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**[Adventures of the Disaster Dudes
Video (with Children's Disaster
Preparedness Guide-FEMA 242)]**

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"Adventures of the Disaster Dudes"

**CHILDREN'S
DISASTER
PREPAREDNESS**

**PRESENTER'S
GUIDE**

FIELD TEST DRAFT



**American
Red Cross**

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Dear Friend:

As we all know, disasters can strike quickly and without warning. While these events can be frightening for adults, they can be traumatic for children, who are particularly vulnerable in times of emergency. Disaster preparedness education can help children learn that there are things they can do to take control of a situation. We also want to work with children because research shows that young people between the fourth and ninth grades develop life-long behaviors.

Whether you are a teacher, an emergency manager, an American Red Cross chapter representative, a law enforcement or fire service official, a National Weather Service representative, a volunteer from a national or community organization or a concerned citizen who wants to help, you can play a role in educating children about preparing for disaster.

Professional educators report that activities that involve face-to-face contact are particularly effective in reaching children. Thus, family disaster preparedness presentations are an excellent way of reaching this young audience.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Family Protection Program and the American Red Cross developed this Presenter's Guide to help make educating children about disaster preparedness as easy as possible. The Guide outlines how to use "Adventures of the Disaster Dudes," a video produced to help you introduce children to disaster preparedness. It contains information on how to work with school systems, build partnerships, talk with children about family disaster preparedness and plan an effective presentation. It also offers suggestions for other types of classroom activities.

In addition to the Presenter's Guide and the video, a coloring book is available to help you educate children about preparing for disaster. Think of these materials not as a set curriculum, but as a collection of tools you can use as you see fit. Adapt the materials as necessary to meet your needs.

Good luck with your work, and thank you for your efforts.



How to Use the Guide

This Guide is organized to help make planning a presentation as simple as possible. The first chapter (the one you are reading now) includes a video presentation outline, which provides a checklist to help you plan and conduct an effective classroom presentation.

The Guide also provides, in detail, information on the different facets of giving a presentation:

- Working with schools (Chapter 2)
- Building partnerships (Chapter 3)
- Working with children (Chapter 4)
- Planning your presentation and other classroom activities (Chapter 5)
- Helpful materials (Chapter 6)

Planning a presentation

The most important thing to remember about giving a presentation is that by planning ahead, you make your job easier and the children's learning experience more positive. To start planning a presentation, there are several things you will need to do:

1. Obtain a copy of the video

"Adventures of the Disaster Dudes" was created to be as user-friendly as possible and is organized in a way that is conducive to a child's natural learning process. It is designed to be shown in three parts with discussion periods between each segment. Video ordering information is included on page 19.

The video opens with three friends (Alex, Chris and Stacey) coming home from school. They talk about what they did during the day, commenting on the "disasters" they experienced such as a pop quiz in math, missing a shot in basketball practice and the lack of snack food in Alex's kitchen. While Alex and Chris are deciding what to eat, Stacey turns on the television and sees a news story on a disaster taking place in another part of the country. As she tries to explain to Alex and Chris what a real disaster is, Chris grabs a video recorder and starts to "tape" Stacey, who is now pretending to be an on-the-scene reporter. In this new role, Stacey defines what a disaster is and talks with children who have experienced disaster.

In the second segment, Alex, Chris and Stacey become "Disaster Masters" by learning what they can do to prepare for disaster and why while playing a computer game. *Please note: the computer game presented in the video is fictitious and is not available for distribution.*

In the last segment of the video, Chris lets his overactive imagination take him into a cartoon world. Chris takes it all in stride, explores his cartoon world, encounters other families and learns how to prepare for disaster by developing a Family Disaster Plan. When Chris returns to the "real world," he, Alex and Stacey conclude the



video by encouraging all children to promote disaster preparedness at home.

2. Obtain background information on disasters that could happen in your community

Know what the hazards are in your community. Is your neighborhood most likely to experience a hurricane, tornado, earthquake, winter storm or hazardous materials spill? You will need to be able to demonstrate basic preparedness actions for whichever disaster or disasters you choose to highlight in your presentation. Be sure to include preparedness actions that children can do on their own.

This information is readily available from your community's emergency management office, American Red Cross chapter, police or sheriff's department, fire department or National Weather Service office.

It's essential to have current information on what disasters may happen and how to prepare for them. The sources listed above can provide you with up-to-date information.

3. Set objectives for the presentation

Ask yourself what it is that you want the children to learn from the presentation. Your objectives might look something like:

- Know what disasters could occur in the community
- Perform two disaster preparedness actions on their own
- Meet with their family to develop a Family Disaster Plan

4. Plan activities that will help reinforce key messages

A number of activities have been developed to help reinforce key messages presented in the video and reiterated during discussion sessions. The activities are interactive, engaging the children in the discussion as well as educating them about what to do in a disaster. The activities are described in Chapter 5.

