

# Children's Disaster Preparedness



**Mission:** To ensure the safety and security of all children before, during and after public health emergencies and disasters.

**Vision:** Communities will have the expertise, skills and resources necessary to plan for and manage the emergency preparedness and response needs of children.



Children Are Not Small Adults.

**Purpose:** Disasters have a great and often lasting impact on children both physically and mentally. Building partnerships, coordinating resources and leveraging best practices will both reduce pediatric morbidity and mortality and increase family, community and public health system resilience in all phases of disaster response.

**Program Authority/Funding:** Chapter 252, Florida Statutes. The department receives funds from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) Cooperative Agreements.

Children's Preparedness aligns with/or supports:

[Florida Public Health and Health Care Preparedness 2014-2017 Strategic Plan](#)

Goal 7: Community and Health Care System Resilience

[ASPR Healthcare Preparedness Capabilities](#)

Capability 10: Medical Surge

[CDC Public Health Preparedness Capabilities](#)

Capability 1: Community Preparedness

Capability 2: Community Recovery

Capability 7: Mass Care

Capability 10: Medical Surge

[The National Commission on Children and Disasters](#)

An independent, bipartisan body established by Congress and the President, examined and assessed the needs of children in relation to the preparation for, response to and recovery from all hazards, including major disasters and emergencies.

## Objectives:

- Support the integration of children's disaster needs in state and local disaster planning, policies and partnerships to identify gaps and leverage resources for children's emergency preparedness and response.
- Promote and support children's disaster resilience for public health systems and communities, families and individuals.
- Coordinate children's disaster preparedness with Vulnerable Population and Behavioral Health Preparedness objectives.
- Provide tools and resources to assist families, community planners, schools, health care professionals and health care system members successfully address children's needs before, during and after a disaster.

## 2013-2014 Highlights:

- Continued to make major strides with the Children's Preparedness Coalition to build the children's preparedness infrastructure in the state by:
  - Increasing the number of meetings with the coalition to receive updates on current initiatives, brainstorm various topics, provide input on workgroup projects and share valuable information to benefit the program and its partners;
  - Creating workgroups to address three of the identified high-priority areas for children's preparedness: state guidance, healthcare coalition involvement and education and awareness. The purpose of these workgroups is to: 1) create children's preparedness guidance for the state, 2) ensure pediatric representation in the state and local healthcare coalitions for planning purposes to meet the needs of children, and 3) provide education and awareness to bolster the amount of information available to the public and partners concerning children's preparedness; and
  - Added new stakeholders to the coalition and reconnected former agencies with the group to be a part of the planning process.
- Developed two new children's preparedness resources to educate the public and include in the program's growing toolkit: 1) a School Preparedness brochure targeted to school principals/administrators and school safety officers to encourage the inclusion of a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) based preparedness curricula at their schools for the benefit of all students, and 2) a Family with Children brochure that encourages proper preparedness. These tools were created to ensure children can be resilient during a disaster.
- Successfully partnered with the Statewide Healthcare Working Group to have children's preparedness initiatives as part of the healthcare coalition structure and have representation in the local healthcare coalitions.
- Provided outreach and presentations to build interest in children's preparedness, such as the Florida Crisis Consortium, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Family Café and the Governor's Hurricane Conference.
- Began sending Children's Disaster Preparedness (CDP) information blasts to the Children's Preparedness Coalition to keep them informed of current CDP news, trends, research and other related information that will assist Florida in being prepared for disasters and emergencies.

**Partners:** County health departments, local emergency management, Florida pediatric hospitals, Department of Children and Families, Department of Education, Florida Division of Emergency Management, Florida Hospital Association, Southeastern Regional Pediatric Disaster Surge Response Network, Florida Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Whole Child Leon, FL JrCERT, American Red Cross and Department of Health partners including the offices of Environmental Health, Group Care, Birth Defects, Family Health Services and Children's Medical Services.

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For more information on the Florida Department of Health, Division of Emergency Preparedness and Community Support, Bureau of Preparedness and Response, Children's Disaster Preparedness go to:

[www.floridahealth.gov/preparedness-and-response/prepare-yourself/childrens-preparedness](http://www.floridahealth.gov/preparedness-and-response/prepare-yourself/childrens-preparedness) or go to [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov) and enter "Children's Preparedness" in the search box.

