

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](http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness).

## CHILDREN & DISASTERS NEWSLETTER



### JULY 2014 - ISSUE 7

Welcome to the July issue of the *Children and Disasters Newsletter*! In this month's edition, we introduce the *National Strategy for Youth Preparedness Education*, which seeks to build a movement around youth preparedness. As families prepare to enjoy the outdoors this summer, we share tips for camping safety and staying hydrated in the heat. We also examine how three years after the nuclear meltdown in Fukushima, Japan, children are still being affected physically and emotionally. The ongoing struggle to deal with the aftereffects of the nuclear disaster highlights the extended ramifications of many types of disasters. Lastly, we profile a summer safety camp in Carlsbad, New Mexico where kids are learning how to save lives while having fun.

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### SHOW YOUR SUPPORT: AFFIRM THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR YOUTH PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross, and the Department of Education are proud to announce the publication of the *National Strategy for Youth Preparedness Education: Empowering, Educating and Building Resilience* (National Strategy). The goal of this document is to engage government and non-government organizations to provide comprehensive disaster education to children throughout the Nation. With the help of like-minded organizations, we are building a Nation that recognizes the value of youth preparedness across all sectors of the community.

The National Strategy outlines a vision for a nation of prepared youth and provides nine priority steps that partners at the local, state, and national levels can take to help make that vision a reality. In many cases, these steps align with work that organizations are doing already, and affirming the National Strategy provides an opportunity for organizations to more publicly associate their work with the youth preparedness movement.

We encourage you to visit <http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness> for more information about the National Strategy. Please click on the tab titled "National Strategy" to download a copy of the National Strategy and learn how your organization can get involved. Please also join the [National Preparedness Community](#), especially the [Educators, Parents, and Youth Community of Practice](#), to participate in the conversation on youth preparedness and to learn about the various youth preparedness initiatives taking place across the country.

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## OUT IN THE WILD: CAMPING SAFETY TIPS

As summer arrives, many children and their families will partake in a favorite American pastime: camping. Whether visiting a picturesque lake, a towering mountain, or a densely wooded area, children and their families can take a variety of steps to safely enjoy the outdoors and avert disaster.

- **Watch Out For Animals:** The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) caution that undomesticated animals can carry diseases such as rabies. Make sure that your food is sealed and stored away from any animals. If you bring a family pet, make sure that it is vaccinated and within sight at all times.
- **Use the Buddy System:** The [US Forest Service](#) advises campers to travel with a partner. They recommend exploring remote areas with a group of at least four people, in case someone gets injured. Be aware of the nearest telephone or ranger station at all times.
- **Practice Makes Perfect:** If you or your child has never been camping before, [PBS](#) recommends practicing in your backyard. A backyard camp out is an inexpensive and safe way to determine if you are ready to venture into the wilderness.
- **Plan Ahead:** Be alert for inclement weather and security issues. Always bring a first-aid kit, whistle to signal for help, hand crank radio, map, flashlight, batteries, food, water, and any necessary medications. [FEMA](#) recommends packing an emergency kit with these materials.

For additional information on outdoor preparedness and safety, check out the resources available from [FEMA](#), the [CDC](#), the [US Forest Service](#), [Kids Health](#), and [PBS](#). Enjoy your outdoor adventures!

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## BE COOL, STAY HYDRATED

According to [Boston Children's Hospital](#), kids are at a greater risk for dehydration than adults. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures and direct sunlight without consuming sufficient liquids can lead to dehydration. Symptoms can include thirst, fatigue, and a number of others that can be found on the [Boston Children's Hospital website](#).

The [US Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) offers some helpful tips to teach children good hydration habits:

- **Make Drinking Exciting:** Serve beverages in colorful containers with fun straws.
- **Encourage Kids To Carry Water Bottles:** Allow kids to pick out a water bottle that suits their personality. They will be excited to carry fluids with them in their own containers.
- **Smaller Drinks, More Often:** Rather than urging kids to drink large amounts of fluids at one time, encourage them to consume small amounts during the day. Children should avoid sugary drinks that possess little nutritional value.
- **Before, During, After:** When children are playing sports or engaging in rigorous activities in

the sun, encourage them to drink water before, during, and after they play. USDA recommends that kids drink at least four ounces of fluid every 15-20 minutes when playing in the heat.

Stay safe, stay hydrated, and enjoy the warm weather!

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## NUCLEAR MELTDOWN CONTINUES TO AFFECT CHILDREN

The effects of a disaster can carry on for years after the actual event has passed, and according to a recent [Reuters article](#), the consequences can manifest themselves in a variety of—occasionally unexpected—ways. Three years after the meltdown of the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant in Japan, children in impacted areas are growing up in an environment drastically influenced by the nuclear disaster.

Until October 2013, for more than two and a half years after the disaster, the city of Koriyama (in Fukushima prefecture, but outside the critically affected area) recommended severely limiting the amount of time children spent outside: less than 15 minutes per day for children two and under, and less than 30 minutes for those between three and five.

Many children are now showing physical and emotional effects of having grown up almost entirely indoors. Children from Fukushima tend to be heavier and show evidence of decreased motor skills and strength. These children show emotional effects such as increased agitation, fear, and lack of motivation.

Though radiation levels have drastically decreased in comparison to levels immediately following the meltdown, the ongoing effects of the disaster are yet to be realized.

More information can be found in the [Reuters article](#).

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## WHERE'S BABY? LOOK BEFORE YOU LOCK

Summertime is a popular time for family road trips and the [National Highway Transportation Safety Administration](#) (NHTSA) wants you to be aware of the risks and consequences of leaving kids in hot cars.

Risks:

- Opening a window slightly does not keep a car cool.
- Heatstroke can occur when the temperature is as low as 57 degrees outside.
- A child's body temperature is prone to increase five times faster than an adult's.

Consequences:

- Heat-related death. A child can die when their temperature reaches 107 degrees.
- Misdemeanor or felony charges for parents. The severity of the charges varies on a state-by-state basis.

Even great parents can forget the risks of leaving children in a hot car. [Safercar.gov](#) has a variety of [resources](#) to help you and your family stay safe on the road including fact sheets, safety tips, and downloadable posters.

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## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: NANA'S FIRE AND SAFETY SCHOOL

Children in the town of Carlsbad, New Mexico are learning about fire safety and preparedness at an innovative and fun summer camp, [Nana's Fire and Safety School](#) Summer Safety Camp. The camp, which caters to kids in kindergarten through fourth grade, was founded by Martha "Nana" Chapman last year and teaches campers skills such as how to operate a fire extinguisher, stay safe around power lines, and memorize their phone numbers.

Chapman, who grew up in a family of firefighters, was inspired to start the camp after losing 12 family members in a pipeline explosion in 2000. The camp uses skits, crafts, and trivia to teach safety in fun and engaging ways.

Chapman told the [Current-Argus News](#), "My philosophy is if we can teach one child to save another child, then we've done our job and our motto is to teach children to save one life at a time...And if we only end up saving one life, then that's one life that would have perished without [the program]."

For more information about Nana's Fire and Safety School, please visit <http://www.nanastown.com>.

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## CONTACT US

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