Critical Issues
For Children in Disasters

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#IAEM16
How many children are separated from their parents on a routine workday?

69 Million
Why focus on children in disasters?

- Highly vulnerable
- Unique needs
- 23% of the U.S. population
Why focus on children in disasters?

- 59% of the dependent population
- Inaccurately categorized
- Preparedness gaps
Children’s Needs Have Not Been a National Priority

11 years after Katrina

Only 21% of NCCD recommendations are complete.
The record on children’s needs at the state & local level is mixed. 

- **Meets all STC criteria**: States in green
- **Doesn’t meet all STC criteria**: States in red

Map of the United States with states colored to indicate whether they meet all STC criteria or not.
Reality Check

• What agency in your state oversees childcare organizations?

• What agency in your state is responsible for children’s welfare?

• Does your state mandate childcare facilities meet the Save The Children standards?
Reality Check

• Do your plans address the needs of children?

• Do you involve local child serving organizations in planning & preparedness?

• Have you exercised your plan using children?
Objectives

• Explain the importance of children’s task forces in effective disaster preparedness planning.

• Develop effective reunification plans for individual jurisdictions.

• Describe the challenges of protecting children in shelters (and the attendant controversies therein).

• Identify 2 ways to better meet children’s disaster needs.
Critical Issue 1: Children’s Task Forces

How they work
Why they are needed
What are Children’s Task Forces?

Multi-disciplinary collaborations focused solely on children’s disaster needs
What do they do?

Drive coordination on children’s issues
Why Have a Task Force?

Because they work

Where?

• Joplin, MO (2011)
• Hurricane Sandy (NJ & NY, 2012)
• Hurricane Isaac (LA, 2012)
How are we doing?

As of July 2016, only 5 states have *dedicated* Children’s Disasters Task Forces.
Dedicated Children’s Disasters Task Forces

- **Active TF**: Green
- **Developing / Considering TF**: Dark Teal
- **Inactive TF**: Yellow
- **No dedicated TF**: Red

The map illustrates the status of dedicated children’s disasters task forces across the United States, with states shaded in different colors to indicate their status as active, developing/considering, inactive, or with no dedicated task forces.
How to start a Task Force?

• Use provided resources
• Reach out
• Work together
Resources

• Templates
• White Paper

• Contacts
• Best Practices
Critical Issue 2: Reunification

Bringing them back together. Quickly and Safely.
Separation from parents
More acute in Weekday & Catastrophic Disasters

WHY?
What’s different about weekdays?

69 Million children separated from parents
5,192 children separated in Katrina

Why catastrophic disasters?
What about weekday catastrophic disasters?
Reunification Problems

- No reunification plans
- Untested plans
Reunification Problems

- Tracking
- Critical missing
- Large distances
Reunification Problems

- Different systems
- Lack of information
- Multiple reports
Reunification Solutions

Post-Disaster Reunification of Children: A Nationwide Approach
November 2013

MULTI-AGENCY REUNIFICATION SERVICES PLAN TEMPLATE

Jurisdiction

Month/Day/Year

Version 1
May 1, 2015
Welcome to the Unaccompanied Minors Registry

If you locate an unaccompanied minor, please call your local law enforcement agency immediately. Then complete the following.

The Unaccompanied Minors Registry supports the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) by allowing the public to report information related to children who have been separated from their parents or legal guardians as a result of a disaster. This tool will enable NCMEC to provide assistance to local law enforcement and assist in the reunification of displaced children with their parents or legal guardians. If you experience any trouble reporting online, please contact NCMEC 24-hours a day, at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678 FREE).

An unaccompanied minor is a child who has been separated from parents, legal guardians, and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

This site is a secured site. UMR uses Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology to encrypt information on this application over the internet.

Start Reporting
Children's Disaster Reunification Plan Pilot Program
Reunification Solutions

- Plan
- Exercise your plan
Critical Issue 3:
Protecting Children in Shelters

Keeping them safe in the worst of times.
Disasters increase vulnerability to sex offenders & traffickers

Why?
Protecting Children in Shelters

They are even more vulnerable in shelters

Why?
Protecting Children in Shelters

- Number of people
- From everywhere
- Relative chaos
- Parental distraction
Problems Protecting Them

- No national standard
- Different approaches
- No case law
- Conflicting rights
Solutions

- NCCD recommendations
- Common standard
- Unified approach
- Educate
- Avoid creating case law
- Protect everyone
Critical Issue 4:
Meeting Children’s Disaster Needs Better

Living up to our obligation to them.
Meet children’s disaster needs better

• Address & implement the NCCD recommendations
• Meet the STC National Report Card Criteria
Meet children’s disaster needs better

- Work at the local and state level
- Address “low hanging fruit”
Meet children’s disaster needs better

- Build on other’s work
  - FEMA
  - Other EMs (local & states)
  - IAEM Children in Disasters Caucus
Questions
Contact

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IAEM Children in Disasters Caucus
BACKUP SLIDES (HIDDEN)
Between 2004 and 2012, ~ 0.08% of Federal preparedness grant money went to children’s needs.

Out of $16.7B, only $13.2M dedicated to children’s needs.

Children’s Needs have not been a National Priority.

If the total was just $100...

Just 8 cents for children’s needs.