

Know the Codes:

When it happens, it's too late!!!!

- **Code Red:** **Potentially Violent Situations**
- **Code Orange:** **Short Term Safety Procedures**
- **Code Green:** **Other Safety Procedures**
- **Code Blue:** **Emergency Situations**
- **Code Purple:** **If The Situation Calls For**

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency, the alarm system will sound over the entire building.

All classes will follow the emergency evacuation routes (a map is located in each classroom) to the parking lot across the street. Office personnel will notify the police/fire department (911) prior to evacuating if possible. Otherwise, a call will be made from a cell phone after the building has been evacuated. Note: Cones and hand held signs will be used to direct traffic.

As each class leaves their classroom, one teacher will count the children and the second teacher will count the children as they assemble on the blacktop. If there is only one teacher, he/she will count the children twice.

The director and/or administrator will check each classroom/bathroom to make sure everyone has exited the building. As they leave each classroom, the doors will be shut. When exiting the center, all fire doors will be completely shut.

A designated staff member will collect any health supplies (i.e.: epi-pens, inhalers, etc.), the school's emergency and first aid kits, attendance laptop and bring them to the assembly point on the blacktop.

In the event the immediate area is evacuated, the children will assemble at:

Barrett Branch Library

717 Queen Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
703-746-1703

If needed, the children will assemble at the secondary location of:

Charles Houston Recreation Center

901 Wythe Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
703-746-5552

Potentially Violent situations

Potentially violent events such as a hostage situation, disgruntled person, active shooter, community violence, unstable custody disputes, or other physical or verbal threats may occur at or near the school and require lock down procedures or selective/partial evacuation procedures. The premise behind a selective/partial evacuation is to evacuate a small area in order to remove large numbers of children and staff from harm's way when an individual is on-site who is potentially violent.

Code Red: Violent Intruder

1. Immediately call law enforcement (e.g. 911).
2. Alert the center's director or administrator that you may have a condition for selective/partial evacuation (this may be within the building if the potentially violent person does not leave the area).
3. If you have any reason to believe the individual has a weapon, order a selective/partial evacuation, if possible.
4. If the intruder chooses to leave the premises, allow them the freedom to exit making sure to note their vehicle make and model, license plate, and the direction of their travel. Communicate this immediately to the emergency services (e.g. 911) dispatcher.
5. Try to isolate the intruder away from as many adults and children as possible. Seek to draw the individual(s) to an office, break room, conference room, or other less populated area. If the individual has entered a classroom, seek to draw him/her into the least utilized portion of the room.
6. Remain calm and be polite.
7. Do not physically restrain or block their movement.
8. While you are engaging the potentially violent intruder, other available persons should direct unaffected classrooms to move to locations in the building/school that are farthest from the incident point. This selective/partial evacuation should precede room-by-room and as orderly and quietly as possible, being careful to use routes not visible to the intruder.
9. Once law enforcement arrives, they will assume charge of the situation, negotiate and dictate further movements.
10. If a decision is made to relocate to the alternate site while negotiations continue, follow the appropriate evacuation procedures.

Code Red: Active Shooter

An active shooter is defined as an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area. In most cases, there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. Active shooters can include unstable persons, and may be unknown to the school, known to a child or staff member of the school (e.g. parent/guardian of a child, or spouse to an employee), an armed criminal, or in rare cases domestic or international terrorists.

Staff must be aware of their surroundings and be prepared to respond appropriately and effectively if they ever find themselves in such a situation in order to protect the children in the center and themselves. Active shooter situations seem to be unpredictable and the event often evolves quickly. However, there may be signs that staff can be aware of to potentially prevent an attack. *Examples of behaviors that staff should look out for include: a) suspicious people watching the pre-school or taking photographs, OR b) strange calls and unusual behavior by staff, parents/guardians or visitors.* Staff should report this information as soon as it is identified.

There are three basic steps to survival during an active shooter incident: “Run, Hide, or Fight.”

“Run” If you are able to escape, evacuate yourself and children to safety and then contact law enforcement (e.g. 911).

