

Preparedness checklists for schools

School administration checklist

Administrators: prepare your school and yourself

- Make sure that you are familiar with all of the *standard operating procedures* and know everyone's role and responsibility.

- Be sure that you can use the *emergency decision tree*, as a handy reference.

- Check that the *school emergency building evacuation route* map is posted in all offices.

- Check that school classrooms have current emergency clipboard including a copy of the *standard operating procedures*, roles and responsibilities in your standard emergency management system, and current class roster.

- Check that school-wide *emergency supplies* are in place and easily transportable (for evacuation or field trips).

- Check that the fire extinguishers or fire suppression materials are maintained, and staff know how to use it.

- In case of disaster before or soon after the end of the school day, be prepared to organize your school to provide assistance to students who may come to school as the nearest meeting point or *safe haven*.

- Make sure that the *student emergency contact cards* are up-to-date.

- Complete your own *family disaster plan* at home and with your childcare providers, if you have children.

Administrators: prepare your staff

Meet with your school management committee to review and amend the *standard operating procedures for disasters and emergencies in schools* as necessary. Reach out to include representatives of parents or guardians, local community and public safety authorities.

In case you are away from the school at the time of an emergency, or in case you have very extenuating circumstances and must leave before an *all clear*, be sure that you have two back-up persons on staff that are confident to lead in your absence.

Plan with your staff for a flexible division-of-labour immediately after a disaster, consistent with standard emergency management plans in your area. Review the roles and responsibilities associated with each function, with your staff.

Immediately following your school-wide simulation drill and be sure to evaluate the drill, learn from it, and review the school risk reduction and response plans again.

Make sure that all of your staff is familiar with the *emergency decision tree*, and all of the *standard operating procedures*.

Problem-solve with staff, students and parents or guardians, to be sure that every child with specific access or functional needs is included, and no one is left out.

Teachers' checklist

Teachers: prepare yourselves

- School emergency building evacuation route map should be posted in your room.
- Classroom emergency supplies are in place and easily transportable (for evacuation or field trips).
- Know the location of your fire extinguisher or fire suppression material and know how to use it.
- Complete your own *family disaster plan* at home and with your childcare providers, if you have your own children. The principal or designee will release staff members as the needs change. If you have very extenuating circumstances discuss these with your school head *now*, not during an emergency.
- Plan a quiet activity that students can do in the assembly area in the event of a real emergency or a drill.
- In case of a disaster or emergency, before or soon after the end of the school day, be prepared to respond and provide assistance to students who may come to school as nearest meeting point or *safe haven*.

Teachers: prepare your students

- Make sure that your students know the four rules for building evacuation: *do not talk; do not push; and do not turn back*. Students should know that if there is an earthquake when they are outside of a classroom (during break or lunch or if they are somewhere), they should exit with the nearest class and should not go back inside after they *drop, cover, and hold on*. If they are between classes, they should assemble in the outdoor emergency assembly area.
- Explain to students before drills what staff members do during emergencies.
- Early childhood classes should have evacuation ropes with one handle for each child. The rope will go through the middle of the group with each child holding on to a handle (handles are on opposite sides of the child in front and behind). Practice to make sure students stay together, holding on to the rope.
- Make modifications to be sure that every child with specific access or functional needs is included, and no one is left out.
- Review the *emergency evacuation routes*. Prepare four monitors who will work as buddies and lead the way, carefully checking to make sure that the route is clear. This is particularly of importance for classes on second floor or without easy access to open space outdoors.
- If you face earthquake risks, practice the *drop, cover, and hold on* drill, having students hold their position for 45 seconds. In tsunami risk areas, make sure that you also *count* and *evacuate to higher ground if the earthquake is strong* (hard to stay standing) *or long* (more than 4 seconds).
- Teacher in science labs and cooking classes should demonstrate to students how to extinguish any flames and isolate any hazardous materials in use. In shop classes, switch off the machines.

Make sure that students understand *safe family reunification* procedures. Inform students that only their parent(s), guardian(s), or other adult(s) listed on their *emergency contact card* will be allowed to pick them up from school during an emergency. Explain the *request gate and reunion gate procedures*.

Teachers and students: prepare your parents or guardians

Teachers are to pass out drill announcements, parent or guardian letters to their students to take home.

Confirm with the parents or guardians that their *emergency contact form* is up-to-date, and explain the importance of the reunification procedures. Explain the *request gate and reunion gate procedures*.

Reassure parents.