

# Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) Program

A Curriculum for 4th and 5th Grade Students

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# **YOUTH PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION**



# 1. YOUTH PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION

According to 2013 census estimates, children under age 18 make up nearly 25 percent of the U.S. population.<sup>1</sup> Disaster researchers have identified children as one of several groups considered more prone to damage, loss, suffering, injury, and death in the event of a disaster,<sup>2</sup> and the disaster impact can be disproportionately greater for children living in poverty—who are approximately 22 percent of all children in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

As adults, we want children to feel safe and not worry about potential emergencies, but we also know that disasters can happen, often without warning, and we want children to know what steps to take to be able to stay safe during and after an event. Because school attendance is mandated for every U.S. child, the school setting is an ideal place to implement effective emergency preparedness programs.

Children can also play an important role in disaster preparedness by being good messengers of preparedness information and advocates for action with their families. This role is particularly helpful in families that speak more than one language or when English is not the primary language in a household, or where one or more family members has a disability or access and functional needs.

These considerations led staff in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region I (which serves the New England area); the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency; and fourth-grade educators in North Providence, RI, to develop a classroom-based curriculum for emergency preparedness education, called Student Tools for Emergency Planning, or STEP. The program was piloted in February 2008 and grew to implementation in 17 states as of 2014. To support the continued growth and national distribution of STEP, FEMA assembled a working group of subject matter experts in youth disaster preparedness to review and update the materials.

The revised STEP curriculum and materials are based on years of promising practices and lessons learned in youth disaster preparedness education. Because the field of youth disaster preparedness education is still growing, however, robust, scientific assessments of proven practices are only now beginning to emerge. Amendments to the STEP curriculum will be provided when additional research findings provide greater insights.

FEMA strongly supports a focused effort on youth preparedness education. In 2010, FEMA published *Bringing Youth Preparedness Education to the Forefront: A Literature Review and Recommendations*, which summarizes research and evaluations in the field of youth disaster preparedness. It also includes best practices for school-based programs that you might find helpful in teaching the STEP program. FEMA also maintains the *Youth Preparedness Catalogue: Disaster Preparedness Education Programs and Resources*—a compilation of successful youth preparedness programs around the country—and in 2014 released the *National Strategy for Youth Preparedness Education: Empowering, Educating, and Building Resilience*. These publications and other resources are available at [www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness](http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness).

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<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. (2013). *Current estimates data*. Retrieved November 5, 2014, from [www.census.gov/popest/data/](http://www.census.gov/popest/data/)

<sup>2</sup> Blaikie, P., Cannon, T., Davis, I., & Wisner, B. (2004). *At risk: Natural hazards, people's vulnerability, and disasters* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

<sup>3</sup> National Center for Children in Poverty. (2013). *Child poverty*. Retrieved November 5, 2014, from [www.nccp.org/topics/childpoverty.html](http://www.nccp.org/topics/childpoverty.html)





## **IMPLEMENTING STEP**



## 2. IMPLEMENTING STEP

The STEP program is a curriculum for fourth- and fifth-grade students to teach them how to prepare for emergencies and disasters, and to train them to become leaders in family preparedness. Your participation in teaching the STEP program can help children and families be better prepared and more resilient should a disaster occur in your area. Thank you for making time to discuss emergency planning with your class.

### STEP Overview

Grade Level: Grades 4–5

#### Teaching Objectives

- Provide general knowledge about disasters common to your area and strategies for how students can protect themselves and their families.
- Teach students how to create a family emergency communication plan.
- Teach students how to assemble disaster supply kits with their families.

#### Learning Outcomes

- Students are more knowledgeable, capable, and prepared in the event of a disaster.
- Students are positive influencers in helping their families be better prepared.

#### Structure

- Base Lesson (approximately 1 hour for videos, discussion, and activities): Introduction to Emergency Planning, Family Emergency Communication Plan and Disaster Supply Kit.
- Hazard Units (approximately 30 minutes for each video and discussion): Fire Emergencies, Severe Weather, Earthquakes.
- While only the Base Lesson is required to receive a STEP Certificate of Completion, FEMA encourages instructors to include the Hazard Units as part of their program. The units on fire emergencies and severe weather are applicable in all geographic areas; the earthquake unit can be added according to local risk.
- Supplemental Lessons (up to 10 hours of optional lessons): Emergency preparedness topics presented through lessons in geography, science, English, art, and mathematics.

#### Materials and Resources

- Participating schools receive ready-to-teach lesson materials, including instructor guides, STEP It Up with the Disaster Dodgers video series, student handouts, classroom activities, homework assignments, and graduation certificates. The STEP program also includes suggestions for how to involve family members and the larger community in STEP.

#### Alignment With National Content Standards

- The STEP Base Lesson, Hazard Units, and supplemental materials align with national content standards for several subject areas.

## Lessons Learned in Teaching STEP

The following recommendations have been provided by STEP instructors and students who participated in STEP over the past several years.

- **Keep class size below 50 to ensure interaction.**

“As a former teacher and a STEP presenter, interactive is always the best way to teach a lesson. However, this doesn’t necessarily mean that the students need to play a game. [You could meet the objective] as long as there is the opportunity for the students to join in the discussion and to think about their own planning and next steps. Several schools bring in two fifth-grade classrooms into one, and it would take quite a bit of time and may not be logistically feasible. I think the maximum amount of students in the class should be 50. If there are only about 20 or so students in a class, doing a game may work really well.”—Stacey Hafen, Senior Director of Community Preparedness, American Red Cross

- **Be creative (and encourage students to be creative) about finding items to add to the disaster supply kits.** Enlist members of your community, such as your parent-teacher organizations or local businesses, to help donate containers or supplies. Consider sending students to a local grocery or general store as part of a presentation lesson to ask store managers for any donations of food and water.

“I had to think about where I could get free things so that it wouldn’t be so expensive to make my family’s disaster supply kit. When I went to the dentist and when he gave me my free toothbrush, I asked him for an extra one for my kit.”—Elissa, fifth grade student

- **Include the families of students in as many ways as possible throughout the STEP program.** In Section 3, “Involving Families and the Larger Community,” you will find a Sample Letter to Family Members to introduce family members to the STEP program.

“Students need to lead their family in action—in the form of building disaster supply kits and plans. The more you, as a teacher, can invest parents in this goal up front, the more likely students will be able to reach this goal. Incorporating STEP into the parent night we hold at the beginning of the year was one way we felt we were setting our students up for success.”—Ms. Coutre, fourth-grade teacher

There has also been an overwhelming amount of positive response from parents and guardians. In fact, the one criticism parents had about STEP was that the program was only being taught to students in fourth and fifth grade, and not other grade levels. Parents were not nervous or fearful about their children learning about disasters—especially when the instructors were confident about their knowledge of and familiarity with the materials.

- **Engage community members in as many ways as possible through the STEP program.** Many instructors reached out to local and state representatives to include these emergency experts in the STEP process. Consider bringing fire chiefs into classrooms to guest speak to students, having an emergency management director speak to your school’s parent-teacher organization, inviting someone from a disability organization to speak with school administrators about disability inclusive emergency management, or taking students on a field trip to your state’s emergency management operations center.
- **Investigate the procedures that your school and city have for handling an emergency situation** so that you can make the connection between home and school preparedness. Many instructors found that the STEP curriculum helped them discuss with their students the need for emergency drills at school.

- **Consider the state standards that these lessons cover** and how learning can be extended across subject areas, including art and geography. Science, reading comprehension, and social studies units have all been built into the STEP curriculum.

## STEP Alignment With National Content Standards

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers work together to develop standards that “define the knowledge and skills students should have within their kindergarten to grade 12 education so that they will graduate high school able to succeed in entry-level, credit-bearing academic college courses and in workforce training programs.” These organizations note that national standards meet the following criteria:

- Are aligned with college and work expectations;
- Are clear, understandable, and consistent;
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills;
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards;
- Are informed by other top-performing countries, so that all students are prepared to succeed in our global economy and society; and
- Are evidence-based.

Recognizing that there are increasing demands on classroom time, FEMA developed the STEP curriculum to align with national content standards for several subject areas. These linkages may help make it easier for you to incorporate the STEP curriculum into your school’s teaching requirements. For more information about your state’s standards, visit [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org).

## Customizing STEP

The STEP curriculum is meant to be tailored to your individual fourth- or fifth-grade class and students. Instructors are encouraged to put their own “stamp” on the program, as they know their school district and individual school best. FEMA also recommends that instructors focus on specific emergencies that are more likely to occur in your geographic area.

FEMA also has online emergency preparedness information developed specifically for children and youth, including interactive games, available at [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids). You may wish to refer students to this website before or after you teach STEP or use some of the additional materials available in your STEP program.

## Preparing Students for STEP

The following activities will help introduce your students to STEP:

- Tell the students about the upcoming STEP lesson. Explain that they will learn more about disasters and how to become agents to help their families plan for emergencies.
- If desired, have your students produce artwork related to nature and natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes, floods, tsunamis, tornadoes, volcanoes, blizzards, and fires) to set the scene in the classroom.
- You also might have students create their own folders to hold the materials they will use during the STEP lessons.

## Emotional Considerations

Because discussions about disasters and their impact can be upsetting, it is important that instructors pay close attention to the emotional reactions of individual students during instruction. Students who have experienced a disaster in the past may find the discussion particularly emotional, so you may want to ask about past experiences before you begin the STEP program. You may also want to use a less destructive, more common type of incident, such as a power outage, as the introduction to emergency preparedness. That way, as you add different content to the lesson, you can notice as soon as possible if any student expresses discomfort, anxiety, or any other type of negative reaction to the subject matter.

While this situation may be a rare occurrence, you may wish to have a backup plan or other activity that would allow you to change course to minimize a student's discomfort. You may want to include the school counselor in your plans to introduce the course materials. You also may then choose to reach out to the distressed student's parent or guardian after class to explain what happened. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Disaster Technical Assistance Center provides a host of materials for instructors and school personnel to use when discussing disasters with children.

These materials are available at [www.samhsa.gov/dtac](http://www.samhsa.gov/dtac). The American Red Cross and FEMA have written *Helping Children Cope with Disaster*, available at [www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf).

### **Want to Know More About Disasters and Emergency Preparedness Before You Begin?**

Before you begin teaching STEP, you might want to spend some time learning more about the types of disasters that occur in your area and emergency preparedness for those disasters. Typically, people don't think about emergency preparedness—until after an event has occurred. Chances are that each of us will be affected by at least one emergency or disaster in our lifetime.

FEMA provides information on different types of disasters and emergencies, maps that identify the locations of historic disaster activity, and what to do before, during, and after an incident at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov).



**INVOLVING FAMILIES AND THE LARGER COMMUNITY**





## 3. INVOLVING FAMILIES AND THE LARGER COMMUNITY

### Involving Families in STEP

People experienced with the STEP program recommend that schools engage the families of students early on and in as many ways as possible while teaching STEP. Family involvement will help students achieve the goals of the program and will help ensure that families are receiving important emergency preparedness information. Suggestions for how to involve families include:

- Sending a letter home to the family;
- Using other communication channels (e.g., emails, blog posts, website posts) to keep families informed;
- Involving families in homework assignments, including emergency supplies checklists and family emergency communication plans; and
- Holding a STEP Open House.

Ensure provision of reasonable accommodations to all family members and students with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, including sign language interpreting, Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), and alternative format of materials in large print, Braille, or electronic format. For family members needing materials translated into other languages, consider providing translation. Work with school personnel who can advise in the provision of reasonable accommodation.

### Involving the Larger Community in STEP

Experienced STEP instructors recommend that the larger community also be engaged in supporting the STEP program; for example, by serving as guest speakers in the classroom, participants in a STEP Open House, or sponsors for “STEP Bags”—bags containing selected emergency preparedness items.

#### ***Guest Speakers***

Emergency management and first-responder organizations have a significant stake in emergency preparedness for the community. Consider contacting your local emergency management agency representative, representatives from your local Citizen Corps Council or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, or local first responders (such as fire, law enforcement, or public health agencies) to ask if someone would speak at an open house school event or speak to your class for 5 to 10 minutes about the importance of family emergency planning. This person may choose to bring flyers, handouts, or other materials to share with students and their families that will reinforce the STEP preparedness message. Points of contact for Citizen Corps Councils and CERT programs are available at: [www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/find-your-nearest-council](http://www.ready.gov/citizen-corps/find-your-nearest-council) and [www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams](http://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams).

Also consider the needs of your community. If English is not the primary language spoken in many households, you may wish to invite someone who can communicate in the language spoken. You may also choose to invite someone who can communicate the importance of family emergency planning and provide guidance for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

### ***Sponsor STEP Bags***

Some STEP instructors have been able to give students STEP Bags containing emergency preparedness items for the children and their families. In some cases, these have been funded by the school, but in other locations, local businesses (e.g., drug stores, grocery stores, or big box chain outlets) have sponsored the STEP Bags and donated some or all items for the bags. Ask your local emergency management representatives or first responders if they already have a partnership with potential donors. If no relationship exists, you or your school may wish to approach a potential donor to ask about donating items for the STEP Bags.

Some suggested items for the STEP Bags are the following:

- Emergency blanket (also known as a space blanket or Mylar blanket)
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Water bottle
- Small first aid kit
- Small comfort item (e.g., plush toy or crayons and paper)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste

While a STEP Bag is not a mandatory component of the program, it is a nice addition and serves as a visual reminder, both to students and their family members, of the importance of planning for disasters. It is also one way to engage the larger community in the STEP program and emergency preparedness.

