

Locating Loved Ones

Have you ever thought about how you will communicate with and locate your loved ones in the event of a disaster? You never know where you will be or with whom you will be when a disaster strikes. This week, the focus for [National Preparedness Month](#) is, “How to Reconnect with Family After a Disaster.” Use this time to build a family [communications plan](#). Your priority will be to get to a safe place, contact your loved ones and reunite with them as soon as possible. The best course of action is to have a plan for each of the common locations where you spend most of your time – home, work, gym, or place of worship.

Below are some tips on how to get in contact with your loved ones in an emergency.

- Complete a [contact card](#) for each member of your family and have them placed in purses, wallets and book bags;
- Have a contact that does not live in your area that each family member can notify when they are safe if unable to contact family in the affected area. An out-of-area contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members;
- Remember you can use [text messaging](#) when calling does not work because phone lines commonly have network disruptions after disasters; and
- In addition to text messaging, use social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, to alert family members that you are safe. You can also use the American Red Cross’s [Safe and Well program](#).

Check out [America’s PrepareAthon!](#) to participate in other drills and exercises with your family, and practice the communications plan you just developed as part of National Preparedness Month.