“Hide” If you and the children are not able to evacuate, use a modified lockdown procedure by hiding, keeping the children as calm and quiet as possible to try to avoid detection.

“Fight” As a last resort, in order to protect yourself and the children, fight the shooter with aggression and improvised weapons (e.g. anything you can throw at the shooter such as books, fire extinguisher, canned goods, etc.)

If an intruder leaves with a child or staff member, it is oftentimes better to let them leave rather than prompt a confrontation that would increase the risk of injury.

Code Red: Hostage Situations

A pre-school may be subject to hostage situations from disgruntled employees, parents/guardians, or terrorists. Important tips to remember if you are held hostage:

1. Remain calm.
2. Remain polite.
3. Follow the hostage taker(s) instructions.
4. Do not resist.
5. If it is safe to do so, alert staff members and contact local emergency services (e.g. 911).

If a hostage situation is occurring at the pre-school and you are not in the immediate area:

1. Activate lock down procedures (see **Lockdown Procedures** below).
2. Staff should place phones and/or cell phones on silent mode.
3. Contact local emergency services (e.g. 911).
4. Provide as much information as possible to law enforcement when they arrive.
5. DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER.
6. Do not attempt a rescue.

Child care school staff should be aware of what to expect and how to respond once law enforcement arrives on scene. Conducting regular drills will provide staff with the training they need to know should an active shooter incident occur at your pre-school.

Short Term Safety Procedures

Depending on the nature of the emergency, there are three types of short term safety procedures: shelter-in-place, lock down, and evacuation.

Code Orange: Shelter-in-Place

When a threat creates hazardous conditions outside the school, students and staff may need to shelter-in-place. This may also need to occur if it is not safe or there is insufficient time to move to a designated assembly area or secondary relocation site. Shelter-in-place involves keeping children and staff in place inside the building and securing the center for the immediate emergency. Examples of such situations include tornados, community violence or a hazardous material spill.

1. Bring children and staff to the pre-determined areas within the school. This area should be an interior room with the fewest windows or vents that has adequate space to accommodate attendees and staff.
2. Close and lock all windows and doors.
3. As applicable, shut off the building's air handling systems, gas, electric, water and other utilities.
4. Gather disaster supplies and bring to the predetermined area, as applicable.
5. As applicable, seal all cracks around the doors and any vents into the room with duct tape or plastic sheeting.
6. Conduct a roll call to ensure everyone is present and accounted for in the area.
7. Contact the center's owner/administrator, inform them of the situation, and report the list of attendees and staff who are present.
8. Listen for announcements from local officials via portable battery or hand-assisted radio and continue to shelter-in- place until told it is safe.

Code Orange: Lock-Down

The purpose of a lock down is to keep children and staff inside the building by securing them inside a classroom or other secure safe area due to an immediate threat inside the school. Lock-down procedures will be used in situations that may result in harm to persons inside the school, such as a shooting, hostage incident, intruder, trespassing, disturbance, or at the discretion of the director, designee or public safety personnel.

1. The director or administrator will notify local emergency services (911) and initiate the lock-down procedure by announcing it over the designated alert system. The alert may be made using a pre-selected code word/phrase so staff is aware that a lock down procedure has been initiated but the intruder is not alarmed.
2. In a lock-down situation, all children are kept in classrooms or other designated safe area locations, out of view and away from the danger.
3. Staff members should put their cell phones and/or pagers on silent mode.
4. Staff members are responsible for ensuring that all children are present and accounted for and that no one leaves the classroom or designated safe area locations.

5. Maintenance personnel should secure building entrances, ensuring that no unauthorized individuals leave or enter the building.
6. Staff and children remain in the classroom or other designated safe area, ensuring the doors are locked and if possible, turning off the lights and covering the windows. Encourage children to remain out of sight (e.g. get under desks, behind cabinets). If possible, engage in quiet story time activities with the children until “all clear” is announced.

During a lockdown, there may be an opportunity to evacuate some of the children. The director or staff designee will notify the classroom to evacuate and specify the route to take out of the building and the designated area for assembly outside. The importance of staff and children remaining calm cannot be over emphasized. A quick, silent evacuation is the goal.