### **America's PrepareAthon!**

America's PrepareAthon! is a national community-based campaign for action with an emphasis on group discussions, drills, and exercises. With National PrepareAthon! Days held every spring and fall, the campaign provides free resources and tools to help individuals, organizations, and communities be better prepared. The fall National PrepareAthon! Day culminates National Preparedness Month, held every September.

Teaching STEP can be counted as an America's PrepareAthon! activity, and FEMA encourages you to register your class participation at [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare). In addition, FEMA encourages schools to conduct drills and preparedness education at all grade levels. There are America's PrepareAthon! Playbooks for different hazards to help school leaders and administrators review preparedness policies by holding a tabletop exercise.

## Sample Letter to Family Members

Dear Family Members,

As we all know, emergencies can strike quickly and without warning. These events can be traumatic, especially for children. To help your child and your family be better prepared and to learn what to do to stay safe, we will be teaching the Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program.

As part of this program, students will learn what steps to take now to prepare and how to stay safe during and after the types of disasters that might occur in our area. They will also learn how to help their families prepare for emergencies. This knowledge can decrease the anxiety they may feel when hearing about disasters happening nearby and around the world and give them an understanding of what to do in a similar situation.

The STEP program, sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is designed to be age appropriate and engaging for fourth- and fifth-graders. The goals of STEP are for your child to do the following:

1. Become familiar with the types of natural disasters that can occur in our area;
2. Work with you to assemble items for a disaster supply kit to use, should your family need to evacuate or stay at home without power; and
3. Work with you to form a family emergency communication plan so that everyone knows what to do and how to contact each other during emergencies.

We hope we do not have to deal with the effects of an emergency or large-scale disaster anytime soon. However, I'm pleased that we are providing our students with tools to help them and our community be ready in case of such an event. More emergency preparedness information for parents is available at [www.ready.gov/kids/parents](http://www.ready.gov/kids/parents).

We are excited about the STEP program and are happy to extend an invitation to you to observe your child's class while it is being taught. Please keep in mind that your child will have homework related to disaster preparedness, and he or she might need your help. Also, at the end of this program, you will receive an invitation to attend a graduation event where your child will receive a certificate for their participation in STEP. We hope to see you at the graduation ceremony!

Sincerely,

## STEP Introductory Open House

Another option for engaging families is to host an open house that lets parents know that their children will be participating in a project that involves the whole household. This can be held as part of a back-to-school night or a parent-teacher meeting. Consider engaging family members at the beginning of the year so they can be thinking about the concept before the lessons are taught. Although the chart below provides different options for you to consider, you can work with your school and administrators to tailor the event and course so that it fits your curriculum and suits your needs.

Speakers	Event/Timing	Messages
<b>Option 1: Events held outside the school day, with community representatives</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Principal</li> <li>▪ Teachers/instructors</li> <li>▪ Emergency management representatives</li> <li>▪ School board members</li> <li>▪ Other civic organizations or community centers</li> <li>▪ Local Citizen Corps or CERT representatives</li> <li>▪ Red Cross representatives</li> <li>▪ Disability organization or independent living center representatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School open house</li> <li>▪ PTA meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The principal announces the STEP program at a school event near the beginning of the academic year, stressing September as National Preparedness Month.</li> <li>▪ A local emergency management agency representative or a first responder could speak briefly about the need for all families to make plans to protect themselves in case of an emergency and may provide handouts with local contacts. He/she will include the fact that students in the STEP program will be learning more about what items to have ready if they need to leave their homes suddenly, and how to stay in contact with family members if they are separated. Teachers will reinforce this message in their individual classrooms.</li> <li>▪ The PTA might host an event and include some information about the STEP program.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 2: Events held during the school day, with community representative</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers/instructors</li> <li>▪ Emergency management representatives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the school day, in the classroom, or at an assembly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The local emergency management agency representative speaks briefly about the need for families to make plans to protect themselves, etc. (see above). Teachers reinforce this message.</li> </ul>
<b>Option 3: Events held during the school day, with school staff</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Classroom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Teachers deliver the message (see above). This message may be augmented by poster displays that relate to the theme or other materials available from FEMA or other sources.</li> </ul>

## **BASE LESSON INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**



## 4. BASE LESSON INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

The Base Lesson of this curriculum includes information and resources that cover the basic principles of youth emergency planning education and focus on having the students develop a family emergency communication plan and a disaster supply kit.

Equipping families with these two important elements can ease disruption for everyone and could even help save lives. For children, gaining knowledge of what to do in emergencies beforehand can also give them a feeling of confidence, control, and calm in a time that could otherwise be traumatic.

The STEP program also includes three Hazard Units—fire emergencies, severe weather, and earthquakes—and instructors are encouraged to include these units as part of their instruction (See Section 5, “Hazard Units Instructor Guide,” for more information). In addition, Section 6, “Supplemental Lessons and Handouts,” provides resources for extending learning opportunities for your students.

### Teaching Objectives

- Provide general knowledge about disasters common to your area and strategies for how students can protect themselves and their families.
- Teach students how to create a family emergency communication plan.
- Teach students how to assemble disaster supply kits with their families.

### Learning Outcomes

- Students are more knowledgeable, capable, and prepared in the event of a disaster.
- Students are positive influencers in helping their families be better prepared.

### Materials Overview

The following materials are standard for the one-hour Base Lesson. Please review the materials and watch the videos in advance of teaching the lessons.

- ***STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 1: Introduction to Emergency Planning (4:14)***

This video teaches students the difference between a disaster, emergency, and hazard. Students will also learn what types of emergencies to prepare for—such as fires, severe weather, and earthquakes—and what to do in order to prepare for them—such as making a family emergency communication plan and disaster supply kit.

- ***STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 2: Family Emergency Communication Plan and Disaster Supply Kit (5:26)***

This video teaches students about making a family emergency communication plan and disaster supply kit. The video covers what questions to ask when making a plan, such as where to meet and how to get in touch with family members; what to put in a disaster supply kit; and ideas for getting families together to make a plan or kit.

- Student handouts: to be completed in class or as homework assignments
  - Preparing for Emergencies
  - Family Emergency Communication Plan Cards
  - Disaster Supplies: At Home and Away
- STEP graduation ceremony flyer and certificate of completion

To download these materials electronically, please visit [www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness](http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness). You can also order a printed copy of the materials or ask for an alternative format by emailing [fema-publications-warehouse@fema.gov](mailto:fema-publications-warehouse@fema.gov).

## Base Lesson Instructions

The STEP lessons were designed with *you*, the instructor, in mind, and you will find that achieving the learning outcomes with your group of students can be fun and easy.

- The one-hour, ready-to-teach Base Lesson uses a series of short, non-threatening videos (*STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers*) to introduce students to situations for which preparedness is vital and explain what families need to do to be prepared.
- Instructors then reinforce this information by using the suggested scripts, including questions, prompts, and answers, and conducting a number of hands-on, engaging activities that align with fourth- and fifth-grade national content standards.
- Feel free to tailor the discussions to your class and let the conversation flow.
- Consider inviting a local first responder or emergency manager to teach select portions of the course.
- Consider inviting a representative from a local disability organization to talk about emergency planning for households where one or more family members has a disability or access and functional needs.
- Remain alert for any child experiencing a negative reaction to the subject matter, and have a backup plan and activity in place should this occur.

## Start With a Story

Begin the Base Lesson by discussing one or both of the following real-life stories about a fire and a tsunami with your students. You may also wish to find stories from your community to discuss. Explain that the purpose of the stories is to illustrate that knowledge is power in responding to emergencies. Knowing what to do in different types of disasters can help students feel more confident while leading emergency planning efforts for their family and community. Stress that students and their families hopefully will never experience situations similar to the ones in the story.

### Tilly Smith Story

You can show a video about Tilly Smith and her tsunami experience, or you can just read the story. The video was produced by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0s2i7Cc7wA&feature=youtube](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V0s2i7Cc7wA&feature=youtube).



***Instructor reads/paraphrases:***

Today we're going to talk about emergencies. Emergencies are often reported in the news. You might have seen or heard stories about families whose homes have been damaged by floods, hurricanes, or wildfires, or who have been ordered to leave their homes to remain safe.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like, and what you would do, if **you** were faced with a possible disaster?

I'm going to read you a true story, about a girl your age, who found herself in exactly that situation.

Imagine yourself on a wonderful vacation in a big hotel right on the beach. The ocean is sparkling, some people are looking for shells, and children are splashing in the waves.

Suddenly, the water in the ocean looks different. It bubbles on the edge, and foam sizzles just like it's in a frying pan. The water is coming up on the beach, but it isn't going out again. It comes in...and in...and in...toward the hotel.

In 2004, 10-year-old Tilly Smith was on a holiday vacation with her family at a beach in Thailand, on the Indian Ocean. There were about 100 people on the beach that day, which happened to be the day after Christmas. Tilly noticed that the water began to look very strange. Tilly's teacher had just talked about tsunamis (sometimes called tidal waves) and had shown the class a video.

What Tilly had seen on the video was happening right in front of her, for real. She told her mother that a tsunami was coming. Tilly and her family rushed back to the hotel and told the staff about what they had seen. The staff were able to run to the beach and spread the word about the giant incoming wave, which was caused by an earthquake many miles away across the Indian Ocean.

Tsunamis caused by that earthquake killed more than 150,000 people around the perimeter of the Indian Ocean. But no one died on the beach where Tilly was. They all left the beach and they were all safe, with the help of the information 10-year-old Tilly learned in school and shared that day.

**Adkins Family Story**

You can show this video (shared by the Associated Press) about country singer Trace Adkins and his family's experience with a house fire, or you can read the story and refer students to the video. The video is available at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=01QmyGUI5mo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01QmyGUI5mo).

***Instructor reads/paraphrases:***

Trace Adkins is a country singer who was flying to Alaska for a performance when a fire broke out in his home in Tennessee. His daughters, some friends, and a babysitter were at home when they heard a loud bang and saw flames. The children had learned about fire safety in school and the family had a fire safety plan. In fact, their mother had recently tied a yellow ribbon to a tree in their yard, so that the children knew where to meet in the event of a fire. That plan really helped, and everyone was able to escape from the house unhurt and meet at the tree.

**Key Messages**

Adapt the following remarks according to whether you discussed one or both stories with your class.

**Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

You can help make a difference like Tilly did, and you can help your family learn about staying safe in the event of an emergency like a fire. We're going to learn about the kinds of emergencies that could happen in our area and what to do in those situations. We're also going to learn how to prepare for an emergency, just like the Adkins family. You can be a positive influence in your family and help make sure that your family is ready for any kind of event that might happen.

When you have finished this course, you will earn a certificate of completion and you will be ready to help others—in your home and maybe even your neighborhood—prepare for different types of emergency situations.

## Activity 1. Introduction: How to Prepare for a Disaster

Prepare to play the DVD or click here to play the video

[www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL720Kw\\_OoijLXAc3P4kZMAbaQiyYCSXit](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL720Kw_OoijLXAc3P4kZMAbaQiyYCSXit).

**Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

Now I'm going to show you the first video in the *STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers* series, starring children who are about your age.

**Play Video 1: Introduction to Emergency Planning.**

At the end of the video, use the following question-and-answer table to engage students in discussion.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What is a hazard?	Hazards are the events that may lead to emergencies and disasters. A hazard is a source of danger. For example, flood water over a road poses a hazard.
What is an emergency?	An emergency is something that requires emergency responders and cannot be handled just by one person, such as a home fire, but it also isn't a large catastrophic disaster, such as a wildfire that threatens an entire community.
What is a disaster?	A disaster is a catastrophic emergency that involves many emergency responders and other professionals to handle it and involves longer-term recovery. An example is a hurricane that causes extensive damage to buildings, roads, and utilities such as power and water.
What is the difference between an emergency and a disaster?	Disasters are large scale and affect a lot of people across a large area. Emergencies are events that affect your family. The STEP program typically uses the word "emergency" to cover any event when we want to be prepared. That is why this program is called "Student Tools for <i>Emergency Planning</i> ."
What might cause an emergency or a disaster?	Severe weather, such as a tornado or earthquake, can cause a disaster or an emergency. Fire or a flood is another cause.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What are other ways a disaster could affect someone?	[Open-ended]
What kinds of disasters are possible where we live?	Select as appropriate: Snowstorms, ice storms, fires, flooding, hurricanes, rainstorms, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, terrorist attacks, widespread chemical spills.
Has anyone in the class experienced a real disaster? What was it like? Were you prepared for it?	[Open-ended]
What is a family emergency communication plan?	This is a plan that describes what a family will do in case of an emergency and how everyone can get in touch with one another if they are separated.
What is a disaster supply kit?	A disaster supply kit is simply a collection of basic items your family would need in the event of an emergency.
When might your family need a disaster supply kit?	As the video pointed out, an emergency can happen anywhere, at any time. Families need to have a disaster supply kit ready if they suddenly have to evacuate—or leave—their home or if they have to stay in their home for a while.
The Disaster Dodgers gave you three important reminders at the end of the video. What were they?	Be informed. Make a plan. Get prepared.

**Note to instructor:** If you choose to include Hazard Units in your STEP program, include those videos and discussions here, before you move on to Activity 2. The Hazard Units provide more information about how to protect yourself during fire emergencies, severe weather, and earthquakes. They also reinforce the need for individuals, families, and communities to prepare for potential emergencies by creating a family emergency communication plan and a disaster supply kit.