Using the video

A video presentation outline appears on the next several pages to help you prepare a video presentation. The outline walks you through each of the video's three segments. It also includes suggested discussion points and activities that will help reinforce key messages from the preceding video segment.

The video and this Presenter's Guide are designed to be used in a flexible manner. The following presentation outline, if used as suggested, will help you develop a presentation approximately 45 minutes long, including a questions and answer session. Feel free to use these materials to meet the needs of the children you are working with.

Video Presentation Outline

1. Introduction

(5 minutes)

- Introduce yourself. Thank the children for inviting you to speak with them.
- Explain what you'll be talking about. For example, say something such as: *"Today we're going to learn about disaster and why it's important to prepare. We'll also learn some of the steps you and your family can take now to get ready."*

"The session is divided into three parts and each part begins with a video segment. The video will give you some important information about disasters. Between each video segment, we'll talk about the disasters that could happen in our community and what we can do to prepare."

2. Play Video Segment #1: What is a disaster?

(4 minutes)

The segment's key messages are:

- Disasters can, and do, happen to people just like you.
- Disaster can disrupt your life in serious ways.

3. Discussion

(6 minutes)

Use the discussion to review the key messages and relate them to the children's own environment. Refer to the video to help draw children into the discussion.

Here are some ideas for getting the discussion started:

- What is a real disaster?
- What are some of the ways disaster affected the lives of children in the video?
- What are some other ways a disaster could affect someone?
- If any children in the audience have experienced a disaster, have one or two briefly share their experiences *if they volunteer to do so*.
- Ask the children to list the types of disaster that might affect their community. To encourage participation, write down each disaster suggested, regardless of whether or not it is a real threat to the community. This list will be used as the basis for Discussion #2.
- Set up the next video segment by having the children explain why preparing for disaster is helpful.

4. Play Video Segment #2: The "Whys" of Preparedness

(4 minutes)

The segment's key messages are:

- When a disaster happens, you need to know what to do.
- By planning ahead of time, you can deal with the affects of disaster.

5. Discussion

(9 minutes)

Use the discussion to review the key messages and relate them to the children's own environment. Refer to the video to help draw children into the discussion. This particular discussion should focus on disasters that are most likely to occur in your community.

Here are some ideas for getting the discussion started:

- Watching Alex, Chris and Stacey, what did you learn about dealing with disaster?
- Why do we need to know what to do in a disaster?
- Referring to the list of disasters developed during Discussion #1, ask the children to pick one or two disasters they think are most likely to occur in the community. If they select disasters that are not the greatest threats, give the correct answers and explain why. Talk about what to expect during these disasters and some of the potential effects (i.e., in a hurricane, we might have to evacuate). Then, explain key preparedness steps including appropriate response actions.
- Encourage the children to demonstrate correct preparedness actions such as drop-cover-and-hold on for earthquakes or assuming the crouch position for lightning.

6. Play Video Segment #3: Getting Prepared

(5 minutes)

This segment's key messages are:

- The whole family needs to be involved in getting ready for disaster.
- You can get ready for disaster by developing a Family Disaster Plan. It's easy to put together and it's something the whole family can do together.

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7. Discussion

(6 minutes)

Use the discussion to review the key messages and relate them to the children's own environment. Refer to the video to help draw children into the discussion. This discussion should focus on creating a Family Disaster Plan.

Here are some ideas for getting the discussion started:

- What did Chris learn that families can do to prepare for disaster?
- Ask children to give examples of the steps involved in creating a family disaster plan. Talk about why some of these steps could be helpful to them. For example, explain why the meeting places discussed could help them know quickly if everyone in their family is okay following a disaster. Review some of the disaster supplies mentioned and ask children to come up with reasons why these items could be helpful to them.
- Talk about steps that children can help their families take, such as posting emergency telephone numbers or picking an outside meeting place. Encourage the children to "take charge."
- Be sure to work into the discussion the importance of practicing your family disaster plan.

8. Question and Answer Session/Closing

(10 minutes)

- Answer any questions the children might have.
- Briefly review key concepts and messages.
- Distribute materials for the children to take home to their families. (See page 18 for suggestions and ordering instructions.)
- Thank the children for inviting you to speak with the class.

You may want to create a certificate or card to award children designating each child as a "Disaster Master." You may need to ask the teacher to fill in the students' names during the session and to help you distribute the cards.



Working with Schools

One of the best places to reach children with the family disaster preparedness message is at school.

Schools often have busy agendas and a full curriculum can play to your advantage. With limited resources and staff, many school administrators welcome a credible resource person from outside the school system to help teach subjects the schools are otherwise unable to cover.

