

Michigan Child Care Matters

Emergency Preparedness Issue 98

From the Division Director

We've all seen the stories on the news and read about them in the paper. Today we heard about a family dealing with a devastating house fire. Yesterday we read about a tornado that ripped through a town and left nothing in its wake. Last week torrential rains caused major flooding in several states. And then there was the story about that child who was severely injured in an accident at home. It will never happen to me, these things happen to someone else. And yet...

Over the past year fires and accidents and other serious emergencies have happened in licensed child care facilities in Michigan. To be more specific, between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2013:

- Eighty-nine children have had an accident while in child care that resulted in a broken bone.
- Ten incidents of children being lost while in the care of a licensed or registered provider occurred.
- Four children have gotten serious burns while in child care.
- Seven facilities had fires that damaged the facility.
- Six children died while in child care.
- Forty-four children had a head injury that resulted in a concussion or a seizure while in child care.

It will never happen to me, but just in case it does we need to be prepared. Child care rules are written to assure the health and safety of children in care. Some of the most important rules address emergency plans. This issue of Michigan Child Care Matters focuses on emergency preparedness. In our technical assistance, the rationale for licensing rules on emergency procedures states, "(a)s emergency situations are not conducive to calm and composed thinking, having written plans allows for the opportunity to prepare and to prevent poor judgments made during an emergency."

It will never happen to me, but let's be prepared just in case it does. ❖



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Michigan Child Care Matters - Winter 2013

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Accommodating Special Needs Children in an Emergency

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Effective January 2, 2014, Child Care Center Licensing Rules will require that providers have a written plan for how each child with special needs will be accommodated during each type of emergency (fire, tornado, man-made and other natural disasters, serious accident/illness/injury and crisis situations, including intruders and bomb threats). The plans should also include evacuation and relocation procedures for children with physical, mental, developmental, and sensory limitations. While this is not required for child care home providers, it is a good idea to think about this as well.

The best way to accommodate a special-needs child in the event of an emergency is to get to know the individual needs of each child enrolled. Discussing emergency planning with each child's parents at enrollment is one way to gather this valuable information. Emergency planning for children with special needs should be as individual as each child. Each staff member should also be trained on the needs of each individual child and this training should be updated regularly.

In devising an emergency plan, be aware of any extra resources that might be needed to accommodate a child with special needs. A child with mobility issues or a child with limited sight might require extra time to evacuate and may require additional assistance from staff members. A child with a hearing impairment may not be able to hear an alarm or emergency signal. Many children with autism spectrum disorders, emotional impairments or developmental disabilities may have a difficult time with unplanned emergency drills, especially those involving loud alarms. Staff must be aware that these children may need extra support during an emergency.

Your emergency plan should also address children with medical needs that may require that their medication be readily available in the event of an emergency, especially one that might involve relocating children to a different site. Some children use medical equipment that requires electricity. Make sure that you have a backup system or plan in case power is lost or relocation is necessary.

Hopefully you will never have to face a real emergency in your child care. But if you do, careful planning for the needs of each child and conducting regular emergency drills with all children and staff will enable you to get through the emergency safely and without incident. ❖

Be Informed about Flooding

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Flooding is considered the most common natural disaster and can occur anywhere. Floods can develop over a period of days, giving you time to prepare; however, flash floods can develop in a matter of minutes. Just because you have not experienced a flood in the past does not mean you will not in the future. Flood risk is not only based on history; it is also based on other factors, such as rainfall, river-flow and tidal-surge data, topography, flood-control measures, and changes due to building and development.

Flood zones are land areas identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Each flood zone describes that land area in terms of its risk of flooding. Everyone lives in a flood zone. As a preventative measure, know if you are in a low, moderate or high risk area.

Become familiar with flood terminology:

- Flood Watch—Flooding is possible. Stay tuned to radio or TV for more information.
- Flash Flood Watch—Flash flooding is possible. Stay tuned to radio or TV for more information. Be prepared to move to higher ground.
- Flood Warning—Flooding is currently occurring or will occur soon. Listen for further instructions. If told to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Flash Flood Warning—Flash flooding is currently occurring or will occur soon. Seek higher ground on foot immediately.

If you are located in a high-risk area for flooding, make sure you have an emergency response plan and an emergency kit on-site. See pages 12 and 13 on developing a relocation plan. Make sure you identify where you can go if you need to reach higher ground.

If a flood occurs, stay tuned to the radio or television for further information and updates. Keeping children in your care safe if flooding occurs is your number one priority. Call 911 if an immediate danger is present.

If an evacuation is ordered by local authorities, follow these guidelines:

- Take only essential items, including Child Information Records (BCAL-3731) and attendance records.
- Turn off gas, electricity and water.
- Disconnect appliances.
- Do not walk in moving water.
- Do not drive in flood water. As little as six inches of water can cause loss of control and stalling of a vehicle.
- Follow the designated evacuation procedure.