## Activity 2. Family Emergency Communication Plan and Disaster Supply Kit

A family emergency communication plan contains contact and other important information for household members so they will know what to do and how to communicate with each other in an emergency. Even in the most common situations, such as a child returning from school to find an empty or locked home, it is important for children and their parents or guardians to have a backup plan. Where should that child go? Whom can they expect to meet them at that location later? These are important questions to answer *before these events occur*.

**Note to instructor:** If you are not showing the **STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 2: Family Emergency Communication Plan and Disaster Supply Kit** during the same class session as **Video 1: Introduction to Emergency Planning**, first take a minute to review the answers to these three questions:

- What is a *family emergency communication plan*?
- What is a *disaster supply kit*?

- When might your family need a *disaster supply kit*?

**Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

I'm now going to show you another video from the *STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers* series about making a family emergency communication plan and disaster supply kit. This video includes several important tips for you to share with your family.

**Play Video 2: Family Emergency Communication Plan and Disaster Supply Kit.**

**Part 1. Family Emergency Communication Plan**

At the end of the video, use the following question-and-answer table to engage students in discussion.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
The Disaster Dodgers suggested a list of questions that could help your family develop a family emergency communication plan. The first was, "What types of disasters happen where we live?" Why is this question important?	This question helps a family realize that a disaster could happen and that the family should be prepared.
The video talked about having a family meeting place near your home and another place outside of your neighborhood. Where might be a good meeting place outside of your neighborhood? Why?	Library, community center, church, favorite store. Because it is important to choose a familiar place that is safe and close to people who you trust and who can help you if you need them to.
What would be a good way to make sure everyone knows where to meet near your home?	Have a drill! This could be a fire drill (where you test the smoke detector) to make sure everyone knows where to go. Remind the students that your school holds fire drills to practice what to do, and practicing at home is just as important.
If you become separated during an emergency, you will need to be able to contact other family members. What suggestions did the Disaster Dodgers give about contacting each other?	Suggestions were to contact a relative or other well-known person who lives out of the area. If a call doesn't go through, text. Have a contact card with you at all times.
What should you do if an emergency occurs while you're at school?	Stay calm and follow instructions from your teacher and the principal. <b>Note to instructor:</b> Point out that your school has an emergency plan in place so that children can remain safe. Explain to students how their families would be contacted.

Remember that it is important for everyone in the family to know where the meeting places are. For homework, please work with your family to create a family emergency communication plan that will include designating these meeting places.

Handouts for completing this assignment are in the "Base Lesson Handouts" section:

- Preparing for Emergencies
- Family Emergency Communication Plan Cards

## Homework Assignment: Creating a Family Emergency Communication Plan

Hand out these documents from the “Base Lesson Handouts” section: “Preparing for Emergencies” and the “Family Emergency Communication Plan Cards.”

### **Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

These handouts will help you lead a discussion with your family about the need to create a family emergency communication plan.

**Note to instructor:** Specify what you would like students to do with these items—should they have a parent or guardian sign something to acknowledge receipt? Will this assignment count toward their grade? Tailor this to your class.

Engage students in discussion using the following question-and-answer table.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What do you think you should do with these forms once you and your family fill them out? Should you return them to me for safekeeping?	No, these forms are for you and your family. Each family member should carry a card with contact information on it in case an emergency happens. If you are at school, the school has an emergency management plan. We have contact information for your parents or guardians already in our records.
You are starting these important activities at home to encourage your family to prepare for emergencies. How can you make sure that every family member will remember your communication plan?	Suggest that family members put their cards and other important information in a wallet or purse that they carry with them often; post the family emergency communication plan in a prominent location in the home; and enter “in case of emergency” and other emergency contacts in their cell phone.

## Part 2. Disaster Supply Kit

Having a disaster supply kit on hand—complete with copies of important documents and emergency supply items such as non-perishable food, water, and personal items—saves critical time if a family needs to evacuate their home. The same is true if an emergency requires that a family stay at home for a few days, especially if there is no power. Preparing ahead of time for emergencies contributes to the safety and resiliency of both yourself and your community.

**Note to instructor:** Distribute “Emergency Supplies: At Home and Away.” You may choose to administer this activity in a variety of ways. The emergency supplies checklist includes many common items that might go in a disaster supply kit, depending on each family’s unique characteristics (e.g., the family includes a baby, a pet, a family member with a disability or others with access and functional needs, or someone who takes prescription drugs) and whether the family would use the kit for evacuation or for staying at home.

You can discuss the emergency supplies checklist during class, asking students what they would choose for their kit and why. You also can have students take the handout home and do a “scavenger hunt” with other family members. Ask them to be prepared to talk about where they found their items. You also might discuss with students what items are essential versus

optional. In discussing this handout, be sensitive to students' needs and socioeconomic status. It is possible that not every student will be able to collect kit materials.

**Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

There are a lot of ways you can find information about disaster supply kits. Here is a supply list with some suggestions.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
Take a quick look at this handout. Do you have to go out and buy a lot of new things for a disaster supply kit?	No, many items are already in your home or apartment.
It is important to know that every family is different and, therefore, every family disaster supply kit should be different as well. Will your family need everything on this list?	Some families with babies will need diapers, but some families will not need to put this item in their kits. Some households have family members with disabilities or access and functional needs and may need durable medical equipment, assistive technology, or prescription medicines. Some families have pets and need pet food and supplies in their kits. Some families will have many of the items on the list already in their homes. Others may want to prioritize the most important things and then add others over time. Most families will not put everything on this list in their disaster supply kit. The important thing is to pick the most important items and fill your disaster supply kit with what you can. Whatever you put in your kit may be your only resource if you have to leave your home suddenly.
Do you ever need to change the items in your disaster supply kit?	Yes, flashlights may need new batteries, food and water may expire, and children may outgrow spare clothes.
Where should your family keep your disaster supply kit?	Your kit should be stored in a place that is easy for everyone to reach.
Why is it so important to store water? What are some activities that you might need water for?	In some cases, you may be unable to get water from the tap. Clean water is important for drinking, food preparation, and preventing the spread of illnesses or infections (for example, by washing your hands often).

Questions	Prompts/Answers
<p>If you bring home information and talk about the importance of having a disaster supply kit and a family emergency communication plan, your family will listen.</p> <p>Remember that Tilly Smith’s parents listened when she told them that the ocean looked like a tsunami was coming. Trace Adkins’ daughters followed the fire plan the family had practiced.</p> <p>The whole family needs to be involved in preparing for emergencies.</p> <p>What will you say to your family members tonight to explain why preparing for emergencies is important?</p>	<p>[Open-ended]</p>

**Extended Classroom Discussion/Activity: Disaster Supply Kits**

**Note to instructor:** You may choose to have a more lengthy discussion about building disaster supply kits now, or at a later time. If you have received funding to purchase STEP Bags, you can use those bags to start the conversation. You may also bring in your own disaster supply kit or pictures of the items as a visual aid and be prepared to explain where you keep it in your home. You may even choose to have students create a kit for the class (which could be given to a student at the end of the year, either through a lottery or by answering disaster-related questions). The goal is for every student to assemble some emergency supply items in a box, pillow case, container, or bag with his or her family members and to maintain this disaster supply kit throughout the year.

You may want to create a system to track the progress of your class in assembling the disaster supply kits and/or require students to verify whether they have completed their kits by the end of the school year. This could include students bringing in one item each month to build their kits, or have parents or guardians sign a sheet once they have put together their disaster supply kits as an extended homework assignment. And be sure to explain that your school is prepared with emergency supplies in case students have to stay at school longer than usual.

Again, we remind you to consider individual students, their needs, and their socioeconomic status. Some may have or live with a family member who has a disability or access and functional needs; some may be in transitional housing; some may not live with both (or any) parents. Some students may not be able to afford items for a kit. Please ensure that you plan accordingly prior to this activity. Consider asking a local emergency manager or your state emergency management agency to help students complete their disaster supply kits. For help in finding this information, visit [www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies](http://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies).

**Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

Please take another look at your handout called “Emergency Supplies: At Home and Away.” I want you to take a few minutes now to silently circle 5 to 10 items that are the most important in your family’s disaster supply kit if you had to stay inside your home for days. If you finish before the time is up, write next to the circle if you have the item in your home, and, if so, where it is located now.



Engage students in discussion, using the following question-and-answer table:

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What are the most important items to you for your disaster supply kit? Why? Why do you think it is important to pack _____ instead of _____?	[Open-ended]

Now, let's consider what items on this list you would take with you if you had to evacuate. The Five Ps of Evacuation can help you decide:

**People.** People and, if safely possible, pets and other animals or livestock.

**Prescriptions.** Prescriptions, with dosages; medicines; durable medical equipment; batteries or power chords; eyeglasses; and hearing aids.

**Papers.** Papers, including important documents (hard copies and/or electronic copies saved on external hard drives or portable USB flash drives).

**Personal Needs.** Personal needs, such as clothes, food, water, first aid kit, cash, cell phones, and chargers; items for people with disabilities or access and functional needs, such as assistive technology for communications; and items for older adults, children, and those whose primary language is not English.

**Priceless Items.** Priceless items, including pictures and other valuables.

Write an "E" next to 5 to 10 items on this list that you would take with you if you had to evacuate.

Engage students in discussion, using the following question-and-answer table:

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What are the most important items to have ready to take with you when you evacuate? Why? Why do you think it is important to pack _____ instead of _____?	[Open-ended]
Why is it important to think about the kind of food you put in your disaster supply kit?	If your family members are allergic to a certain kind of food, they won't be able to eat it in an emergency.
What if it is hard for your family to buy the items you want to include in their disaster supply kit? Can you think of some creative way we all can find these items without having to spend a lot of money?	Examples: Ask the dentist for an extra free toothbrush for your disaster supply kit when you get a cleaning; send a class letter to a parent-teacher organization, local nonprofit group, or grocery store asking for assistance and donations for everyone's family disaster supply kits.
What if you already have a disaster supply kit at home? Is there anything you can do now?	Yes. Check to make sure items have not expired; consider assembling a disaster supply kit for a neighbor, friend, or relative; possibly plan to give disaster supply items as gifts for an upcoming holiday or birthday.



Questions	Prompts/Answers
<p><b>Note to instructor: Tailor this to an actual situation.</b></p> <p>Let's take a look at the disaster supply kit I put together with my family recently. [Tailor this, explain items; pass them around].</p> <p>Put your critical thinking hats on for a minute. In what ways could I improve my family's disaster supply kit? Are there items that I should consider adding or taking away? Why?</p>	<p>[Open-ended]</p>



## **BASE LESSON HANDOUTS**



## Preparing for Emergencies

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

You have the opportunity to help your family complete a family emergency communication plan and put together a disaster supply kit by following these easy steps:

**STEP 1: Be informed.** Learn about what kinds of disasters or emergencies can affect your area. Go to [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids) and click on the “See What’s Happening in Your State!” button. Some other sources for information include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([www.oceanservice.noaa.gov/kids](http://www.oceanservice.noaa.gov/kids)) and the U.S. Geological Survey ([www.earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/kids](http://www.earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/kids)). And you can ask grown-ups you know to tell you what they have experienced.

List potential local disasters and emergencies here:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sign up for alerts and warnings.** Be sure that each person in your family signs up for local weather alerts so they will be notified in the event of an emergency. To find out what alerts are available in your area, you can do an Internet search with your town, city, or county name and the word “alerts”; you can go to the website for your local emergency management or public safety office; or you can contact these offices by telephone.

**STEP 2: Make a plan.** Plan for how family members will communicate and reconnect if a disaster happens. Write this information on your Family Emergency Communication Plan Cards.

- Collect contact information for every member of your household. This information will help you get in touch with each other if there is an emergency.
- Identify a person who lives outside of the area and whom you can all text or call to help you reconnect. You might not be in the same place as the rest of your family when a disaster or emergency occurs.
- Decide where your family will meet after a disaster if there is a fire or other emergency and you need to leave your home. The meeting place could be a big tree, a mailbox at the end of the driveway, or a neighbor’s house.
- Decide where your family will meet if a disaster happens when you’re not at home and you can’t get back to your home. This could be a library, community center, house of worship, or family friend’s home.
- You should also include other important information and phone numbers on your Family Emergency Communication Plan Card. Examples of important information are any

allergies or medications. Examples of other important phone numbers are your doctor's office or your pet's veterinarian.

- Make sure all family members keep a copy of their Family Emergency Communication Plan Card in their backpack, purse, or wallet. You should also hang a copy on the refrigerator, along with emergency phone numbers for police, fire, and poison control.

### **Family Emergency Communication Plan Cards**

***Every member of the family should carry a copy of this important information.*** To fill out your card online, go to: [www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/94715](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/94715).



Write your family's name above

### Family Emergency Communication Plan

#### HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Home #: .....

Address: .....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: ..... Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: ..... Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

FOLD HERE

#### IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (ICE) CONTACT

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Home #: ..... Email: .....

Address: .....

#### OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Home #: ..... Email: .....

Address: .....

#### EMERGENCY MEETING PLACES

Indoor: .....

Instructions: .....

Neighborhood: .....

Instructions: .....

FOLD HERE

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: ..... Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: ..... Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

Out-of-Neighborhood: .....

Address: .....

Instructions: .....

Out-of-Town: .....

Address: .....

Instructions: .....

FOLD HERE

#### SCHOOL, CHILDCARE, CAREGIVER, AND WORKPLACE EMERGENCY PLANS

Name: .....

Address: .....

Emergency/Hotline #: ..... Website: .....

Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

Emergency/Hotline #: ..... Website: .....

Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

#### IMPORTANT NUMBERS OR INFORMATION

Police: ..... Dial 911 or #: .....

Fire: ..... Dial 911 or #: .....

Poison Control: ..... #: .....

Doctor: ..... #: .....

Doctor: ..... #: .....

Pediatrician: ..... #: .....

Dentist: ..... #: .....

Medical Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Medical Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Hospital/Clinic: ..... #: .....

FOLD HERE

Name: .....

Address: .....

Emergency/Hotline #: ..... Website: .....

Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

Name: .....

Address: .....

Emergency/Hotline #: ..... Website: .....

Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

Pharmacy: ..... #: .....

Homeowner/Rental Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Flood Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Veterinarian: ..... #: .....

Kennel: ..... #: .....

Electric Company: ..... #: .....

Gas Company: ..... #: .....

Water Company: ..... #: .....

Alternate/Accessible Transportation: ..... #: .....

Other: .....




Other: .....





Optional: Draw a map that shows your neighborhood meeting place and out-of-neighborhood meeting place. Put a  $\Delta$  to show your home. Put a O to show your neighborhood meeting place and label it. Put an X to mark your out-of-neighborhood meeting spot and label it.

A large empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for drawing a map. The box is mostly blank, with a legend in the bottom-left corner.

-  Home
-  Neighborhood Meeting Place
-  Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place



**STEP 3: Build a disaster supply kit.** Work with your family to assemble and update the supplies you would need if you were home with no power or water for several days and the items you would need to take with you if you needed to evacuate. To be ready for evacuation, store basic emergency supplies in a “go bag” or other container that you can grab quickly, and plan in advance what other items you will need to take. Make sure you have items for family members with special needs, and don’t forget your pets! The handout “Disaster Supplies: At Home and Away” can help you come up with other ideas for what to include in your disaster supply kit. Remember to replace old food and water with newer items when necessary.

**STEP 4: Practice your plan.** Schedule regular times during the year to go over and practice your family emergency communication plan.

- Review contact information for family members and your out-of-town contact.
- Make sure all family members know how to text in case calls do not go through.
- Make sure everyone in the family knows how and when to call 9-1-1.
- Review the location of your neighborhood and out-of-neighborhood meeting place and practice going there.
- Review the location of your disaster supply kit and update the contents.
- Check to make sure your smoke detectors and carbon monoxide monitors are working and hold a family evacuation drill.



Option: In the box below, pick a date to practice your plan. After you practice, write a sentence or two about what went well and what your family can do better next time.

**Practice date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What went well:**

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---

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**What we can improve:**

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## Disaster Supplies: At Home and Away

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

In some situations, the safest place to be is at home. But, because disasters can cause power and water outages, you may not have electricity for your lights, refrigerator, stove, air conditioning, or heat, and you may not be able to get any water from the tap. Disasters can also interrupt transportation, which means you may not be able to go to a store for food or water. In other disasters, the safest option is to leave your home and get outside of the area—this is called evacuating.

The Disaster Supplies Checklist below shows a list of items that are in many homes. Think about what your family would need if you had to stay inside your home for a week or more without power or running water. Think about family members, pets, and service animals that might need special food, extra water, or other special items.

Next, consider which of these items you would need to take with you if you had to evacuate. These are the items you should keep in a “go bag”—a bag you can carry easily. Keep your go bag in a place where you can easily grab it if you have to leave quickly.

Use this list to assemble a disaster supply kit and go bag with your family. And, remember to check your supplies periodically and keep them up-to-date.

Be prepared to discuss why these items are important in class.

### DISASTER SUPPLIES CHECKLIST

#### Communication/Information

- Family emergency communication plan; emergency contact phone numbers and out-of-area contacts
- Cell phone, hand-crank charger or extra battery, car charger
- Radio (hand-crank or with extra batteries)
- Whistle to signal for help

#### Medical Needs

- Prescription and nonprescription/over-the-counter medicines (for at least one week)
- Extra eyeglasses/contact lenses and prescriptions
- Medical equipment/assistive technology with backup batteries
- First aid kit  
([www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit/anatomy](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit/anatomy))

#### Important Documents (stored in waterproof/fireproof container or electronically)

- Copies of the following: photo identification for all family members, pets, and service animals; passports; birth certificates
- Insurance policies
- Proof of address; deed or lease to home
- Bank account records
- Medical records, including copies of insurance cards, immunizations, and prescriptions
- Pet/service animal immunization records
- Family and household contacts (family, schools, employers, doctors, and medical service providers; home repair services)

### Food and Water

- Water in the home—Store at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days
- Water for go bag—As much bottled water that can be reasonably carried or put in your vehicle
- Method to purify water (bleach, purification tablets, purification kit)
- Nonperishable or canned food for at least three days (food that doesn't need to be cooked is best)
- Special dietary needs for family members, such as baby food and food for pets/service animals
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper cups and plates, plastic utensils or mess kit, bowls for pets/service animals

### Hygiene and Sanitation

- Plastic garbage bags and ziplock bags
- Soap/disinfectant/sanitizer
- Paper towels/moist towelettes
- Toilet paper (diapers, if needed)
- Feminine needs
- Toothbrush and toothpaste

### Clothing and Bedding

- Extra clothes
- Sturdy shoes, dust mask, safety glasses, work gloves (for protection when cleaning up any damage)
- Rain gear
- Blanket or sleeping bag

### Tools and Functional Items

- Cash (when power is out, ATMs and credit card readers do not work)
- Flashlight (hand-crank or with extra batteries)
- Smoke detector (with strobe light, if needed)/carbon monoxide monitor
- Fire extinguisher
- USB car charger and DC/AC adapter
- Wrench or pliers and multipurpose tool; scissors
- Matches in waterproof container or lighter
- Plastic sheeting; duct tape
- Local map
- Permanent marker, pens, and paper
- Pet/service animal carrier and leash

### Special and Priceless Items

- Entertainment: cards, book, puzzle, or game
- Favorite stuffed toy
- Photo albums, pictures
- Valuables



## **HAZARD UNITS INSTRUCTOR GUIDE**



## 5. HAZARD UNITS INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

To enhance the Base Lesson, teachers have the option of including Hazard Units in their STEP program. The Hazard Units are focused on specific hazards and include a *STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers* video and discussion guide. Each Hazard Unit should take approximately 30 minutes to conduct.

The Hazard Units provide information about specific hazards and reinforce key messages covered in the Base Lesson. The Hazard Units on fire emergencies and severe weather are recommended for all students, as these are universal risks. The earthquake Hazard Unit can be added according to local risk.

While completing the Base Lesson is the minimum requirement to distribute certificates of completion, instructors are encouraged to include Hazard Units in their STEP program to provide greater understanding of how to remain safe during these events.

### Materials Overview

The following Hazard Unit materials are available. Please review the materials and watch the videos in advance of teaching the lessons.

- ***STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 3: Fire Emergencies (3:14)***  
This video teaches students about ways to stay safe if a fire occurs, including making and practicing a family emergency communication plan.
- ***STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 4: Severe Weather (7:22)***  
This video teaches students what to do in different types of severe weather—such as tornadoes, hurricanes, and extreme heat or cold—and what they can do to prepare.
- ***STEP It Up With the Disaster Dodgers, Video 5: Earthquakes (2:55)***  
This video teaches students what to do in case of an earthquake and what they can do to prepare for one.
- Discussion guides for each Hazard Unit.

If your community (or some other area of the country) has recently experienced an emergency from a fire, severe weather event, or earthquake, consider using it as an example. However, be sure to be alert for any student expressing discomfort, anxiety, or any other type of negative reaction toward the subject matter. While this may be a rare occurrence, you may wish to have a backup plan or other activity that would allow you to change course to minimize a student's discomfort. You also may then choose to reach out to the school counselor and the distressed student's parent or guardian after class to explain what happened.

## Fire Emergencies

**Note to instructor:** The unit on fire emergencies includes a home safety checklist and fire escape plan as optional classwork or homework activities that you can use to reinforce the lesson. More information about fires and fire safety for instructors is available on FEMA’s U.S. Fire Administration website at [www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/children.html](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/children.html).

### **Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

Today we’re going to discuss a type of emergency that has several possible causes, including severe weather, faulty electrical wiring, and human behavior. Can anyone guess what emergency I’m talking about?

Fire is the correct answer. I’m now going to show you a video about ways you can help keep yourself and your family safe if a fire occurs.

**Play Video 3: Fire Emergencies.** After the video concludes, engage students in discussion by using the following question-and-answer table.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
The flames from a fire can be harmful. What two other things of fire can be dangerous?	Heat and smoke can be even more dangerous than flames.
Why is smoke dangerous?	Smoke can completely fill a room quickly, making it hard for people to find their way to safety. Smoke also makes it hard for someone to breathe.
What is the FIRST thing you should do if a fire occurs?	Yell “fire” and get out as fast as you can.
What should you do if there is a lot of heat and/or smoke?	Get low and crawl towards your exit.
In the video, the Disaster Dodgers show how to touch a door with the back of your hand before you open it. Why?	A hot door can mean that there is fire on the other side. If a door is hot, DO NOT OPEN IT. Use your second way out of the room. This may be a window. If you can’t get out, turn on the light and go to the window so you can be seen by firefighters.
Once outside, what should you do?	Go to your family’s meeting place. Stay outside—don’t go back for any reason. Call 9-1-1 and report a fire. Tell the operator the location of the fire.
We’ve just discussed what you should do <i>after</i> a fire occurs. What can you and your family do <i>before</i> a fire happens to make sure you are prepared?	Create a family escape plan. Test your smoke alarms every month. Change the battery once a year. Replace the alarms every 10 years. Make sure everyone knows the sound the smoke alarm makes. Hold a practice fire drill. Remind students about fire drills that have been held at school and tell them it’s also important for their family to practice getting out of the house. Follow up in a week to ask who has conducted a drill at home.
What should your family escape plan include?	A safe, easy-to-remember place to meet outside the home where firefighters can easily see you.

# Home Safety Checklist



## Smoke Alarms

- There is one smoke alarm on every level of the home and inside and outside each sleeping area.
- Smoke alarms are tested and cleaned monthly.
- Smoke alarm batteries are changed as needed.
- Smoke alarms are less than 10 years old.

## Cooking Safety

- Cooking area is free from items that can catch fire.
- Kitchen stove hood is clean and vented to the outside.
- Pots are not left unattended on the stove.

## Electrical & Appliance Safety

- Electrical cords do not run under rugs.
- Electrical cords are not frayed or cracked.
- Circuit-protected, multi-prong adapters are used for additional outlets.
- Large and small appliances are plugged directly into wall outlets.
- Clothes dryer lint filter and venting system are clean.

## Candle Safety

- Candles are in sturdy fire-proof containers that won't be tipped over.
- All candles are extinguished before going to bed or leaving the room.
- Children and pets are never left unattended with candles.

## Carbon Monoxide Alarms

- Carbon monoxide alarms are located on each level of the home.
- Carbon monoxide alarms are less than 7 years old.

## Smoking Safety

- Family members who smoke only buy fire-safe cigarettes and smoke outside.
- Matches and lighters are secured out of children's sight.
- Ashtrays are large, deep and kept away from items that can catch fire.
- Ashtrays are emptied into a container that will not burn.

## Heating Safety

- Chimney and furnace are cleaned and inspected yearly.
- Furniture and other items that can catch fire are at least 3 feet from fireplaces, wall heaters, baseboards, and space heaters.
- Fireplace and barbecue ashes are placed outdoors in a covered metal container at least 3 feet from anything that can catch fire.
- Extension cords are never used with space heaters.
- Heaters are approved by a national testing laboratory and have tip-over shut-off function.

## Home Escape Plan

- Have two ways out of each room.
- Know to crawl low to the floor when escaping to avoid toxic smoke.
- Know that once you're out, stay out.
- Know where to meet after the escape.
- Meeting place should be near the front of your home, so firefighters know you are out.
- Practice your fire escape plan.

U.S. Fire Administration  
[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)



FEMA





HAVE  
A FIRE  
DRILL

**If you have children and want to make this a family activity:**

- Make a map of your home. Mark a door and a window that can be used to get out of every room.
- Choose a meeting place outside in front of your home. This is where everyone can meet once they've escaped and where firefighters can see you and know you are out. Draw a picture of your outside meeting place on your escape plan.
- Write the emergency telephone number for the fire department on your escape plan.
- Sound the smoke alarm, and practice your escape drill with everyone in your home.
- Keep your escape plan on the refrigerator, and practice the drill twice a year or whenever anyone in your home celebrates a birthday.

**If your family is all adults:**

- Walk through your home, and identify two ways out of each room.
- Choose a meeting place outside in front of your home. This is where everyone can meet once they've escaped and where firefighters can see you and know you are out.
- Make sure everyone knows the emergency number for your local fire department.
- Practice your escape drill twice a year.



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## Severe Weather

### **Instructor reads/paraphrases:**

This next video is about severe weather. Severe means that something is very harsh or causes pain and hardship. Severe weather can cause any number of emergencies or cause a disaster over a large area.