In some communities, school board approval may be necessary to give a classroom presentation; in other communities, it may be as simple as contacting the school principal or a teacher. Here are some guidelines to follow when preparing a presentation proposal:

1. Contact your community's board of education to find out if your State has a disaster preparedness education requirement

If it does, it will help make it easier for you to "sell" your presentation to school administrators. It's quite possible that schools are looking for someone to provide this type of information to their students.

2. Talk with the school district's curriculum specialist, health education director or safety/security officer

These individuals can give you a good idea of what has been presented to the children in the past and what the district's current needs might be. They might also be the people responsible for maintaining disaster

plans for schools. If so, suggest that disaster preparedness presentations would be a valuable addition to school disaster plans.

3. Determine what your presentation will cover

Develop an outline for your presentation. Determine which area of the community you would like to address first. Consider the parts of the community that may not necessarily receive outreach efforts from other organizations, or that have higher numbers of students who live in areas at greatest risk for disasters. For example, schools whose students come primarily from mobile home parks would be good targets for tornado, flood and hurricane presentations. Schools whose students come primarily from apartments or whose students are often left alone while parents are away ("latch-key" children) are good targets for fire safety education. On the other hand, if you are making a presentation in a school that draws from a geographically large, mixed community, an all-hazards approach might be most suitable.

4. Develop a proposal to "sell" family disaster preparedness to school officials

Explain how the presentation could save lives, prevent injuries and reduce property loss. Most school administrators are keenly aware that disaster might strike while school is in session — they **want** to take steps to prepare. Emphasize that the presentation is a supplement to the emergency plans schools currently have in place.

Use local statistics to give hard evidence of the need for family disaster preparedness education. If applicable, highlight the fact that you are a part of the community's public safety team — emergency management, fire service and law enforcement. Cite cases of local children affected by a recent disaster. Contact your community's emergency management office, American Red Cross chapter, fire department, sheriff's department or social services office to learn how many children in the community are affected by disaster each year.

Focus on a particular age group. The recommended age group for a family disaster preparedness presentation is fourth through sixth grades. At this age, children start to become more independent and begin to take more responsibility for their learning experience. They are also at a developmental stage where they can understand remote concepts, such as disaster, without it actually happening.

Point out how traditional subjects are enhanced by the presentation in such areas as language arts, fine arts, social studies, science or math. The skills you choose to highlight will depend on which types of activities you plan to conduct in the classroom.

Know what school administrators are looking for from an in-class presentation. They are more likely to approve presentations or other classroom activities that are:

- short and simple.
- rich in step-by-step instructions.
- supported by printed information to be posted in the classroom.
- supported by printed information to be sent home with students to discuss with their parents or guardians.
- conducted by a credible resource person with valuable information to offer.

5. Select a grade level to receive disaster preparedness education each year

It is strongly recommended that you target a particular grade level and develop a strategy to deliver a presentation to every class within that grade each year. This will help ensure that disaster preparedness education becomes a long-term goal of the education system and that every student will be reached at least once.

Consult with the school district or an individual school to identify the grade level where disaster education will best complement the existing curriculum. (Keep in mind that the video presentation is targeted to a fourth- through sixth-grade audience.) You will most likely need to enlist some help to accomplish this strategy. Chapter 3 outlines a list of organizations that are family disaster preparedness partners — their members may be interested in participating in this effort.

6. Be receptive to educators' and administrators' comments and suggestions

Promptly address any concerns school administrators may have about the presen-

tation or other classroom activities. Teachers, principals, superintendents and/or curriculum specialists can be especially helpful in recommending approaches for disaster education.

7. Make family disaster preparedness easy to teach

If a school would prefer that a member of its staff deliver a presentation, make supporting materials or technical advice available. Mention that another possible use for the presentation could be as an alternative lesson plan for substitute teachers.

In the event a school board declines your proposal, you can still reach children outside of the classroom through such groups as the Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, Camp Fire Boys and Girls, after-school activity or special-interest clubs, day-care providers and religious organizations that sponsor activities for children.

Oftentimes, these groups have public safety education requirements for members and are looking for someone to provide this type of information.



Building Partnerships

As resources become increasingly scarce, building coalitions is an effective way to leverage existing resources and enhance efforts to reach your target audience. A coalition can broaden the reach of preparedness programs and accelerate the production of materials and the sharing of life-saving information. Joint efforts can add to the credibility of messages and materials.

The following organizations can provide you with valuable information on how to prepare for disaster, educate people about family disaster preparedness and how to work with schools and children. They may also be willing to volunteer their time or accompany you to give classroom presentations.

Office of Emergency Management

In many cases, your community's emergency management office has an existing relationship with area school districts. Obtaining the office's backing can enhance your credibility with school district decisionmakers. The emergency management office can also provide you with materials to help you plan your presentation or to hand out after a presentation.