Code Orange: Evacuation

Evacuation of a school involves moving children and staff out of the building that is affected by the emergency and relocating them to a safer area.

There are three types:

- a. **Onsite:** Evacuation to a designated safe staging area on the site of the pre-school such as evacuating to the playground during a fire.
- b. **Offsite:** Movement of children and staff off the premises of the school to a designated shelter or relocation area due to a threat (e.g. natural, terrorist or man-made, or hazardous chemical release) to the children and school. Transportation maybe necessary for this type of evacuation.
- c. **Reverse evacuation:** Movement of children and staff back into the child care school due to a danger/emergency outside. An example of this is a suspicious or criminal act occurring nearby.

In the event of a fire, extreme weather, pre-school emergency, bomb threat, or any other situation that results in the child care school needing to be evacuated, all staff should adhere to the following.

1. The director or administrator will call local emergency services (e.g. 911) and indicate the need for assistance. It may be beneficial to develop scripts to assist staff with the information needed when calling emergency services, especially during high risk, high stress situations (e.g. bomb threat).
2. Evacuate all students and staff members to a designated safe area away from the building as quickly as possible.
3. **Before** leaving the pre-school, confirm attendance by conducting a **face-to-name** to ensure all children and staff members are accounted for. Bring attendance list along to the evacuation site. If possible, a staff member should bring along child and staff records.
4. During the evacuation, students and staff should adhere to predetermined evacuation routes as much as possible. However, staff should not hesitate to alter the designated route if determined to be unsafe.

- a. The staff will evacuate children as follows: *Infants*: Place up to four infants in an evacuation crib, or place two infants in rescue packs carried over the shoulders of staff, or place infants in carriers to evacuate.
 - b. *Toddlers and Preschool*: Gather children in a group and supervise an orderly evacuation to the designated assembly area.
 - c. *Children with Special Needs*: These children will be assisted by specific staff members who have been trained in their role to evacuate children with special needs.
5. Emergency disaster packs/backpacks are carried out by designated staff. Once students and staff report to the designated safe staging area, a **second roll call** should be conducted to ensure that everyone has exited the building safely.
 6. No person should return into the school until it is deemed safe by the proper authorities.
 7. If needed, students and staff should relocate to the secondary offsite location.
 8. The director or administrator will carry the pre-school's emergency cellular phone or other communication device to notify parents of the situation and the pick-up point for the children.

During an evacuation, under no circumstances should staff stop for any of their own or children's personal belongings, including jackets, shoes, etc.

Code Orange: Fire

In case of a fire, follow the R.A.C.E. acronym.

R = Rescue (Evacuate the area immediately)

A = Alarm (Fire alarm should be pulled and local emergency services {e.g. 911} should be notified of fire location)

C = Contain (Close doors and windows to contain the fire)

E = Extinguish (Evaluate the situation to determine if staff should attempt to extinguish the fire)

Evaluate the situation:

1. The location of the fire within the school
2. The size of the fire
3. The nature of the fire.

If the fire is small and is not located in a room where students are present, a fire extinguisher may be used to put out the fire. This should only be done if the staff responding to the fire has received the proper training. In addition, staff should not attempt to fight the fire if there is an imminent threat to their safety.

A roll call of all students and staff should be taken to ensure that everyone is out of the building. If there is any threat to the children and staff at the designated evacuation site, an immediate evacuation to the alternate evacuation location is necessary.

The school director or an administrator should go to a visible location to help direct the fire department to the center/home. Once the fire department arrives on scene, the director or

administrator should establish contact with the fire department official to discuss what information they need.

When possible, all windows and doors in the school should be shut, and all electrical switches should be in the off position. This should be done while keeping in mind that both the children and staff need to be evacuated in the shortest time possible.

The director or administrator should make sure no child or staff member attempts to re-enter the school until cleared by the fire department.

Virginia State Licensing Standards for child care centers/schools requires that “in the event of a fire, the school shall be evacuated immediately and the children’s safety insured before calling the fire department or attempting to combat the fire.”