### **Play Video 4: Severe Weather.**

After the video concludes, engage students in discussion by using the following question-and-answer table.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What are some severe weather examples?	Hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, etc.
What is the difference between a watch and a warning?	A watch means that a severe weather event <i>might</i> happen. When a watch is issued, it's time to pay close attention to the weather and to alerts. A warning means that a severe weather event has occurred in the area or is likely to occur soon. When a warning is issued, it's time to ACT!
What should your family do if you hear about a weather watch?	Keep a TV, radio, or cell phone on for weather alerts.
What should your family do if you hear about a weather warning?	For tornadoes, go to a safe place for protection and cover your head and neck. For floods and hurricanes, you may be instructed to evacuate—which means leaving your home. If you have to leave your home quickly, you'll be glad you prepared an evacuation kit ahead of time. Listen for instructions from local emergency management personnel.
Floodwater can be dangerous. The Disaster Dodgers mentioned two ways that floodwater can hurt you. What are they?	Floodwater can have germs and other dangerous objects in it. Drinking or getting floodwater on your skin and in open cuts can make you sick. Even a few inches of moving floodwater can knock you off your feet or sweep cars away. Water may also be deeper than it looks and can hide dangerous objects. Do not walk through floodwater, and tell adults not to drive through moving floodwater.
Hurricanes have strong, dangerous winds—sometimes higher than 155 miles per hour. What advice can you share with your family about keeping safe during a hurricane?	The safest thing to do in a hurricane is leave the area or evacuate. If you are home and the winds are strong, go to a small interior room without windows, such as a bathroom or closet, on the lowest level. If you live near the water, stay alert for flooding.
What should you do if there is a tornado warning and you are <i>indoors</i> ?	If you are indoors, go to the basement or the lowest level of the home or building. Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls. Get under something sturdy, and use your arms to cover your head and neck. Bring your pets inside and keep them with you. <b>Note to instructor:</b> Some homes and schools have a safe room. If your school does, reassure

Questions	Prompts/Answers
	<i>students that your school is prepared to shelter them during tornadoes as well as hurricanes. More information about safe rooms is available on the FEMA website at <a href="http://www.fema.gov/safe-rooms/frequently-asked-questions-tornado/hurricane-safe-rooms">www.fema.gov/safe-rooms/frequently-asked-questions-tornado/hurricane-safe-rooms</a>.</i>
If your family has to evacuate, or leave home, because of an emergency, what should you take with you?	Family emergency communication plan and disaster supply kit.
Think about your disaster supply kit. Are there items that you should include for severe weather?	<i>[Open-ended]</i> Possible answers include boots or rain gear.

***Instructor reads/paraphrases:***

We've just talked about floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes—three severe weather events that can come and go quickly and still be very harmful to people and property. The Disaster Dodgers also talked about the dangers of extreme heat and extreme cold, which may last for days.

The Disaster Dodgers pointed out that heat waves often come with high humidity. Humidity refers to the amount of moisture in the air. You may have heard adults talk about hot weather being too “humid” or too “muggy” or “steamy” [can insert local term] when the humidity is high.

High humidity makes the temperature feel higher—or hotter—than it is. How hot the temperature *feels* is measured by a “heat index,” which combines actual air temperature with the effects of humidity.

High humidity combined with heat makes our bodies work harder to maintain a normal temperature. Heat-related illnesses, like heat stroke, can develop when our body can't cool off properly. But—just like with tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods—there are steps we can take to keep ourselves safe. Let's review some more safety tips from the Disaster Dodgers.

Questions	Prompts/ Answers
How can you protect yourself during a heat wave?	Stay indoors as much as possible, and stay on the lowest level of your home if you don't have air conditioning or fans. Drink lots of water.
What kind of clothing should you wear if you have to go outside in the heat?	Wear light-colored clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.
How can you protect yourself during extreme cold?	Stay indoors as much as possible.
What kind of clothing should you wear if you have to go outside in the cold?	Wear several layers of light clothes instead of one heavy layer. Wear mittens because they are warmer than gloves. Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs. Go back inside if your fingers, toes, or nose starts to feel numb, to prevent frostbite.
Do pets need any special care during extreme temperatures? If so, give an example.	Yes! Pets also need protection from extreme weather. Be sure pets have plenty of water during hot weather. Never leave a pet alone in a car. Pets should have a shelter against both high and low temperatures.
What did the Disaster Dodgers tell you to do at the end of the video?	Be informed. Make a plan. Get prepared.

## Earthquakes

STEP is meant to help your students be more knowledgeable, capable, and prepared in the event of possible disasters. Although earthquakes can occur almost anywhere in the United States, some areas are more susceptible than others. Have your students watch Video 5, *Earthquakes*, if your school is located in an area where earthquakes have occurred or might occur. Information about earthquake risk is available at [www.fema.gov/your-earthquake-risk](http://www.fema.gov/your-earthquake-risk).

### **Play Video 5: Earthquakes.**

After the video concludes, engage students in discussion by using the following question-and-answer table.

Questions	Prompts/Answers
What is an earthquake?	An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the ground caused by the breaking and shifting of underground rock.
How is the strength of an earthquake measured?	The Richter scale is used to measure earthquake strength.
What should you do if you are <i>inside</i> and feel an earthquake?	Drop, cover, and hold on. Don't run outside where something could fall on you. If you are unable to drop, cover, and hold on: get as low as possible and move away from windows or other items that can fall on you; do not try to transfer from your wheelchair, recliner, or bed during the shaking; if you use a wheelchair, lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops; and always protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.
What should you do if you are <i>outside</i> and feel an earthquake?	Move away from buildings, streetlights, and power lines.
What should happen if you're in a car and an earthquake hits?	The driver should stop the car and everyone should stay inside.
How can your family prepare for an earthquake?	Have a practice drill—drop, cover, and hold on! Make sure your disaster supply kit is up-to-date and within easy reach. Practice your family emergency communication plan.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL LESSONS AND HANDOUTS**



## 6. SUPPLEMENTAL LESSONS AND HANDOUTS

The following handouts and lessons can be used to supplement the STEP Base Lesson and Hazard Units. These materials are not mandatory, and students do not need to complete them to receive their STEP certificate of completion. Instructors can use these materials at their discretion and may use as many of them as they choose and as time allows. The skill sets introduced by these materials meet a variety of national and state education standards and can be integrated into different subject areas. For example, some of the skills are related to geography, science, English, art, and mathematics. Feel free to tailor these materials to suit your students, class, and community.

### Supplemental Materials

- Student Reading Resource List
- Disasters Hot Off the Press: Newspaper-Style Writing Lesson—Instructor Guide
- Newspaper Headlines—Student Handout
- Create an Emergency Planning Poster—Instructor Guide
- Emergency Role Play Scenarios—Instructor Guide
- Emergency Role Play Scenarios—Student Handout
- Planning Crossword—Instructor Answer Sheet
- Planning Crossword—Student Handout
- Math Worksheet—Instructor Answer Sheet
- Math Worksheet—Student Handout
- Mapping Meeting Places—Instructor Guide
- Promoting Preparedness Oral Presentation—Instructor Guide
- Adventures of the Disaster Dodgers Game (for classroom use and for graduation ceremony)





## Student Reading Resource List

The list below identifies several books related to disasters and emergency planning. This list is in alphabetical order by title. Age levels vary from 3 to 12 to ensure that books are available to students of varying reading abilities. Feel free to choose from this list or add your own books to this list.

You will want to refer to this list if you assign your students “Disasters Hot Off the Press: Newspaper-Style Writing Lesson.” You also might do the following:

- Have students design their posters or give brief presentations about their choice of book;
  - Ask the librarian to create a special section in the library featuring some of these books; and
  - Share this list with parents and guardians when you announce the STEP program.
1. *Blizzard: The Storm that Changed America*, by Jim Murphy. Ages 9–12. This book provides an historical account of the blizzard of 1888 that hit the East Coast and how people survived.
  2. *Day of Blizzard*, by Marietta Moskin. Grades 3–5. Katie braves New York City’s great 1888 blizzard.
  3. *Emergency Animal Rescue Stories: True Stories about People Dedicated to Saving Animals from Disasters*, by Terri Crisp. Unspecified reading level. A dedicated Emergency Animal Rescue Services team saves animals from well-known natural and manmade disasters.
  4. *Floods*, by Emma Durham and Mark Maslin (Restless Planet). Ages 9–12. This book includes colorful diagrams and fact boxes that highlight famous disasters throughout history.
  5. *Forest Fires: Natural Disasters*, by Luke Thompson. Ages 9–12. This fact-filled book explains how and why forest fires occur.
  6. *“Help!” Yelled Maxwell*, by James and Edwina Stevenson. Ages 9–12. When a flood threatens the town, third-grader Maxwell finds help in an unlikely place and becomes a hero.
  7. *Hurricane*, by David Wiesner. Ages 4–8. A giant storm is experienced through a child’s perspective. Two boys turn their hurricane-torn backyard into an adventure land.
  8. *I’ll Know What to Do: A Kid’s Guide to Natural Disasters*, by Bonnie S. Mark, Aviva Layton, and Michael Chesworth. Ages 9–12. This book provides facts about natural disasters, as well as tips on prevention, safety, and what to do in case disaster strikes.
  9. *No Dragons for Tea: Fire Safety for Kids and Dragons*, by Jean Pendziwol and Martine Gourbault. Ages 3–8. This book provides a low-key approach to fire safety for kids.
  10. *Rescue*, by Claire Watts (Dorling Kindersley Eyewitness Books). Ages 9–12. A reference book that teaches children about emergency rescues. It includes information on how to survive until help arrives.
  11. *Rising Waters*, by Rick Thomas. Ages 4–9. This book is about floods.

12. *Storm of Spirit*, by Nancy Martin-Rouse. Unspecified reading level. This is a tribute to children and families who have survived natural disasters.
13. *The Big Flood*, by Wendy Pfeffer and Vanessa Lubach. Ages 4–8. This is a story of how one community responded when the Mississippi River flooded in 1993.
14. *The Big Wave*, by Pearl S. Buck. Ages 9–12. This is the famous story of a Japanese boy who must face life after experiencing the tidal wave destruction of his family and village.
15. *The Blizzard Voices—Poems*, by Ted Kooser. Unspecified reading level. This is a collection of poetry about the blizzard of 1888.
16. *The Finches’ Fabulous Furnace*, by Roger W. Drury. Ages 9–12. This tells the story of a family whose home has a natural furnace—a volcano—that they must keep secret from their neighbors.
17. The Magic School Bus Series
  - a. *Inside a Hurricane*, by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen. Ages 4–8. A tropical storm catches the Magic School Bus inside the eye of its hurricane, providing first-hand information on changes taking place in air, sea, and land.
  - b. Others from this series:
    - i. *To the Rescue: Blizzard*, by Judith Stamper. Grades 3–5. This is a fictional story about a science class and their teacher who help rescue survivors stranded during a blizzard.
    - ii. *Forest Fire*, by Anne Capeci. Grades 3–5. This is a fictional story of a class field trip to explore the effects of forest fires.
    - iii. *Earthquake*, by Gail Herman. Grades 3–5. This is a fictional story of a class that experiences an earthquake.
18. *Twister on Tuesday* (The Magic Tree House Series), by Mary Pope Osborne. Ages 6–8. This is a fictional story about two children who experienced a tornado in 1870.
19. The Wild Weather Series
  - c. *Blizzards!*, by Lorraine J. Hopping. Grades 2–3. This book describes the effects of and provides historical facts related to blizzards.
  - d. *Lightning!*, by Lorraine J. Hopping. Grades 1–4. This book gives details on lightning and the positive and negative effects it can have.
  - e. *Hurricanes!*, by Lorraine J. Hopping. Ages 4–8. This book explains what hurricanes are, how they form, and how they are studied.
  - f. *Volcanoes!*, by Eric Arnold. Ages 7–9. This book describes what volcanoes are and some of the famous eruptions in history.
20. *Tornadoes*, by Seymour Simon. Ages 4–8. This book explains how and why tornadoes form, how they behave, how scientists predict and track them, and what to do to protect yourself.

## Disasters Hot Off the Press: Newspaper-Style Writing Lesson— Instructor Guide

Students complete this lesson by writing a news article on a disaster topic.

### Learning Objectives

- Students will choose a book from the Student Reading Resource List.
- Students will identify and write about the connection between their book and emergency planning.
- Students will write an article outlining those connections, with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Students will learn how to write attention-grabbing headlines.

### Preparation

Compile appropriate handouts to illustrate writing techniques for news articles. Possible handouts might include how to start with an attention getter, answering the five W's in writing, the inverted pyramid, using quotes, or summing it up.

Print out two newspaper headlines, one with the headline “Preparedness Saves Lives” and another with “First Responders Work to Teach Local Residents How to Extinguish Fires.”

Also, print out “Newspaper Headlines—Student Handout” to help students practice writing headlines.

### Pre-Assessment

Have students come up with a topic for a newspaper article based on a book about disasters or emergency planning that the class has read. Ask the students to list some sample newspaper headlines related to their topic.

### Introduction

Hold up the fake headline, “Preparedness Saves Lives” and read the headline aloud, with excitement. Say:

“Who wants to read more about that? I know I would! And probably so would a lot of other people. Now, how about this one?”

Next, hold up the headline, “First Responders Work to Teach Local Residents How to Extinguish Fires.” Say:

“Which headline makes you want to read the article? They’re actually two different headlines for the same article. So you see, choosing your words wisely is very important in the news business. Today, we’re going to try our hand at writing news articles and a headline that will really make people want to read it. Your articles will be based on a book that you read that is about emergency planning, so you have your work cut out for you. But I know you can do it!”

## Procedure

Give each group of students a set of newspaper articles or printouts from the Internet. Ask them to choose an article they would like to read. After they have read it, ask why they chose that article. Was it the headline? Read over the headline handout and have students spend some time creating headlines together. Review as a class.

Ask students to choose a book from the student reading list or assign books to students by reading level. Allocate time for students to read their books in class or as a homework assignment.

