

The monthly FEMA *Children & Disasters Newsletter* is a resource for youth preparedness practitioners, educators, parents, children, and teens. It shares timely research, examples of successful youth preparedness programs, safety tips, and resources related to youth preparedness. To subscribe to the *Children & Disasters Newsletter*, please visit www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness.

CHILDREN & DISASTERS NEWSLETTER



FEMA



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Welcome to the June issue of the *Children and Disasters Newsletter*! We are very excited to announce the members of the 2014 FEMA Youth Preparedness Council! We also feature a camp that is making a big difference in getting youth in Texas prepared, and a young man who has helped make his community safer from fires. As summer gets under way, we share some water safety action points. We also provide information about a tip sheet that can help parents, teachers, and others identify children who have been severely traumatized. Lastly, remember that FEMA is accepting submissions for the upcoming youth preparedness activity booklet. We still have a need for activities that address individual natural disasters (earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.)!

FEMA ANNOUNCES 2014 COUNCIL MEMBERS

The 2014 Youth Preparedness Council application period brought a huge number of highly qualified applicants, and the selection process was incredibly difficult! Ultimately, 12 new members were selected, with at least one new member from each FEMA region. The newly selected members for 2014 are as follows:

- FEMA Region I: Bridget Smith (*Connecticut*)
- FEMA Region II: James Collins (*New Jersey*)
- FEMA Region III: Sahara Duncan (*Pennsylvania*)
- FEMA Region IV: Jonathan Salazar (*Florida*)
- FEMA Region V: Isaiah Garcia (*Michigan*)
- FEMA Region VI: Obie Jones (*Texas*)
- FEMA Region VII: Austin Witt (*Iowa*)
- FEMA Region VIII: Weston Lee (*Utah*)
- FEMA Region VIII: Matthew Mayfield (*Colorado*)

- FEMA Region IX: Brittany Amano (*Hawaii*)
- FEMA Region IX: Navjot Hansra (*California*)
- FEMA Region X: Raylene Ensminger (*Washington*)

Three Council members are returning for a second year: Emily Rosenblum will serve as the Council Chairperson; Sophie Friedfeld-Gebaide will return to represent Region II, where she will be attending college; and Daniel Wernsman will return to represent Region V.

The 2014-2015 Council will get underway with the Youth Preparedness Council Summit held in Washington, D.C., in July. We are excited to see how this year's Council will further the movement of youth preparedness!

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: TEXAS YOUTH PREPAREDNESS CAMP



The Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) at Texas State University has developed an exciting statewide approach to individual and community preparedness for teenagers. The TxSSC began hosting the Youth Preparedness Camp in 2011, with 27 individual youth from around the state in attendance. In its second year, the program switched to a team structure, its current form, in which teams of 10 youth and an adult sponsor work together. The teams receive a full basic Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, community-focused action planning, and leadership development. Each youth group and their adult sponsor devises a project related to school and/or community preparedness that is later implemented in their community.

The groups that attend camp return home to address and prepare for potential hazards in their communities, and engage other youth and adults in their efforts. Joe McKenna, Youth Preparedness Coordinator of the TxSSC, notes, "The most important thing youth participants learn at camp is that they can lead preparedness efforts in their community. Often times, they come to camp thinking that, as youth they can have little impact on community preparedness, when in reality, they can have a tremendous positive impact on the whole community. Through leadership development and community action planning, youth participants develop the skills and confidence they need to lead action-based preparedness projects in their local communities."

The TxSSC was the recipient of the 2013 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Award for Outstanding Achievement in Youth Preparedness and received honorable mention in the category of Awareness to Action. In addition, the Center was named a White House Champion of Change for its work in the area of individual and community preparedness. Beyond the outstanding recognition that the program has received, the Center has collected data from camp participants over the past several years that demonstrate the positive impact the program has had on the lives of the youth and the Texas communities in which they reside. This positive impact is a direct result of youth groups who have returned to their communities and led preparedness efforts. Youth leave camp with the ability to

initiate a culture of preparedness, train others, and ultimately further prepare their families and communities.