Life safety is the first priority. No matter how small or large the fire is, an evacuation should occur and local emergency services (e.g. 911) should be called.

Code Orange: Hazardous Chemical Spill

The following section contains general response guidelines to a hazardous chemical spill in the pre-school. In general, the most dangerous chemicals located on the premises should be locked in a secure location. When handling chemicals, be sure to follow the instructions written on the product. Never mix products together.

1. Evacuate the area immediately if a hazardous chemical is spilled.
2. Do not turn any electrical switches ON or OFF when exiting the room.
3. Eliminate all open flames.
4. Evacuate to an area upwind and uphill from the location of the spill if possible.
5. The school director or administrator will contact local emergency services (e.g. 911) and notify them that there has been a “hazardous materials spill.”
6. The school director or administrator will contact the maintenance personnel to request turning off the ventilation system to avoid further spread of the hazardous materials.
7. No person should try to contain, touch, or identify the hazardous material.
8. Staff should not attempt to rescue anyone who has passed out due to fumes given off by the hazardous materials spill. This could expose staff to the fumes, potentially incapacitating them as well.
9. If any child or staff has come into contact with a hazardous material, the chemical should be washed off immediately with water.

Code Orange: Gas Leak

The following section outlines the general response to a gas leak:

1. The children and staff should evacuate the building.
2. Local emergency services (e.g. 911) should be notified that there is a possible gas leak at the pre-school.

3. The school director or administrator should be notified of the situation, and they will notify the rest of the staff.
4. Do not turn ON or OFF any electrical switches.

The pre-school should not be entered by anyone until the fire department announces it is safe to return.

Code Orange: Contaminated Water Supply

Occasionally water supplies are contaminated or are suspected of being contaminated with microorganisms or chemicals due to a break in a water main or other damage to the distribution system. Discontinue the use of tap water, ice machines, drinking fountains and any other water equipment to prevent ingestion. Label all water sources with a sign reading, "Do not drink" and begin using bottled water.

If water is suspected of being contaminated, do not boil water for infants! Use bottled water from an approved source for all infant feeding and drinking needs. Bottled water may be needed to care for children with special health care needs as well.

The following advisories/notifications may be used during an incident that leads to contaminated water:

1. Boil water advisory/notice: water can be used for drinking only if it is boiled or disinfected with chlorine prior to consumption.
2. Do not consume: water should not be consumed.

Other Safety Procedures

Code Green: Extreme Weather

General Extreme Weather Planning Considerations:

Pre-school staff should follow these general guidelines during weather emergencies:

1. The pre-school director or administrator will monitor radio, television, or NOAA weather radio for weather updates.
2. The pre-school director or administrator will advise all staff of the weather conditions that are approaching.
3. When extreme weather is approaching, check the status of:
 - a. Battery powered radios
 - b. Flashlights
 - c. Back-up lighting and power
 - d. Heat
 - e. Cell phones
4. Consider pre-storm closing (night before) or early closing depending on conditions.
5. Release non-essential staff in accordance with pre-school closing procedures.
6. Identify services for snow and ice removal as well as possible debris removal such as fallen trees and utility lines.
7. Staff should maintain voice contact at all times, and all staff members should have flashlights and emergency packs/backpacks available.
8. Take a roll call before moving to the safe place, after arriving at the safe place, and finally, after leaving the designated safe place.
9. Once the storm has passed and there is no more danger to the children and staff, the reverse steps should be taken.
10. If any medical attention is required, first aid should be administered. If the situation warrants, contact local emergency services (e.g. 911) for medical assistance.
11. The staff should once again do a roll call to ensure that all child care attendees and staff members are safe.
12. Staff needs to assess the pre-school for any damage created by the extreme weather, such as fire, water, or structural damage. This includes testing utilities to ensure they are functioning appropriately.

Specific Weather Situations

In addition to the above general guidelines, the following are recommendations for specific inclement weather emergencies.