Have students write an article based on what they learned. Instruct them to choose a key point, event, or topic. Ask students to include the following components in their articles:

- An attention-grabbing headline;
- What the book is about;
- Who the main character is;
- What kind of emergency is outlined in the book; and
- What you would do if you were stuck in that type of emergency (tip—what have you learned about emergency planning?).

Once all students have gone through at least one editing and revision phase and have final drafts, compile all the articles into a class-wide newspaper that can be distributed to everyone in the class, the school, or via a class/parent newsletter or website.

## Closing and Assessment

Provide all students with copies of or access to the final class newspaper that has been created.

## Newspaper Headlines—Student Handout

Stories about disasters and what disasters do to communities appear frequently in the newspaper. Reading these stories can encourage families to be prepared.

**Read the story descriptions below and then write a headline for each.** Remember that news items need a short but attention-grabbing headline. Your goal is to make people want to read your story by telling them in an interesting way what the story is about. **Try to write each headline in about four to five words.**

1. Last night, there was a fire in an apartment building. Several families had to leave their homes, but no one was hurt.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

2. The National Weather Service predicts a busy hurricane season. The Service also said that people who live near the water are coming up with ways to protect their homes and belongings.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The owner of a nearby chemical plant wants to talk to the community about emergency planning. She has some items to hand out, and there will be fun things for kids to do.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Last month's flooding caused a lot of damage and closed roads. The department of transportation had to do a lot of work to the road, but the road will reopen tomorrow. The community is invited to an emergency planning fair tomorrow night to learn about what the department did to fix the road and how to prepare for floods.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_



## Create an Emergency Planning Poster—Instructor Guide

There are several options you can consider when implementing this activity. You may wish to have students use the list of topics provided, or you may ask them to read one of the books from the **Student Reading Resource List**, and then create a poster based on what they read.

In addition, you may choose to work with your school/school district to do the following activities:

- Place the posters around the school to spread the message to other classes and visitors;
- Assemble individual posters into a local preparedness campaign to educate other classes or community members; or
- Have a competition between students, classes, or schools in your district.

Also, feel free to come up with your own ideas!

### Instructions for Students

**Design a poster illustrating different emergency planning strategies. Use one of these examples or brainstorm your own examples!**

- Making a disaster supply kit
- Talking about a family emergency communication plan
- Choosing a meeting place outside of the home
- Discussing an out-of-neighborhood meeting place
- Planning for pets in emergencies
- Installing smoke detectors
- Installing carbon monoxide detectors
- Talking to a friend about why being prepared is important
- Helping a neighbor assemble a disaster supply kit
- Making a map of the best evacuation routes from your home
- Posting emergency numbers by each telephone in the home
- Talking to a local police officer or firefighter about emergencies and hazards in your community
- Taking a first aid course
- Calling your out-of-state contact to connect with family members in an emergency
- Practicing your family emergency communication plan
- Updating your disaster supply kit with fresh food and water
- Evacuating your home in an emergency

## Emergency Role Play Scenarios—Instructor Guide

Below, we provide several scenarios from which students can choose. You can list the six scenarios, so that the whole class can see them, or print the last page of this handout. In the past, teachers have assigned these scenarios to groups of students for them to work on over several weeks. The skits were typically performed in front of classmates—either from one class or the entire grade. Some teachers also had students serve as the “audience” and give the “actors” feedback on what they did correctly and what else they could have done. Did they grab their kit? Did they have the contents they needed? Did they activate their family emergency communication plan? Check on their neighbors? These are just some of the questions the audience can consider when discussing each skit.

### Directions for Students

Plan how you could act out the following scenarios. Write an outline of a performance. Plan to demonstrate exactly what to do and possibly what not to do in each emergency situation. Practice and put on the performance skit for your classmates.

#### **1. There is a soccer game in progress when thunder is heard in the distance. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include one to three soccer players, a coach, and a parent]*

Correct Response: When thunder roars, go indoors! If you absolutely cannot get inside, avoid open fields or hill tops; stay away from trees or other tall objects; and stay away from water, wet items, such as ropes, and metal objects, such as fences and poles.

#### **2. A family is sleeping when the smoke detector goes off at 3 a.m. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include parents, siblings, and sleepover guests]*

Correct Response: Shout “Fire!” and leave the home immediately. Remind an adult to check on babies and others who need help evacuating. Go to the family’s outside meeting place. Call 9-1-1 from outside the home to alert fire responders.

#### **3. It has been a stormy winter and big piles of snow are lying on the flat roof of an apartment building. A firefighter pounds on the door and says the building must be evacuated. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include parents, siblings, a firefighter, and neighbors]*

Correct Response: Grab your disaster supply kit and your pets and leave immediately. Go to your outside or out-of-neighborhood meeting spot, or call your out-of-state contact and tell him or her where you are if not all members of the family are home.

#### **4. Freezing rain and ice caused tree limbs to fall and neighborhood electrical lines to break. The home has no power. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include parents, family members, and neighbors]*

Correct Response: Get the flashlight out of your disaster supply kit, and turn on the battery-powered radio to keep current with the weather and power situation. Gather blankets and warm clothes. If it gets too cold in your home, you may have to go to a shelter or to the home of another family member or a friend, taking your disaster supply kit and pets with you.



**5. The teacher is giving a history lesson when the room begins to shake. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include a teacher, a student teacher or aide, and students]*

Correct Response: Drop, cover (get under a heavy piece of furniture or a desk), hold on, and don't move. If you're inside, protect your head and torso. If you're at a desk or table, get under it. Stay indoors until the shaking stops. If you are outside, quickly find a clear spot, drop to the ground, cover, and hold on. Stay there until the shaking stops. Earthquakes are usually followed by smaller aftershocks.

**6. The radio says a big, dangerous hurricane is heading toward your part of the state. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include a radio announcer, family members, and neighbors]*

Correct Response: Check your disaster supply kit and add any extra supplies you think you will need. Listen to the radio or television to find out if you have to evacuate (take your disaster supply kit and pets with you). Review and activate your evacuation plans, including asking your guardian to put gas in your car or looking up public transportation, rail, and para-transit options. Note that public transportation may be stopped or changed, so try to keep up with this information via local news outlets. Bring outdoor furniture (and other things that might blow around and cause damage) inside the home or garage.

**7. It has been raining for days and there is water everywhere. Water is running swiftly down the street two blocks from your home and a police officer tells you that you cannot go any closer to your home. What do you do?**

*[Roles may include students, a police officer, neighbors, and family members]*

Correct Response: Do not step into fast-flowing water! Go to your out-of-neighborhood meeting place (library, post office, convenience store). If your family is not there with you, or if you can't get to the meeting place, call your out-of-state contact to tell them you are safe and to help you decide what you should do. You can also stay near the police officer if it is safe or ask him or her for help.



## Emergency Role Play Scenarios—Student Handout

### Directions for Students

Plan how you could act out the following scenarios. Write an outline of a performance. Plan to demonstrate exactly what to do and possibly what not to do in each emergency situation. Practice and put on the performance skit for your classmates.

1. There is a soccer game in progress when thunder is heard in the distance. What do you do? *[Roles may include one to three soccer players, a coach, and a parent]*
2. A family is sleeping when the smoke detector goes off at 3 a.m. What do you do? *[Roles may include parents, siblings, and sleepover guests]*
3. It has been a stormy winter and big piles of snow are lying on the flat roof of an apartment building. A firefighter pounds on the door and says the building must be evacuated. What do you do? *[Roles may include parents, siblings, a firefighter, and neighbors]*
4. Freezing rain and ice caused tree limbs to fall and neighborhood electrical lines to break. The home has no power. What do you do? *[Roles may include parents, family members, and neighbors]*
5. The teacher is giving a history lesson when the room begins to shake. What do you do? *[Roles may include a teacher, a student teacher or aide, and students]*
6. The radio says a big, dangerous hurricane is heading toward your part of the state. What do you do? *[Roles may include a radio announcer, family members, and neighbors]*
7. It has been raining for days and there is water everywhere. Water is running swiftly down the street two blocks from your home and a police officer tells you that you cannot go any closer to your home. What do you do? *[Roles may include students, a police officer, neighbors, and family members]*

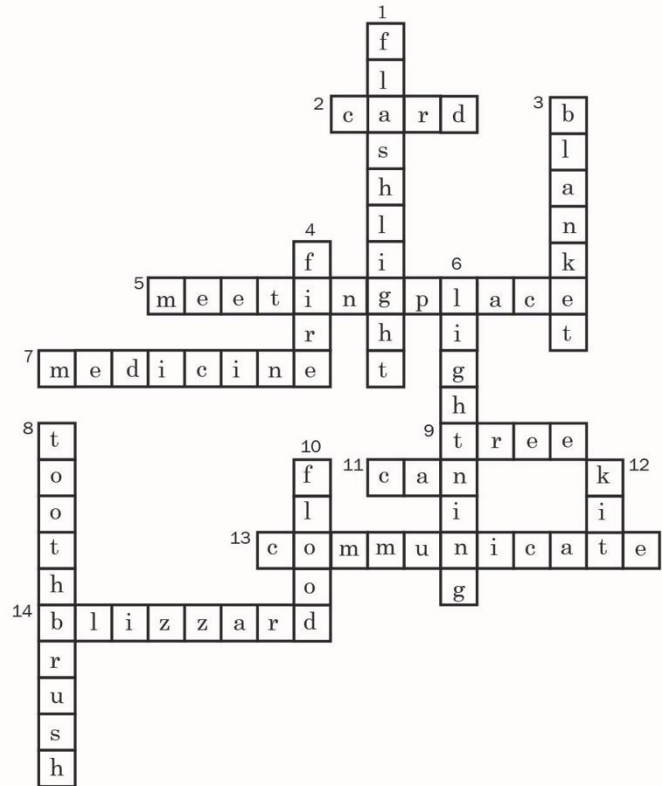


# Planning Crossword—Instructor Answer Sheet

**Note to instructor:** This activity can be done by individual students as homework or by small groups in the classroom.

**Down:**

1. Instead of candles, which could be dangerous, add this item to your disaster supply kit.
3. This item is important in your disaster supply kit because you may need something to keep you warm in case the heat goes out.
4. In this emergency, you should immediately get outside when you smell smoke or hear an alarm.
6. This accompanies thunder in a large rainstorm.
8. When visiting the dentist, ask for an extra one of these for your disaster supply kit.
10. This emergency is caused by too much snow melting or too much rain falling for the rivers and ground to hold.
12. Every family should gather water, food, batteries, and other supplies for their disaster supply \_\_\_\_\_.



**Across:**

2. Family members can write contact numbers on a family emergency communication plan \_\_\_\_\_ to carry around with them in a pocket or wallet.
5. Each family should designate a \_\_\_\_\_ outside the home in case of an emergency. (2 words)
7. If you have a pet at home, you should put pet food, extra water, a picture of you and your pet, and any pet \_\_\_\_\_ they may need in your disaster supply kit.
9. During a lightning storm, the worst place to stand is under a tall object, such as a \_\_\_\_\_.
11. To prevent spoiling in your disaster supply kit, look for food found in this.
13. It is important for family members to be able to \_\_\_\_\_ during an emergency.
14. This is a very strong and often long-lasting winter storm with snow, wind, and ice.

**On the back of this sheet, rewrite each sentence using the correct punctuation.**

1. The boy put gauze, Band-Aids, and tweezers in his first aid kit.
2. Lizzy wrote down the phone numbers of her doctor, fire department, and school.

**Circle the correct word to complete each sentence.**

1. The teacher let (**we, us**) bring in pictures of our disaster supply kits.
2. Mom told us about the big storm and asked (**we, us**) to update our disaster supply kit.
3. It is not (**good, well**) to panic when an emergency occurs.
4. The batteries (**can, may**) run out. We should pack some extras in case they do.
5. The family's out-of-neighborhood meeting place was at the (**peak, peek**) of the hill.

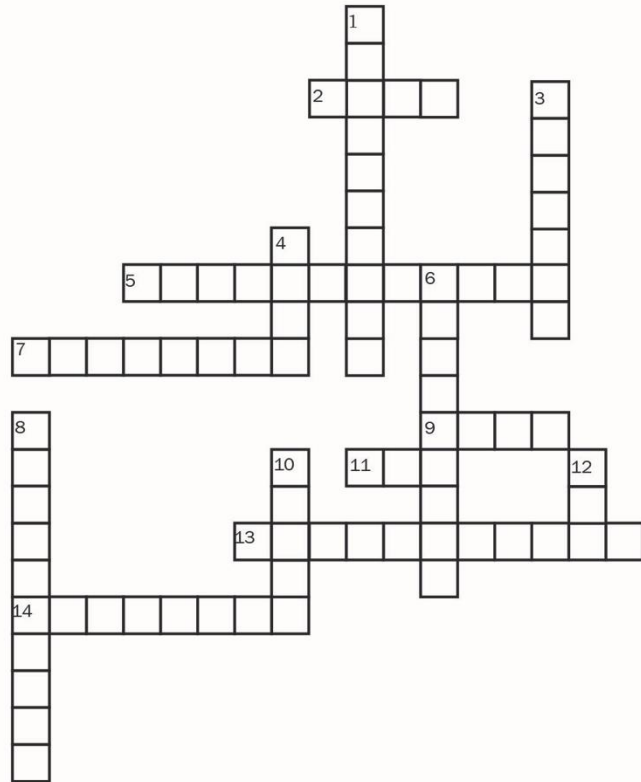


# Planning Crossword—Student Handout

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Down:**

1. Instead of candles, which could be dangerous, add this item to your disaster supply kit.
3. This item is important in your disaster supply kit because you may need something to keep you warm in case the heat goes out.
4. In this emergency, you should immediately get outside when you smell smoke or hear an alarm.
6. This accompanies thunder in a large rainstorm.
8. When visiting the dentist, ask for an extra one of these for your disaster supply kit.
10. This emergency is caused by too much snow melting or too much rain falling for the rivers and ground to hold.
12. Every family should gather water, food, batteries, and other supplies for their disaster supply \_\_\_\_\_.



