



All Children Considered

VOL. I • 2003/04

A NEWSLETTER FOR PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR CHILDREN

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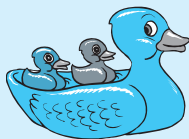
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Connecticut
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Develop Safe Habits — BEFORE the Emergency!

Deborah S. Adams, Program Director
Child Development Laboratories
University of Connecticut

Caregivers of young children are unique people with enormous responsibility, especially when faced with an emergency. Balancing the various facets of this responsibility takes confidence, calmness, and the ability to prioritize. Our daily interactions with children in

a caring, trustful and safe environment builds important ties between child and caregiver. When an emergency occurs, children place their trust in the caregivers with whom they have formed a bond. They trust that their caregiver will always keep them safe. Emergency planning is a necessity, but it will only be effective if the caregiver is confident, calm and able to prioritize at a moments notice, in the middle of such emergencies. *(Continued on page 2.)*



DEAR READERS:

This issue focuses on the difficult but important matter of helping child care providers develop and carry out their **Emergency Preparedness Plan**. Articles from professional educators, public health leaders, experts in Connecticut state agencies, and others, will assist you as you prepare and plan your response to emergencies, those caused by nature and humans alike. As a result of the tragedy of 9-11 and the possibility of destruction resulting from violent actions (bioterrorism, etc), those of us who care for children must be sure to add emergency preparedness to our list of things to be done NOW!

Some emergency planning questions that must be answered:

- Are those who work with children directly ready for any kind of emergency?

- Is there a written plan that clearly outlines what needs to be done, and by whom?
- Are emergency procedures and actions practiced (before an emergency)?
- How good is the emergency plan? Has the plan been shared with parents?

Our editorial team hopes that the articles, resources, and web addresses included in this issue provide you with practical information to answer these questions as you develop, revise, and carry out your **Emergency Preparedness Plan**. As always, please contact me with your ideas and suggestions on how we can improve our newsletter, which is made possible through funding from the Connecticut Departments of Social Services and Public Health.

Harry Mangle, Editor

FIRE DRILLS ESTABLISH SAFE HABITS

No one likes to think that the worst can happen, but what would you do if there were an emergency? Are you ready? Knowing the "plan" is one step, but until something really happens, will you know how the children will respond? How will you respond? Practicing fire drills helps adults implement a specific and basic type of emergency plan. For example, there is a loud noise (a bell, buzzer, or other warning), everyone leaves the building, and walks immediately to a safe place.



These types of fire drills should be practiced every month, and caregivers should notice how the children listen to directions and follow the group. Infants and young toddlers will need to be carried or transported in a

crib or wagon. Their reactions are typically more emotional than the responses of those children who are able to walk, hold hands and follow a group.

EVERYDAY ROUTINES HELP DEVELOP SAFE HABITS

There are everyday routines that will help children develop safe habits, which in turn will help adults manage a real emergency. Safe habits are integrated into just about everything that happens in a center or family day care. Walking together as a group, marching to music, or going on a field trip can all be opportunities for caregivers to support children's abilities in learning safe practices, listening to adults, and following the group.

Caregivers should use language with children that sends positive messages about what they should be doing and why. For example, the statement "Place your feet on the floor; it is not safe to stand on the chair" sends a direct message. The child hears your expectation. Helping children understand expectations in a positive way will help reinforce the necessity to listen and respond. Having confidence in your ability to communicate expectations in the form of positive directions will definitely be an asset when the children in your care need to evacuate your premises.

BEYOND THE FIRE DRILL

What worries adults is very different from what worries children. Keeping this in perspective, child care centers need to make a decision on whether or not it is in the best interest of the children to practice emergency drills (for bomb threats or bioterrorism events) beyond the usual fire drill. Keep in mind, if you have the children's attention and fire drills are practiced with a sense of seriousness, you should be able to take your children anywhere in a real emergency.

