

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) [Strategic Plan](#) includes five strategic goals that together support the agency's mission to promote the economic and social well-being of children, youth, families, individuals, and communities by providing federal leadership, partnership, and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services.

Strategic Goal 4 identifies the importance of supporting communities and families to respond to acute needs and facilitate recovery from a range of crises and emergency situations. To support this Goal, ACF has compiled the following resource guide for ACF program staff and ACF grant recipients to support children, youth, and families who are preparing for, responding to, or recovering from an emergency, disaster, or adversity.

### Table of Contents

- [Definitions](#)
- [ACF-Specific Resources and Support](#)
- [Preparedness for Children and Families](#)
  - [General Resources](#)
  - [Training](#)
- [Response & Recovery for Children and Families](#)
  - [General Resources](#)
  - [School and Community Violence](#)
  - [Health & Behavioral Health Resources](#)
  - [Disaster Resources](#)
- [ACF Regional Emergency Preparedness Contacts](#)

### Definitions

**Emergency:** A sudden and urgent life-threatening event requiring immediate action. These types of events are often self-contained and may not require assistance from external partners.

**Disaster:** A calamitous event, especially one occurring suddenly and causing great loss of life, damage, or hardship. Such events may be natural, man-made, or hybrid and affect a community or communities.

**Adversity:** A wide range of circumstances or events that pose a serious threat to an individual or family's physical or psychological well-being.

### ACF-Specific Resources and Support

ACF program offices provide training and technical assistance (TTA) targeted to support ACF grant recipients to build capacity of the program, which may include specific TTA regarding how

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

to best support children, youth, and families who are preparing for, responding to, or recovering from an emergency, disaster, or adversity. For more information, contact your [ACF program office](#).

The ACF [Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response \(OHSEPR\)](#) promotes resilience of vulnerable individuals, children, families, and communities impacted by disasters and public health emergencies by providing disaster human services expertise to ACF grant recipients, partners, and stakeholders during preparedness, response, and recovery operations for emergency and disaster events.

- OHSEPR administers the [Disaster Human Services Case Management Program](#) and the [U.S. Repatriation Program](#). OHSEPR manages the ACF Continuity of Operation Plan, which directs how ACF's mission essential functions are performed during a wide range of disruptions or emergencies. [This video](#) provides an overview of those programs.

The ACF Office of Regional Operations (ORO) works with regional teams to lead strategic initiatives and emergency preparedness and response activities in partnership with states, counties, community and faith-based organizations, researchers, the philanthropic sector, businesses and other stakeholders. ORO is comprised of a [headquarters office and 10 regional offices](#) that serve states and territories in their geographical areas.

### **Prevention & Preparedness for Children and Families**

The following resources will help children, youth, families, and communities prepare for emergencies, disasters, and adversities.

#### ***General Resources***

- [Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response \(ASPR\)](#): A Staff Division of HHS, ASPR leads the nation's medical and public health preparedness for, response to, and recovery from disasters and public health emergencies.
  - [HHS Maternal-Child Emergency Planning Toolkit](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#): Preparedness tips, toolkits, and information for families, parents, and parents-to-be
  - [Prepare an emergency kit](#) that includes a 3-day supply of necessities for each person in your family, such as food, medicine, water, games, flashlight, and special toys to help keep your children calm during an emergency.
  - [Make a plan](#) to contact family members, especially if you are not together when an emergency strikes. If your children are old enough, teach them how to call 911 and memorize important phone numbers. Create a reunification plan as part

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

of the family communication plan to reunite you with your loved ones as soon as it is safe to do so.

- [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#): FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after disasters.
  - [Be informed, stay informed](#), and get vital information, such as emergency warnings and alerts, from reliable news sources and your local emergency management agency.
  - <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current>: Find the most relevant information about disasters and emergency management by [searching your location](#).
- [Ready](#): Ready is a National public service campaign designed to educate and empower the American people to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters. The goal of the campaign is to promote preparedness through public involvement.
  - [Ready Kids](#): A Resource devoted to helping children understand disasters, and prepare for a storm with games and stories, in English and Spanish.
  - [Family Emergency & Disaster Planning: prepare and build a kit!](#)
- [American Red Cross](#): The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.
- [SavetheChildren.Org](#): Save the Children is committed to reducing the impact of disasters, whether [natural](#) or manmade, on children through [effective preparedness](#), [emergency response](#) and recovery.
  - [Family Emergency Preparedness Plan](#)

### Training

Training is an important component of preparing for emergencies, disasters, and adversities, whether you are a parent or guardian, human services provider, or first responder.

