

The PTA disaster preparedness chairman works to increase the awareness of and provide information for the school community on emergencies which might arise and the importance of being prepared. This chairman works with school staff and other PTA members to ensure parent involvement in the development and implementation of the school's disaster preparedness plan.

WHAT PTA CAN DO

- Become acquainted with the school district's state-mandated policies and procedures on disaster preparedness and crises response, including natural disasters, toxic spills, explosions, fallen aircraft, unauthorized persons on campus.
- Find out how the school has prepared for the unexpected by asking these questions:
 - What emergency situations have been identified that might threaten the school or its surrounding community? What is the response for each threat?
 - Have school staff and students received training or participated in drills using emergency procedures?
 - How do new teachers or staff learn and practice emergency procedures?
 - Does each student remember the training provided and have a sense of what he or she is supposed to do?
- Seek support from the principal and staff for PTA involvement in the school's disaster preparedness plan.
- Ask the school principal for permission to form a PTA committee to evaluate a disaster drill at the school, and share the results with the principal, staff, unit, council, district and State PTA. Evaluation should be based on established policies and procedures. If necessary, make recommendations that would provide for a safer school in the event of a disaster.
- Assist the school in providing information to parents about what to expect from the school in case of a disaster.
- Work with other community groups to increase awareness of the school's responsibilities in case of a disaster and to solicit community cooperation in both the planning and implementation stages, including the donation of supplies and/or funds to purchase supplies. Remember — solicitation of funds must be in accordance with local and state regulations, and any funds deposited in a PTA account must be handled in accordance with established PTA policies and procedures.
- Check with the city and/or county office of emergency services for information on emergency services and disaster preparedness.
- Consult with school district officials and council or district PTA for opportunities to increase personal knowledge of disaster preparedness and crisis response. Attend workshops/conferences.

- Read and clip disaster preparedness/crisis response newspaper and magazine articles for the files.
- Keep an updated procedure book with a record of all information gained. The successor will appreciate the information.
- Inform parents, through PTA newsletter, meetings and/or programs, how they can prepare their homes for a disaster.
- Work with school district and other local agencies on increasing public awareness of the importance of home planning for disaster. Use local media (i.e., newspaper, radio, television).

REFERENCES

- PTA publications
- California State PTA Toolkit*
- PTA in California* (official newsletter of the California State PTA)
- National PTA *Annual Resources for PTAs*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- County Disaster Plan
- School District Disaster Plan
- School Disaster Plan
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services – Sacramento
- California Department of Education, Education Codes
- American Red Cross (www.redcross.org)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, SW, Washington DC 20472 (www.FEMA.com/)
- First Aid and/or Survival Guide provided in the telephone directory
- California State PTA Vice President for Health
(health@capta.org) or 213.620.1100 ext.306

FAMILY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN AND EMERGENCY KIT

Check with schools about the plan for children to return home if disaster occurs during school hours. Ask to see the school district's disaster preparedness plan.

Plan for parent(s) safe return home from work.

Plan for what children should do if at home when disaster strikes:

- Learn about the natural disasters that could occur in the community from the local emergency management office or American Red Cross chapter. Learn whether hazardous materials are produced, stored or transported near the area. Learn about possible consequences of deliberate acts of terror. Ask how to prepare for each potential emergency and how to respond.

- Earthquake (stay away from windows and outer walls; duck, cover and hold).
- Toxic spills or explosions (Close windows, turn on radio and listen for instructions).
- Evacuate if necessary.

Plan for where family will meet, where children will go if parents are not home, how to evacuate from second floor or higher in case of earthquake, fire or flood. Establish an out-of-town contact person.

- Post emergency telephone numbers by telephones. Teach children how and when to use 911.
- Make sure everyone in the household knows how and when to shut off water, gas and electricity at the main switches. Consult with local utilities for answers to questions.
- Take a first aid and CPR class. Local American Red Cross chapters can provide information. Official certification by the American Red Cross provides “good Samaritan” law protection for those giving first aid.
- Reduce the economic impact of disaster on personal property and household’s health and financial well-being.
 - Review property insurance policies before disaster strikes make sure policies are current, and be certain they meet family needs (type of coverage, amount of coverage, and hazard coverage - flood, earthquake).
 - Protect the household’s financial well-being before a disaster strikes - review life insurance policies, and consider saving money in an “emergency” savings account that could be used in any crisis. It is advisable to keep a small amount of cash or traveler’s checks at home in a safe place where one can gain access to it quickly in case of an evacuation.
 - Be certain that health insurance policies are current and meet the needs of the household.
- Consider ways to help neighbors who may need special assistance, such as the elderly or the disabled.
- Make arrangements for pets. Pets are not allowed in public shelters. Service animals for those who depend on them are allowed.

