

Emergency Preparedness for Children with Special Needs

Seattle Children's Center for Children with Special Needs | www.cshcn.org

Follow these steps to help you prepare for an emergency or disaster with your child's special health care needs or disability in mind.

Assess your situation

Reflect and plan for your child's needs if there was:

- No utilities
- No local access to prescription refills or health products
- Separation from family members
- Inability to leave your home or need for evacuation
- Limited health care access and emergency rescue services
- A lack of transportation

Create a plan

Sit down and talk with your family about different types of emergencies and how to prepare for them. Talk about how to care for your child with special needs during an emergency.

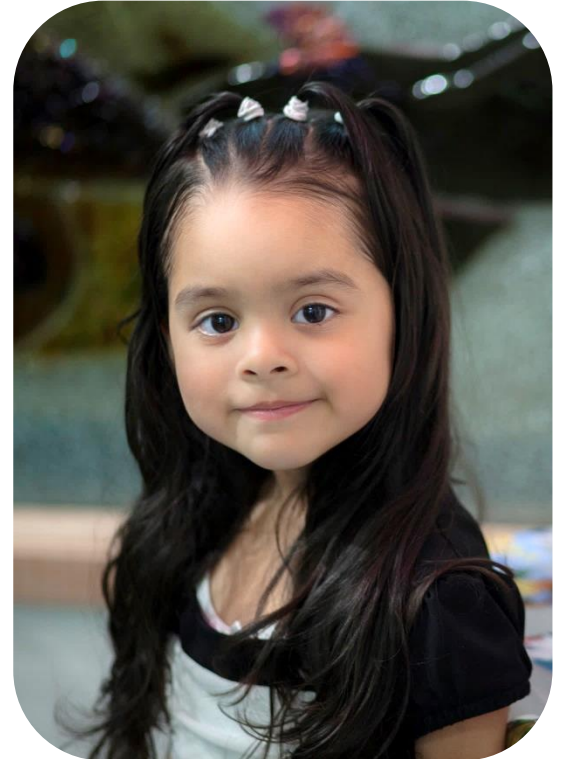
- Plan for back up sources of heat, refrigeration, and electricity.
- You can use a Red Cross shelter for storing medicine, charging equipment and meals. You do not have to be staying there to use its resources.
- Create and practice an escape plan for your home
- Be sure there are clear exit paths for a child who uses mobility devices or has vision loss.
- Check out Smart 91. This free service allows you to create a safety profile for your household and include any information you want 9-1-1 to have in the event of an emergency.
- Obtain medical alert identification jewelry for your child.
- Ask for the emergency plan at your child's school or child care. Plan with them how your child will get medication, be evacuated or shelter in place.

Create a support network

Create a network of family, neighbors or friends that can help you and your child. Tell them about your child's special needs and share your emergency plan and where your emergency supplies are stored.

- Show others how to handle your child's wheelchair or other equipment.
- Give a trusted member of your network a key to your home.
- Agree upon a system to signal for help if phones and electricity are not working.

Pack an emergency supply kit



Emergency Preparedness for Children with Special Needs

~~In addition to supplies needed for a general disaster kit, you may need to add several things to the kit for your child with special needs. These may include:~~

- A current copy of your child's emergency care form. Visit cshcn.org to download the "In Case of Emergency Form".
- Store current medical information and records on a phone app or thumb drive. Keep one paper copy laminated or in a waterproof bag.
- Special dietary foods and supplies.
- Items that calm or entertain your child.
- Identification for each family member in case your family gets separated.

Power Supplies:

- A generator for back up power. **Never** use a generator indoors.
- Battery powered versions of medical equipment your child uses.
- Extra batteries for hearing aids and communication devices.
- An AC adaptor for your car can be used to power small electrical equipment such as nebulizers.
- Store a manual wheelchair or other non-electric versions of equipment.

Medical supplies and medications:

- Talk with your child's doctor about how to get an emergency supply of medicines.
- Ask your pharmacist about how long the medicine can last and their storage requirements.
- Keep a cooler and chemical ice packs on hand for medications that must stay cold.
- Keep prescription information in your wallet or phone, survival kit and car. Include the name, location and phone number of an out of town pharmacy.
- Keep a two-week supply of medical care items such as needles, nasal cannulas and bandages.

If you can't contact your doctor or pharmacy in a disaster, ask for help from staff at emergency shelters or service centers.

For more information on emergency preparedness visit cshcn.org

