

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



NOVEMBER 2014 - ISSUE 11

Welcome to the November issue of the *Children and Disasters Newsletter*! With Ebola in the news, the change of seasons, and youth throughout the Nation taking action to prepare, we have plenty to share this month!

COLD WEATHER HAS ARRIVED: GET PREPARED!



The first day of winter may not be until December 21, but that hasn't stopped the cold from descending on many parts of the country. Winter storms and extreme cold pose some unique risks, so take the time now to learn how to prepare for these types of weather. America's PrepareAthon! has developed a video about preparing for winter weather (linked at left), and Ready.gov includes a page devoted to [winter storms & extreme cold](#).

[storms & extreme cold](#).

READY, THE AD COUNCIL, AND DISNEY ENCOURAGE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR KIDS WITH "BIG HERO 6"

Recognizing that children have the ability to play an important role in preparing themselves, their

BE A BIG HERO.
PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

families, and their communities for a disaster, FEMA's *Ready Campaign*, along with the Ad Council and Disney, released new Public Service Advertisements (PSAs) as an extension of Ready Kids' ongoing outreach. These PSAs highlight several steps that children can take to prepare for emergencies: Make a Plan, Build a Kit, and Know The Facts. The new English and Spanish PSAs feature leading characters from Walt Disney Animation Studios' recently released film "[Big Hero 6](#)" and encourage



viewers to visit www.ready.gov/kids to learn how to prepare for emergencies. Whether during National Education Week or throughout the year, it's always a good time to remind youth that they can "Be a Big Hero" by learning their roles in emergency preparedness.

NOVEMBER IS RED CROSS NATIONAL YOUTH INVOLVEMENT MONTH

Armed with knowledge, interest, and enthusiasm, youth can play a big role in keeping our communities safe. The Red Cross recognizes this potential and has designated November as National Youth Involvement Month (#NYIM).

Red Cross Youth volunteers throughout the country can get involved by planning activities and events and promoting their work on social media. Preparedness-focused activities include things like [Zombie Apocalypse Parties](#), [Fire Safety Canvassing](#), and [Prepare and Share Kit Drives](#).

For more information about #NYIM, or to register an event, please visit the [Red Cross Youth website](#).

FACEBOOK TO FACILITATE DISASTER UPDATES

Social media often takes on a special importance in the aftermath of an emergency or disaster, as individuals in affected areas seek to reassure friends and relatives that they are safe—and those friends and relatives wait anxiously for word from their loved ones.

In recognition of this key role, Facebook has announced the development of a Safety Check feature that will allow Facebook users in disaster-affected areas to easily notify their friends that they are safe. More information about this exciting new feature can be found in the [Facebook newsroom](#).

NEW EBOLA FACT SHEET AVAILABLE FROM HHS

With clear information and facts, individuals can take steps to manage the fear that surrounds disasters and public health emergencies. To facilitate such information-sharing, the [Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness & Response \(OHSEPR\)](#) within the [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services \(HHS\) Administration for Children & Families \(ACF\)](#) recently released a [fact sheet about Ebola for human services programs](#).

The fact sheet provides information about the virus, how it is spread, and how the outbreak can

impact human services programs (both directly and indirectly). It includes a section for human services organizations that provide services to children, and provides tips for speaking to children about Ebola and addressing their fears.

OHSEPR is also in the process of developing Ebola informational materials and messaging specifically tailored to [Head Start](#) grantees; child care providers and child care-focused organizations; and parents. Check out [their website](#) for more information!

MEET FEMA'S YOUTH MEMBER EMERITUS

Emergency Preparedness: The Next Generation

As ambassadors for disaster preparedness education, Youth Preparedness Council alumni have knowledge, passion, and experiences that they continue to use to spark awareness. Precisely for this reason, FEMA sought to sustain ongoing engagement with Council alumnus Alex Pasculle by asking him to serve as a Member Emeritus. In this role, Alex will focus on encouraging peers to consider careers in emergency management.

FEMA considers Alex right for this role because, for many years now, Alex's work and volunteer activities have demonstrated a profound passion for the field of emergency management. At 19 years old, Alex is an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), a volunteer firefighter, and a Basic Life Support (BLS) instructor. He has also worked as a lifeguard, and has received First Aid/CPR training, hazmat training, and instruction in a variety of other preparedness-related skills. His interest in emergency management, however, started years ago when he was just 12 years old! He used to ask his stepfather questions about his previous career as a firefighter, he befriended local Junior Firefighters, and he sought out books on related topics. With such an extensive background and interest in the field, he has a unique perspective that can help other young people who may be interested in careers in emergency management.

All of the above said, we are very pleased to announce that starting with our next issue, we are launching a segment titled "Emergency Preparedness: The Next Generation." This series will showcase Alex's thoughts on the emergency management profession on a monthly basis! Get excited for his first article next month!

YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT: HANDS-ON EXHIBIT TEACHES PREPAREDNESS SKILLS TO KIDS

Bridget Smith, the Youth Preparedness Council member from FEMA Region I (specifically, Connecticut), recently created a disaster preparedness exhibit at a local children's museum.

Over the past few months, I have been hard at work on my legacy project, a hands-on children's exhibit and series of workshops focused on teaching emergency preparedness skills. My exhibit consists of four stations, each focused on a theme such as



personal preparedness kits, family preparedness kits, family meeting places, and online resources for emergency preparedness. I planned, designed, and, with some assistance, built the exhibit myself. On Saturday, September 13, I had the opportunity to implement and present my project to the public at a local children's museum, Stepping Stones Museum for Children in Norwalk, CT. With the help of my fellow youth volunteers, I displayed my exhibit and educated children about the importance of being prepared and how to prepare. As part of my exhibit, I created a preparedness kit-themed scavenger hunt as well as fun, interactive workshops that taught kids about subjects such as natural disasters and emergency contact information. I was also able to recruit several Red Cross volunteers to come in to do a Pillowcase Project Workshop, which the children thoroughly enjoyed. After they were done with my exhibit and workshops, families were able to take home a pamphlet with an emergency supply kit checklist and contact information master list.

My event was a huge success! Because of its popularity, I was able to return with my exhibit on September 20 during the museum's busiest day of the year. As a result, more people were able to see and interact with my exhibit, and I was able to get the message out about emergency preparedness to a wider audience.



Great job, Bridget!

For additional information about the Youth Preparedness Council, please visit <http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council> or email fema-youth-preparedness@fema.dhs.gov.

QUOTABLE: MAKING DISASTERS LESS SCARY



Halloween scaring might be over for this year, but disasters may make children nervous year-round. Education and planning can help to relieve fears. We posed the following question to the FEMA Youth Preparedness Council last month:

“Halloween is scary enough without disasters! What would you tell young kids to make them

less scared about disasters?”

Isaiah Garcia, Youth Preparedness Council member from Region V, had the following response:

I would relay to them that, although a disaster can strike at any moment, as long as they prepare and stay educated about potential disasters, they will be safe. I would also stress to them to talk to their parents, guardians, or trusted adults if they are feeling frightened; furthermore, I would stress that they talk to those individuals and create a plan to stay safe during the upcoming months.

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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