1. *Severe Thunderstorm Watch*: Outdoor activities should be modified to ensure that quick access to safe areas and shelter is available.
2. *Severe Thunderstorm Warning*: All outdoor activities should be terminated and shelter should be taken.
3. The pre-school director or administrator will monitor sky conditions as best and safely as possible. If a dark/funnel-shaped cloud is seen, seek shelter immediately.

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4. If possible, call local emergency services (e.g. 911) to report it.

Tornado Watch

1. Outdoor activities should be modified to ensure that quick access to shelter is available.
2. Upon the approach of thunderstorms, cease all outdoor activities that may delay seeking shelter.
3. The pre-school director or administrator will monitor sky conditions as best and safely as possible. If a dark/funnel-shaped cloud is seen, seek shelter immediately. If possible, call local emergency services (e.g. 911) to report it.

Tornado Warning

In addition to the above tornado watch guidelines:

1. If time permits and it can be done safely, the preschool director or administrator will turn off all utilities.
2. The director or administrator will have all staff move to their designated safe area locations.

Flash Flood

The pre-school director or administrator will move records and valuable equipment to higher floors. Chemicals that are in the pre-school should be stored in locations where floodwaters will not come into contact with them.

The pre-school director or administrator will make transportation preparations to move children and staff in the event that an evacuation is needed.

If evacuation is necessary and time permits, staff members or employees will unplug all electrical appliances. If time permits, move all loose and unsecured outdoor equipment to an indoor location.

Blizzard/Snow/Ice

Outdoor activities should be modified to ensure that quick access to shelter is available in the case of hazardous conditions.

If evacuation is necessary, the pre-school director or administrator will ensure that proper transportation has been arranged to move the children and staff to the designated safe area. This area can be the same as the flash flood location.

Code Green: Utilities and Maintenance Emergency

The following section is a general response to utility problems that may present themselves in the pre-school.

When a utility failure has occurred, the decision to close the pre-school or delay its opening will be based on the following factors:

1. The amount of natural light in the pre-school

2. The temperature in the school
3. The ability and necessity of heating food and formula
4. The risk to the health and well-being of children and staff

Virginia State Licensing Standards for pre-schools requires maintaining the temperature of the school at 65°-75°F in the winter and 68°- 82°F in the summer

Code Green: Electrical Power Failure

In the event of a power failure contact the electric company to notify them of the power failure.

As the school is not equipped with a backup generator:

1. Access emergency lighting from your emergency supply cache (e.g. flashlights, lanterns).
2. Contact the electric company.
3. If there is danger of fire, evacuate the pre-school.
4. If an electrical short is suspected, turn off power at the main control point.

Code Green: Water Main Break

In the event of a water main break:

1. Call maintenance personnel and/or the water department.
2. Shut off the valve at the primary control point.
3. Access water from your emergency supply cache.

Emergency Situations

The following information is a general response to physical threats that may present in the pre-school. This includes threats that come from outside the pre-school, such as community violence, as well as inside the school. In every situation, the pre-school director and staff members should evaluate the situation, and only address the threat when their safety is not compromised. If any person in the pre-school does not feel safe in the situation, local emergency services (e.g. 911) should be contacted, provided it can be done in a safe manner.

Code Blue: Physical and Verbal Threats

All physical threats made inside or outside the pre-school should be taken seriously.

1. Report and document any physical threats directed towards the children or staff members to the pre-school director.
2. If the physical threat comes from within the school, the school director or administrator notifies law enforcement of the incident and communicates with the staff members involved in the incident.
3. Staff members involved in the altercation should be separated. Appropriate administrative actions should be taken to insure the safety and well-being of the children.
4. If the physical threat comes from outside the school, the pre-school director or administrator is notified of the incident. The pre-school director will notify law enforcement of the incident.

Regardless of whether the physical threat comes from outside or inside the pre-school, the students should be removed safely from the area in which the altercation is taking place (selective/partial evacuation), and should return only after the situation has been resolved.

All verbal threats will be treated the same way as physical threats.

Code Blue: Bomb Threats

Any bomb threat should be taken seriously and treated as a real situation until proven otherwise.

