WHAT WILL YOU DO WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES?

PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES

LESSON 1:
DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN
Developing A Communication Plan

Brief Overview

Developing a communication plan is very important when preparing for a disaster. Family communication plans, shelter locations, and working together in the community are three concepts discussed in this section. A family communication plan is developed by the family members in case a disaster strikes. Finding a shelter is a very important decision. Always make sure that the chosen shelter fits the needs of everyone in the family. Make sure that there are multiple driving routes available to that shelter. Developing a plan to work together in the community, when a disaster strikes, is also very important. Working together can provide a great relief and everyone has something to offer providing a great service to the community.

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disaster</th>
<th>An occurrence causing widespread destruction and distress; A grave misfortune.</th>
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<td>Shelter</td>
<td>A building serving as a temporary refuge or residence for people experiencing a disaster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMA</td>
<td>Federal Emergency Management Agency; FEMA’s mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.</td>
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**Length:** 1 hour

**Desired Learning Outcomes**

Participants will learn:
- How to develop a communication plan for a family
- Who to contact when a disaster strikes
- The importance of designating a safe meeting spot and the function of shelters
- The benefits of working together in the community if a disaster strikes

**Lesson Outline**

1. Importance of having a communication plan
2. Knowing who to contact in case of a disaster
3. Designating a safe meeting place
4. Emergency shelter locations and their role
5. Working together in the community

**Resources and Materials**

**Items provided on the disk:**
- Power point presentation
- Emergency booklet
- Handouts (6):
  - Activity 1, Scenario 1-5
  - Activity 2
  - Lesson Evaluation
  - Crossword
  - Take Home Messages (optional)
  - Subsection of Booklet (optional)

**Items needed to teach this lesson:**
- Computer with LCD projector or handouts of power point
- Pens or pencils
- Copies of activity and take home handouts (listed above)
  - Activity 1 is a group activity and only requires one copy per group.
  - All other handouts require one copy per person.
- Emergency contact information for the city and/or county in which you will be presenting this lesson.
**Instructions For Educators**

1. Be sure the power point titled Developing a Communication Plan is ready. If you do not have access to a projector you have the option to print copies of the slides or work out of the emergency booklet.

2. Welcome the participants to the Developing a Communication Plan educational program. Break the participants into groups of 3-4 people. They will continue to stay in these groups for the remainder of the session.

3. Introduce the lesson by using slide 1 in the presentation section. After slide 1, complete Activity 1: Part 1 listed in the activities section (page 4).

4. Upon completion of Activity 1: Part 1 resume the program with slide 2 provided in the presentation section.

5. After slide 2 complete Activity 2, listed in the activities section (page 4). [Activity 2 will require you to do some preparation before your presentation day.] Upon completion of Activity 2, resume the presentation starting with slide 3.

6. When the slide presentation is concluded, have the participants complete Activity 1: Part 2 (page 4).

7. Ask if there are any questions for you at the end of this lesson. Pass out the lesson evaluation in the handouts section (Lesson 1 - Handout 3) for the participants to complete. Give each participant a copy of Take Home Handouts 1, 2, and 3 [Take Home Handouts 2 and 3 are optional] before they leave.
Activities

Activity 1 - Scenarios

Part 1 [At beginning of the lesson]
- Distribute the Communication Plan Activity 1 Handouts Scenarios 1 - 5, to the groups, along with a pen or pencil. There are 5 scenarios, each group will receive only one..
- Let the groups read and discuss the situation at the top of their handout.
- Have the groups write down what they would do if they were truly in that situation. [they are to only fill out Part 1 of the sheet]
- When their list is completed, have the groups share their answers and give the reasons to why they think those items are important.

Part 2 [After the lesson has been taught]
- In Part 2 of the sheet, have the groups develop and write down a Communication Plan for their situation. They should also note what they would do differently from their response to Part 1.
- When they are through, have the groups share their Communication Plans along with any changes from their response to Part 1.

Activity 2 - Communication Plan

- After Slide 2 in the Presentation, pass out Lesson 1 Handout 2, Emergency Contact Information Sheet. Be sure each participant has a pen or pencil.
- Have the participants fill in the emergency numbers (Police, Fire Department, Hospital, Red Cross, FEMA, Health Department) as you read them aloud.
- After the participants have added the emergency phone numbers, give them some time to add any other numbers they wish.
- Upon completion of the list, remind the participants of some different locations to post the information. The sheet is theirs to take home.
Presentation

Slide 1 - Developing A Communication Plan

Today we will be learning about developing a communication plan. When a disaster strikes, it is very important to have a communication plan in place, so all of your family members will know exactly what needs to be done to ensure their safety. A communication plan consist of knowing who to contact, designating a safe meeting place for all family members, and knowing the function and location of the emergency food kit.