Seek help for emotional needs of children and adults, if necessary. Get back to regular routines as soon as possible. (It gives children a feeling of security.)

Prepare a complete plan for the family and home.

Do not frighten young children unnecessarily.

Make a game of the plans.

Visit the FEMA website at www.fema.gov or the American Red Cross website at www.redcross.org for further information.

03/2004

Suggested Family Disaster Preparedness Plan and Emergency Kit Plan

March 1992 – Community Concerns

Family Plan

- Check with schools about the plan for children to return home, if disaster occurs during school hours. Ask to see the school district's disaster preparedness plan.
- Plan for parent(s) safe return home from work.
- Plan for what children should do if at home when disaster strikes:
 - Earthquake (stay away from windows and outer walls; stand in doorways).
 - Toxic spills or explosions (close windows, turn on radio and listen for instructions).
 - Evacuate if necessary.
- Call American Red Cross for further suggestions.
- Plan for after disaster occurs (where family will meet, where children will go if parents are not home, how to evacuate from second floor or higher in case of earthquake, fire or flood). Establish an out-of-town contact person for area.
- Contact references for detailed information.
- Seek help for emotional needs of children and adults, if necessary. Get back to regular routine as soon as possible (it gives children a feeling of security).
- This is not a complete plan.

It will be up to individual parents to prepare the best plan for their family and home.

Be careful of unnecessarily frightening young children.

Make a game of the plans.

See reference material.

Essentials

- Battery-powered radio (extra batteries--check freshness);
- Flashlight (extra batteries--check freshness);
- Blankets, bed rolls or anything that retains body heat;
- Water (in unbreakable containers - keep fresh - water is stored in water heater, toilet tank and pipes);
- Matches;
- Non-electric can opener;
- Fire extinguisher (keep updated);
- Adjustable wrench for turning off water and gas (do not turn off gas if no leakage is detected);

First Aid Kit

- First Aid Manual;
- 72-hour supply of family's prescribed medications;
- Aspirin or pain relievers;
- Rubbing alcohol;

- Soap for cleaning wounds;
- Baking soda and salt (1/2 tsp. soda and 1 tsp. salt in quart of water to replace body fluids in case of shock, vomiting or diarrhea);
- Gauze (small sterile pads to cover wounds, rolls of non-sterile gauze to cover, secure and protect an injury);
- Elastic bandage;
- Cotton balls and swabs;
- Scissors, tweezers, needles and safety pins;
- Thermometer;
- Matches;
- Adhesive tape;
- Splint material (magazines, wire mesh, cardboard, pillows, popsicle sticks, etc.);

Sanitation Kit

- Plastic bags and ties;
- Disinfectant (bleach, Lysol or betadine in unbreakable containers);
- Toilet paper, paper towels, soap, feminine hygiene needs;
- Disposable cups, plates, napkins and utensils;
- Toiletries (toothbrush and paste, comb and hairbrush, deodorant, mirror, etc.);

Food

- 72-hour supply that does not need heating, refrigeration or water;
- Ready-to-eat meats in cans;
- Canned fruits and vegetables (use liquid for drinking);
- Canned fruit juice (change canned goods periodically);
- Nuts and peanut butter in unbreakable containers;
- Powdered milk, chocolate mixes and pre-sweetened drink mixes;
- Infant supplies, if needed;
- Crackers, cookies in airtight containers;

All Items Should Be Checked and Replaced on a Regular Basis

An emergency kit must express the needs of each particular family. This list does not include all family needs. These are merely some suggestions to help determine the family needs. Contact the American Red Cross before finalizing kit.

RESOURCES

School District

County Department of Education

Fire Department

Police Department

Sheriff's Department

City and/or County Office of Emergency Services
State Office of Emergency Services
2800 Meadowview Road, Sacramento, CA 95832
Federal Emergency Management Agency
American Red Cross and front pages of telephone book