



Sheltering and Special Needs Tasks

Primary Responsibilities

- ▼ Set up a neighborhood Care Center to help those with special needs following a disaster. This may include children, older adults or those who may have a disability.
- ▼ Ensure that all neighbors have shelter following a disaster.

Before the Disaster

- Using the back of this sheet as a guide, identify those who may need special assistance following a disaster. Reassure parents that information about their children will be kept confidential.
- Identify a home that could be used as the neighborhood Care Center. Providing a place where children can be brought for a few hours will allow other team members to complete their responsibilities.
- Become acquainted with the psychological needs of children and elderly listed on the back of this sheet.

After the Disaster

Priority #1: Take care of yourself, your family and your home

- Check yourself and your family members for injuries.
- Take care of your house by:
 - Putting out small fires using a portable fire extinguisher.
 - Turning off your natural gas at the valve outside the house, **only if you smell natural gas, hear or see a problem, or if you suspect a leak.**
 - Turn off your water at the main house valve and, if necessary, your electricity at the main electrical panel.
- Dress for safety and go to your meeting site:
 - Put your Help/OK sign in the window or on the door where it can be seen from the street.
 - Wear comfortable clothing, hardhat, safety glasses, gloves, sturdy shoes.
 - Bring a flashlight and your first aid kit.
 - Put your fire extinguisher at the end of the driveway for others to use if necessary.

Priority #2: Take Care of Others

- Meet up with your team members at the neighborhood Meeting Site. Always work in teams of two.
- Immediately check on children and those who live alone or may need additional assistance. If the structure they are in appears damaged, coordinate this effort with the Search & Rescue Team. If they have been injured, immediately take them to the neighborhood First Aid Station.
- Establish a neighborhood Care Center. Post a large sign so all neighbors know where to bring their children while they complete their neighborhood response tasks.
- Try to find a way for those brought to the Care Center to participate in the recovery effort. It is comforting to help the neighborhood resume its normal routine.
- Determine if anyone in the neighborhood needs shelter. If you are unable to house them in the neighborhood, coordinate with the Neighborhood Coordinator to find out if shelter sites have been opened near your neighborhood.
- Maintain a list of those who are staying at neighbors homes or in shelters and their locations. This information will be valuable to family members or friends who come looking for them.



Psychological Needs of Children and Older Adults

Children and older adults can be easily overwhelmed by a disaster and may experience difficulty in coping with the situation and their feelings. You can help by talking openly about what has happened and how they feel about it.

- ▼ Encourage them to speak freely about whatever is on their minds. Be careful not to argue or tell them how they should feel.
- ▼ Express confidence in your ability to help them. Reassure them that the recovery process is underway.
- ▼ Encourage them to participate in the rebuilding efforts. Explain that as they contribute their skills to the neighborhood, life will start returning to normal.

Talking With Kids About Disaster

You may notice the following NORMAL reactions in children:

- Reluctance to be separated from parents, fear, and general upset.
- Problems going to sleep.
- Increased fears that may not appear to be related to the event.
- Stomachaches or headaches.
- An increase in their questions as they try to figure out what happened.

Use these guidelines when talking with children:

- **Reassure** children that they – and the key adults in their lives – are safe.
- **Explain** that it's OK to feel upset. Let kids talk about their feelings and help them put those feelings into perspective.
- **Observe** their emotional state, keeping an eye on changes in behavior, appetite or sleep patterns.
- **Maintain** a normal routine as much as possible, sticking to set times for homework, dinner and bed.

Children & those with special needs in our neighborhood

Name: _____ Phone: _____
 Address: _____ Will be checked on by: _____
 Need: _____

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 Need: _____

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 Need: _____

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