

CHILDREN & DISASTERS NEWSLETTER



November 2016 - ISSUE 11

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FROM THE FIELD

New Mascot Promotes Preparedness

On September 11, 2016, the [Smithfield Emergency Management Agency](#) (EMA) in Smithfield, RI, introduced its new mascot, Apples B. Ready, during the Old County Road School's Touch-a-Truck event. The mascot is featured in several interactive materials, including a word search, an emergency preparedness kit scavenger hunt, and an abbreviated emergency plan for children to gather phone numbers, meeting places, and other important information. He also interacts with children at local events.

Todd Manni, director of Smithfield's EMA, explained that while the agency regularly engages with the public, "our engagement with kids was lacking." "We realized we needed an attention getter and thought a plush mascot would fit the bill."

Various members of the town's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) wear the costume, take pictures with kids, and hand out preparedness information. "One of our CERTs is based at Smithfield High School—the students there play the part of Apples really well," Manni said.



So far, Manni says the mascot is a success. “He gives hugs and high-fives; he takes his picture with kids. Apples gives us an opportunity to spread information and have a quick conversation about being ready for an emergency with kids who more than likely would have passed by our information table.” To get more information about ways Smithfield’s EMA helps kids prepare for disasters, go to <http://kids.smithfieldema.org/>.

Campus Program Helps College Students Get Ready



ReadyCampus, a FEMA-backed program that aims to develop college student preparedness through outreach and practice drills, was active at events this past spring and fall throughout the Nation. Emergency services at institutes of higher education are already well formed and trained, but students themselves tend to run behind in training when it comes to reacting to disasters. This is

where ReadyCampus steps in. The program is designed to help support student reaction training for all hazards.

The University of Missouri has been a long-standing partner of ReadyCampus. For instance, each September the school incorporates drills and action steps from the program’s Development Guide into its campus Safety Week.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) also has a strong history with the program. One especially lively event took place in October, when the school held a ReadyCampus event that included student outreach such as giving out snow cones, emergency preparedness-themed buttons, and holding emergency drills.

ReadyCampus aims to become a staple program across all colleges and universities, holding events to prepare students for various types of emergencies. Learn more about how ReadyCampus can add to or develop preparedness programs for a college or university near you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

StormZone Celebrates 10 Years

[StormZone](#) is a school-based, multidisciplinary social studies and science education program that teaches students about preparedness, the role of emergency management, and the science of severe natural hazards like hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, severe winter weather, extreme heat, wildfires, and earthquakes.

Designed specifically for grades 6–12, students learn how to build a disaster survival kit and a family communication plan that they share with their families and friends. The program also explains how emergency management agencies work with Federal, state, and local governments to prepare for and recover from disasters. Students take part in an interactive exercise where they form their own government to practice planning and recovering from a major weather event, wildfires, or earthquakes.



StormZone also features Weather Rangers, a group of dedicated students responsible for teaching their classmates and community about the importance of disaster preparedness and community volunteerism when confronted with natural disasters.

To learn more about StormZone and the Weather Rangers student outreach program, visit www.stormzone.us or contact Program Director Bay Proby at (305) 613-4668 or bp@stormzone.us.

Summit Seeks to Protect Schools



environments.

For the third year, [Safe and Sound Schools](#) is a proud partner and Advisory Board member of [Security100Summits K-12](#), an interactive meeting format that seeks to solve pressing safety and security challenges within school communities. Hosted November 30–December 2, 2016, in Tucson, AZ, the Summit brings together educators and professionals dedicated to providing safe school

environments. The Summit's goal is to create a dialogue around the current security challenges K–12 superintendents, administrators, security staff, school districts, and cities face, as well as the security solutions available to them. To register or to get more information, visit www.security100summits.com/k12.

