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Introduction
DESCRIPTION

Caring for children is serious business, and their safety is your number one priority.

Each day in the U.S. more than 17.5 million children are cared for outside the home.

As a child care provider, you know that your most important job is to protect the children in your care. You must protect them from accidental injury, from neglect, and from emotional harm. You do this each day and in many ways. During emergencies such as a fire or a natural disaster, you must also be prepared to keep the children in your care safe.

Planning is essential. Being prepared helps you to:
• protect the lives of the children in your care, as well as your staff, volunteers, and yourself,
• minimize risks,
• reduce stress, build empowerment, and lessen the emotional impact of a disaster,
• safeguard your business and reopen more quickly after a disaster.

Additionally, an important aspect of being prepared is meeting parents’ expectations that you will keep their children safe. Parents want to know their children’s safety is a priority at all times. They expect you to:
• plan for emergencies,
• have supplies to meet their children’s needs,
• teach their children what to do during an emergency,
• safely evacuate their children in your care when necessary,
• quickly notify them when an emergency occurs,
• care for their children if they cannot get to them,
• have relationships with emergency management officials before something happens.

GOAL

This course is designed to help child care providers develop and implement an emergency plan in their child care program.

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:
1. Identify hazards and risks at their child care site.
2. Create a written plan that addresses the emergency needs of their program.
3. Communicate, practice, and update their emergency plan on a regular basis.
AUDIENCE

This course is designed for large and small child care programs that serve the more than 17.5 million children in the U.S. each day, including but not limited to center-based programs, family child care providers, service organizations, sports programs, faith-based programs, and before- and after-school and summer programs.

PREREQUISITE

Before taking this course, participants must take the free, self-guided Multihazard Planning for Childcare (IS-36) course provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is36.asp). The course takes approximately two hours to complete.

ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL

Accompanying this training manual is a Workbook to help you through the steps of collecting information and creating an emergency plan for your facility, which will help you achieve national best practices. The Workbook contains:

1. An Emergency Plan Template, which outlines the information needed in your facility’s emergency plan. You will use information from your worksheets to complete your emergency plan.

2. Worksheets to gather and identify information you will need in an emergency or disaster. The information from the worksheets should then be included in your facility’s emergency plan.

3. Checklists to serve as “to-do” lists. Date and sign each checklist and file it with your other emergency plan documents as a record of your program’s emergency preparedness activities.
Module One

IDENTIFY YOUR HAZARDS AND RISKS

This module consists primarily of content from FEMA’s Multihazard Planning for Childcare (IS-36) course, available online at http://training.fema.gov/EM/IS/index.shtm. Inclusion of the FEMA course in this manual does not indicate that Save the Children is certified or endorsed by FEMA or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

While Module One relies heavily on content provided by FEMA, Modules Two and Three build upon that foundation with original guidance, worksheets, and checklists provided by Save the Children.

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of Module One, participants will be able to:

1. Identify hazards and risks that could impact their child care site.
2. Describe how to prevent/mitigate and prepare for the impact of likely and high-consequence hazards.
3. Know where to go for more information.

Use the activity on the next page to think about everyday hazards and threats at your child care program.
ACTIVITY: EVERYDAY HAZARDS

Think about the following questions and jot down what comes to mind.

Name some activities you did today at your child care site.

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What hazards did you encounter or could you have encountered?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

What could your program do to reduce or prevent each of these hazards?

_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
KNOWING YOUR HAZARDS
Hazard Awareness

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 to prevent them or limit their effects. For example, driving your car could be dangerous, but you wear your seatbelt to minimize injury and you purchase insurance to help you recover from an accident.

Who Can Help Identify Hazards

An important and effective way of being aware of your hazards is by including the whole community in the identification process. The following community groups and individuals have information about risks, hazards, and emergency procedures and should be included in your preparedness efforts:

• Local emergency manager has historical information about hazards and risks in your community.
• Parents can provide expertise based on their experience, professional knowledge (e.g., in the medical field or construction business), or 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 child care 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.
• Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies have resources to help sites with many aspects of running a child care program including emergency preparedness.