The American Red Cross

Most American Red Cross chapters have paid and volunteer staff who are experienced in conducting disaster preparedness education presentations. Many local Red Cross chapters involve teachers and youth leaders

as volunteers for various services provided for the public. Most chapters also have existing relationships with local school districts and may provide insight on working with schools. In addition, Red Cross chapters can help you obtain materials for distribution.

National Sheriffs' Association

The National Sheriffs' Association provides family disaster preparedness information to sheriffs and other Neighborhood Watch group organizers. Oftentimes, sheriffs or their deputies give classroom presentations as part of a community's crime prevention efforts. Their experiences from working with children could be helpful in developing your presentation.

Boy Scouts of America Exploring Division

"Exploring" is a young adult program that provides 14- to 20-year-old men and women with activities designed to build character, promote citizenship and develop physical and mental fitness. Explorers are encouraged to help local emergency managers and other program organizers who wish to educate children about family disaster preparedness.

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

The AFL-CIO promotes cooperative activities between local emergency management

offices and AFL-CIO state federations and central labor councils in communities across the country. The state federations and central labor councils may provide you with contacts within teacher's unions. Union members might also be willing to help give presentations.

National Association for Search and Rescue

The National Association for Search and Rescue promotes the organization of family disaster preparedness activities by local search and rescue team members. Search and rescue teams frequently make presentations at schools and may be willing to share their experiences with you.

National Weather Service

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service (NWS) maintains a constant vigil for life-threatening dangers such as hurricanes, tornados, winter storms and floods. Contact your community's NWS office for information on weather-related disasters such as tornado, hurricane, severe storm or winter storm. Or ask them to help give a presentation.

Cooperative Extension Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension System (CES), a national educational network, provides practical education for Americans to use in dealing with the critical issues that affect their daily lives. Almost every county in the United States has a CES office. Contact your community's CES office to invite them to join your disaster preparedness education effort.

Fire Department

Fire departments are another good resource when it comes to educating the public about disaster preparedness. Many local fire departments offer some form of public education during Fire Prevention Week and at other times. They may also have an existing relationship with schools from teaching students about fire safety. Invite a firefighter to join you in giving a disaster preparedness presentation.

Working with Children

Many people who work with children believe capturing a child's attention — and keeping it — is the biggest challenge to working with children. They need to learn so much, yet they can only absorb a little at a time. Much of their learning process depends on the repetition of clear, concise information children can act on themselves.

Capturing a child's attention

To capture a child's attention, your presentation should be entertaining as well as educational. When planning a presentation, consider using eye-catching mediums such as video, slides or collages.

Most educators believe that the use of actual disaster scenes for educational purposes is acceptable as long as common sense and sensitivity are applied. To keep from confusing the children, avoid using images that demonstrate or reinforce incorrect preparedness actions, or depict people who are hurt or injured.

Give children reasons to get involved. Ask if anyone in the class has experienced disaster. If anyone has, ask him or her to share their experience with the rest of the class. Keep in mind that if children have experienced disaster, they may be hesitant to discuss preparedness.

Keeping a child's attention...

Hands-on activities can play an important part in teaching children about family disaster preparedness. These types of activities help reinforce a particular message and can foster further discussion on other preparedness issues. Try to plan activities that challenge skills children are currently learning.

And making the lesson stick...

Children today are surprisingly sophisticated for their ages. In most cases, they are very aware when they are being talked down to or if someone isn't being honest with them. If the children don't trust you, they most likely will not listen to what you have to say.

When talking with children about disaster preparedness:

- Tell children what to do during a disaster, rather than what not to do
- Present information in a positive, non-threatening way
- Reinforce messages by repeating key points
- Don't get too technical — give children information they can work with. Forget about emergency operations, talk preparedness!

In particular, children should be made aware that:

- disaster can occur anywhere, anytime.
- taking action prior to a disaster can save lives and reduce losses.
- people may be on their own for a while immediately after a disaster occurs — preparing to cope is everyone's responsibility.
- "family" includes anyone who resides with or has regular contact with the child, such as a baby-sitter or day care provider.

Keep in mind that if children have experienced disaster, they are most likely afraid that:

- the event will happen again.
- someone will be injured or killed.
- they will be separated from family.
- they will be left alone.

Because children rely so much on repetition to learn new concepts, consider returning to give a follow-up presentation to the classrooms you visit. These follow-up presentations could reinforce messages from the first presentation or address a different disaster. To make the job easier, ask someone to help you give the presentations. Chapter 3 provides suggestions for organizations you could call on for assistance.

Parents: another key audience

Parents and guardians can play a critical role in a child's ability to prepare for disaster. Invite parents to become active participants in their child's family disaster preparedness experience.

Provide teachers with a letter for children to take home a few days before the presentation. The letter should explain to parents and guardians what the presentation will cover, and give them the opportunity to support at home what their children will be learning in school. Also provide teachers with copies of the *Your Family Disaster Plan* and *Helping Children Cope with Disaster* brochures to send home with the letter. A sample letter is provided on page 21. Materials ordering information appears on page 18.

