities or important relationships after six weeks, then a referral to a professional provider who specializes in children's needs may be appropriate.

### What Care Providers can do to Help Themselves

Care Providers should not neglect themselves as they work with children and their families. Here are some self-care suggestions:

- Take care of yourself emotionally. You and your own family may have had a stressful experience and suffered losses. To be able to support young children, you must support yourself.
- Take care of yourself physically. Eat healthy, get enough sleep, drink plenty of water, and get proper medical care.
- Communicate and connect with others. Make sure that you and other care providers or co-workers schedule time to talk and support each other. You may consider covering schedules for each other to allow time to address personal/family issues.
- Give yourself a break. Try not to over-do clean-up activities, avoid lifting heavy items or working for extended periods.
- Take care of your own family. Even though you are very committed to your work, take time to meet the needs of your own family members or friends.
- If you continue to feel unsafe, anxious, excessively worried, or use unhealthy ways to manage your feelings, seek help through your doctor, faith groups and community mental health services.

**The Crisis Help Line (1-888-568-1112) is staffed 24 hours a day, every day.**

## Ways Caregivers Can Help after a Traumatic Event



The young child feels safe when you:

### Focus on safety first

- ✓ Hold them more and let them stay close to you.
- ✓ Return to a regular routine to help them make sense of their surroundings and feel comforted.
- ✓ Do familiar things, like singing a song or telling a story.
- ✓ Increase time with others. Children who get support from others cope better after emergencies.

### Follow the child's lead

- ✓ Listen and observe. Having a story helps a child make sense of what happened and cope.
- ✓ Different children need different things. Some children need to run around and need extra breaks while others may need to be held more during cuddle times.
- ✓ It can be hard to watch or listen to their stories. Caregivers need to seek support for themselves so they can listen without becoming upset.

### Allow children to express their feelings and worries

- ✓ Young children can “behave badly” or “act out” when they are scared as a way of asking for help.
- ✓ Help them name how they feel about their worry over their safety or the safety of others, including pets.
- ✓ Help them express anger in ways that won't hurt by using words, pictures, play-time or drawings.
- ✓ Children use play or particular activities to tell their story so allow them to stop when it becomes difficult or distressing.

### Help them reconnect with supportive people, community, culture and rituals

- ✓ Simple things like a familiar story, a song, a prayer or tradition helps a child return to a “new normal”.
- ✓ Provide handouts to families about expected and predictable behaviors in young children.
- ✓ Allow parents to be with their children in your home or child care center.
- ✓ Tell children about community recovery. Reassure them that many people are working hard to restore electricity, phones, water or heat.

### Offer them support and acceptance.

- ✓ Reassure them that they are safe. You may need to repeat this frequently.
- ✓ If a child feels really bad, it is a good time to seek out parents or particular teachers to help them feel better and calmer.
- ✓ Don't punish them for “regressive” behaviors (nightmares, bedwetting, physical complaints); set limits but reassure them they are safe.
- ✓ Replace lost or damaged toys, and offer items they can touch or hold such as blankets, books or stuffed animals.
- ✓ Ask parents to provide something familiar such as a family photo while they are separated.

**Just being with children, even when you can't fix things, helps!**

**Please see Appendix C for additional resources.**

## Step Fourteen: After the Emergency

After the emergency is the time to REAP the benefits: Recover, Evaluate, And Plan.

### Recovery from the emergency

Recovery means to return to normal operations. This may be a long-term process depending on the damages incurred. However, it is important to get back up and running as quickly as possible to avoid additional losses in income and possible losses in clientele. You need to consider the physical and mental health and safety of your staff and children and your financial resources.

### Evaluate

You put a lot of time and thought into preparing for an emergency. Now that you have survived one, how well did your plan actually work? What would work better next time?

Meet with your original planning partners and assess how each step in the plan worked for children, parents, staff, and local emergency officials.

### Plan

Now is the time to plan for the next emergency.

- ✓ Update and revise your emergency plan if your evaluation shows the need.
- ✓ Restock the emergency supplies you used.
- ✓ Involve parents in the planning process to update communications, reunification, and contact information.
- ✓ Continue to stress that family preparedness is the best way to plan for the next emergency!



## After the Emergency Checklist

### Recovery

- ✓ You and/or staff perform an initial damage inspection.
- ✓ Have building inspected for safety by a professional licensed structural engineer, architect or building inspector.
- ✓ Get approval to reopen using your local jurisdiction's damage assessment process.
- ✓ If you need to do some rebuilding, think of ways to add mitigation techniques in the repairs.
- ✓ Access your contingency fund.
- ✓ Document the costs associated with the disaster in case you can apply for disaster assistance programs in the event of a declared disaster.