- [Cultural Competency Program for Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response](#): is a free, online educational program accredited for disaster and emergency personnel that equips learners with knowledge, skills, and awareness to serve all individuals, regardless of cultural or linguistic background through the application of HHS' National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health and Health Care.
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#): Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners who strive to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

- Psychological First Aid: [PFA](#) is an early intervention to support children, adolescents, adults, and families impacted by these types of events. [PFA Mobile](#) and the [PFA Wallet Card \(En Español\)](#) provide a quick reminder of the core actions. The [PFA online training](#) course is also available on the NCTSN Learning Center.
- [PFA for Schools \(PFA-S\) – Field operations guide](#)
- [Providing PFA-S: For Health-Related Professionals](#)
- [Providing PFA-S: For Principals and Administrators](#)
- [Providing PFA-S: For Teachers](#)
- [PFA for Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- [Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters](#)
- [Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#): FEMA’s mission is helping people before, during and after disasters.
  - FEMA’s Individual and Community Preparedness Division (ICPD) develops and provides trainings for volunteers and local organizations to support their community during emergencies of all kinds.
    - [Community Preparedness: Integrating the Needs of Children](#)
    - [Organizations Preparing for Emergency Needs \(OPEN\)](#)
    - [Emergency Management Institute](#)

### **Response & Recovery for Children & Families**

The following resources provide information, strategies, and tools that can help children, families, and communities respond to and recover from emergencies, disasters, and adversities to mitigate their impact during and immediately following such events and to minimize the risk of future harm while returning to some degree of normalcy and stability once the immediate threat has subsided. Each event is different and may require different actions to keep you and your family safe.

### ***General Resources***

- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#): Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners who strive to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

- [Helping Kids Cope](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#): Preparedness tips, toolkits, and information for families, parents, and parents-to-be
  - [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)
- [Ready](#): Ready is a National public service campaign designed to educate and empower the American people to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters. The goal of the campaign is to promote preparedness through public involvement.
  - [Helping Children Cope](#)

### ***School and Community Violence***

- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#): Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners who strive to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.
  - [Helping Youth After Community Trauma: Tips for Educators](#)
- [SchoolSafety.gov](#): Created by the federal government to provide schools and districts with actionable recommendations to create a safe and supportive learning environment where students can thrive and grow.
- [Youth.gov](#): Created by the Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs, which is composed of representatives from 13 federal departments and 12 federal agencies that support programs and services focusing on youth and promote the goal of positive, healthy outcomes for youth.
  - [Youth.gov: Resources for Helping Youth Cope After A Mass Shooting](#)
- [National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center \(NMVVR\)](#): NMVVR serves as the source for best evidence to achieve a social understanding of mass violence upon which civic leaders, mental health professionals, journalists, policy makers, and victim assistance professionals can rely.
  - [Rebuild Your Community--for Community Leaders](#)
  - [Timeline of Activities to Promote Mental Health Recovery: Recommendations Before, During, and Following a Mass Violence Incident](#)
  - [Resources to Support Self Help for Parents & Caregivers](#)
  - [Unexpected Challenges for Communities](#)
- [National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement](#): The National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement (NCSCB) at Children's Hospital Los Angeles is dedicated to supporting students through crisis and loss.

