

National Preparedness Month (September 2020)

In support of National Preparedness Month—sponsored by the [U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#)—to honor its [Ready Campaign](#), the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) is offering disaster preparedness resources to enhance our nation's capacity to prepare for and respond to terrorism, mass violence, public health emergencies, and disasters. This year's theme is “[Disasters Don't Wait. Make Your Plan Today.](#)”

As we are in the middle of a global pandemic, preparedness has to consider safety precautions for both COVID-19 as well as for a disaster or terrorist event. For example, consider updating your emergency kits to include cleaning items (soap, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes) and a mask for each member of your family.

Disasters and terrorism can have devastating physical and psychological effects on children and families. Children and adolescents are at risk for stress reactions including sleep and eating disturbances, irritability, anger, headaches, and stomachaches. They may also have behavior problems at school, lose interest in activities they once enjoyed, avoid friends, or engage in dangerous or risky behaviors. Being prepared ahead of time is the best way to help children and families recover.

For Educators

[American Red Cross](#)

- [Pillowcase Project](#)
Teaches children in grades 3-5 about personal and family preparedness, potential local emergencies, and ways to cope. After an hour-long presentation, children build their own emergency kits with pillowcases.

[Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Technical Assistance Center](#)

Provides information and resources about emergency management to help schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education learn more about developing, implementing, and evaluating school emergency operation plans. Has additional resources to ensure the resilience and the well-being of school personnel, students, and families during the pandemic.

[Ready.gov – Educators & Organization](#)

Provides guidance to those who work with youth that they have an important role in preparedness. Find activities for the classroom as well as other resources.

[Ready.gov – Youth Emergency Preparedness Curriculum](#)

Provides lessons, handouts, and activities for teaching high schoolers, middle schoolers, upper elementary schoolers, and early elementary schoolers how to prepare for disasters.

For Families

American Red Cross

- [Disney Mickey and Friends Preparedness Activity Book](#)
Teaches children how to be prepared and stay safe during disasters. Available in English and Spanish.
- [Monster Guard](#)
Teaches kids (aged 7-11) how to prepare for real-life emergencies-at home plus other environments-in a fun and engaging game. Sponsored by Disney, this free app is available to download on iOS and Android mobile and tablet devices.
- [Preparing for Disaster During COVID-19](#)
Teaches families how to prepare for hurricanes, wildfires and heat waves while protecting them from COVID-19.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- [Ready Wrigley](#)
Includes a series of children's activity books, checklists, posters, and a mobile app describing disaster events and steps children and families can take to prepare featuring Ready Wrigley the dog.
- [COVID-19](#)
Includes resources to help families prepare and respond to COVID-19 while at home work/school, or in the community.

READY.gov

- [Preparing for Pedro: Disaster Preparedness Activity Book](#)
Includes a fun new way parents, teachers, and community leaders can talk about safety with different natural emergencies with young children.
- [Ready Kids](#)
Includes games, information, and strategies for parents to include children in preparing for disasters is to help kids, parents, and educators to increase children's preparedness skills.
- [Youth Preparedness](#)
Includes resources for youth to become leaders in preparedness efforts and identifies strategies for youth to be active participants in family preparedness.

Sesame Street

- [Let's Get Ready! Planning Together for Emergencies](#)
Recommends tips, activities, and other tools to help families prepare for emergencies (available in English and Spanish).
- [Sesame Street in Communities](#)
Includes resources to help families' problem-solve, express themselves, find comfort, and build resilience during COVID-19.

For Policy Makers

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Suggests resources, practical information, disaster maps, applications for assistance, links to related news & media archives, and much more. "FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."

Health & Human Services (HHS)

- [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response \(ASPR\)](#).
Leads the nation's medical and public health preparedness for, response to, and recovery from disasters and public health emergencies. The division of [At-Risk, Behavioral Health and Community Resilience \(ABC\)](#) has a collection of resources to ensure the functional needs of at-risk individuals are addressed.

For Service Providers/Agencies

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Emergency Preparation and Planning](#)

Offers information on myriad emergencies and disasters, with preparedness, response, and planning advice and resources for individuals, businesses, healthcare facilities, states, local communities, and the nation; along with legal information and more.

[Disaster Information Management Research Center](#)

- [Children in Disasters and Emergencies; Health Information Guide](#)
Makes available a collection of resources related to medical and public health issues of children in disasters and emergencies. The resources are national/international in scope and they target health providers as well as emergency and community planners who work with or behalf of children.

[Emergency Medical Services for Children \(EMSC\) Innovation & Improvement Center](#)

Utilizes a clinical systems integration framework to provide the emergency care community with training, support, and tools to use quality improvement methodology in order to reduce morbidity and mortality in children.

[Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\)](#)

- [Plan Ahead for Disasters](#)
Provides tools and resources on emergency assistance. Encourages individuals and organizations to join the National Preparedness Month activities, and pledge their support to help prepare their families, businesses, and communities for emergencies of all kinds.

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#)

- [Disaster Technical Assistance Center \(DTAC\)](#)
"Supports SAMHSA's efforts to prepare States, Territories, Tribes and local entities to deliver effective mental health and substance abuse (behavioral health) response to disaster."
Includes information and resources on disaster behavioral response planning, assistance, training, experts, tip sheets, publications, and much more.
- [SAMHSA Behavioral Health Disaster Responses App](#)
Provides behavioral health responders with the resources they need to provide support to disaster survivors. Resources are pre-downloaded to the user's mobile phone to ensure access in the event of limited Internet connectivity in the field. Resources include tip sheets and the ability to search and map behavioral service providers in the impacted areas. The app is available on iTunes and Google Play.