**Across:**

2. Family members can write contact numbers on a family emergency communication plan to carry around with them in a pocket or wallet.
5. Each family should designate a \_\_\_\_\_ outside the home in case of an emergency. (2 words)
7. If you have a pet at home, you should put pet food, extra water, a picture of you and your pet, and any pet \_\_\_\_\_ they may need in your disaster supply kit.
9. During a lightning storm, the worst place to stand is under a tall object, such as a \_\_\_\_\_.
11. To prevent spoiling in your disaster supply kit, look for food found in this.
13. It is important for family members to be able to \_\_\_\_\_ during an emergency.
14. This is a very strong and often long-lasting winter storm with snow, wind, and ice.

**On the back of this sheet, rewrite each sentence using the correct punctuation.**

1. The boy put gauze Band-Aids and tweezers in his first aid kit.
2. Lizzy wrote down the phone numbers of her doctor, fire department, and school?

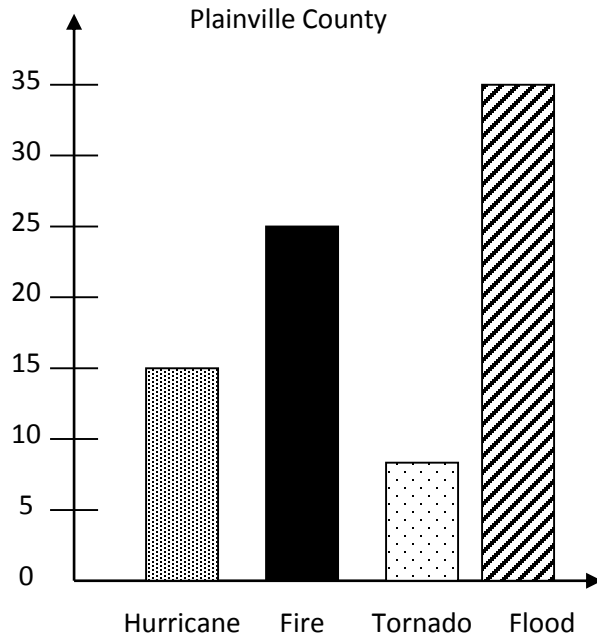
**Circle the correct word to complete each sentence.**

1. The teacher let (**we, us**) bring in pictures of our disaster supply kits.
2. Mom told us about the big storm and asked (**we, us**) to update our disaster supply kit.
3. It is not (**good, well**) to panic when an emergency occurs.
4. The batteries (**can, may**) run out. We should pack some extras in case they do.
5. The family's out-of-neighborhood meeting place was at the (**peak, peek**) of the hill.





## Math Worksheet—Instructor Answer Sheet



The bar graph to the left shows the number of natural disasters that affected Plainville County over the last 50 years. Use this chart to answer the questions below.

1. What is the most common disaster for Plainville County? flood
2. How many hurricanes hit Plainville County? 15
3. How many tornadoes? 8
4. How many more fires than hurricanes hit Plainville County? 10

### Word Problems

1. If you lived in Plainville County, what are some things you would want to do to prepare yourself and your family for a natural disaster?

Make sure you have a disaster supply kit with up-to-date food and water. Find out your town's evacuation routes. Move valuables and electronics away from the ground or basement level of your home. Establish a meeting place outside of the neighborhood in case your street is flooded.

2. The superintendent of the school district decided that it was important to order an emergency planning booklet for all of her students. She found out that the elementary school had 1,356 students. The middle school had 2,543 students and the high school had 4,320 students. How many emergency planning booklets should the superintendent order?

8,219 booklets

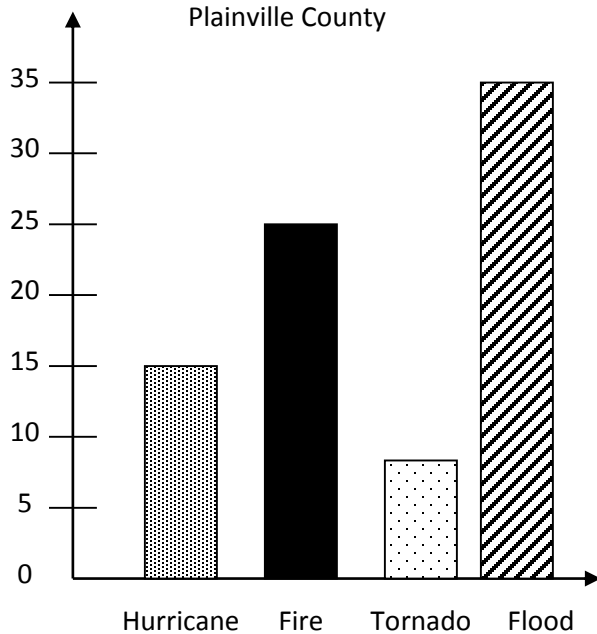
3. The chief of police met with the town officials to determine if the river would flood the town when the snow melted this spring. "The river is currently in normal range, measuring 32 inches," said the director of public works. "For the river to flood, it will have to measure 38 inches or more." "By my estimation, we have about 25.4 centimeters of snow that will melt directly into the river," said the meteorologist. If 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters, will the river overflow? If yes, how many inches will flood into the town?

Yes, the river will overflow by 4 inches.



# Math Worksheet—Student Handout

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



The bar graph to the left shows the number of natural disasters that affected Plainville County over the last 50 years. Use this chart to answer the questions below.

1. What is the most common disaster for Plainville County?
2. How many hurricanes hit Plainville County?
3. How many tornadoes?
4. How many more fires than hurricanes hit Plainville County?

5. If you lived in Plainville County, what are some things you would want to do to prepare you and your family for a natural disaster?

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## Word Problems (use the back of this sheet if you have to)

1. The superintendent of the school district decided that it was important to order an emergency planning booklet for all of her students. She found out that the elementary school had 1,356 students. The middle school had 2,543 students and the high school had 4,320 students. How many emergency planning booklets should the superintendent order?

2. The chief of police met with the town officials to determine if the river would flood the town when the snow melted this spring. “The river is currently in normal range, measuring 32 inches,” said the director of public works. “For the river to flood, it will have to measure 38 inches or more.”

“By my estimation, we have about 25.4 centimeters of snow that will melt directly into the river,” said the meteorologist.

If 1 inch = 2.54 centimeters, will the river overflow?

If yes, how many inches will flood into the town?



## Mapping Meeting Places—Instructor Guide (Science and Math Lesson Plan)

### Learning Objectives

- Students will identify two meeting places as part of their family emergency communication plan.
- Students will draft and finalize aerial maps of their home and their neighborhood.
- Students will chart evacuation routes on their maps.
- Students will show their maps to their families and lead family members in an evacuation drill that will include evacuating to the family’s designated outside meeting place.

### Preparation

Gather large drawing paper, rulers, pencils, markers, and glue for each student group. Print out labels for “My Home,” “Outside Meeting Place,” “Out-of-Neighborhood Meeting Place,” and “My Evacuation Route.” Add any labels that may be specific to the community in which the school is located. Draw or print out an example of an aerial map that contains a title, legend, and appropriate labels. Gather maps of the neighborhood and/or other geographic information that the students can use as a reference.

### Introducing Students to the Task

Remind students of the family emergency communication plans they compiled, emphasizing the aspect of identifying an outside meeting place and an out-of-neighborhood meeting place. Have the students verbally explain the difference. (For example, my outside meeting place is the mailbox; my family will meet there if there is a fire. My out-of-neighborhood meeting place is the community center; I will go there if I can’t get into my neighborhood because of an emergency.) Explain to the students that that they will be mapping these locations and will be able to post them in the classroom and then in their homes. Display the model aerial map and guide students in a discussion of why each aspect is important.

### On-the-Spot Assessment

Ask students to raise their hands if they can draw their aerial maps by freehand. If many hands are raised, review the importance of having, neat, precise, and organized maps, which will require the use of rulers, research on their locations, and creation of a rough draft.

### Procedure

Instruct students to collect important information about their homes and neighborhoods and begin a draft of their two meeting places for homework. (Note: This assignment may be spread over several days.) Provide students with verbal feedback on their drafts. Students will work on finalizing their drafts by drawing their maps, gluing on their labels, charting their evacuation routes (as appropriate), and adding a title and legend to their maps. Students should work independently on their assignment, although they may speak in low voices to their neighbors. Once they receive teacher approval, allow students to use permanent pens or markers to finalize their maps.

## **Closing and Assessment**

Grade maps based on the inclusion of all the communicated elements (e.g., title, legend, labels, meeting spots). You can assign separate grades for students' ability to collaborate, work independently, and revise a drafted version.

After maps have been displayed in the classroom, instruct students to take their maps home, go over the evacuation routes with their families, and lead one emergency drill in which the family practices leaving their home and meeting at their outside meeting place.

## **Optional Activity**

Ask students to orally describe to their classmates what their evacuation drill entailed and any lessons they learned from conducting the drill with other members of their household. Will they make changes to their family plans based on the lessons learned? Remind students that drills are done at school just like at home, and consider reviewing school emergency procedures with your students.

## Promoting Preparedness Oral Presentation—Instructor Guide

This lesson was written by a teacher and implemented over several weeks. Feel free to tailor it to your needs. You may choose to have students give speeches in a debate format, for example, or have students compete to create new slogans and taglines.

### Learning Objectives

- Students will brainstorm and outline ideas in a structured format.
- Students will write one-page persuasive speeches.
- Students will be able to orally communicate a thesis and supporting details to various groups of people.

### Preparation

Choose one or more topic(s) from the introduction section below. Ask students to imagine presenting their speeches in a certain forum and to a certain population (for example, to a local apartment complex that houses older adults, other classrooms in school, or at a town hall meeting).

If practical, consider contacting these populations to arrange for students to give their speeches to them in person.

You may want to do background research on the chosen topic to have website resources, book resources, and other research tools available for students. You also might encourage students to conduct additional research for inclusion in their presentations. A great place for students to start is at [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids).

### Directions for Students

Explain the topic(s) to your students, stressing the importance of spreading the message of emergency planning outside their classroom. Emphasize the need for students to persuade others to think and behave differently.

## Topics

**In Case of Emergency (ICE) Contacts:** Most people you know carry a cell phone with them, and keep the numbers of friends and family members in their contact list. Did you know that having an “ICE” contact listed could save someone’s life? Imagine you or someone you know couldn’t speak because of an injury or sickness. If a firefighter or police officer found your cell phone, he or she could quickly find your emergency contact, call that person and tell them about the situation, and learn how to treat you to make you better. Most people do not know what ICE is or how to enter ICE into their phone. Many cell phones have ICE as a built-in contact, but it can be entered in any phone by adding a new contact, entering “ICE” or “In Case of Emergency” in the contact name, and entering phone number(s).

**“Turn Around, Don’t Drown”:** Flash floods typically happen in low-lying areas such as creeks, rivers, and streams. Flash floods are usually caused by heavy rain from a storm or if a dam breaks. The main hazards of flash floods are that they happen so quickly and often are considered dangerous. Most people believe they can walk or drive through large amounts of water. Did you know that as little as two feet of water can carry away most SUV-sized vehicles? In the United States, more people die in floods than from lightning, tornadoes, or hurricanes. If everyone followed the advice “Turn Around, Don’t Drown,” there would be a lot fewer injuries and deaths caused by flash floods.

**“Don’t Be Scared, Be Prepared”:** Building a disaster supply kit and forming a family emergency communication plan are important elements of being prepared for any kind of emergency. Most families, however, have not done either of these things. It is important to work with your family to set up a kit and a plan. It is also important to motivate friends and neighbors to do the same. Many people don’t know that they should have a disaster supply kit, or don’t set aside time to assemble one. What information have we learned that we could use to convince people that NOW is the time to build a disaster supply kit and form a family emergency communication plan?

## Procedure

Conduct a brief class discussion to gather overall ideas and thoughts from students, preparing them to engage in more detailed brainstorming in small groups of two to six students. Assign one topic to the entire class or multiple topics to different student groups.

Instruct the students to brainstorm, outline, plan, and write their group speeches, working together to formulate individual speaking roles.

Guide and encourage your students to consider audience type and to evaluate the most effective ways to compel each audience to action, using supporting details such as case stories and statistics. Students should work on their speeches over multiple class periods, possibly practicing their speeches with each other before making a final presentation to the chosen audience.

## Closing and Assessment

Grade written speeches, outlines, and oral delivery of speeches. Separate grades can be given for students’ ability to collaborate and work together in groups. If applicable, encourage students to check in with the target audience two weeks after they delivered their preparedness speech to see if the audience took appropriate action.



# Game Instructions

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Question cards are red.  Answer cards are yellow. 

- 1. Form at least two teams.**
- 2. Take turns reading a red question card.**
- 3. Check the answer, using the yellow card with the same number.**
- 4. Keep track of the points you earn.**
- 5. Play the bonus challenge cards together. The team with the most points at the end of the game is the winner.**



**Disaster:** Earthquake

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are inside a building and begin to feel the shaking of an earthquake. What should you do?