Follow [@TXYouthPrepared](#) on Twitter and “Like” the [Texas Youth Preparedness Facebook page](#) to follow along with all the action at camp and for updates throughout the year. For more information, visit the [Youth Preparedness Camp webpage](#) or contact Joe McKenna, Youth Preparedness Coordinator, at jmm272@txstate.edu.

CHILDREN AND TRAUMA TIP SHEET

A number of factors impact the severity with which a child reacts to a traumatic event. The type of event, proximity of the child to the event and duration of exposure, relationship to victims, reactions of adults to the event, and personal factors can all play a role in how a child responds to a crisis. In many cases, a child’s distress will subside after the event, but in some cases it may indicate a more severe trauma.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides a tip sheet that outlines the factors that impact trauma and the symptoms of severe trauma. The document, [Identifying Severely Traumatized Children: Tips for Parents and Educators](#), can be found on the [NASP website](#). This information can help parents, teachers, and others identify children who might be in need of professional assistance after a traumatic event.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE, ONE SMOKE DETECTOR AT A TIME

Disasters and emergencies not only have a profound impact on those who experience them, they can also spur others to action. When eight-year-old Hector Montoya saw a news report about a house fire that killed a mother and daughter, he was motivated to take action to make sure others would not suffer the same fate.

Hector had saved up to be able to buy a video game system, but after seeing the news report, he decided that money would be better spent on smoke detectors. He was able to purchase almost one hundred smoke detectors, and worked with the fire department to get the smoke detectors installed in the homes of those who needed them. In particular, he was able to assist some older members of the community. You can view a video about Hector’s story on the [CBS DFW \(Dallas Fort Worth\) website](#).

Hector’s story is a great reminder that working smoke detectors are an essential preparedness tool. More information about the types of smoke detectors available and the maintenance they require can be found on the [US Fire Administration website](#).

Fire Corps provides an excellent opportunity to get involved with fire safety in your community. This volunteer program provides a way for fire departments to leverage volunteers for non-emergency activities. More information is available on the [Fire Corps website](#), where you can also [search for programs in your area](#).

KEEP KIDS SAFE DURING SUMMER WATER ACTIVITIES

June 21 was the first day of summer. As this new season arrives, families across the United States will be visiting pools, lakes, rivers, and oceans. Along with the fun and heat relief that water activities can provide, it is essential to make children aware of the risks. According to [Safe Kids Worldwide™](#), drowning is the most common cause of injury-related death for children ages 1-4. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) indicate that it is the second most common cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 1-14.

Here are a few water safety tips from the [American Red Cross](#).

- **Rules:** Establish water safety rules for each family member based on their swimming abilities.
- **Access:** Home pools and hot tubs should be protected by barriers. They should not be accessible when unsupervised. Clear the pool of any toys that may draw children to the water.
- **Supervision:** Keep an eye on children even in the presence of lifeguards. There should always be a trustworthy adult to supervise children.

[Safe Kids Worldwide™](#) also provides tip sheets about water safety [at home](#), [while swimming](#), and [while boating](#).

For additional information on water safety, check out the websites of the [American Red Cross](#), [Safe Kids Worldwide™](#), and [National Water Safety Month](#). Also, stop by the [U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\) Pool Safety](#) website, which has a [page dedicated to parents and families](#).

REMINDER: CALL FOR RESOURCES FOR YOUTH PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITY BOOKLET

Thank you to everyone who has submitted resources for the youth preparedness activity booklet. FEMA is still collecting resources, so please continue to send along activities that are quick, easy to conduct, and provide powerful learning experiences. In particular, we are looking for more activities that focus on specific natural disasters (earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, etc.).

For complete details about the booklet and the types of resources we are collecting, please see [the original bulletin](#). Please email all submissions to FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov, and please note that by sharing information about your activity, you are providing your consent for it to be included in the booklet.

We look forward to hearing about your program's youth preparedness activities!

CONTACT US

Email: FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov

Online at <http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness>

Disclaimer: The reader recognizes that the federal government provides links and informational data on various disaster preparedness resources and events and does not endorse any non-federal events, entities, organizations, services or products. Please let us know about other events and services related to youth preparedness that could be included in future newsletters by contacting FEMA-Youth-Preparedness@fema.dhs.gov.

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