We will also talk about how to find an emergency shelter and the benefits of working together in the community.

Stop here and complete Activity 1 - Scenario: Part 1. Instructions are in the Activities section on page 4.
• When developing a family communication plan, it is important to know how to contact family members, relatives, or some close friends.

• Other important contact information may be Police, Fire Departments, local hospitals, Red Cross, FEMA, and the State Health Department. Each of these provide important services to the community, especially before, during, and after a disaster.

• It is a good idea to create a reference list with phone numbers for the people and organizations previously mentioned. You may have others you want to add. Post the list in a convenient location that is easy to access, such as on home refrigerator or next to your home phone. Make sure everyone in the family knows where the reference list is located.

Stop here and complete Activity 2 - Communication Plan. Instructions are in the Activities section on page 4.
Lesson 1: Developing A Communication Plan

- Designating a safe meeting place is also important when developing a communication plan. This is a safe place where family members can meet if they are separated. Keep in mind that there are different types of disasters, and be sure that your meeting places are safe for the disasters that threaten your area. Some examples of safe meeting places are: right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire, or outside of your neighborhood in case you cannot return home.

- Determining a location for the emergency food kit is also important. Be sure that all family members are familiar with the location. Keep copies of up to date identification and medical information for all family members in your emergency food kit. You never know what information will be needed after a disaster. It is better to be prepared. It is also a good idea to store a copy of your emergency contact numbers in the kit.
Each state has an emergency plan in place, where they designate certain locations as emergency shelters. These shelters have an assigned staff, trained to help people remain safe during a disaster.

Possible shelter locations are: community centers, schools, and churches.

You can contact the local Health Department or the American Red Cross for locations of emergency shelters in your area.

It is important to know different routes to shelters in your area. You never know when a road might be blocked or closed.

Don’t forget about your pets. There are some pet friendly shelters, but not all shelters are pet friendly so do your research. If there are no pet friendly shelters in your area, please do not try to take your pet to the other shelters.
• Working together in your community not only deals with what you can do for your community but what others have done to ensure the safety of you and your family.
• Research the plan of action at the school/university where you or your child may attend. Some examples of these action plans may be a teacher’s emergency training in first aid or CPR, emergency supplies such as emergency food kits or first aid kits, or school/class mock drills so all teachers and students know the correct procedures to ensure everyone's safety.
• It is also important to know your work’s plan of action if a disaster were to strike. Some examples of action plans your work may have enacted are the storage of emergency supplies, well lit exit routes, securely structured rooms you can take refuge in, and the execution of mock drills.
• Creating a safe environment with neighbors as well as those in your community can be easily accomplished. Work with your neighbors, everyone has special skills that can be used in a disaster. An example may be, one of your neighbors can be a nurse or have medical training. This is important in case anyone is hurt during or after a disaster.
• Developing a communication plan with your neighbors will help to ensure everyone’s safety.
• Community emergency drills will help everyone know what to do if a disaster were to strike. Talk to your community officials or neighborhood associations about performing an emergency drill.
Lesson 1: Developing A Communication Plan

Slide 6 - Be Ready To Take Action

- Keeping a copy of your communication plan with your emergency food kit is a great way to ensure everyone is prepared. It can also serve as a memory refresher or checklist to make sure you cover every detail during an emergency.

Slide 7 - Follow All Instructions Provided

- It is important that you and your family follow every instruction provided on the TV and radio or in the newspaper. The safety of you and your family is their top priority during any disaster.
In conclusion, a Communication Plan consists of knowing who to contact, designating a safe meeting place for all family members, and knowing the function and location of the Emergency Food Kit.

- Post your emergency contact list in a convenient location, for example on your refrigerator door or next to your home phone.
- When designating a safe meeting place, plan for the different types of disasters that can happen in your area.
- Work with your community to create a safer environment if a disaster were to happen.
- Most importantly, follow all the instructions provided on the TV and Radio or in the Newspaper.

Stop here and complete Activity 1 - Scenario: Part 2. Instructions are in the Activities section on page 4.