



# CHILDREN AND DISASTERS NEWSLETTER

June 2013 – Issue 3

The June issue of the Children and Disasters Newsletter presents a variety of resources for establishing and growing youth preparedness programs. This month, the Children and Disasters team reveals new FEMA resources for children, introduces a challenge opportunity and offers new disaster safety tips. Also, this month we have included real-life examples of youth involvement in preparedness. Keep reading for more!

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## **YOUTH PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL MEMBER PRESENTS AT IOM WORKSHOP**

Ashley Houston, an active FEMA National Youth Preparedness Council (YPC) member, was invited as a panel speaker at the *Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Considerations for Children and Families* workshop held by the [National Institute of Medicine \(IOM\)](http://www.iom.edu). The IOM workshop, held in Washington, D.C. in early June, focused on children acting as advocates for disaster preparedness. As one of several diverse panelists at the event, Ashley discussed her interest in preparedness, involvement with YPC, and promotion of youth preparedness in her community. She also provided workshop participants with suggestions for how communities can reach youth and how to channel messages to families and friends. Ashley stressed the importance of communities and towns targeting teens through community programs and schools. As a valued member of the YPC, we commend Ashley for her poise and a job well done!

To learn more about Ashley Houston and the Youth Preparedness Council, visit <http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness-council>.

## **FEMA CONNECT TEACHES NEW JERSEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DISASTER PREPAREDNESS**

In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy FEMA implemented a program to help high school students understand the importance of preparation for future disasters. The program, FEMA Connect, is presented by FEMA Corps members to high schools throughout the state of New Jersey.

FEMA Corps is a new partnership between AmeriCorps and FEMA. Members ages 18 - 24, assist in disaster response and recovery. After Superstorm Sandy, teams were deployed to New Jersey to assist with recovery efforts and provide FEMA registration and preparedness information in communities throughout the state.

FEMA Corps members created and developed the FEMA Connect program intended for high school audiences with the assistance of FEMA's Private Sector Division and External Affairs Office for the State of New Jersey. With numerous schools interested, FEMA Connect has grown from an idea to an active program. FEMA Connect has been presented to several high schools, including Passaic County Technical Institute, Camden City School System, Perth Amboy High School and Brick Township High School.

The program stresses the importance of individual preparedness and emergency management. Students learn how to establish a family communication plan and how communities can plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters. In order to relate to and involve high school students, the program uses an emergency management scenario involving a fictional town and real-life issues that may arise during and after a major storm event. The students are asked to give input on what families should do to prepare/react and how emergency managers should plan for and respond to the disaster. Students also receive local and national volunteer opportunities and are encouraged to get involved in their communities.

For more information on how to properly prepare for disasters, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).

## HURRICANE READINESS

FEMA provides valuable tips and resources to help prepare you for Tropical Storms and Hurricane season. Excessive rain and flash flooding may occur as a result of these storms; visit [www.ready.gov/hurricanes](http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes) to learn more about protecting and preparing yourself, your family, and your community from these destructive natural disasters. FEMA provides additional resources on [how to make a family emergency plan](#) and [create a disaster kit](#).

You can also [pledge to prepare](#) and sign up to be a member of the [National Preparedness Coalition](#). As a member, you will have access to exclusive resources and the opportunity to stay in tune with preparedness information throughout the year and to collaborate with thousands of fellow members nationwide on ways to get your community involved.

## DISASTER SAFETY AND PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST FOR FAMILIES

**Save the Children Releases Disaster Safety and Preparedness Checklist for Families.** These precautionary measures will keep kids safe and calm in the event of an emergency. In addition to basic survival items such as water, a flashlight and a battery-powered radio, families with children need to include kid-friendly supplies in their emergency kits. Based upon Save the Children's years of domestic and international experience in aiding children in emergencies, these tips can be used as a guide for parents to support their loved ones in the event of a crisis.

[Click here to learn more about the Save the Children Disaster Safety and Preparedness Checklist.](#)

**Source:** Jessy Burton, MSW, Associate Director of Training and Outreach for the Center for Child Development and Resiliency, U.S. Programs, Save the Children; [jbarton@savechildren.org](mailto:jbarton@savechildren.org).

# RELEASE OF GUIDES TO HELP SCHOOLS PROTECT OUR CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES FROM GUN VIOLENCE

In support of the President's effort to combat gun violence and at the direction of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano, DHS/FEMA, with its partners, developed guidance, tools, and training for the whole community on planning for and mitigating mass casualty incidents, among other threats.