1

**Disaster:** Tornado

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are riding in your car when you see the funnel shape of a tornado. It seems the tornado is coming your way. What should you do?

2

**Disaster:** Hurricane

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You just heard that there is a hurricane warning for your area. What should you do?

3

**Disaster:** All Disasters

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** A disaster is coming to your area. You and your family have been told to evacuate your home. What should you bring with you?

4

**Disaster:** Fire

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You wake up to find your room is full of smoke. What do you do?

5

**Disaster:** Tornado

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are at home when you hear a tornado warning. What should you do?

6



7

**Disaster:** Blizzard

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** It is snowing hard and you can't get home. You try calling your family but their cell phones are not working. What should you do?

8

**Disaster:** Thunderstorm

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** A bad thunderstorm results in loss of electricity. What items do you need?

9

**Disaster:** Flood

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** It rained nonstop for 4 days. All the roads to your home have been flooded and you can't get home from school. Where should you go?

10

**Disaster:** Tsunami

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are on the beach when you notice the waves pulling towards the ocean without rolling back out. What disaster might happen next and what do you do?

11

**Disaster:** Blizzard

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** During a blizzard, you are trapped in your car. Should you stay in your car or get out?

12

**Disaster:** Fire

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You smell smoke and find a fire burning in the bedroom. What should you do?





**Disaster:** Flash Flood

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** It has been raining very hard for the last several days. As you are walking, you see water covering the road. What do you do?

13

**Disaster:** All Disasters

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are building a disaster supply kit with your family before a disaster happens. What things should you pack if there are babies or pets in your home?

14

**Disaster:** Fire

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** What can your family do to prepare for a fire in your home before it happens?

15

**Disaster:** All Disasters

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** How many gallons of water does 1 person need for 1 day (24 hours) in the case of an emergency?

16

**Disaster:** Thunderstorm

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** Name 3 things that you should NOT do during a thunderstorm because they could cause injury and harm.

17

**Disaster:** Flood

**Value:** 500 Points

**Question:** You are in the car with your Dad, who is driving. You see some water flooding the surface of the road. Your Dad thinks you can drive through it. What do you do?

18





**Disaster:** Earthquake

1

**Answer:** Drop, cover, and hold on. The safest thing to do is take cover where you are. Don't try to run out of the building because things could fall on you and hurt you.

**Disaster:** Tornado

2

**Answer:** Get out of the car, lie face down in a low area (ditch) and cover your head. You cannot outride a tornado! Tornadoes are unpredictable and can blow cars away.

**Disaster:** Hurricane

3

**Answer:** Leave if the warning tells you to do so and bring your disaster supply kit. Keep listening to the radio for instructions. Bring pets inside and stay away from windows and glass doors.

**Disaster:** All Disasters

4

**Answer:** Take your pets and disaster supply kit: food, water, blankets, flashlight, radio, extra batteries, whistle, first aid kit, toilet paper, wipes, spare clothes, important papers, and medicine.

**Disaster:** Fire

5

**Answer:** Crouch low to the floor (smoke rises). Take the fastest route out of the home. If the door to your room is hot, use another exit such as a window. Go to your family meeting place.

**Disaster:** Tornado

6

**Answer:** Go to the lowest level of your home. If you do not have a basement, go to a bathroom or closet near the middle of the lowest floor of your home.



**Disaster:** Blizzard

7

**Answer:** Use your family emergency communication plan. Call your out-of-state contact to tell him or her where you are and get any information about where your family is.

**Disaster:** Thunderstorm

8

**Answer:** You need a flashlight, extra batteries, warm blankets (if it is cold outside), and battery-operated radio. If you are there for more than a few hours, you need food and water as well.

**Disaster:** Flood

9

**Answer:** Go to your family's out-of-neighborhood meeting place such as a community center or library.

**Disaster:** Tsunami

10

**Answer:** A tsunami may occur next. Tell the people around you and run to higher ground or go inland. If you can't do either, go to the highest floor in a nearby building.

**Disaster:** Blizzard

11

**Answer:** Stay in your car. Stay warm with blankets. Use your car disaster supply kit. Keep snow away from the exhaust pipe. Hang a colorful distress flag from the antenna.

**Disaster:** Fire

12

**Answer:** Shut the bedroom door and get out of the house. Yell fire to any family members who might still be in the house. Call 9-1-1 once you are safely outside and away from the house.





**Disaster:** Flash Flood

13

**Answer:** Turn around and walk the other way. You won't be able to tell how deep the water is and it may be moving faster than it appears.

**Disaster:** All disasters

14

**Answer:** Take pet food, collars, leashes, and carriers for your furry friends and baby food, diapers, and blankets for small children. Bring medications that are needed for pets or babies.

**Disaster:** Fire

15

**Answer:** Install and regularly check smoke detectors. Plan an easy exit route from each room. Designate a meeting spot outside your house to go to when there is a fire.

**Disaster:** All Disasters

16

**Answer:** 1 Gallon. It is ideal to plan to have enough food and water in an emergency kit for each family member to last 3 days.

**Disaster:** Thunderstorm

17

**Answer:** Use computers, phones, or appliances that plug in the wall. Stand near large windows. Go outside and stand under a tree. Go swimming in a pool. These are all harmful activities!

**Disaster:** Flood

18

**Answer:** Tell the driver that you should "Turn around, don't drown!" Even 2 feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, even SUV's. Ask him to be safe and find another route.



 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

You notice the beginning of a brush fire in your neighborhood. With a pretend phone, practice what information you would relay to the fire department.

 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

Your older adult neighbor doesn't have a home disaster supply kit. Draw a picture of what his or her disaster supply kit should look like with labels on each item. Remember to take into account the fact that they may be on medications.

 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

A friend of yours says that hurricanes and earthquakes never happen here, so there is no need to prepare. Practice your argument to change his or her mind.

 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

Name some food items that would be good for a disaster supply kit and why. Name some foods that would NOT be good for a disaster supply kit and why. Make a diagram that organizes all these examples of food items.

 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

During a disaster, some people get anxious and panic. Brainstorm some strategies for staying calm. Make a poster telling your class why it is important to stay calm and directions on how to stay calm during a disaster.

 **BONUS CHALLENGE CARD**  
1,000 points 

Make a list of adults who can provide help to you during a disaster. Make a chart of where you can find these people in your town.





## **STEP GRADUATION MATERIALS**



## 7. STEP GRADUATION MATERIALS

### STEP Graduation

A formal STEP graduation event can recognize, reinforce, and share the information learned by students and also stress to families the value of emergency preparedness. You may want to present students with a customizable STEP certificate of completion or host a more formal event that includes their families. A suggested program with approximate times, invitation letter to families, flyer, and the certificate of completion is provided to help you plan a meaningful graduation program. Begin planning for your event at least a month before so that you have plenty of time.

### Final Program and Graduation Event

**Purpose:** To recognize, reinforce, and share the lessons learned by students and to include other family members as partners in the effort to be prepared for emergencies and disasters.

**Participants:** School principal or vice principal, instructor or classroom teachers, students and their families, and local emergency management representatives.

**Key Messages:** Who needs to be prepared for an emergency? EVERYBODY! Here's how to do it: Assemble a disaster supply kit and agree on a family emergency communication plan. If you aren't able to gather all the items that are on the disaster supply kit list, collect at least a few important items and have those ready to take with you if you must leave your home. Being prepared can save lives!

#### Preparation:

- Send a "save the date" letter home to families a week or two before the event ("Dear Family, As you know, our class has been using the Student Tools...").
- Send home the flyer ("Attention Families") a few days before the event.
- Sign a certificate of completion for each student.
- Help students gather props for the Adventures of the Disaster Dodgers game (e.g., red and yellow game cards, blackboard or paper for tallying the score) and/or role-playing skits (disaster supply kit, umbrella, warm hats and scarves, soccer ball, pajamas). *You can find the Adventures of the Disaster Dodgers game and suggested role-playing skits in the "Supplemental Lessons and Handouts" section.*
- If you have it, post artwork that relates to the lessons. *For suggestions, see "Create an Emergency Planning Poster" in the "Supplemental Lessons and Handouts" section.*
- Rehearse game and skits.
- Decide how certificates will be handed out.

#### Options:

Invite your local emergency management representative or local first responder to briefly reiterate the importance of preparedness. Perhaps he or she might hand out the certificates of completion to the students. Choose whether to use "Emergency Role Play Scenarios," or the Adventures of the Disaster Dodgers game, or both. Assign students to work on the role play and/or game. Role plays might include a narrator who starts each skit by reading a description

of the scenario. You also might want to use someone to provide sound effects, such as those from thunder, a smoke detector, or pets.

If applicable and practical, you can have students post their “badges” or awards on appropriate social media. They can make a video using SchoolTube and post it. The school can invite local media to the event and can share information via SchoolTube, too.

## Sample Agenda

### Final Program and Graduation Event

Total Suggested Time: 60 to 90 minutes

Welcome (3 minutes)	Principal and/or teacher/instructor
Explanation of program (5 minutes)	Teacher/instructor or student
Introduction of speaker (if applicable) (2 minutes)	Teacher/instructor or student
Speaker remarks (10 minutes)	Keynote speaker
“What do you do?” emergency skits (25 minutes)	Students
Adventures of the Disaster Dodgers game (15 minutes)	Students
Graduation ceremony (10 minutes)	Teacher/instructor or speaker and students
Closing remarks (3 minutes)	Principal, teacher/instructor, or speaker

## Sample Letter to Family Members: Graduation Event

Dear Family,

As you know, our class has been using the Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program to learn how to prepare for emergency situations. Students have talked about the kinds of disasters that might occur in our area and the steps a family can take before, during, and after an emergency to help keep safe. Students also have been encouraged to take the lead in helping your family plan for emergencies by building a disaster supply kit and creating a family emergency communication plan. Thank you for supporting your child in accomplishing these important projects!

Our class is now inviting you to a STEP Family Event and Graduation. Each student will receive a certificate of completion for the program, and many students will participate in our presentations. We may also have a guest speaker from the emergency management community. This event should be both enjoyable and informative.

The graduation event will be held on:

Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,



# ***Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP)***

## ***Graduation Event!***

See your student recognized for his or her hard work in emergency planning!

**Enjoy student performances!**







# CERTIFICATE OF COMPLETION

*Issued to*

---

*For Learning About Emergency Planning and Helping Our Community,  
Family, and Friends Become Better Prepared*

---

*Classroom Emergency Planning Instructor*

*Date*



FEMA



**EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES FOR  
TEACHERS AND PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS**



## 8. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

See the lists below for selected emergency preparedness resources from federal and other organizations. For a more detailed list, please see the FEMA *Youth Preparedness Catalogue: Disaster Preparedness Education Programs and Resources* at [www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/94775](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/94775).

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### Resources for Teachers and Schools

Teachers and schools can use the resources in this section to find out more information on select preparedness topics in the STEP program. There are also several resources that can be shared with students to supplement lessons.

- America's PrepareAthon!: [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare)
- American Red Cross, Prepare Your School: [www.redcross.org/prepare/location/school](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/school)
- FEMA and Red Cross, Helping Children Cope with Disaster: [www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf)
- FEMA Ready.Gov: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- FEMA Ready.Gov, Youth Preparedness: [www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness](http://www.ready.gov/youth-preparedness)
- FEMA Ready.Gov, Build a Kit: [www.ready.gov/build-a-kit](http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit)
- FEMA Ready.Gov, Make a Plan: [www.ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)

### Other Emergency Preparedness Education Programs

- American Red Cross, Masters of Disaster and the Pillowcase Project: [www.redcross.org/prepare/location/school/preparedness-education](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/school/preparedness-education)
- FEMA Ready.Gov, Be a Hero!: [www.ready.gov/kids/educators](http://www.ready.gov/kids/educators)
- U.S. Fire Administration: [www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention)
- Save the Children, Prep Rally: [www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9085951/k.B899/Get\\_Ready\\_Get\\_Safe\\_Community.htm](http://www.savethechildren.org/site/c.8rKLIXMGIpI4E/b.9085951/k.B899/Get_Ready_Get_Safe_Community.htm)

### State Emergency Management Agency

For help finding contact information for your state emergency management agency, please go to [www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies](http://www.fema.gov/emergency-management-agencies).

## Activities for Kids

- American College of Emergency Physicians, Disaster Hero: [www.disasterhero.com](http://www.disasterhero.com)
- FEMA Ready Kids: [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids)
- Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition, Sprinkler Smarts: [www.sprinklersmarts.org](http://www.sprinklersmarts.org)
- National Fire Protection Agency, Sparky.Org: [www.sparky.org](http://www.sparky.org)

## Resources for Parents and Caregivers

Parents and caregivers can learn more about the topics covered in the STEP program by checking out these resources.

- America's PrepareAthon!: [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare)
- American Academy of Pediatrics, Family Readiness Kit: [www2.aap.org/family/frk/aapfrkfull.pdf](http://www2.aap.org/family/frk/aapfrkfull.pdf)
- American Red Cross, Prepare Your Home and Family: [www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family)
- FEMA Ready.Gov: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- FEMA Ready.Gov for Parents: [www.ready.gov/kids/parents](http://www.ready.gov/kids/parents)
- DisasterAssistance.Gov: [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov)
- FEMA and Red Cross, Helping Children Cope with Disaster: [www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf](http://www.fema.gov/pdf/library/children.pdf)
- The Weather Channel Family Emergency Plan: [www.connectwithweather.com/create-your-plan](http://www.connectwithweather.com/create-your-plan)





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