Evacuation sites for other emergencies vary in distance and may not be conducive to regular visits. In summa-

ry, when you reinforce those everyday interactions with children, facilitate positive listening strategies, and demonstrate confidence in your ability to handle any situation, this may reduce your worries about whether or not you will be "ready" for anything that may come your way. ♦

Get Prepared Now: Your Emergency Plan

Suzanne Blancaflor, Public Health Services Manager and Devon Conover, Acting Division Director
Division of Community Based Regulation
CT Department of Public Health
http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Day-Care/day_care.htm

Natural and man-made disasters can occur without warning. Some examples include fires, dangerous weather conditions, earthquakes, medical emergencies, chemical releases, violent intruders and, unfortunately in today's world, terrorism (including bioterrorism, violence, and nuclear disasters). Bioterrorism is the intentional or threatened use of biological agents or their toxins to produce death, disease or fear in individuals or populations for political, religious, or personal reasons. Potential Bioterrorism agents include bacterial agents such as anthrax, viruses such as smallpox, and toxins, such as botulinum.

While we may not be in a position to prevent a disaster, we can prepare ourselves to the best of our abilities so that we can expect the best outcomes for our children, our staff, ourselves and our families. Good planning before the event occurs is important to your appropriate response in the event of a real emergency. Making sure everyone is out of danger and in a safe area are critical tasks.

- What would you do if you had to evacuate your child day care?
- Where would you go?
- What would you do if you were not able to evacuate?

Here are some updated guidelines to help you in developing or revising your emergency plan.

1. For licensed child day care facilities:
 - Review the regulations for operating

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the type of facility you are licensed for: a family day care home, group day care home or child day care center.

- Be sure you are in compliance with the applicable rules concerning policies and procedures, records, staffing, attendance, emergencies, transportation, first aid, administration of medications, safety, etc.

2. Contact your local government officials and emergency response volunteers and let them know you are a child day care provider:

- Provide officials with your hours and days of operation along with the ages, special needs, and numbers of children in your care.
- Find out if your town has warning signals, what they sound like, and what you should do if you hear them.
- Request information on specific types of emergencies and how to prepare for each.
- Request evacuation and transportation information to other sites.
- Ask local officials for help in developing and reviewing your plan.

3. Make an accurate drawing of your facility's floor plan:

- Clearly mark and label rooms, doors, windows, obstacles, etc.
- Include fire extinguishers, alarms, and sprinklers in your drawing, etc.
- Draw two unobstructed evacuation routes.
- Label two places children and facility staff will meet in the event you have to evacuate or relocate.
- Label the places in the facility where children and facility staff will stay, when evacuation is not possible.

4. Create your disaster plan:

- List emergency notification numbers specific to your facility. Include medical, fire, rescue, civil preparedness, and parent contact numbers. Be sure parents provide you with the telephone numbers of relatives, neighbors or friends who have permission and are available to pick up their child in case the parent cannot be reached.
- Describe your facility's location, children's ages, number of children enrolled and number of staff. Be clear in your descriptions so they can be

shared with emergency personnel.

- Develop a staff plan. Include staff in the planning process. List all staff and their responsibilities during an emergency. Assign specific tasks including taking attendance, transporting supplies, and transporting children if necessary. Be sure all staff members know what their responsibilities are before an emergency occurs. Make certain that they will be ready and able to carry out their assignments during an event.

- Develop an evacuation plan that includes: your facility procedures, at least two places children and staff will meet if evacuation or relocation is necessary (one site should be local and one outside of the immediate area), an "attendance checklist," and an "item checklist." The attendance checklist should include all children, staff, and



visitors at the facility. The items checklist should include any necessary medications, supplies, lists, and records that need to be taken along in the event of an emergency. Include regular staff drills in your plan.

- Develop a "provision for shelter" in your plan in case you are directed not to evacuate.
- Develop a transportation plan: For Example, Who will transport children? Will parents be called to transport their children or will facility staff transport? Will personal vehicles or public transportation be needed? What local resources are available?
- Develop a plan for informing children's relatives in your care about your plan, and a procedure for notifying children's relatives in the event of a real emergency.
- Maintain a 3-day supply of nonperishable food and water at the site. Suggestions for other emergency supplies to keep on hand include a portable first aid kit, extra batteries, multiple flashlights, a portable radio, extra blankets, two sets of clothing for each child, a can opener and disposable eating utensils, extra diapers, wipes,

and toilet paper, as well as emergency health supplies and medication. Store these supplies in an easily accessible area and make sure staff know where they are kept.