1. Any suspicious packages or letters should be reported to authorities.
2. **Evacuation should be out of the pre-school and to another location as far from the pre-school as possible.**
3. The area that is being evacuated should be searched quickly for information that may be important for the responding law enforcement.
4. Upon arrival of the law enforcement response team, the pre-school director or administrator will assist with any questions that the law enforcement response team may have.
5. **No person should enter the pre-school** until the law enforcement response team has been consulted and the situation has been resolved.
6. Use landline telephones only. Turn all cell phones off and do not use them until the situation has been resolved.

Code Blue: VIA Telephone Threat

The staff member taking the call should notify another staff member that a bomb threat is in progress so that:

1. The building may be evacuated immediately.
2. The child care center director or administrator will contact local law enforcement (e.g. 911).

When a bomb threat is received, it is important to gather as much information as possible from the caller.

1. Keep the caller on line as long as possible
2. Record information as quickly and accurately as possible

Obtain the following information:

1. The time the call was received
2. The caller's exact words
3. A description of the callers voice

Ask the following questions:

1. Where is the bomb located?
2. When is the bomb set to go off?

Code Blue: Terrorism

The National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) is a system used to effectively communicate information with the public about terrorist threats by providing timely, detailed information to the public, government agencies, first responders, airports and other transportation hubs, and the private sector.

Americans all share responsibility for the nation's security, and should always be aware of the heightened risk of terrorist attack in the United States and what they should do. Be vigilant, constantly on the lookout for unusual persons or activities such as:

1. Unusual unsolicited deliveries
2. Suspicious items left around the outside of the pre-school
3. Individuals "hanging around" for no apparent reason.

Enforce pre-school security.

Restrict visitors to only public areas. Ensure that all visitors are identified and appropriately cleared before they enter the preschool.

Bear in mind that criminals/terrorists may have multiple attacks planned. They may use an explosion to get you to force an evacuation and then wait to take children hostage once they are outside. Assess the area to be sure it is safe before evacuating. This is why details of a pre-school's disaster plans should only be shared with those who need to know (e.g. staff, parents/guardians, local EMA and other emergency medical services).

Code Blue: Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

The following section gives a general response to a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) incident. Since this is a worst-case scenario for a pre-school and the community as a whole, the safety of children and staff should be the major concern.

1. If there is reason to suspect that a WMD event has originated in or near your pre-school, call local emergency services (e.g. 911).
2. If the pre-school needs to respond to a WMD event, the pre-school director or administrator should monitor the battery-powered radio for updates.

IF THE SITUATION CALLS FOR...

SHELTERING-IN-PLACE: TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS

1. Staff will close and lock all windows and doors.
2. Seal all windows, doors and vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape.
3. The pre-school director or designee will turn off the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system.
4. The child care attendees and staff should move to a designated interior room with an attached bathroom, if possible. A roll call should be completed to ensure everyone is accounted for.
5. Be sure emergency supplies are available in the designated shelter-in-place area. If not, a staff member should be assigned to locate and bring emergency supply pack/backpacks with them into the shelter.
6. Once all child care attendees and staff have been accounted for, the pre-school director or designee should tape the door to create a better seal.
7. The pre-school director or designee should continue to monitor the battery-powered radio for information updates, including the possible order for evacuation.

SHELTERING-IN-PLACE: KEYS TO PREPARING THE STUDENTS

1. Students are to be taught to follow direction the first time they are given in an emergency.
2. Students are to be trained to **STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN**.
3. In lockdown: Students are to be quiet, listen to their teacher, and stay out of the line of sight from the door. **DO NOT** hide in a closet.
4. If an intruder enters the room, and the students cannot evacuate, train them to be up, moving, making noise, gaining distance, and throwing items at the intruder.
5. When safe, Evacuation is **always** the best defense.

EVACUATION OF THE SCHOOL: TAKE THE FOLLOWING STEPS

1. The pre-school director or designee will monitor the battery-powered radio for directions on where to relocate and the proper routes to take.

