

# Exploring

## children's health and wellness

a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children



Capital District  
Child Care Council

www.cdcccc.org



## 9 Tips to Prepare for an Emergency

### **Identify hazards.**

Fires are the most common disaster but they are not the only one. By identifying potential hazards, you have completed an important first step to being more prepared. Recheck your hazard list every 6 months or yearly.

### **Contact local emergency services.**

Make a list of important emergency contact numbers and keep them posted. Call police, fire, and other first responders *before* there is an emergency to let them know you have a child care business in the neighborhood.

### **Make an evacuation plan.**

Depending on the type of emergency, you may have to relocate the children in your care. Make an evacuation plan and practice it. Remember that during an emergency, you may not be able to communicate via email or phone to parents.

### **Identify the location of the nearest shelters.**

Make a note of community centers, churches, food pantries, schools, or other locations that may serve as a shelter during an emergency. Be sure to inform parents of your emergency relocation plan.

### **Create a “ready to go file” for each child.**

This should include contact information, medication and any medical information, a child identification badge, and a copy of your child care emergency plan. Make a copy of this information and store it securely in an offsite location or in an area of your practice that is kept dry in the event of a flood.

### **Put your plan on a wallet card.**

Wallet cards can be printed in your home, made by hand, or can be printed inexpensively. The cards should contain the child care provider's and staff contact information, the off-site pick-up locations, and the back-up communication plan. Give a card to each parent when their children are enrolled or whenever changes are made to the plan.

### **Identify an emergency team.**

Everyone on staff or involved in the operation of the child care should have a task during an emergency. Designate who will carry out the emergency/disaster plan, who will communicate with parents and the media/public, who will distribute disaster supplies and medication, who will supervise children, and who will drive if evacuation is required.

### **Make an emergency preparedness kit.**

The top item to include is a first aid kit. You can get many other items at the dollar store. Be sure to have a current child enrollment roster, a copy of the children's ID badges with parent contact information, and any medicine children require. Visit <http://goo.gl/zhZm8b> for a full list.

### **Practice your plan.**

Create a written schedule to practice the plan, including evacuation. Drills should include all children and staff. Inform parents in advance of the drill and ask them to practice with you if they are available. Multiple drills should be held throughout the year for fires, sheltering in place, and evacuations. Give children specific instructions so they feel confident.