- Do not forget to plan some simple activities for the children. Songs, finger plays, stories, and games are some examples.

5. Share your plan, practice your plan, and keep your plan updated:

- Make sure all staff know how to identify a real emergency and know their role.
- Make sure children know where to meet in the event you have to evacuate or relocate.
- Make sure the plan is known by the children's relatives.
- Update emergency contact information regularly.
- Make sure children's relatives know where you will relocate to in the event of an emergency.
- Conduct fire and emergency drills with all of your staff on a regular basis.
- Update your plan when there are changes.
- Ask your local officials for help.
- Be aware that practicing the plan may be stressful for some children. Find ways to practice that are fun and not frightening.

6. Be sure to consider the mental health needs of the children, staff and yourself after the event has occurred:

- Identify local resources that might be useful in addressing post-traumatic stress.
- Be aware that individuals respond to traumatic events differently, and at different times. Provide opportunities for communicating feelings and supporting each other.

We hope these guidelines will be of assistance to you in developing your plan. Although developing a plan is not difficult, it takes time and thought. Do not forget that your staff and the parents of the children in your care are valuable resources in the planning process.

For more information and resources on emergency planning, the following web sites offer a variety of suggestions and articles:

CT Department of Public Health
www.dph.state.ct.us

The American Red Cross
www.redcross.org

The American Academy of Pediatrics
www.aap.org (click on "Children, Terrorism, & Disasters" and then scroll down to, and click on "Family Readiness Kit.")

Disaster Training International
www.disastertraining.org

Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
www.dmhas.state.ct.us

National Mental Health Association
www.nmha.org

Center for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
www.fema.gov

National Centers for Disease Control
<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/>

"Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness" available through the FEMA Publications warehouse (800) 480-2520, FEMA publication H-34.

Sources for this article:

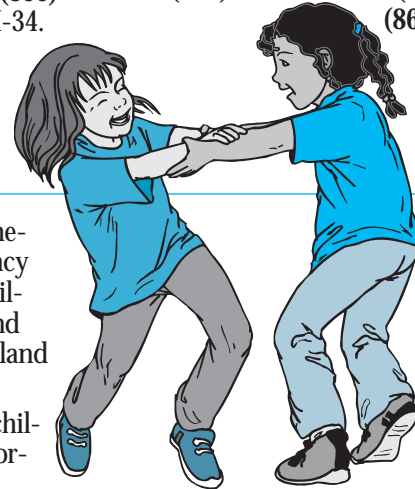
American Red Cross
Diane Barden, Connecticut

Department of Public Health
Laboratory

Jerry Curley, Massachusetts Office of
Child Care Services

Federal Emergency Management
Agency (FEMA)

For additional information, call the
Child Day Care Licensing Help Desk:
1 (800) 282-6063 or 1 (800) 439-0437 or
(860) 509-8045. ◆



Keeping Youth in Emergency Planning

MOMENTOUS LEGISLATION ON CHILDREN AND HOMELAND PREPAREDNESS

Elizabeth Brown, Legislative Director
Connecticut Commission on Children

As of November 2003, Connecticut is one of the first states in the nation to have passed broad planning legislation on homeland security and children. This legislation, S.A. 02-8, "An Act Concerning Civil Preparedness and the Needs of Children," recognizes the special needs and assets of children in both being protected as well as in helping to lead and protect our democracy.

Passed with the unanimous support of the legislature, this act requires a

report on the provisions in homeland preparedness and emergency response planning regarding children. The report must assess and convey to leadership how homeland security planning addresses:

1. The discrete health needs of children for purposes of bio-terrorism preparedness;
2. Public education and communications with families on public safety issues relating to terrorism;
3. Training in safety, security and multi-hazard response plans for child care workers, school personnel and those in before- and after-school programs;
4. Coordination of school health and mental health strategies, and
5. Opportunities for youth to engage in community service, civic activities and programs that provide cultural

diversity experiences. The report recommendations will focus on school districts and not on licensed

child care settings. It is hoped that more attention will be placed on the need to assist the birth through 5-year-old population to ensure adequate crisis planning and linkage with local and state systems.