On June 18, 2013 the Obama Administration released the following guides, jointly authored by the Departments of Education, Homeland Security (led by FEMA), Justice (led by FBI) and Health and Human Services, on how schools, institutions of higher education, and houses of worship can develop high-quality emergency operations plans. These guides represent the first joint guidance from these critical agencies on emergency planning and translate lessons learned from the Administration's work on national preparedness into the school context, ensuring our children and communities benefit from recent advancements in the emergency planning field.

Additionally, the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice have expanded access to federal training on active shooter situations for law enforcement, first responders, and school officials with additional outreach, new online resources, improved training curricula, exercises with law enforcement at all FBI field offices, and DHS security briefings for 100 school districts across the country.

Additional information can be found via the links below.

## PROGRESS REPORT

[Progress Report on Executive Actions to Reduce Gun Violence](#)

## FACT SHEETS

[Emergency Management Planning](#)

[Training First Responders and Schools on Active Shooter Situations](#)

## GUIDES

[Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#)

[Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Institutions of Higher Education](#)

[Guide for Developing High-Quality Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship](#)

# AVAILABLE MATERIALS

## CERT

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program educates people about emergency preparedness for disasters and hazards that may impact their community and trains them in basic disaster response skills. CERT team members are trained to help in an emergency until first responders are able to arrive.

A variety of resources on [Teen CERT programs are featured on Ready.gov](#). Download the official Teen CERT Brochure, learn how to launch and maintain a Teen CERT program in your community, and watch the Teen CERT PSA!

Please email [YouthTA@icfi.com](mailto:YouthTA@icfi.com) if you have additional questions regarding Teen CERT.

## STEP

The Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program educates and energizes 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students during school about how to prepare for emergency scenarios. Students are taught life-saving emergency skills, so they can act as leaders in implementing key preparedness strategies at home and in their communities.

To learn more about STEP or order materials, visit the [STEP website](#).

## CATALOG OF YOUTH PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

The [Catalog of Youth Disaster Preparedness Education Resources](#) was created by FEMA to assist individuals and organizations in finding preparedness resources tailored for children and youth.

If you are a youth preparedness program manager and your program is not listed in the catalog, please let us know about your program by emailing us at [YouthTA@icfi.com](mailto:YouthTA@icfi.com) with "New Youth Preparedness Program" in the subject line. We will be happy to add your program to the list.

## FEMA FOR KIDS

FEMA has implemented an interactive and educational [FEMA for Kids program](#) for children ages 4 - 11 that advocates disaster preparedness. Children can help prepare their families for the unexpected by creating a family plan and learning how to build an emergency supply kit. Interactive games and activities test your child's knowledge on emergency planning and disaster readiness.

Are you prepared for an emergency? Test your skills at [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids)!

## CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE CHALLENGE

**Take the National Service Impact Challenge.** The [Corporation for National and Community Service \(CNCS\)](#) seeks nominations for the National Service Impact Award. Focusing on specific impact, this award emphasizes the community and national contributions of service in addressing critical issues in the areas of disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, healthy futures, and veterans and military families.

Nominations are due no later than Sunday, June 30, 2013 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Learn more about the [2013 Challenge rules and submit a nomination today!](#)

Source: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/>.

# SIMPLE STEPS TO STARTING A WHOLE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

FEMA's "[Preparedness Activities for Communities Everywhere](#)" tools (available in English and Spanish) can educate you about the simple steps you can take to become more prepared. As an initial first step to learn about preparedness, as a building block to more advanced preparedness training, or to supplement existing efforts, FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) worked with the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) to design a curriculum that serves the needs and interests of the whole community. The tools can be implemented following these simple steps that can be found in the free, online [Program Leaders Guide](#):

**Step 1:** [Take the Free Online Introductory Program Course](#)

**Step 2:** Identify Your Target Audience

**Step 3:** Determine Interests and Needs

**Step 4:** Select Presenters

**Step 5:** Prepare the Presentation

**Step 6:** Arrange Logistics

**Step 7:** Get the Word Out

If you have taken the training or have started a "[Preparedness Activities for Communities Everywhere](#)" training program in your community, we'd love to hear from you! Additionally, FEMA is available to help you develop, tailor, and refine quality local community preparedness programs that fit your needs. To request assistance; please send an email to [citizencorps@dhs.gov](mailto:citizencorps@dhs.gov) with "Whole Community TA" in the subject line.

For more information on whole community preparedness, please visit: <http://www.ready.gov/neighbors-helping-neighbors-through-preparedness>.

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