If you are not ordered to evacuate:

- Stay tuned to emergency stations on the radio or TV.
- Listen for further instructions.
- Prepare to evacuate, should this become necessary.

Flooding can happen with little or no warning and can happen anywhere. Having an emergency plan and being knowledgeable about flooding will help you keep kids safe. ❖



The Crisis Management Plan: Intruders and Bomb Threats

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Emergency preparedness is essential planning processes that will help child care providers respond

appropriately and effectively to crisis. It is important for child care providers to prepare for emergencies because a situation may suddenly arise while children are in care. Being prepared in the event of an emergency can reduce chaos and promote a fast and effective reaction to ensure the safety of caregivers, staff and children.

Child care centers are required by licensing to maintain written emergency procedures for crisis management, including but not limited to intruders and bomb threats. Keep in mind that an intruder may be a parent or other person known to the provider. For child care homes, licensing does not require providers to have written procedures for intruders and bomb threats. However, it is recommended that home providers have contingency plans to address such emergencies if an evacuation or lockdown is needed.

Creating a crisis management plan requires a risk assessment to identify the potential threats to the child care center or home. The plan is unique for each center and home depending on the location of the facility, the environment and the number and ages of children in care. It should answer the questions who, what, when, where, and how. The plan should be specific, simple to read and easy to understand. The roles and responsibilities of each caregiver or staff should be noted as well.

Child care center licensing rules require that staff be trained at least twice a year on their duties and responsibilities referenced in crisis management plans. It also recommended that

crisis management plans be practiced. The crisis management plan must be maintained in a place known and easily accessible to staff. However, due to the sensitive nature of a crisis management plan, it should not be posted in a public area.

The crisis management plan should address when a lockdown should occur and when an evacuation is needed. Lockdown procedures should be used in situations such as a shooting, hostage situation, intruder, trespassing, or at the discretion of the program director or local authorities. During an event, the American Red Cross suggests doing the following:

- Close the center or building. Use reverse evacuation procedures to bring children and staff to the predetermined locations.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors and any other openings to the outside. Parents should not be allowed access the building during a lockdown.
- Call emergency contacts.
- Close window shades, blinds or curtains.
- Bring everyone into the room. Shut and lock the door.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room and call your center's designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you.
- Listen for an announcement from local officials via portable battery-assisted radios and stay where you are until you are told that it is safe to leave.

During the lockdown, the children and caregivers should be kept in their classrooms or designated safe locations that are away from the danger. It is suggested that the children are secured under the tables or behind cabinets. If possible, caregivers should place any barriers in front of the door to prevent entrance to the

room. The caregivers should also engage the children in quiet activities to keep them calm until the situation has been resolved.

If it is unsafe for caregivers and children to remain inside the building, then an evacuation is needed. The goal of an evacuation is to get each person out of the building as safely and quickly as possible. Evacuations should be used in situations such as fire, gas leaks, bomb threat, or any other situation that results in the need to have everyone exit the building. Any bomb threat should be taken seriously and treated as a real situation. Evacuation should be out of the center or home and to another location that has been designated as a safe meeting place.

The transition from one location to another may be chaotic and confusing. Practicing the evacuation plan frequently will reduce stress and confusion. During an evacuation, preschool-age children can line up behind one another to exit the building, or caregivers can adopt the buddy system where a child holds hands with an assigned friend. Infants and toddlers may be transported in evacuation cribs. Prior to exiting the building, it is important that caregivers conduct head counts to ensure that all children are accounted for before exiting the building. Another head count should be completed once the children and caregivers arrive at the designated location.

It is best practice to have an emergency/evacuation bag for each classroom that contains copies of the Child Information Records (BCAL-3731), a first aid kit and the class list. Caregivers should take the bag and the attendance record with them when it is necessary to vacate the building.

It is important that no one go back inside the building for any reason, including to retrieve personal belongings. All staff, caregivers and children should remain at the designated location until the authorities have given the all clear signal to return to the building.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), being prepared during a crisis can reduce fear, anxiety and the impact of disasters. Having a crisis management plan helps prevent caregivers from panicking. Here are a few important tips to remember:

- Stay calm.
- Be prepared.
- Properly supervise children in care and make sure they are safe.
- Follow the written plans.
- Assign staff specific roles and inform them of their roles.
- Conduct drills frequently.

There are many resources and agencies available to assist in your crisis management planning efforts. Contact your local city or township emergency coordinators and fire, police and public works departments for assistance in determining potential disaster threats and hazards closest to your facility. The following other resources are available:

- The American Red Cross - www.redcross.org.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency - www.fema.gov.
- FEMA's disaster preparedness site - www.ready.gov.
- FEMA's information on hazards - www.fema.gov/plan-prepare-mitigate.
- Office of Child Care - www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/resource/child-care-resources-for-disasters-and-emergencies.