For more information on this legislation and related topics contact **Donna Osuch** at the CT Early Childhood Legislative Collaborative, phone (860) 951-2212, ext 240 or **Liz Brown** at the Connecticut After-School Alliance, phone (860) 240-0042. ◆

CHILD CARE INFOLINE MAILBAG

Is there anything specific that Connecticut residents can do to prepare for a possible bioterrorist attack?

The best way for a family (or child care providers) to be safe, is to be as prepared as possible before any disaster strikes. Consistent with long-standing guidelines on disaster preparedness, including natural disasters such as hurricanes and blizzards, families (and centers) should plan to provide necessities for themselves for a three to four-day period, in the event that they have to remain inside their home for their safety. Information on

disaster planning can be found throughout this newsletter.

The Connecticut Department of Public Health, along with other government agencies and health institutions, will do everything possible to protect public health. Were a bioterrorist event to occur in Connecticut, the public would be informed through the news media of measures that could be taken to protect their health. If antibiotics or vaccines were recommended, instructions would be provided on who should receive them and where to receive these medications.

If you have specific questions regarding bioterrorism, please contact

your local health or police department, or call the Department of Public Health at (860) 509-8000. Additional information on bioterrorism preparedness responding to public health emergencies can be found at <http://www.state.ct.us/dph>

Q. I am in the process of creating a formalized child care agreement to use with families in my child care program. What should I include in it?

An agreement with the families using your child care program can be an

Child Care Infoline Mailbag, to page 8.

Helping Children Deal With Uncertainty: The Three C's

Mary Ann Dayton-Fitzgerald
Program Supervisor
Early Childhood Intervention
CT Department of Children and Families

Often in these stressful times when we are too busy with our day-to-day lives, it is hard for us to feel connected to families, neighbors, and communities. Our days are filled with dropping off, picking up, rushing to activities such as soccer, karate, dance, playgroup, and story hour, as well as trying to keep some semblance of family life in the evenings and over the weekends. Now more than ever we need to step back and take the time to begin to reflect on what is really important in our lives and ways to begin to take the time to nurture not only our children but ourselves as well.

Putting family time aside to encourage our children to play quietly and have alone time is critical in a time when our lives are over-stimulated from the time we wake up until the time we go to bed. Children are often exposed to the barrage of crises from around the world ranging from the events of 9/11, the war in Iraq, kidnappings, snipers and natural disasters. This is truly a time to think about how we communicate with each other, how we connect with each other and how much compassion we feel for each other and can convey to others.

We can think of the three "C's" in order to organize how we can approach this subject with our children.

- **What is going on in the world and their daily lives = Communication**
- **How we spend quality time with our children = Connection**
- **Ways to create a safe haven for children = Compassion**

The three "C's" – Communication, Connection, and Compassion promote the social and emotional well-being of us all. In a time when our lives are so busy it is important to remember that we are part of the solution by being proactive rather than reactive.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

A major resource for this article is the "Bright Horizons Family Solutions" website (<http://www.brighthorizons.com>). The website and other resources found throughout this newsletter, provide information on child development and other topics of interest to parents and providers. Of particular interest is the "Ready to Respond Emergency Preparedness Plan for Early Care and Education Centers" authored by Bright Horizons Family Solutions. This document provides many detailed suggestions and forms to assist you in compiling an Emergency Preparedness Plan.

The words "Emergency Preparedness" invoke a height-



ened sense of anxiety in many of us, and bring out these questions for us and our children:

- Will you and I be okay?
- Will everyone I love be okay?
- Will the world be okay?
- How do we help our young children feel safe when we ourselves are worried about what will happen next?