Encourage the school's parent-teacher organization to host a family disaster preparedness presentation for parents the evening before the classroom presentation.



Planning Your Presentation and Other Classroom Activities

When teaching children about **any** subject, careful planning is very important. You can start developing the presentation's content based on the audience's needs. In particular:

Determine which age group you want to reach. The recommended age group is fourth, fifth or sixth graders.

Familiarize yourself with the audience's socio-economic profile.

This will help determine what children and their families may or may not be able to do.

For example, if you are talking with children who live in a low-income neighborhood, don't focus on activities that might involve a financial commitment. Asking children to do something that they may not be able to perform could lead to increased anxiety. Instead, emphasize preparedness activities that require no financial commitment, such as posting emergency telephone numbers or selecting two meeting places.

Set objectives.

Ask yourself what it is that you want the children to learn from the presentation. Think in terms of what the children will be able to do after the presentation, such as "tell what to do if a < > happens...list supplies to have in case of a disaster... demonstrate how to drop, cover and hold on...

explain how they would find out if < > is going to happen." Keep your objectives realistic.

Determine the presentation's length.

Unlike adults, children cannot sit and listen to someone lecture for an hour or more.

When planning a classroom presentation, be sure to include activities between discussion sessions to help keep their attention. Even following this format, presentations should be no more than 45 minutes, including a question and answer session. Breaking it into three 15-minute presentations may increase retention.

Focus on activities children can do on their own.

Tell the children what they can do and how they can do it. Give the children one or two things they could do on their own in case their parents don't support the preparedness effort.

Include examples.

Children will be able to better identify with new information if they can relate it to an event they are familiar with.

Communicating messages

Make sure that the information you present is appropriate for the children's age, financial situation and living environment. Be sensitive to their needs.

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Children take everything said to them quite literally. New information should be presented by building on concepts or events which children are familiar with, otherwise they may become confused or frightened.

Invite children to become “partners in preparedness.” It’s important to communicate to children that being prepared for disaster will allow them to help others, such as parents, brothers, sisters, neighborhood friends or younger children at school.

It’s more than just talk

The following activities are designed to be used in a classroom setting to encourage the children to participate in the discussion sessions.

To build awareness of items to have on hand in case of disaster:

“What’s in a Disaster Supplies Kit?” Team Challenge

Provide students with a list of Disaster Supplies Kit items. Put the class into groups of three to six students. Give students five to eight minutes to reach consensus about the 10 most important items to have in an emergency situation. Ask each group to explain why they selected the items on their list. Compare, contrast and discuss each team’s list. A list of items appears on page 23.

Disaster Supplies Kit Grab-bag

Use your own Disaster Supplies Kit as a display model. Add some items that are not

appropriate for a Disaster Supplies Kit. Ask the students to take turns selecting an item from the kit and explaining why or why not to include it.

To build knowledge of the elements of preparedness:

Disaster Behavior Questions and Answers

Separate children into groups. Each group is assigned a different set of questions. The groups are given five to eight minutes to discuss their answers. When time is up, individual groups share their answers with the class. In the reporting out, the other groups are given the opportunity to challenge the answers, but must provide an answer of their own. Use the report-out session as an opportunity to correct any misperceptions and to provide the children with any additional information. Sample questions and their answers appear on pages 24-25.

Disaster Preparedness Posters

This activity helps children understand disaster preparedness messages by asking them to illustrate what to do in an emergency. Sample poster themes appear on page 26.

To provide practice in taking steps to prepare:

Disaster Preparedness Role Plays

This activity encourages students to demonstrate preparedness actions in a role-play environment. Limit each role play scenario

to three minutes each to ensure that there is enough discussion time between vignettes. Children should be encouraged to discuss what they saw after each role play session. Sample scenarios appear on page 27.

Other considerations

Before the presentation.

Find out from the school how many children will be present. The optimal audience size is about 30 students or less. If possible, avoid giving a presentation to group assemblies. Regardless of the audience size, have someone help you give the presentation. In addition, ask that a teacher or other school official be present in the classroom or auditorium to help maintain order and continuity.

Practice, practice, practice. Children can be an unforgiving audience if you're not prepared. Practice the presentation so that you are comfortable with the content and the length. Also, consider practicing the presentation with a neighbor's children. Their feedback can be invaluable.

Logistics. Determine what types of equipment will be needed (such as a VCR, slide or overhead projector, flip charts, easels). Will the equipment be provided or will you have

to bring it? Is there an electrical outlet for the equipment? Does the equipment work? Do you know how to use it? Are the slides loaded correctly into the carousel?

On the day of the presentation.

Get to the school early to familiarize yourself with the surroundings. Test the equipment before the presentation begins. Arrange the chairs so that everyone may see the presentation clearly. If there's time, practice the presentation again.

