

CREATE AN EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY

In the event of an emergency, natural or otherwise, it is important to make sure that your family's basic needs are being met and that they are safe. The most effective way of to do this is to have a plan in place. It's very easy to panic during an emergency; being mentally and physically prepared may help to minimize that feeling of panic and enable you to keep your family calm, cool, collected, and most importantly, safe. An emergency preparedness plan should include a disaster supply kit, as well as any emergency essentials. Emergency preparedness supplies should also be arranged and easily accessible. While your family's emergency plan will be unique to you, there are a few general points that will help to best prepare you for success.

Creating a disaster supply kit is essential to an effective emergency preparedness plan. Stock your supply kits with medical supplies, medications, non-perishable foods, water, batteries, blankets, clothing, and other items. When creating stocking your supply kit, ask yourself "Does this item meet one or more of my basic needs or is it a luxury?" Doing this will help you to separate out what is and isn't an item you'll need in an emergency. Our basic necessities include: food, water, clothing, and shelter; everything else is a luxury in times of crisis.

Developing an easy-to-remember plan is also important. After all, an emergency plan is not effective if it isn't remembered. This is especially true for families with older adults or children to consider. Keep your emergency plan as simple as possible and use places that are very familiar and hard to forget. For example, in the event of a house fire, include a safe meeting space close by, like a next door neighbor's house. For a larger scale emergency, choose a familiar building, like a nearby school, to which the family can report. It also important that everyone knows what they're expected to do during an emergency. For example, a mother may be responsible for collecting her children and moving to safety and a father may be responsible for grabbing the emergency preparedness kit and meeting the family at the planned location. Again, this will be something that is very specific to your family and should be discussed and agreed on.

Write up and/or print out an emergency checklist and keep it someplace easily accessible and memorable. This checklist should include emergency contacts. It should

also include local emergency phone numbers and addresses. A very short list of important items to be removed from the house may also be included (i.e. a folder with copies vital documents). Spare car keys may also be on this list and kept in the same vital folder, making it easy to grab and go. It may also be helpful to create separate lists for either members of your family or different types of emergencies. The most important thing to know when creating this checklist is that may need to change in a split second. It's important not to get too caught up in details that might slow down or endanger your family's wellbeing.

Preparing for extended periods of emergency is also important. Natural disasters may knock out power, pollute drinking water, and make it difficult for first responders to reach you. Best prepare to be in it for the long haul. An emergency food storage of canned and nonperishable items, as well as bottled drinking water are essential, especially for families living in areas with an increased likelihood of natural disasters, including hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, wildfires, and snow emergencies.

It's also important to involve your community in your disaster preparedness plans. Let your neighbors know what you're doing to keep your family safe and encourage them to take precautions of their own. Building a proactive network of people that may be of assistance may help you and allow you to help others in need. Communication is a vital part of being prepared, no matter what the emergency may be, and it's best to over communicate, knowing that people around you may be stressed and may only retain part of the information being imparted.

- [Your Emergency Communication Plan and Printables](#)
- [Tips to Making Emergency Plans for Your Family](#)
- [A Step-by-Step Guide to Making Your Disaster Plan: Start Today!](#)
- [FEMA's Family Emergency Planning Guide](#)
- [Printable Family Emergency Plan and Contact Cards](#)
- [A Master Emergency Supply Sheet](#)
- [A Video and Information on Family Preparedness](#)
- [Are You Ready? An In-Depth Guide to Preparedness](#)
- [The American Red Cross: Helping Kids During a Crises](#)
- [Be Prepared: Info on Kits, Plans, and More](#)
- [A Child Care and Preparedness Guide](#)
- [Staying Connected During an Emergency](#)

- [Ready, Set Prepare Activity Book for Kids](#)
- [Preparing Your Pets for an Emergency](#)
- [Must-Have Go-Bag Items List](#)
- [Make a Kit, Make a Plan, and Stay Informed During Emergencies](#)
- [Family Preparedness Plans Must Include Your Pets](#)
- [Prepare Your Family, Pets, and Home for Emergencies](#)
- [Emergency Food Supplies Info and Resources](#)
- [Keeping Food Safe During an Emergency](#)