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

- [Talking to Kids about Tragedies \(Such as Shootings and Terror Attacks\) in the News](#)
- [Center for Study of Traumatic Stress \(CSTS\)](#): CSTS addresses a wide scope of trauma exposure from the consequences of combat, operations other than war, terrorism, natural and humanmade disasters, and public health threats. A unique aspect and contribution of the Center is the integration of disaster mental health and public health.
  - [Grief Leadership: Leadership in the Wake of Tragedy](#)
  - [Leadership Communication: Anticipating and Responding to Stressful Events](#)
  - [Coping with Stress Following a Mass Shooting](#)
  - [Restoring a Sense of Safety in the Aftermath of a Mass Shooting: Tips for Parents and Professionals](#)
- [Early Childhood Development in Emergencies](#) — guidance from UNICEF to help train and support parents and caregivers prepare for and respond to disasters.
- [National Association of School Psychologists](#): School psychologists are uniquely qualified members of school teams that support students' abilities to learn and teachers' abilities to teach. They apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally.
  - [School Violence Resources](#)
  - [School Safety and Crisis Resources](#)

### ***Health & Behavioral Health Resources***

- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#): Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners who strive to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.
  - [Early Childhood Trauma Resources](#)
  - [At the Hospital: Helping My child Cope-What Parents Can Do](#)
  - [Making A Plan: Dealing with Things That Remind You of What Happened \[Medical Trauma\]](#)
  - [What Do I Say? Talking About What Happened with Others \[Medical Trauma\]](#)
- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#): SAMHSA leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.
  - [Skills for Psychological Recovery: Field Operations Guide](#)
  - [Talking with Children: Tips for Caregivers, Parents, and Teachers During Infectious Disease Outbreaks](#)

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

- [Healthy Children.Org](#): A parenting website developed by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), a professional organization dedicated to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.
  - [Childhood Trauma: 3 Ways to Help Kids Cope](#)
  - [How to Support your Child's Resilience in a Time of Crisis](#)
- [National Institute of Mental Health](#): The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is the lead federal agency for research on mental illnesses. The mission of NIMH is to transform the understanding and treatment of mental illnesses through basic and clinical research, paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure.
  - [Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Traumatic Events](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#): NASP is a professional association representing more than 25,000 school psychologists, graduate students, and related professionals throughout the United States and an additional 25 countries worldwide. As the world's largest organization of school psychologists, NASP works to advance effective practices to improve students' learning, behavior, and mental health. Their vision is that all children and youth thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.
  - [Helping Children Cope with Changes Resulting from COVID-19](#)
- [University of Missouri Disaster and Crisis Center \(DCC\)](#): DCC focuses on enhancing preparedness, recovery, and resilience in children, families, schools, and communities affected by disaster and community crisis.
  - [Resilience and Coping Intervention \(RCI\)](#)

### ***Disaster-Specific Resources***

- [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration \(SAMHSA\)](#): SAMHSA leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation. SAMHSA's mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities.
  - [SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline and Text](#)
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network \(NCTSN\)](#): Administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), NCTSN is a unique network of frontline providers, family members, researchers, and national partners who strive to raise the standard of care and increase access to services for children and families who experience or witness traumatic events.
  - [Disaster-Specific Resources](#) including resources to support children and families during:
    - [Earthquakes](#)
    - [Extreme Heat](#)

# Resource Guide

## Supporting Children & Families Before, During, & After Emergencies, Disasters, & Adversities

- [Floods](#)
- [Hurricanes](#)
- [Landslides](#)
- [COVID-19 and Pandemics](#)
- [Tornados](#)
- [Tsunamis](#)
- [Wildfires](#)
- [Windstorms](#)
- [Winter Storms](#)
- [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children \(NCMEC\)](#): NCMEC serves as a resource center and supports location and reunification of children separated from families in disasters.
  - [Preparedness, Response, and Recovery](#)
- [Healthy Children.Org](#): A parenting website developed by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), a professional organization dedicated to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.
  - [Talking With Children About Disasters](#)
  - [Helping Children Cope and Adjust After a Disaster](#)
  - [How Families Can Cope with Relocation Stress After a Disaster](#)
  - [Hurricanes & Floods: Taking Care of Your Children and Yourself](#)
- [National Association of School Psychologists \(NASP\)](#): NASP's vision is that all children and youth thrive in school, at home, and throughout life.
  - [Natural Disaster Resources](#)
  - [Natural Disasters: Brief Facts and Tips](#)
  - [Large-Scale Natural Disasters: Helping Children Cope](#)