Sample emergency plans are also available on the department's website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare. ❖

Tornadoes and Severe Thunderstorms

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The most prevalent natural disasters in Michigan are tornadoes and severe thunderstorms. It is important to have plans and take the necessary steps to ensure that the staff and children in care are protected during these bad weather conditions.

Tornadoes

Make sure that you have plans for your home or center in case of a tornado. Remember that the plans must be posted in a place visible to staff and parents. Write directions for staff, substitutes, volunteers, and parents so they know what is expected of them during the emergency. Include the following:

- The alarm to be used to announce a tornado. (The same alarm should be used during drills.)
- Where the children are to go to take shelter.
- When they are to go to the shelter.
- Duties of the staff, such as who will get the children to the shelter area, who will bring the attendance records and Child Information Records (BCAL-3731) and who will determine that all the children and adults are in the shelter area.

Make sure that there is someone in the building at all times that knows how to administer basic first aid, how to use a fire extinguisher and how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity. Inform the parents of your procedures so that they know how they should respond and make sure children know what a tornado is and how to take shelter. Centers must practice for tornadoes at least two times per year between April and October; homes every month between April and October. These are the months in which tornadoes most often occur.

Learn about the tornado warning system of your county or locality. Most tornado-prone areas have a siren system. Know how to

distinguish between the siren's warnings for a tornado watch and a tornado warning.

A *tornado watch* is issued when weather conditions favor the formation of tornadoes, for example, during a severe thunderstorm. During a tornado watch:

- Stay tuned to local radio and TV stations or a National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio for further weather information.
- Watch the weather and be prepared to take shelter immediately if conditions worsen.

A *tornado warning* is issued when a tornado funnel is sighted or indicated by weather radar. If you see a funnel cloud nearby or hear that a tornado warning has been issued, take shelter immediately.

Some tornadoes strike rapidly, without time for a tornado warning, and sometimes without a thunderstorm in the vicinity. It is important to know that you cannot depend on seeing a funnel: Clouds or rain may block your view. The following weather signs may mean that a tornado is approaching:

- Very still air.
- A dark or green-colored sky.
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud.
- Large hail.
- A loud roar that sounds like a freight train.

Taking Shelter

The key to surviving a tornado and reducing the risk of injury lies in planning, preparing and practicing what the staff will do if a tornado strikes. Flying debris causes most deaths and injuries during a tornado. Although there is no completely safe place during a tornado, some locations are much safer than others.

In a Child Care Center or School

Extra care is required in any building where a large group of people is concentrated in a small area. The exterior walls of such buildings often have large windows. If you are in a child care center or school:

- Move away from windows and glass doorways.
- Go to the innermost part of the building on the lowest possible floor.
- Avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums and cafeterias.
- Do not use elevators because the power may fail, leaving you trapped.
- Get under a piece of sturdy furniture such as a heavy table and hold on to it.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Protect your head and make yourself as small a target as possible by crouching down.

In a Home

Pick a place in the home where everyone can gather. The safest place in a home is the interior part of a basement. If there is no basement, go to an inside room, without windows, on the lowest floor level. This could be a center hallway, bathroom or closet. For added protection, have everyone get under something sturdy such as a heavy table or workbench. If possible, cover everyone with a blanket, sleeping bag or mattress, and protect your heads with anything available--even hands. Avoid taking shelter where there are heavy objects, such as pianos or refrigerators, on the area of floor that is directly above you. They could fall through the floor if the tornado strikes the home.

In a Mobile Home

Plan ahead. If you live in a mobile home, take the children to a nearby building, preferably one with a basement. If there is no shelter nearby, have everyone lie flat in the nearest ditch, ravine or culvert and shield their heads with their hands.

Severe Thunderstorms

All thunderstorms are dangerous. Every thunderstorm produces lightning, which kills more people each year than tornadoes. Heavy rain from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding. Strong winds, hail and tornadoes are also dangers associated with some thunderstorms. It is important to pay close attention to changing weather conditions when there is a severe thunderstorm watch or warning.

A severe thunderstorm watch means that a severe thunderstorm is expected in the next six hours or so within a specific area.

A severe thunderstorm warning indicates that a severe thunderstorm is occurring or is imminent in about 30 minutes to an hour.

