

Talking Points

Key messages to communicate consistently with various audiences about America's PrepareAthon!SM

- Being prepared for disasters is a shared responsibility. It takes the whole community working together to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from the destructive forces of nature and other emergencies and disasters.
- America's PrepareAthon! is a national community-based campaign for action to increase emergency preparedness and resilience.
- The Ready Campaign established four universal building blocks of preparedness – Be Informed, Make a Plan, Build a Kit and Get Involved – and raised awareness about the importance of preparing. America's PrepareAthon! builds on this foundation by adding a focused national call to action for individuals and organizations to take simple, specific actions to increase their preparedness for a potential disaster.
- America's PrepareAthon! provides preparedness guides and resources to help workplaces, schools, houses of worship, community-based organizations, and the whole community practice specific preparedness activities necessary to stay safe before, during, and after an emergency or disaster.
- When Americans prepare and practice for an emergency in advance of the event, it makes a real difference in their ability to take immediate and informed action, which, in turn, enables them to recover more quickly. Participation in drills, exercises, and trainings help to establish brain patterns that support quick and effective action during an emergency.
- America's PrepareAthon! provides instructions for educational discussions, simple drills, and exercises for a range of disasters that will help people:
 - understand which disasters could happen in their community;
 - know what to do to be safe and mitigate damage;
 - take action to increase their preparedness; and
 - participate in community resilience planning.
- America's PrepareAthon! is modeled on the success of The Great ShakeOut earthquake drills, which have moved millions of people to practice what to do during an earthquake and improve preparedness. The Great ShakeOut will continue to be a day of action for earthquake preparedness associated with America's PrepareAthon!

Examples of Sector-Specific Talking Points

Workplace-Specific Talking Points

- Twice a year, your business has an opportunity to join other businesses in workplace drills and exercises that can strengthen your company and its workforce against disasters.
- America's PrepareAthon! provides step-by-step instructions on drills and activities that are easy to implement. America's PrepareAthon! provides resources to help businesses assess their continuity of operations plan and develop a corrective action plan for identified gaps.
- The continuity of commerce and community services is a cornerstone of community resilience.
- Participating in America's PrepareAthon! will help reduce a disaster's devastating impacts, including injury and disability, financial loss, loss of life, and property damage.

School-Specific Talking Points

- Children comprise approximately 25 percent of our Nation's population and they play an important role in disaster preparedness.
- America's youth are highly effective messengers to reach and influence parents, other adults and their peers.
- Youth who are trained in preparedness are more resilient in actual disasters.
- Ensuring that school children are safe is an essential component of community preparedness.

Background Statistics

State of Preparedness and Basis for America's PrepareAthon!

1. Between 1980 and 2010, the United States experienced 24 earthquakes, 392 storms, and 132 floods ([Prevention Web](#)).¹
2. In 2011, deadly weather killed more than a thousand people across the country, causing more than \$53 billion in property damage ([Prevention Web](#)).²
3. In 2012, there were more than 450 weather-related fatalities and nearly 2,600 injuries ([National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration](#)).³
4. A recent report by the National Academies found annual federal spending on disasters jumped from \$20.9 million in 1953 to a staggering \$1.4 billion in 2009.⁴ This spending increase comes at a time when many individuals believe there is an increased chance of a disaster affecting them in the future, yet most still remain unprepared for them.⁵
5. Despite multiple campaigns and awareness efforts, a large percentage of Americans have not performed preparedness actions to increase their personal safety in the event of a disaster or emergency.
6. The 2012 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Survey found that only 39 percent of individuals reported having a household emergency plan, which included instructions for household members about where to go and what to do in the event of a disaster.⁶
7. Groups of people who most American would presume to be more prepared for a disaster, such as health care workers, lack preparedness efforts at home, according to a study of U.S. health care workers, which found that 75 percent were either “minimally prepared” or “not prepared.”⁷
8. A 2011 FEMA study on disaster and earthquake preparedness recommended that a focus be placed on outreach efforts that are “locally relevant and hazard-specific.”⁸

¹ United States of America – Disaster Statistics: 1980-2010. *Prevention Web*, <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=185>.

² United States of America – Disaster Statistics: 1980-2010. *Prevention Web*, <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/statistics/?cid=185>.

³ National Severe Weather Preparedness Week 2013 Talking Points. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*, http://www.nws.noaa.gov/com/weatherreadynation/files/Talking Points Template_Severe Weather Preparedness Week.pdf.

⁴ Disaster resilience: A national imperative. National Academies, 2012, <http://nas-sites.org/resilience/disaster-resilience-report/>.

⁵ 2012 FEMA National Survey Report, www.ready.gov/prepare.

⁶ 2012 FEMA National Survey Report, www.ready.gov/prepare.

⁷ Sivan Kohn, et al. Personal disaster preparedness: An integrative review of the literature. *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness* 6, no. 3 (2012): 217–31.

9. Drills, exercises, and trainings are key tools that help the brain acquire that enable individuals to better overcome shock and support crisis response.⁹
10. An increase in awareness of the disasters most relevant to their community is shown to prompt people to take preparedness actions.¹⁰
11. Collective action promotes and provides opportunities for peer-to-peer discussions within and across community networks. Peer-to-peer discussions about disaster preparedness have been shown to be linked to motivation to act.¹¹
12. Community members such as businesses, schools, local governments, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations working together better ensure communities are able to build capacity in education, engagement, and self-sufficiency to survive on their own following a disaster, before outside help is able to arrive.¹²
13. The workplace, schools, and volunteer organizations that support community preparedness, safety, or emergency response are effective channels for preparedness outreach.¹³
14. A recent media analysis showed FEMA was portrayed as a go-to resource for tips and information about preparedness and as an agency taking action by coordinating with other organizations and governments.¹⁴

⁸ FEMA. 2011 FEMA Central States Disaster and Earthquake Preparedness Survey Report. July 2012, <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=6403>.

⁹ Koichi Shiwaku and Rajib Shaw. Proactive co-learning: A new paradigm in disaster education. *Disaster Prevention and Management* 17, no. 2 (2008): 183–198.

¹⁰ David M. Simpson and Sandra E. Sephton. Citizen participation, social support, and disaster preparedness: Promoting self-protection action in risk prone environments. Working Paper No. 53-P, Texas A&M University: Hazard Reduction and Recovery Center, 1998.

¹¹ Summary report on awareness to action: A workshop on motivating the public to prepare. Federal Emergency Management Agency and American Red Cross, February 2013, <http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=7124>.

¹² Anita Chandra, et al. Building community resilience to disasters: A way forward to enhance national health security. 2011, http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/TR915.html.

¹³ Preparedness in America, Research Insights to Increase Individual, Organizational, and Community Action, September 2013, www.ready.gov/prepare.

¹⁴ Gallup Poll (Unreleased Report, 2012).