



FEMA



Why Youth Preparedness?

Children comprise approximately 25 percent of our nation's population and are the future of our communities. At the end of the 20th century, research showed an estimated 66.5 million children worldwide were affected by a natural disaster each



year, and this number is only expected to increase. Most emergencies happen without warning, and the best way to ensure citizens are safer during an emergency is to help them prepare before one occurs.

Youth disaster preparedness and engaging the whole community is a priority at the Federal level. Since fall 2010, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Department of Education and the American Red Cross have been collaborating to empower youth to build a more resilient nation through preparedness education.

Children can play an important role in disaster preparedness and each have the unique potential to help their communities be safer, stronger and more resilient before, during and after a disaster.

Children are Positive Influencers. Leading educators and scholars in the field of preparedness education consider our nation's youth to be the best envoy for taking preparedness messages home to their families.

Children are Leaders. Today's children represent our future leaders who will ensure generations to come are prepared for disaster events.

Children are First Responders. During an actual emergency, children who have been exposed to disaster preparedness lessons will likely be more confident to respond to these events and have a true impact on the lives of their family, friends and neighbors.



FEMA Youth Preparedness Workshops

Youth preparedness is a FEMA priority. FEMA provides monthly Youth Preparedness technical assistance workshops nation-wide. These practitioner-targeted workshops address educational standards, adaptability, partnership engagement, promotion, fundraising, inclusion and evaluation and sustainability. For more information about integrating preparedness education into your local youth programs, send a message to citizencorps@dhs.gov.

"We need to look at our youth as part of the solution [for community resilience]...we need help to make them stronger."

*Tim Manning
FEMA Deputy Administrator for Protection and National Preparedness
National Summit on Youth Preparedness,
Summit Proceedings Report*

Additional Resources

FEMA also provides a host of valuable resources to utilize when developing a youth disaster preparedness program.

- ★ [Citizen Corps Youth Preparedness Web Page](#)
- ★ [Youth Disaster Preparedness Education Resources Catalogue](#)
- ★ [Emergency Management for Schools](#)
- ★ [Ready.gov](#)
- ★ [Youth Preparedness: Implementing A Community-Based Program](#)



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Tips for Successful Youth Preparedness Programs

Additionally, FEMA has collected many [promising resources and practices](#) for establishing and sustaining successful youth disaster preparedness programs. These practices can help ensure program success from start-up and beyond to include the following tips:



- ★ ***Promote Interactive Activities within Families***, such as the development of [a family emergency plan](#).
- ★ ***Give Special Consideration to Bilingual Children***, as they can serve as conduits of information to their friends and family who do not fully understand English.
- ★ ***Use Real World Events to Teach About Emergency Situations and Disasters***. Materials in the public domain (media coverage of a hazard, checklists, FEMA resources, other government and nonprofit organizations) provide information on local hazards and appropriate preparedness and response actions.
- ★ ***Use Presentations by Local Emergency Management Practitioners*** who are engaging and support preparedness activities.
- ★ ***Engage Partners***. Youth Preparedness cannot be the responsibility of only one organization. It requires the collaboration and support of a variety of organizations and individuals.
- ★ ***Integrate and Coordinate Emergency Preparedness for Children with Disabilities*** and others with access and functional needs before, during, and after a disaster.



FEMA's Current Outreach Strategies

FEMA, the U.S. Department of Education and the American Red Cross are currently working on a national strategic plan for youth preparedness implementation, in addition to coordinating on youth-related events, programs and outreach.

FEMA provides choices, flexibility and technical assistance in order to best support people starting or growing a youth preparedness program. State/local youth programs are tailored to varied age groups, program durations and community-specific hazards. A sample of adoptable programs includes [Teen CERT](#), [Student Tools for Emergency Preparedness \(STEP\)](#) and American Red Cross's [Masters of Disaster](#).

FEMA continues to cultivate strategic partnerships to maximize youth efforts across sectors, including private, faith-based and community-based.



Additionally, FEMA provides guidance to states to encourage local youth programming support and as part of the Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance, youth preparedness is an allowable activity.

FEMA manages a [Children in Disasters listserv](#) to which youth preparedness stakeholders can subscribe. Currently, the network has thousands of subscribers.

The U.S. Department of Education, in coordination with FEMA, communicates with school security officials to provide them with training and guidance tools.

More Information

Visit: <http://www.citizencorps.gov>

Email: citizencorps@dhs.gov

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.