During the presentation.

Introduce yourself and thank the children for inviting you to speak with them. Explain the purpose of your presentation. Maintain eye contact.

After the presentation.

Open the floor to questions. Arrange with the teacher to ask the first question, in case the children aren't sure where to begin. Leave family disaster preparedness materials for the children to take home to their parents. Send a letter to the school or class, thanking the children for inviting you to speak with them. Establish an evaluation procedure to determine how effective the presentation was.

Non-Video Presentation Outline

If you choose not to use the video, you can incorporate a variety of activities to communicate important preparedness messages to children. The activities described on page 14 are also designed to be used for this type of presentation.

Using this outline, your presentation will be approximately 45 minutes long, including a question and answer session.

1. Introduction

(5 minutes)

- Introduce yourself. Thank the children for inviting you to speak with them.
- Explain how the presentation will run and what you'll be talking about. For example, say something such as: *"Today we'll talk about disasters that could happen in our community and what we can do to get ready. I'm going to ask you some questions to get you thinking. Then we'll ... (briefly explain how the presentation will unfold)."*

2. Discuss what kinds of disasters could happen in your community and how to prepare

(7 minutes)

- Ask the children to think about how prepared they are right now. Sample questions appear on page 22. Make sure that the children understand that this is not a test.
- Ask the children to give examples of different types of disasters. Make sure they have a clear understanding of what is meant by "disaster" in this presentation. Follow up by asking them what disasters are most likely to occur in the community. After they have created a list, tell them the correct answers.
- Encourage the children to briefly share any experiences they have had with disaster situations *if they volunteer to do so*.
- Next, ask the children a series of questions to help them start thinking about what is meant by preparedness. Again, make sure they understand that this is not a test. The questions should focus on disasters that could happen in the community and preparedness actions for each. Sample questions and answers appear on pages 24-25.

After you ask a question, be sure to explain why the action is important. For example, if you ask, "Has your family picked a place to meet outside in case of a fire?" explain why this step is important.

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3. Conduct a classroom activity

(25 minutes)

- This activity is the heart of your presentation. When selecting an activity, consider which activity will best convey preparedness information for local disasters.
- The following suggested activities are described in more detail on page 14:
 - “What’s in a Disaster Supplies Kit?” Team Challenge
 - Disaster Supplies Kit Grab-bag
 - Disaster Behavior Questions and Answers
 - Disaster Preparedness Posters
 - Disaster Preparedness Role Plays

4. Question and Answer Session/Closing

(10 minutes)

- Answer any questions the children might have.
- Review key messages.
- Distribute materials for the children to take home to their families. (See page 18 for materials suggestions.)
- Thank the children for inviting you to speak with the class.
You may want to create a certificate or card to award children designating each child as a "Disaster Master." You may need to ask the teacher to fill in the students' names during the session and to help you distribute the cards.



Helpful Materials

In addition to the video and this Guide, FEMA and the American Red Cross developed other materials to help support your efforts to educate children about disaster, including a coloring book.

The *Disaster Preparedness Coloring Book* helps younger children learn about fire, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and other disasters, as well as how to protect themselves — all while having fun coloring. The coloring book is designed for adults and children to work on together.

Materials should also be sent home with the children to discuss with their parents or guardians. FEMA and the American Red Cross developed several brochures that contain practical advice and step-by-step instructions to help people prepare for disaster. Many of the suggestions in these brochures include activities that children could perform on their own.

The brochures are available through your local or State office of emergency management, American Red Cross chapter or FEMA. They include:

Your Family Disaster Plan (L-191; ARC 4466) provides guidelines and instructions to help people develop a disaster plan. The brochure suggests basic actions to prepare for any type of disaster, including ways to

communicate if separated during disaster, get ready for an evacuation and practice safety in the home. This brochure is also available in Spanish (L-191S; ARC 4466S).

Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit (L-189; ARC 4463) is a checklist of the emergency supplies that should be assembled and kept in disaster supplies kits. This brochure is also available in Spanish (L-189S; ARC 4463S).

Helping Children Cope with Disaster (L-196; ARC 4499) provides adults with practical advice on how to help children deal with the crisis and reduce stress during the recovery period. This brochure is also available in Spanish (L-196S; ARC 4499S).

Emergency Preparedness Checklist (L-154; ARC 4471) provides a checklist of suggested disaster preparedness steps and activities. The brochure contains instructions for mapping home escape routes, locating important items and identifying potential home hazards.

Your local emergency management office and American Red Cross chapter have a number of brochures available that outline basic preparedness steps for earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, floods, winter storms, thunderstorms and residential fires. Many brochures are available in both English and Spanish.

Promoting Your Family Disaster Preparedness Program

Printing these brochures locally can provide you with an excellent opportunity to promote participation in family disaster preparedness activities. The Family Protection Program makes these FEMA-American Red Cross brochures available in a camera-ready format. There's space throughout each publication to put your logo.

