

**Let's Talk:  
Emergency Preparedness for Children  
in Early Education and Child Care  
Programs**

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**For a tape of this audioconference,  
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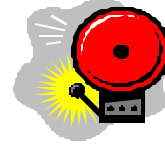
**Moderator: Susan Aronson, MD, FAAP**

**Speakers: Debi Mathias, BS  
Jamie Calabrese, MD, FAAP  
Linda Harwanko**

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR CHILDREN IN EARLY EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Introduction

Experiences and Lessons Learned:



Routine Practice of Emergency Procedures-



Threat from the Inside-

Escaped Inmate-



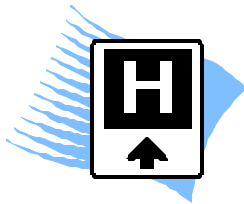
Incendiary Device on the Bus-



Evacuation from Toxic Fumes-



Collaboration to Provide Emergency Care-




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The Pediatrician's Role in  
Emergency Preparedness for  
Children in Early Education  
and Child Care Programs

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Jamie Calabrese, MD, FAAP

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In an emergency, children are  
more vulnerable than adults

- ⌘ Rapid respiratory rate
- ⌘ Thinner skin
- ⌘ Less fluid reserves
- ⌘ Less mature motor skills to escape
- ⌘ Less cognitive ability to understand the dangers present

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The unique treatment needs  
of children

- ⌘ Medication adjustments based on weight
- ⌘ Smaller equipment
- ⌘ Mentally, their reactions will be based on their developmental level
- ⌘ Influence of caretaker's emotional state

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The Local Disaster Preparedness Team includes:

- Families
- Early education and child care providers
- Pediatricians and other health professionals

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Disaster Planning for Early Education and Child Care Programs

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Do it  
Update it regularly

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Disaster Plan Components for Child Care Programs

- Being ready to evacuate children who can not or will not walk out themselves
- Getting children to a safe place
- Notifying parents

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## Disaster Plan Components for Child Care Programs

Next steps:

- ✦ Reuniting children with their families
- ✦ Providing/arranging care for children whose parents are incapacitated or can't be reached
- ✦ Providing age-appropriate and disability-appropriate first aid

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## The Role of the Child Health Professional

- ✦ For each child in the pediatric practice
- ✦ For the child with special health care needs
- ✦ For the early education and child care programs in your area

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## Well Child Care and Disaster Preparedness

- ✦ At check-ups, provoke thoughtfulness on the parents' part to address the issue
- ✦ The Family Readiness Kit
- ✦ The early education and child care or school forms

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The Pediatrician's Role for  
the Child with Special Health  
Care Needs

The Pediatrician as the Medical Home for  
the child with special health care needs

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The Medical Home

- EPIC IC Medical Home Initiative
- The emergency information form
- Filling out the forms
- Addressing issues specific to emergencies
- The three day "Grab-n-Go" box

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The Child Health Professional's  
Role with Early Education and  
Child Care

- Training
- Reviewing emergency response plans
- Advocacy for early education and child care professionals

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Keeping Children Safe.....  
Disaster Emergency Planning

What to consider when developing  
your plan

**Linda Harwanko**  
Headquarters/Department of the Army

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Overview

- Why have emergency plans?
- What are the components of a plan?
- Who should be included in the plan?
- What are some resources?
- What are some "lessons learned" ?

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Why have emergency plans ?

- Unplanned natural disasters
- Undetected terrorism-now on US soil
- Enforces safety & security of children / reduces risks
- Peace of mind for children, parents, and families
- Assurance for communities & employers

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What are the four steps of developing and maintaining a plan?

- Develop
- Monitor
- Implement
- Evaluate

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What are the components of a plan?

- Assess the current situation
- Establish a team
- Define roles for the team
- Train the team
- Document existing care capacities
- Project needs

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What are the components of a plan? (continued)

- Outline potential care/options/support services
- Identify facilities, financial resources and personnel needed
- Develop transportation plans & agreements

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**What are the components of a plan ?**  
(continued)

- Determine supplies and materials needed
- Establish staffing and training
- Determine security needs
- Determine program needs
  - Emergency information for children & staff
  - Maintain quality: licensing & accreditation

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**What are the components of a plan ?**  
(continued)

- Establish food needs and transportation
- Have staff & families read and reread the plan
- Practice the plan
- Monitor, implement (if necessary) and reevaluate the plan

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**Monitoring the plan**

- Set schedule for periodic evaluation
- Consider situations that may affect your plan
- Make appropriate changes

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Implementing the plan

Implementation process will only be as good as the plan the team developed and monitored.

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Evaluating the plan

- What worked well? Was plan effective?
- What could have worked better?
- Were the community proponents responsive?
- Were the parents satisfied?
- Did staff meet their responsibilities?
- What were the lesson's learned by the experience?

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What are some resources?

- Pamphlet from NAEYC: Helping Children Cope with Disaster
- Guide from NAEYC: What Happened to the World?: Helping Children Cope in Turbulent Times & the Facilitator's Guide from Bright Horizons Family Solutions

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What are some web resources?

- fema.gov
- zerotothree.org
- naeyc.org
- aap.org
- dougy.org
- nasponline.org
- americanredcross.org

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What are some “lessons learned”?

- Establish staff relief
- Ensure enough supplies and materials
- Keep family & staff records current
- Keep training current
- Keep ties to resource and referrals

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What are some “lessons learned”? (CONTINUED)

- Make arrangements in advance for food and water
- Coordinate with police for security
- Keep list of resources current to help families and staff
- Establish plan to arrange for fees/donations

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**What are some “lessons learned”?** (CONTINUED)

- Expect donations and people wanting to help
- Have immunizations and emergency records on-site
- Plan for emergency transportation
- Involve qualified mental health and other helping professionals

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**General Advice from Experts**

- Continuously reassure your children that you will help to keep them safe
- Turn off the TV
- Be aware that your child’s age will affect his or her response
- Calmly express your emotions
- Give your children extra time & attention
- Play with children who can’t talk yet

*Source: Children’s Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.*

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**General Advice from Experts**  
(continued)

- Keep regular schedules for activities to help restore a sense of security and normalcy
- Consider how you and your child can help. Children are better able to regain their sense of power and security if they feel they can help in some way.

*Source: Children’s Defense Fund, Washington, D.C.*

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## Conclusion

"These resources are timely and useful, but we should remember that as early childhood educators we help young children cope with fears, anxiety, stress, and confusing feelings everyday. We can draw upon these skills to support children during these troubling times, just as we use them everyday to teach children about tolerance, encourage them to build positive self images, and help them grow into caring adults who value being members of an inclusive society."

**Kathy Thornberg**  
President, NAEYC Governing Board

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