Team up to Help Community Members



Prepare and Share Kit Drive

Only 28 percent of American households have an emergency preparedness kit. These kits are crucial during and after a disaster—having one is a simple way to ensure that you have vital items available in the time of need. The American Red Cross' [Prepare and Share](#) is a kit drive activity in which essential preparedness items are collected, assembled in a pack, and delivered to those in the community who need the kit most.

To plan a kit drive in your community, contact your local Red Cross chapter or Service to the Armed Forces station for help and for a list of suggested items. For more information, visit www.redcross.org or email youthinvolvement@redcross.org.

RESOURCES

National Youth Survey Findings Available

On September 13, 2016, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., delivered the findings of the [2016 State of Our Nation's Youth \(SONY\) survey](#) and results at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. Four college students—members of the Horatio Alger Scholars Program—joined a panel presentation at the event to discuss their unique perspectives and viewpoints in response to the survey.



A key takeaway from the survey and event is that one way youth define success for themselves is in terms of helping others in need. They also view technology as an important contributor to the overall quality of their education. Youth are very aware of the fundamental role education plays in their own development as well; they reported that they develop valuable skills in high school that will be important to their success later in life. Click [here](#) to download a PDF of the full survey findings.

The Horatio Alger Association conducts the SONY survey to better understand what is most important to youth, and uses the findings to shape its scholarship and support programs to best serve youth and underserved populations. To learn more about Horatio Alger Scholarships, which are awarded to youth leaders who have succeeded in the face of adversity, visit www.scholars.horatioalger.org.

Learn How to Get Youth Involved

[The Game Plan for Engaging Youth](#) offers strategies to get adolescents engaged in their own health.

The Think, Act, Grow (TAG) effort provides a variety of information for both adults and youth—from its [guiding principles](#) to [the eight successful youth engagement approaches](#). It describes that youth engagement is a [win-win strategy](#). At the website, you can see how other organizations have promoted the initiative, get materials, and review current discussions about TAG in action.



Download Family Readiness Kit



The [American Academy of Pediatrics' Family Readiness Kit](#) includes information from preparedness experts, parents, and child care providers that can help families get ready for disasters. The kit includes general guidelines that can be used in most situations and for all types of disasters.

True family readiness involves every member of the family—even pets! Kids can take part in each step of the planning process with age-appropriate activities. The Family Readiness Kit includes resources for building an emergency kit, making a family communication plan, being informed, and getting involved.

The kit also includes information about disasters from forest fires to floods, tornadoes, and winter weather to infections, along with other helpful resources. [Download](#) the Family Readiness Kit today.

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Youth Preparedness Council Member Takes on Zombies for National PrepareAthon! Day



Jerome Dinakar, Region VIII member of FEMA's Youth Preparedness Council, participated in the fourth annual "[Be Prepared ... Don't Be A Zombie](#)" 3k Run and PrepareAthon event on September 24, 2016, in El Paso County, CO. The event showcased the importance of developing family and workplace emergency preparedness plans. Jerome tested his emergency preparedness knowledge by

completing obstacles and avoiding zombies during a simulated emergency.

"The 2016 Zombie Run was a huge success and I had fun participating," Jerome said. "The run was setup so you start off with two flags, and zombies try to pull them off. If you wanted a flag back, you would have to answer an emergency preparedness question."

After the run, Jerome took part in a variety of preparedness activities with CERTs and emergency responders, among others. He also participated in demonstrations such as learning how to work a fire extinguisher. The event was a great opportunity for him to promote his Youth Preparedness Council legacy project, which is focused on preparing teen drivers in his community with the resources they would need if trapped in a blizzard.

"I handed out flyers about my legacy project, the Blizzard Bag. A Blizzard Bag has the necessities for a person to survive for up to three days if stuck in a car during a blizzard. Many people didn't know that they needed an emergency kit for their car," Jerome explained. He added, "the whole event was a great way to learn and share preparedness information with my community."

For more information about Jerome's Blizzard Bag project or the Youth Preparedness Council, contact FEMA-Youth-Preparedness-Council@fema.dhs.gov.

CONTACT US

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