

Emergency Preparedness

In a disaster, local officials and relief workers cannot reach everyone immediately. Help may not arrive for hours or days. You and your family -- and don't forget to include the [needs of those with disabilities](#) -- need to be prepared ahead of time because you won't have time to shop or search for the supplies you will need when a disaster strikes.

Most disasters are [natural disasters](#), the result of some force of nature, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods. Some natural disasters can be predicted, such as hurricanes and severe winter storms, while others, such as tornadoes and earthquakes, happen with little or no warning.

Some disasters are the cause of human actions, intentional or unintentional. A disaster plan will help with safety, security, and comfort.

Regardless of the type of disaster, there are things you can do to prepare. Contact your local [Red Cross chapter](#), visit the [FEMA Web site](#), or [Ready.gov](#) to make sure you are aware of the potential for natural disasters in your community. After you have identified the types of disasters that could strike where you live, create a family disaster plan that can apply to any type of disaster – natural, unintentional, or intentional.

Prepare an emergency supplies kit

Disaster can occur suddenly and without warning. They can be frightening for adults, but they are traumatic for children if they don't know what to do when these events occur. Children depend on daily routines. When an emergency disturbs their routine, children can become nervous. In an emergency, they'll look to parents or other adults to help.

How parents react to an emergency gives children an indication on how to act. They see their parents' fear as proof that the danger is real. A parent's response during this time may have a long-term impact. Including children in the family's recovery plans will help them feel that their life will return to normal.

Families should prepare an [emergency supplies kit](#) and develop a plan. Practice your plan so that everyone will remember what to do in an emergency. Everyone in the home, including children, should play a part in the family's response and recovery efforts. Remember: make the plan simple so everyone can remember the details.

For Kids: [Sparky the Fire Dog®](#) teaches kids about what needs to be included in an emergency supplies kit.