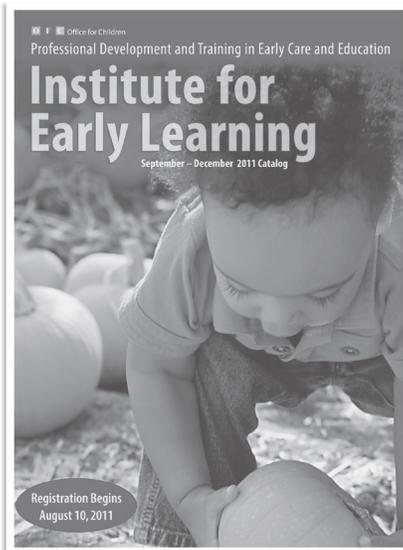


September Is National Emergency Preparedness Month

As a child care professional, the CPR and first aid training you take for your license or permit prepares you to help children recover from choking and other injuries. Child care professionals are also required to know how to keep children safe during emergencies caused by extreme weather, accidents, crime and epidemics. The Office for Children offers classes and information to help you plan, prepare and practice caring for children during emergencies.

Special Event September 17



Family child care providers are invited to attend the “Be Ready: Emergency and Safety Preparedness” conference which will be held Saturday, September 17 from 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center. Family child care providers can earn six hours of training credit for attending this event.

Registration details are in the Institute for Early Learning’s fall training catalog, which is available on the Office for Children’s website at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.

Fire Safety

Fire emergencies happen much more often than you might think.

Last year, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department responded to more than 18,000 fire incidents, and more than 100 fires were set by minors.

It is very important to know how to protect children from fire and burn hazards.

As a child care professional, you must:

- ▶ Know the fastest way to evacuate your home or facility if a fire breaks out,
- ▶ Practice evacuating with the children every month,
- ▶ Have working smoke detectors and fire extinguishers,
- ▶ Keep your home or facility free from fire hazards.

You can find helpful fire safety information online at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr.



Emergency Preparedness Resources on Back.

Building Resiliency: How to Have “Bounce-Back” Kids

Resiliency is the ability to recover from misfortune. As a child care professional, you can help the children in your care develop resiliency.

Children will become more resilient if they have adults in their lives who teach them how to deal with fear and grief caused by pain and loss. You can learn how to build on children’s strengths to help them bounce back from crises. Here are a few helpful resources:

The Sesame Workshop shows adults how to use songs and activities to help children become more resilient in dealing with emergencies and natural disasters. Type “emotional wellbeing” into the search box at: www.sesameworkshop.org/parents.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has helpful information about how children react to emergencies at different ages. Type “Helping Children Cope With Disaster” at: www.fema.gov.

PBS offers videos and articles about helping children deal with tragic events. Type “PBS Helping Children Deal With Scary News” at: www.google.com.

North Carolina State University has a “Helping Children Cope With Stress” guide in English and Spanish. You can read it at: www.ces.ncsu.edu.

The University of Illinois Extension provides a guide adults can use with school-age children. Type “Children, Stress and Natural Disasters” in the search box at: www.ag.uiuc.edu.

Fairfax County Office for Children also provides many courses through the Institute for Early Learning that support emergency preparedness and children’s emotional development. This catalog of courses can be found at: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.



Fight the Flu

Flu season typically runs from October to April. Every flu season has the potential to become an epidemic – which means having more than the expected number of cases of the disease. To prevent the spread of infectious diseases like the flu, remember to:

- ▶ Get a flu shot every year,
- ▶ Clean toys regularly,
- ▶ Make sure parents keep children home when children are sick.

It’s important to teach children these hygiene habits that will help them avoid catching or spreading the flu:

- ▶ Cover their noses and mouths when they cough or sneeze.
- ▶ Wash their hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. (Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.)
- ▶ Avoid touching their eyes, noses or mouths. Germs spread this way.

For current information about the flu, check this Fairfax County website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/flu.

Planning Ahead

“Disaster” is defined as a crisis causing widespread destruction and distress. Disasters can strike suddenly with no warning. Some are so huge – like the recent earthquakes in Haiti and Japan – that they challenge the government’s ability to assist the public. Because authorities might not be able to help residents and businesses right away during an area-wide disaster, you should have enough food, supplies and equipment to care for yourself and the people who depend on you for several days if necessary.

Whether emergencies impact a whole community or only a few people, child care businesses must have certain supplies and equipment on hand at all times to help keep children safe. The required supplies and equipment you should have depend on whether you operate a state-licensed program or have a Fairfax County permit.

The requirements for state-licensed programs can be found at www.dss.virginia.gov.

Emergency equipment and supplies for county-permitted programs can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ofc.



Stress Management for Child Care Professionals

Most emergencies happen quickly and without warning. If you already have a lot of stress in your life, it can be hard for you to handle the extra stress caused by a crisis. The less stressed you are before an emergency happens, the better you will be able to cope and assist the children in your care.

Some stress is caused by major life changes, such as marriage, divorce, parenthood, or moving out of the country. Other stress can come from worries and negative thinking.

Reducing stress, and doing everything you can to be prepared for emergencies, will help you respond much more calmly in a crisis. Ways to reduce stress include:

- ▶ Getting enough rest.
- ▶ Knowing your limits.
- ▶ Learning how to relax.
- ▶ Exercising regularly.
- ▶ Connecting with others.

It’s also important to know when to ask for help in dealing with stress. For information about finding treatment, go to Mental Health America’s website at: www.mentalhealthamerica.net.

Fairfax County Office for Children
Department of Family Services
Community Education and Provider Services
12011 Government Center Pkwy., Suite 800
Fairfax, VA 22035-1102

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Be Informed

There are many ways to find out what's happening in your community before, during and after an emergency.

The Community Emergency Alert Network sends short messages about local emergencies to your communication devices. To sign up for this free service, go to:
www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cean.

- ▶ Fairfax County government's website: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency.
- ▶ Fairfax County government's emergency radio station: 1670 AM.
- ▶ Fairfax County government's cable TV station: channel 16.
- ▶ Fairfax County government's emergency information hotline: 703-817-7771, TTY 711.



Emergency Preparedness Resources

Federal Emergency Management Agency

www.fema.gov

www.ready.gov

www.listo.gov (Spanish)

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov

Red Cross

www.redcross.org

Safe Kids USA

www.safekids.org

National Safety Council

www.nsc.org

Fairfax County's Office of Emergency Management

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/oem