To obtain camera-ready materials, write to

Dr. B. Wayne Blanchard
Family Protection Program Manager
FEMA
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

When ordering, include the full title of the publication, your name, address and ZIP Code.

The Family Protection Program, in cooperation with the American Red Cross, has developed a variety of other materials to support local program organizers' efforts. Brochures, slide presentations, videos, posters and exhibits were created to be used in communities across the country. Some materials are designed to provide the public with the information they need to prepare for all types of disaster. Other materials assist local program organizers with the development of family disaster preparedness activities.

Instructions on how to order preprinted materials from FEMA, the American Red Cross, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and The Weather Channel are included in the *Emergency Preparedness Materials Catalog (L-164)*. The catalog and other materials are available from your local emergency management office or American Red Cross chapter, or by writing to

FEMA
P.O. Box 70274
Washington, DC 20024



How's It Going?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross are interested to learn how you used the materials as well as the response from school administrators, teachers, students and parents regarding family disaster preparedness activities.

Please contact us with your questions, comments and suggestions. If you find something that worked well for you, share it with us and we'll share it with others.

Write to:

Family Protection Program Manager
FEMA
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

or

Community Disaster Education Associate
American Red Cross
National Headquarters
Disaster Services Division
17th and D Streets, NW
Washington, DC 20006

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Sample Letter to Parents

Dear Parent:

As we all know, disaster can strike quickly and without warning. While these events can be frightening for adults, they can be traumatic for children—if they don't know what to do. It's important that children learn how to respond. Helping children prepare for disaster can give them a sense of power over a disaster situation.

To help our class learn how to prepare for disaster, we invited (name) with (organization) to talk with us about family disaster preparedness on (date).

You may want to reinforce this lesson by discussing with your child your family's disaster plans. The enclosed brochures, *Your Family Disaster Plan* and *Helping Children Cope with Disaster*, were produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross. They offer advice for talking with children about disaster and provide simple, step-by-step instructions to prepare for all types of disaster, such as

- posting emergency phone numbers by each telephone
- installing smoke detectors on each level of the home
- planning escape routes from each room in the home
- assembling a Disaster Supplies Kit.

Many of the points outlined in *Your Family Disaster Plan* will be highlighted in the classroom presentation. If you have any concerns regarding this presentation, please let me know so that we may discuss them. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(teacher)

Classroom Activities

Disaster Preparedness Questions

1. Do you know what types of disasters could happen in your community?
2. Has your family talked about what to do if a disaster happens?
3. Does your family keep supplies at home in case of a disaster? Do you keep them together in one place? Do you think you have enough supplies to take care of yourselves for at least three days?
4. Does your family keep disaster supplies in the car?
5. Have you had first aid training? Has anyone in your family?
6. Do you have smoke detectors on each level of your home? Are they outside the bedrooms? Do they work?
7. Has your family picked a place to meet outside in case of a fire?
8. Has your family practiced a fire drill at home this year?
9. Has your family picked a friend or relative who lives in a different state to be your check-in contact — the person you will call if a disaster happens?
10. Does your family have a disaster buddy — someone who will check on you if a disaster happens?

"What's in a Disaster Supplies Kit?" Team Challenge

Pick 10 items you believe are most important to include in a Disaster Supplies Kit.

Food	Needle and thread
Water	Whistle
Flashlight	Plastic sheeting
Radio, extra batteries	Toilet paper
Bag/container for items	Soap
Credit card, cash or traveler's checks, change	Disinfectant
Clothes and shoes	First aid kit
Plastic storage containers	Foul weather gear
Car keys	Blankets or sleeping bag
Non-electric can opener	Gloves
Vitamins	Entertainment items
Forks, spoons, plates and cups	Family documents and records
Emergency preparedness manual	Prescription drugs
Fire extinguisher	Eyeglasses/contact lenses
Compass	Matches
Tent	Plastic garbage bags and ties
Map	Gas shut-off wrench
Pliers and wrench	Toothbrush and toothpaste
Signal flare	Deodorant

Disaster Behavior Questions

These questions, and the answers appearing on the following page, are courtesy of the American Red Cross.

1. I'm inside a building and I begin to feel the shaking of an earthquake. I should...
2. I'm riding in my car when I see the funnel shape of a tornado in the rearview mirror. It seems the tornado is coming my way. I should...
3. I'm at home when I hear a tornado warning. I should...
4. I just heard that there is a hurricane warning issued for my area. I should...
5. It's been raining very hard for the last several days. As I'm riding in a car, I see water covering the road. I can't tell how deep it is, but it doesn't look like it's moving very fast. I should...
6. I smell smoke and find a fire burning in the bedroom. I should...
7. I am outside on the ballfield when a lightning storm starts. I can't get to shelter. I should...