Coordination with Community Partners

Coordinating with emergency management officials and first responders (including fire, police) and community partners (including schools, community centers and nearby businesses) is vital for the safety of your program during an emergency. In addition to providing information about local hazards and risks, they can help guide you in securing other information needed...
to create your emergency plan. This could include shelter locations in your community and evacuation routes.

Your community probably has an emergency plan. You should ensure your child care emergency plan conforms with the larger community plan and that officials in your community are aware you care for children at your site and are informed about your emergency plan. In an emergency (e.g., if there is a hazardous materials spill near your site), this awareness of your program and emergency plan can help ensure you stay informed of what is occurring.

The best way to coordinate with these community partners is to ask them to visit your facility and give you advice on emergency planning. If you are not able to have emergency management and first response officials visit your facility, you can at least share copies of your emergency plan with them.

FIRES

Fire is the most common of all business disasters.
• 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 child care centers.
• Children have difficulty escaping from building fires because they lack the motor skills and mental capabilities needed and may be unable to awake from a sound sleep.

Here are some general steps to protect the children in your care and yourself from fires:
• Have an evacuation plan.
• Practice your plan and make sure everyone can get out of each room of your facility.
  – Ensure windows are not painted or nailed shut.
  – Provide escape ladders for upper floors.
  – Ensure you can evacuate children who cannot evacuate on their own.
• Install, test, and clean smoke alarms.
• Schedule visits from the fire department for fire safety information.

For more information on home fires visit FEMA’s website at http://www.ready.gov/home-fires.

Use “WORKSHEET I: HAZARD/THREAT IDENTIFICATION AND MITIGATION: FIRE” in the Workbook to assess the risk level of fire at your child care site and identify steps to minimize your risk and prepare your site.
This course introduced you to the need to plan ahead for a range of disasters and emergencies in your child care facility. Previous experience from child care providers across the country has shown that emergency planning is easier when you know where to start. Emergency Preparedness plans for your facility can help protect not only the children in your care, but also your staff, volunteers, yourself and your business. In addition, planning helps minimize the risk and the negative emotional effects of a disaster and ensures your business can re-open quickly after a disaster.

The course also provided you with the resources and information to best identify hazards at your child care site, create a written disaster plan, and communicate, practice, and update your emergency plan.

In Module One (which is based primarily on FEMA’s Independent Study Course IS-36 Multihazard Planning for Childcare) you learned how to identify hazards and risks that could impact your child care site, such as fires, floods, hurricanes and tornadoes. You also discovered a range of simple steps to help you prepare for these hazards and risks. These steps included, for example, installing smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in case of a fire. Finally, you learned where to go for more information on identifying and preparing for hazards, such as your local emergency manager, first responders and even knowledgeable parents.
In Module Two, we moved beyond identifying hazards and threats to your child care site to understanding and applying eight emergency preparedness best practices to your site. These best practices, developed in partnership between Save the Children and NACCRA, range from assembling emergency equipment and supplies to practicing your plan. During Module Two you also learned important information you need to prepare for a disaster or emergency, such as identifying on-site sheltering locations and off-site evacuation sites. With information from the course, including your worksheets and checklists, you should now be able to complete the Emergency Plan Template provided in your workbook.

Finally, in Module Three you learned that emergency planning is a continual process. Once your emergency plans and procedures have been written, they need to be updated and practiced on an ongoing basis. As part of this process, you should schedule annual training sessions that include CPR/AED training and an Annual Emergency Plan Orientation.

The following sections provide additional resources that you may want to consider in your site’s emergency planning.
Appendix B
SAMPLE CHILDCARE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN
Sample Childcare Emergency Action Plan

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Appendix C

SAMPLE CHILDCARE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
Sample Childcare Emergency Operations Plan

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