### Evaluate

- ✓ How well did each part of your emergency plan work?
- ✓ How well are the staff and children coping with the emergency?
- ✓ How well are parents and the larger community coping with the emergency?
- ✓ Were you adequately insured for losses (structural and business) and liability?

### Plan

- ✓ Restock emergency supplies
- ✓ Make modifications in emergency plans using the Y.I.K.E.S. Planning Guide.
- ✓ Replace money used from your contingency fund.
- ✓ Plan your next drill.
- ✓ Communicate the changes you made in your plan.
- ✓ Link to mental health services if your children/staff need assistance.

**Appendix A**

**SAMPLE EMERGENCY RELOCATION SHELTER AGREEMENT**

I hereby give permission for \_\_\_\_\_  
(child care program)  
to use \_\_\_\_\_ as an emergency relocation site  
(relocation site)  
for employees, volunteers, and children.

Any liability claims that arise in the course of this relocation are the sole responsibility of (child care provider). I, (child care provider), agree to indemnify and hold (relocation site) and its employees harmless from any liability, loss or damage they may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments against them arising out of the activities to be carried out pursuant to the obligations of this Agreement.

This agreement shall remain in effect until \_\_\_\_\_ (date). The agreement may be terminated before this date by either party but only with written notification.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ ALTERNATIVE PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SITE PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

IS SITE ACCESSIBLE AT ALL TIMES CHILD CARE PROGRAM IS OPEN? YES NO

DESCRIBE HOW TO ACCESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS (e.g., storage of emergency supplies, reimbursement, limitations, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED AND DATED

\_\_\_\_\_

Relocation Site Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Child Care Representative

**Appendix B**

**SAMPLE EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION PERMISSION AGREEMENT**

I hereby give permission for \_\_\_\_\_ child care program to transport my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to an emergency relocation site for staff, teachers and children when it is unsafe to remain at the child care facility.

I understand that normal safety rules will be followed as much as possible, but that the highest priority is to relocate to a safe location.

This agreement shall remain in effect until \_\_\_\_\_ (date). The agreement may be terminated before this date by either party but only with written notification.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ALTERNATIVE PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED AND DATED

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent or Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## Appendix C

### ONLINE RESOURCES

#### General Emergency Planning

Federal Emergency Management Agency home page:

<http://www.fema.gov/plan>

- “Planning for the Needs of Children in Disasters” is a **free** four-hour training available at <https://www.training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-366>. Participants will need to first get a FEMA Student Identification (SID) number to take the exam and receive the certificate.

Ready.gov:

<http://www.ready.gov/>

Maine Emergency Management Agency home page:

<http://www.maine.gov/mema/>

Maine Prepares:

<http://www.maine.gov/mema/prepare/>

- Lots of information here for preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters of all kinds.

211 Maine, Inc.

<http://www.211maine.org>

- 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember number that connects people who want to give help or get help with a full range of health and human services in their community. Dial 211; Out of state call (877) 463-6207.

Maine DHHS/Center for Disease Control and Prevention Health Topics A-Z:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/navtabs/topics.htm>

American Red Cross:

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster>

Headstart Disaster Preparedness Workbook, 2015:

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/docs/head-start-emergency-prep-manual-2015.pdf>

Just In Time Disaster Training:

[www.drc.com](http://www.drc.com)

- The purpose of this on-line video library is to provide a single, easy to search source in which individuals, agencies and organizations can access Just In Time Disaster Training videos. The videos found in this library cover disaster related mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery training for a wide variety of areas.

## Hazard Analysis

American Red Cross Ready Rating:

<http://www.readyrating.org/>

- Ready Rating is a program that helps businesses, schools and organizations become prepared for disasters and other emergencies.

The National Flood Insurance Program

<http://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program>

- This page contains an overview of the National Flood Insurance Program and contains additional information and links for property owners, claims adjusters, insurance professionals, lenders, surveyors, and elected officials.

## Mitigation

Maine Prepares: Getting Started with Business Emergency Planning:

<http://www.maine.gov/mema/prepare/business/index.shtml>

U.S. Small Business Association Disaster Planning website:

<https://www.sba.gov/content/disaster-planning>

“Protecting Our Kids from Disasters: Nonstructural Mitigation for Child Care Centers”:

<http://www.swmobert.com/resources/cfacilCheck.pdf>

<https://www.losalamosnm.us/emo/Documents/NonstructuralMitigationChildcareCtrs.pdf>

[www.iclr.org](http://www.iclr.org)

“Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EDDAK) - Strengthen Your Financial Preparedness for Disasters and Emergencies”:

<http://www.operationhope.org/images/uploads/Files/EFFAK---FEMA-Scanned---Aug-2014.pdf>

“Operation HOPE”:

[www.operationhope.org](http://www.operationhope.org)