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Disaster Behavior Answers

Answers to the questions appearing on the previous page are capitalized and in parentheses.

1. I'm inside a building and I begin to feel the shaking of an earthquake. I should...(DROP, COVER AND HOLD ON).

The safest thing to do is take cover where you are. If you try to run out of the building, things could fall on you and hurt you. Standing in a doorway is fine, but how many people can fit in a doorway? Is the doorway structurally sound? Teaching a proper doorway stance is difficult to do. The safest thing to do is to drop, cover and hold on.

2. I'm riding in my car when I see the funnel shape of a tornado in the rearview mirror. It seems the tornado is coming my way. I should...(GET OUT OF THE CAR AND LIE DOWN IN A LOW PLACE).

You can't outdrive a tornado; plus, they are unpredictable and blow cars away.

3. I'm at home when I hear a tornado warning. I should...(GO TO THE LOWEST LEVEL OF MY HOME).

4. I just heard that there is a hurricane warning issued for my area. I should...(LEAVE IF TOLD TO DO SO. OTHERWISE, KEEP LISTENING TO THE RADIO FOR INSTRUCTIONS. STAY INSIDE, AWAY FROM WINDOWS.)

5. It's been raining very hard for the last several days. As I'm riding in a car, I see water covering the road. I can't tell how deep it is, but it doesn't look like it's moving very fast. I should...(TURN AROUND AND GO THE OTHER WAY).

You can't always tell what happened to the roadway underneath.

6. I smell smoke and find a fire burning in the bedroom. I should...(SHUT THE BEDROOM DOOR. GET OUT OF THE HOUSE AND CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT FROM SOMEWHERE ELSE.)

7. I am outside on the ballfield when a lightning storm starts. I can't get to shelter. I should...(CROUCH LOW TO THE GROUND ON THE BALLS OF MY FEET).

Many people say that you should lie flat on the ground. This makes you a bigger target.

Suggestions for Disaster Preparedness Posters

Ask students to create a poster illustrating disaster preparedness actions. For example:

- Developing a Family Disaster Plan
- Picking two meeting places outside the home
- Installing smoke detectors
- Assembling a Disaster Supplies Kit
- Having an out-of-state family check-in contact
- Posting emergency numbers by each telephone in the home
- Taking a first aid course
- Practicing your Family Disaster Plan

Sample Role Play Scenarios

Ask four or five children to take part in each role play scenario. Encourage them to end each scenario by demonstrating what to do in the prescribed emergency. After each role play, ask other members of the class to discuss what was done correctly or incorrectly and why.

The following are just a few possible role play scenarios in which children may participate to reinforce a variety of preparedness messages. Activity planners are encouraged to develop scenarios appropriate to the community's needs.

- Children are playing in a park and a thunderstorm strikes. What do you do?

(Crouch down on the balls of your feet, wrap your arms around your knees. Stay away from trees and metal objects.)

- It's the middle of the night and the smoke detector alarm sounds. What do you do?

(Get out of the house and go to your outside meeting place.)

- You're in the middle of a math lesson and the earth begins to shake. What do you do?

(Drop, cover and hold on.)

- You want to get ready for disaster. What do you do?

(Put together a Family Disaster Plan.)

- A disaster occurs in your hometown. Friends and family can't reach you by telephone to see if you and your family are OK. What should they do?

(Call your family's out of state check-in contact.)

Acknowledgements

This guide and the *Adventures of the Disaster Dudes* video were developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in cooperation with the American Red Cross, Disaster Services Department, National Headquarters, Washington, D.C. We appreciate the time and consideration people in both the emergency management and Red Cross communities gave to their development.

Special thanks to the following organizations and individuals who donated their time and expertise to assist our efforts to create effective educational tools:

Adventures of the Disaster Dudes

National Association of
Elementary School Principals
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration's National
Weather Service
Exploring Division/Boy Scouts of America
Capital Children's Museum,
Washington, D.C.
The Weather Channel, Atlanta, GA
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Children's Disaster Preparedness Presenter's Guide

American Association of School
Administrators
Exploring Division/Boy Scouts of America
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration's National
Weather Service
Diane Merten, Chairperson, Benton County
Emergency Services Management
Council, Corvallis, OR

Natural Disaster Awareness Day

The United Nations designated the 1990s the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. In 1990, the U.S. Congress supported the initiative by declaring a simultaneous U.S. Decade and endorsing the second Wednesday of October as the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction Awareness.

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The Natural Disaster Awareness Day Working Group, of which the following organizations are members, recommends use of *Adventures of the Disaster Dudes* to support educational efforts on Natural Disaster Awareness Day and throughout the year:

Federal Emergency Management Agency
American Red Cross
U.S. Geological Survey
U.S. Department of Education
National Research Council
NOAA/National Weather Service
U.S. Forest Service
National Science Foundation

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