2. Transportation arrangements should be made by the local emergency agency.
3. Until the pre-school is ready to be evacuated, staff will keep all doors and windows shut and locked.
4. Staff will follow all their center/home's general evacuation procedures.
5. The pre-school director or designee should carry the emergency cellular phone (if available) to contact parents/guardians with the status of the situation and where their children are being transported (if it is different from the normal evacuation site).

REUNITING CHILDREN WITH PARENT(S) AND /OR GUARDIAN(S)

During a disaster, children are at high risk for maltreatment, abduction and abuse if separated from their families. In order to protect the children in their care, child care centers/homes should have plans and processes in place to identify how they will reunify children with parents/guardians. Ideally, if there is advance warning about the event, attempts should be made to reunite children with their families before the event occurs. Below are steps that child care centers/homes can take before, during and after a disaster to address reunification needs of children in their centers:

Before a Disaster:

1. Ensure there are multiple phone numbers for family members including home, cell and work phone numbers for parents/guardians and others to whom the child can be released.
2. Ensure parents/guardians have designated in writing the relatives and/or friends to whom children can be released after a disaster, including one or more individuals residing outside the area.
3. Inform parents/guardians in advance where the children will be taken if an evacuation is required.
4. Ensure there is a phone number of a family member or trusted friend out of the area such as a grandparent or other relative who can be contacted to locate the parents/guardians.
5. Establish an emergency number for the pre-school outside the area that parents/guardians can contact to learn where their child or children have been relocated.
6. Take and maintain a current digital photo of each child enrolled in the pre-school that can be posted to aid in reunification; with the parents'/guardians' permission, email a copy of the photo files to a location outside the area for use in reuniting children with their parents/guardians during a disaster.
7. Become familiar with national and local registries that are in place to assist with family reunification during a disaster:
 - a. FEMA's National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS): <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit/recovery-directorate/national-emergency-family>
 - b. National Missing and Exploited Children's National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC) and Unaccompanied Minor Registry: <http://www.missingkids.com/DisasterResponse>

- c. The American Red Cross' Safe and Well Program:
<https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/index.safe.php>

During a Disaster:

1. Place an identification bracelet on each child or pin information on each child (e.g. to the back of their shirt) that will help reunite the child with his or her parents/guardians or other trusted individuals.
2. Assign an individual (staff member or assistant) and a backup person to be responsible for each child's safety during the event.
3. Release children only to individuals the parents/guardians have designated as approved to take the child from the child care center; require such individuals to show photo identification before releasing a child to them.
4. Keep parents/guardians informed when children are evacuated from the pre-school.

After a Disaster:

After an incident has occurred, it may not be possible to locate a child's parent/guardian or other designated trusted individuals. The pre-school will need to keep the child safe until reunified. The pre-school should contact the local emergency management office, the state child care licensing office and National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC) operated by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC).

If possible, provide requested information such as a photo of the child and parent/guardian information. If no one has been located to release the child to and the center is no longer able to provide care for the child, follow local protocols and contact the appropriate state agency for guidance.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

The pre-school may have children with disabilities or chronic medical conditions.

Considerations for these children should be included in all disaster plans and procedures.

Examples of special considerations include:

1. Ensure the emergency supply cache has equipment, food, medications and other items the child (ren) may need during a shelter-in-place event. Evaluate the food cache list for any conflicts with child (ren)'s allergies.
2. Ensure additional equipment that may be needed is available to safely transport the child (ren) to a secondary location (e.g. special car seat, wheelchair van) during an evacuation.
3. Discuss with local emergency responders what additional assistance may be needed during an evacuation, including any child that is dependent on technological devices (e.g. ventilator) and will need assistance soon after an event occurs.
4. Ensure the Emergency Information Form is up to date and included with other important documents during an evacuation.

During and after an event, ensure age/developmentally appropriate language is used when providing care, comfort and addressing the mental health needs of the child.

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CONCLUSION

Most children under the age of five that spend their daytime hours away from their parents do so in a pre-school. It is vital that every pre-school take steps to ensure the safety of these children and be prepared to meet their needs should a disaster occur. Comprehensive written disaster plans that outline the policies and procedures that child care staff will follow during a disaster will assist centers/schools with meeting the needs of children and staff during an emergency incident.