Times of national and international crisis test us as our children's protectors, whose primary goal is to keep them physically and emotionally safe, and as our children's teachers. Children learn from what we say and don't say about the world and their place in it: about politics and morality, about patriotism and nationalism, about relationships between nationalities and countries, about justice and injustice, and about life and death.

Learning to cope with external and internal stressors is learning to reach out and connect with others. One of the places that offers help to us as we discuss emergencies with children is our own

Connecticut 2-1-1 INFOLINE. This

resource offers a brochure and resources to help cope with the fear and anxiety in today's uncertain world.

For young children in times of unease, the strength of our calm presence and simple reassurances makes the world a safe and manageable place. As children get older and their understanding of the world outside their home grows, they not only need us to be at our warmest and strongest, they need our political and moral thinking, our wisdom and our values. (Bright Horizons Family Solutions – www.brighthorizons.com)

Children need our thoughtfulness and our honesty. Before talking to children:

- Get your own feelings and thoughts straight.
- Try to be your most thoughtful, calm, and emotionally stable self when you talk to children
- Be prepared for the inevitable difficult questions about why people kill, why war happens, why people die, and why people hate.
- Think not only about what you want to say, but also about how you want it to come across.

Depending on our words, tone, and body language, we may project calmness, thoughtfulness, sadness, or anger, or vengeful self-righteousness. How do we want the child to think and feel about us as human beings? I think we all want our children to grow up to be adults who are able to communicate well, connect with others and be compassionate with those around them. "If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those about them. If children live with friendliness, they learn the world is a nice place in which to live." (Dorothy Law Nolte, Ph.D.) ♦

CONNECTICUT STATE AGENCY UPDATE

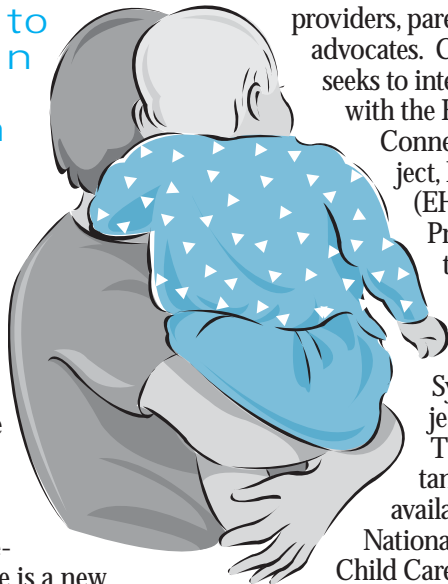
Department of Social Services (DSS)

Connecticut to Participate in Planning Initiative On Infants and Toddlers

Amparo Garcia
CT Department of
Social Services

Connecticut was selected as one of 10 states to participate in the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Planning Initiative in April 2003. This three-year planning initiative is a new joint project of the national Zero to Three, Inc organization and the federal Child Care Bureau in Washington, D.C. The Initiative's goal is to support states in their efforts to effect system-wide improvements in infant and toddler related services, including child care. It is expected that this planning effort will allow states to identify challenges and propose solutions to their infant and toddler service system and to enhance the states' capacity to address future challenges. Connecticut will have access to information and materials on other state infant and toddler child care service systems, research, and practical resources via national and local consultants.

The Connecticut Department of Social Services is coordinating this planning initiative with the assistance of nearly 45 state, local and community individuals representing a host of service areas that include child care



providers, parents and early care advocates. Connecticut's proposal seeks to integrate this initiative with the Healthy Child Care Connecticut (HCCCT) project, Early Head Start (EHS), the Connecticut Preschool project and the Department of Public Health's Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) project.

The technical assistance and resources available through the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative will help Connecticut achieve improved coordination and integration of its infant/toddler system in two critical areas as follows:

- development of a statewide strategic plan to address Connecticut's infant and toddler child care system, and
 - development of early learning guidelines for infant and toddler care, consultation, and education
- The planning process comprises the following aspects:
- identifying current elements of the state's infant and toddler system
 - prioritization of needs
 - building consensus on how to address those needs
 - evaluation by a national evaluator

If you are interested in learning more about this planning initiative, contact the CT Department of Social Services at 1 (800) 811-6141, press #6.