## People with Disabilities

Individuals with Disabilities and Others with Access and Functional Needs:

<http://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs>

Coping with Crisis - Helping Children with Special Needs:

[www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis\\_safety/specpop\\_general.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/specpop_general.aspx)

Service animals:

<http://www.ready.gov/animals>

## Tools for Families

Save the Children Emergency Contact Card:

<http://www.savethechildren.org/Connect>

Family Evacuation Checklist:

[https://safeamerica.org/tools/pdf/PreparedFlyer\\_SafeAmerica.pdf](https://safeamerica.org/tools/pdf/PreparedFlyer_SafeAmerica.pdf)

Pet care during a crisis:

<http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/pets>

### Travel Information during a Crisis

<http://www.511.maine.gov/#roadReports/layers=roadReports>

- Call 511 or 1-866-282-7578

### Safe Place/Shelter-in-Place

National Institute for Chemical Studies' Shelter-in-place page:

<http://www.nicsinfo.org/SIPcenter.asp>

Red Cross Fact Sheet on Shelter-in-place:

[http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA\\_CustomProductCatalog/m4340182\\_shelterinplace.pdf](http://www.redcross.org/images/MEDIA_CustomProductCatalog/m4340182_shelterinplace.pdf)

Department of Homeland Security:

[www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

How to Respond to an 'Active Shooter' scenario

### Reportable Diseases

Maine CDC:

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/disease-reporting/>

### Influenza/Pandemics

Center for Disease Control Influenza Fact Sheet:

<http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/community/plannow.pdf>

- You can find other guides to help you, your family, your workplace, and your community at [www.pandemicflu.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.gov)

Center for Disease Control Influenza-Related Questions & Answers by Topic:

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/faq/index.htm>

Child Care and Preschool Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist

[http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/community/child\\_care.pdf](http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/community/child_care.pdf)

### Emergency Supplies

Information on how to safely store water can be found at:

<http://aces.nmsu.edu/terrorism/CRpresentations/epwater.pdf> or

[http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe\\_water/personal.html](http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe_water/personal.html)

NOAA weather radio information:

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

## Trauma and Children

Crisis Help Line (staffed 24/7/365): 1-888-568-1112

The American Academy of Pediatrics:

[www.HealthyChildren.org](http://www.HealthyChildren.org)

- Disaster Preparedness for Families with Special Needs- **Healthy Children Radio Podcast**
- Helping Children Cope with Disasters
- Talking to Children in the Aftermath About Violence
- How to Support Grieving Children
- Responding to Children's Emotional Needs During Times of Crisis
- How Children of Different Ages Respond to Disasters

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:

<http://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness>

- SAMHSA provides communities and responders with behavioral health resources that help them prepare, respond, and recover from disasters.

Helping Children with Disabilities Cope with Disaster and Traumatic Events:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandsafety/trauma.html>

Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators:

[http://rems.ed.gov/docs/NCTSN\\_ChildTraumaToolkitForEducators.pdf](http://rems.ed.gov/docs/NCTSN_ChildTraumaToolkitForEducators.pdf)

Identifying Seriously Traumatized children:

[http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis\\_safety/Identifying\\_Seriously\\_Traumatized\\_Children\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/Identifying_Seriously_Traumatized_Children_2011.pdf)

Coping with Crisis - Helping Children with Special Needs:

[www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis\\_safety/specpop\\_general.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/specpop_general.aspx)

- Tips for School Personnel and Parents from the National Association of School Psychologists

Identifying seriously traumatized children:

[www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis\\_safety/psycht\\_general.aspx](http://www.nasponline.org/resources/crisis_safety/psycht_general.aspx)

Teaching Tolerance:

[www.tolerance.org](http://www.tolerance.org)

- A responsive organization offering resources on how to work with children K-12 on tough issues such as why violence happens, disasters, bullying, and diversity

National Center for PTSD:

[www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)

- PTSD in Children and Teens- cause, risk, effects, signs, treatment.

What Happened to My World? Helping Children Cope with Natural Disasters and Catastrophe:

[www.brighthorizons.com](http://www.brighthorizons.com) (Type in 'talk to children')

The Unique Needs of Children in Emergencies

[www.savethechildren.org](http://www.savethechildren.org)

- Multiple articles and resources on this site (some very simple) and a good handout.

### Communicating During and After a Crisis

Safe and Well

<https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/index.php>

- This website is designed to help make communication to family and friends easier, so they know that you are safe and well

Tips for Emergency Use of Mobile Devices

<http://www.jik.com/Mobile%20Devices.pdf>

Child Care Licensing

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/dlrs/Licensing/children/daycare-nursery.html>

- Communication with your licensor after an emergency event is critical, but also for re-establishing drinking water safety (bottled water agreements if needed), scheduling fire inspections after damage to a home or building, after re-building and fixing damage, and for helping with basic health and safety inspections prior to re-opening after a disaster.

