The start of the school year is a great opportunity to talk to students and parents about hurricane preparedness. Teachers are key to educate the students on the subject. Understanding these phenomenon helps ease their fears and prepare for them to minimize harm. This brochure aims to offer a few ideas of age appropriate activities for the classroom to raise awareness on the subject.

PROTECTING THE CLASSROOM

- Take pictures of the classroom to determine loss after hurricane.
- Secure or take home any electronic equipment.
- Cover with plastic any furniture close to windows. Shower curtains can be used.
- Turn all bookshelves to face the walls.
- Cover windows with plastic to prevent water from coming inside.
- Place wood pieces across to prevent the wind from opening the windows.
- Have the students take home all their materials.

Talk to school administrators and to parents about the school plan if a hurricane hits.

Convenient apps for smartphones and tablets
FEMA app
Red Cross app: Hurricane
NOAA app: NOAA Weather
UCLA app: Help Kids Cope

Useful web pages:
http://www.ready.gov/kids
www.fema.gov/hurricane
https://www.facebook.com/FEMAPuertoRico/
http://www.noaa.gov/
http://www.redcross.org/local/puerto-rico

Find out if your school is used as a shelter in case of emergency. Write the contact number for the shelter administrator ____________________________
Preschoolers
At this age, teachers play a very important role in children’s understanding of the world. They listen to their teachers and in turn go home to teach their parents and siblings.

There are a variety of activities to discuss preparedness with preschoolers. Teachers can look for many more visiting the recommended websites on the back of this brochure.

- Invite resources for a talk or workshop; Red Cross; FEMA; NOAA are a few of the places where you can ask for resources.
- Prepare an emergency kit in a backpack for kids. You can ask each child to bring one item. After the kit is done, they can do a drawing of the final product to take home. The kit can be raffled.
- Read a book about hurricanes and reenact the noise of the wind, the rain, the thunder.
- Sit together on a circle on the floor and talk about their hurricane experiences and yours.
- Talk to them about what they can do to prepare for a hurricane in school and at home.

Primary School
Primary School children have a better understanding about the world. They can share the knowledge about how to prepare in case of a hurricane with family and neighbors.

This age group is eager to learn hands on by working projects, drawing and practicing their writing. The following ideas can help to create awareness.

- A lesson to define emergencies and natural disasters.
- Focus on disasters that may affect them to learn key facts and create books to share that knowledge with others.
- Create a list of things to do during a blackout.
- Have a show and tell of things to have in an emergency kit and why.
- Ask them if they have questions about emergencies or about hurricanes or preparing for a hurricane.
- Create a “Disasters Map” where students identify what kind of disaster is most likely to happen in each region.

High School
Use students’ growing awareness and interest in emergencies and disasters occurring around the globe.

Real world experiences can be used to create relevant lessons to prepare students for emergencies and natural disasters. The following are examples of lessons educators can use to help alleviate anxiety and empower high school students.

- Identify various emergencies and natural disasters that could impact communities by area.
- Research and summarize the causes or risks of various disasters based on geography, climate, or season.
- Discuss the environmental and human impact of disasters and emergencies and identify what resources exist to support response and recovery.
- Work with students to create a family communications plan.
- Identify what is required in an emergency kit and consider service learning projects to build and distribute kits in the community.
- Identify safe and proper responses to emergency situations.

Remember to take care of yourself!
“An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly.” Unknown

An emergency can create anxiety, fear and worry for personal security and that of family, neighbors and pets, specially for children. The school environment is ideal for students and teachers to support each other. It is important for teachers to take care of themselves and acknowledge their own feelings in order to support their students effectively. Sleep and eat well. Talk to others about how you’re feeling. Get help when you feel overwhelmed, talking about your feelings is a way to heal.

Linea Pas 800-981-0023, TTY 888-672-7622