Emergency Planning Kit for Providers and Parents

SAFE, the new nonprofit organization headed by Ann Brown, former chairman of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, and the Knowledge Learning Corporation (KLC) have prepared the Emergency Planning Kit to assist in emergency preparedness planning that is free of charge to anyone who is interested.

The Emergency Kit includes an emergency card for childcare providers and two documents for parents: "How Parents Can Help Their Children," with activities and resources for disaster preparedness, and "Questions to Ask Your Child Care Provider" on disaster preparedness. The free kit is available by calling Knowledge Learning Corporation toll-free [1 (877) 244-5346], then pressing 0 or by downloading the document from www.knowledgelearning.com. If you cannot reach this website with your present web browser, you may need to try a more recent upgrade.

SAFE and KLC are participating in this initiative to commemorate the heroic teachers at KLC's Children's Discovery Center, located in the World Trade Center. They saved the lives of 42 children in their care on September 11, 2001. The combination of a well-rehearsed disaster plan and thorough, portable emergency records kept for each child that the teachers grabbed during evacuation saved the lives of those children. The information in those emergency records enabled the teachers to reunite the children with their parents by 3 PM that tragic day. ♦

Department of Public Health (DPH)

Division of Community-Based Regulation

http://www.dph.state.ct.us/BRS/Day_Care/day_care.htm
1 (800) 282-6063, 1 (800) 439-0437, (860) 509-8045

Partnering with Parents in Emergency Planning

Devon Conover, Acting Director
Division of Community Based Regulation
Child Day Care Licensing
CT Department of Public Health

Keeping children safe is an important responsibility. Child care providers are already aware of the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. Including parents in developing or enhancing emergency plans is critical to the success of those plans. The following letter has been developed, in collaboration with experts in the field of early care and education, to

help child care providers begin discussions with parents about emergency planning, and to invite them to become active partners in assuring the success of those plans in the event of a real emergency. Please feel free to share this letter with the parents

of the children in your care. If you have questions about emergency planning, please feel free to call Margaret Freidenfelt, Child Care Licensing Supervisor, at (800) 282-6063, (800) 439-0437, (860) 509-8045.

DEAR PARENTS:

Since September 11, 2001, we have all become more aware of the need for emergency planning. Although we have had to prepare for events such as natural disasters, fires and other emergencies in the past, the recent world events have raised our consciousness about the importance of working together to create more effective emergency plans. The Connecticut Department of Public Health and your child care provider consider the health and safety of your child to be of primary importance. Your provider should already have emergency plans in place to safeguard your child, and your participation in those plans is critical to its success. Here are some suggestions on ways you can be a partner with your child care provider and other parents:

Records and Other Information

1. Keep all of your child's enrollment and contact records up-to-date, including telephone numbers (including area codes), emergency permission, and medical information.
2. Give your child care provider additional back up contacts (telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, and beeper numbers) in case some of the contacts are not available or cannot be reached. Consider relatives or neighbors who can pick up your child in an emergency within ten minutes.

Communicating With Others

1. Talk with your back-up contacts about your plan. Be sure they are able and willing to pick up your child at the child day care program in case you cannot be reached. Provide them with clear directions and the telephone numbers for your child day care program.
2. Create a telephone tree with other parents, so your child care provider can attend to the children's needs, instead of making multiple telephone calls during an emergency.
3. Establish an out-of-area telephone number for telephone

contacts in case local calls are disrupted.

To Discuss with the Child Care Provider

1. Are there plans for transporting children and evacuation, if it becomes necessary?
2. Will parents, the provider, or local officials help with evacuating children to shelter sites?
3. If applicable, do you know where the shelter sites are? It may be necessary to plan for both a local shelter and remote shelter outside of the immediate area.

Helping the Child Care Provider

1. Assist in assembling portable emergency kits. They may include extra clothing, diapers, batteries, water, hand washing supplies, nonperishable food, comfort items, necessary medications if the provider administers medications, first aid kit, portable radio, flashlights, emergency contact information.
2. Practice the plan with your provider and other parents.