## Appendix D

### SAMPLE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICY

Reason this policy is important:

Child care settings must safeguard each child in care. All staff should be prepared to deal with any emergency that may happen during child care, in order to minimize the effects of such events. Regular practice of emergency drills is essential to that responsibility and promotes calm, competent use of the plans in an emergency. The high turnover of both staff and children, in addition to the changing developmental abilities of children who participate, makes frequent practice drills critical.

Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):

At least monthly \_\_\_\_\_ shall initiate an Emergency Evacuation Drill which will include all children in care, all staff and any other person who may be on the premises at the time. All drills will be conducted as if there were a real emergency taking place.

At least once a year \_\_\_\_\_ shall have a representative of local Emergency or Disaster Planning Services observe a drill and seek their input for possible improvements to the facility's procedures, including the education of all children in care on what to do in different crisis situations. Such input shall be taken into account during the annual review of this policy.

Following every Emergency Evacuation Drill, \_\_\_\_\_ shall complete an entry regarding the drill on the Emergency Evacuation Drills Log. Any problems or errors occurring during each drill will be noted, addressed and corrected immediately.

When this policy applies:

At varied times and places, using all building exits, and during all types of activities (meals and naptimes included) and weather conditions, throughout the year while child care is being provided.

Communication plan for staff and parents:

Staff and volunteers will receive a written copy of this policy in their Orientation Packets before beginning work. All parents will receive a written copy of this policy in their Parent Handbook upon their child's enrollment. Written notification will be given of any updates. A copy of the Emergency Evacuation Drills Log will be posted on the parent and staff bulletin boards.

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Director/Owner

\_\_\_\_\_ Health Professional (physician, nurse, health consultant)

\_\_\_\_\_ Staff member

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (parent, advisory committee, police, MEMA)

Effective Date and Review Date:

This policy is effective \_\_\_\_\_ (month/day/year) and will be reviewed annually or as needed.

## Appendix E

### SAMPLE CHILD CARE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

**I. Evacuation:** In case of the need to evacuate our site, the following procedures will be followed:

**Evacuation routes/exits:**

- Children are cared for (*locations in the home/program*)
- Exits (all windows and doors are checked regularly to ensure opening):
  - o (*Room/exits*)
  - o (*Room/exits*)
  - o (*Room/exits*)

**Evacuating Infants/Toddlers:**

- SAMPLE: Children will be evacuated together using a portable crib with wheels. The site owns two portable play yards, one of which remain placed near each of the two exits (front and back doors).
- SAMPLE: In case of the need to evacuate through the windows, children will be placed out windows first, using any items available to place them on the ground.

**Notification:** Once all children are safely evacuated:

- 911 will be called
- Parents will be notified of the evacuation
- Announcements will be made (when possible) on (RADIO/TV stations)

**Emergency Kits/Information:**

- Emergency kits will be taken when the safety of children is not compromised.
- SAMPLE: Each portable crib/play yard will have an envelope attached to it with each child's emergency contact information.

**Evacuation Sites:**

- Neighborhood (e.g., for fire):  
(Street Address/contact information)
- Out-of-neighborhood (e.g., explosion, flooding):  
(Street Address/contact information)
- Out-of-town (e.g., hurricane, widespread flooding)  
(Street Address/contact information)

**Transportation to Evacuation Locations:**

- Children will walk/be pushed in portable play yards or strollers to the neighborhood evacuation site and weather permitting to
- Children will be driven in a personal vehicle, with XX car seats, to

**II. Shelter-in-Place:** In case of the need to stay put due to weather or notification from authorities, the following procedures will be followed:

**Location:** Children will be taken to \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Supplies:

- Emergency kits with food (including formula), toys, and water are stored
- A first aid kit is stored: \_\_\_\_\_
- A battery-powered radio and NOAA radio is stored with the emergency supplies.
- Cell phone will be brought by: \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency contact sheets are kept with the supplies.
- Supplies for sealing the room are stored: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notification:** • Parents/guardians will be notified once the immediate threat has passed.

**III. Parent Reunification:** In case of the need to evacuate or when parents/guardians are unable to get to children, the following procedures will be followed to reunite children with parents/guardians (or other contacts designated by parent/guardian) as soon as it is safe.

**Notification:**

- Parents/guardians are provided:
  - o Information on each evacuation site.
  - o Contact information for (DIRECTOR/HEAD TEACHER) cell phone and home phone.
- Parent/guardian contact numbers are:
  - o Stored in (Personnel)'s cell phone.
  - o Attached to portable play yards.
  - o Kept in emergency kits.

**Release:**

- Children will only be released to contacts listed on the child's form with proper identification.