What YOU Can Do at Home

1. Keep a portable radio with extra batteries on hand to listen to emergency broadcasts.
2. Develop an emergency checklist.
3. If your children ask questions, let them know that you and their child care provider will keep them safe.
4. During an emergency, it is important to remain calm. Listen to messages and follow directions broadcast by the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Be prepared to follow your plan. Planning in advance and practicing the plan with the other adults responsible for the care of children can help assure your child receives the best care possible during an emergency.

Sincerely,
Your Child Care Provider ◆



Preparing for An Emergency: Food and Water Needs

Diane Wright Hirsch, MPH, RD,
Extension Educator/Food Safety
University of Connecticut
Cooperative Extension

If a severe thunderstorm, ice or snowstorm, major power outage, or other disaster strikes, child care providers could be left without food or water for a while. If parents cannot pick up their kids due to problems with transportation or emergency responsibilities at work, you may need to continue to be responsible for the children in your care. Will you be ready? Three critical questions to answer: 1) Will you have

enough food? 2) Is there enough water? 3) What are other necessary emergency supplies?

FOOD

Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that need no refrigeration or cooking. Make sure you have a manual can-opener and some utensils for eating. Consider needs, likes and dislikes. Try to keep foods on hand that the children are used to eating. Keep in mind that while some of these foods are usually heated before serving, they are perfectly safe to eat straight from the can—even though it may not be what we are used to!

If there is no electricity, start with the food from your refrigerator, then use the

food in your freezer, then your daily reserve, and finally, your emergency food supply. Never taste food to determine its safety! If the food thawed and was held above 40°F for more than 2 hours, throw it away! Be sure to discard any items in either the freezer or the refrigerator that have come into contact with raw meat juices.

Your emergency food list might include:

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, beans, soups, pasta, tuna fish, chicken, stew, fruits, and vegetables

- Protein or fruit bars, dry cereal or granola
- Dried fruit, jams or jellies
- Peanut butter, crackers
- Canned juices, non-perishable pasteurized milk (dry milk powder, canned or high temperature pasteurized milk in a box); chocolate powder to flavor milk

Store your emergency food supply in easy carry, rodent-proof containers. Put the containers in a cool, dark, dry place, such as an entry hall closet, an insulated garage, or dry basement. Check the supply periodically to make sure that the packaging is in good condition and free of insects. Be sure to rotate supplies about every six months by replacing

older food with fresher items. Check expiration dates on packaged foods.

WATER

A water well needs electricity to power the pump. If you know that severe weather is on the horizon, store water in advance of the storm. Plan on at least one gallon of water per person per day for drinking and sanitation. Store at least enough water for three days. However, young children, nursing mothers, and sick people may need more. Commercially prepared bottled water is the preferred recommendation for water storage.

For more information about organizing an emergency food supply and other

emergency supplies, try these resources:

A variety of government information resources for preparing for food emergencies

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~fsg/fsgdisas.html>

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

<http://www.fema.gov/library/emfdwtr.shtm>

Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/foodwtr.pdf>

Health Canada (a great guidebook)

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pphb-dgspsp/emergency-urgence/pdf/food_e.pdf ◆

Child Care Infoline Mailbag, from pg. 4.

A essential communication tool. It will engage you and the parents in a conversation on both the expectations and policies of the program. An agreement will also be helpful if any problems arise; you can refer to it as a tool in resolving issues.

Some examples of topics your agreement should include are scheduling, sick care policy, fees charged,

emergency contacts, special instructions and requirements on termination of the child care arrangement for both yourself and the enrolled families.

When listing your schedule for the families, it is important to also define the personal and vacation time you will be requesting



throughout the year including days your program may be closed for the holidays. Are you expecting payment for any days off initiated by yourself or the families?

For a copy of a sample contract you can use within your program or for other helpful information as a child care provider, please visit our website at www.211infoline.org. ◆

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PLEASE SHARE THE NEWSLETTER WITH ALL STAFF.