Make sure that you have plans in case of a severe thunderstorm, which should include the following:

- Learn about your area's severe thunderstorm risk. Severe thunderstorms can occur year-round and at any hour. Contact your local emergency management office, local National Weather Service office or American Red Cross chapter for more information.
- Have a plan similar to the plans for a tornado. Choose a safe place for everyone to gather. This should be a place where there are no windows, skylights or glass doors, which could be broken by strong winds or hail, causing damage or injury. Consider making the shelter area on the lowest floor of the building, near the tornado shelter area.
- Learn how to squat low to the ground. Make yourself the smallest target possible for lightning and minimize contact with the ground. Lightning current often enters a victim through the ground rather than by a direct overhead strike. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of

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Best Practice for Fire and Tornado Plans: Over and Above Essential Requirements

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Everyone knows the basic goal of fire and tornado drills - get staff and children to a safe spot as quickly as possible. Child care licensing rules require caregivers and children to practice fire and tornado drills often enough to assure everyone knows where to go and how to stay safe. But, are there more things caregivers could be doing to assure the safety of the children and other adults?

Fires

According to the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA), fire can spread rapidly through a home, leaving as little as two minutes to escape safely once the alarm sounds. Your ability to get out depends on advance warning from smoke alarms and advance planning — a fire escape plan that everyone is familiar with and has practiced. NFPA recommends:

- Keep your emergency plans up-to-date.
- Have written emergency plans posted near exits and include the local emergency number (or 9-1-1).
- Have at least two ways out and make sure you practice using all exits.
- Keep escape routes clear of clutter, make sure doors and egress windows open easily.
- Designate an outdoor meeting place where emergency responders can easily see everyone.
- Homes should have house numbers that are clearly seen from the street.
- Use the smoke alarm for fire drills in homes, and make sure everyone exits the house when one goes off (even if it is just burnt toast).

In addition to the NFPA recommendations, caregivers in homes and centers should consider having a “ready-to-go” kit containing Child Information Records (BCAL-3731), emergency medical information for special needs staff or children and other necessary

forms. Once you have safely left the building, it will be important to know that you can account for all children and then have a way to contact parents. One of the hazards of only using a computerized attendance system is the lack of any way to know for sure that all children who checked in for the day are safe with you outside the building.

Because you never know when a fire will start, or where, practice fire drills at all times of the day and from a variety of locations. You might want to try making a large picture of flames that you can set up near an exit route, forcing everyone to go a different direction. Homes that care for very young children might want to consider a nap time fire drill; at the very least, a practice fire drill for caregivers using dolls to represent napping infants.

If the child care home uses an approved basement for child care, it is very important to make sure the children and caregivers are comfortable using the window egress. It is best practice never to leave children alone in a basement if they cannot use the egress window without adult help.

Tornadoes

Preparing for tornado is just as important. Create an emergency kit for your designated shelter area. Items you may want to include, but are not limited to: diapers and wipes (if necessary), wet wipes and tissues, blankets, a radio with extra batteries, flashlights and extra batteries, first-aid kit, copy of Child Information Records (BCAL-3731), pain/fever reduction medication (kept out of reach of children), bottled drinking water, disposable cups, concentrated formula and baby food (if necessary), other non-perishable food, and a can opener. The kit should also include copies

of essential papers such as an emergency contact list, special needs information, staff contact information, medical permission forms.

Evacuation and Tornado Shelter Diagrams

It is recommended emergency plans include a map or diagram highlighting important locations. Draw a map or diagram of the home/center. Mark the following:

- Where the children are supposed to take shelter.
- Where exit doors and egress windows are located.
- Where the Child Information Records (BCAL-3731) and attendance records are kept.
- Where the first-aid kit and fire extinguishers are located.
- Where the utility switches or valves are located so they can be turned off--if time permits--in an emergency.

The better prepared you are before an emergency strikes, the more natural your response will feel during an actual emergency. The children will rely on you to be calm and in control and that will only happen if you practice, practice, practice. For detailed information about best practice in emergency situations, see the publication from National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies "Protecting Children in Child Care During Emergencies." This publication is available at www.naccrra.org/sites/default/files/publications/naccrra_publications/2012/protectingchildreninchildcareemergencies.pdf. ❖

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the feet touching the ground; place your hands on your knees and lower your head.

- The sound of thunder can be especially frightening for young children. Teach children what to expect during a thunderstorm and how to be safe.
- Postpone outdoor activities if thunderstorms are likely. Many people take shelter from the rain, but most people struck by lightning are not in the rain. Postponing activities is the best way to avoid being caught in a dangerous situation.
- Stay away from metal items that lightning may strike. Lightning is attracted to metal poles and rods.
- Turn off the air conditioner and television, and stay off the phone until the storm is over. Lightning can cause electric appliances, including televisions and telephones, to become dangerous during a thunderstorm.
- Stay away from running water. Electricity from lightning has been known to come inside through plumbing.
- Keep fresh batteries and a battery-powered radio or TV on hand. Electrical power is often interrupted during thunderstorms--just when information about weather warnings is most needed.

During any natural disaster, make sure you have the following information:

- Telephone numbers of the electric, gas and water companies.
- Completed Child Information Records (BCAL-3731).
- Radio and television broadcast stations to tune to for emergency broadcast information.

Severe thunderstorms and tornadoes occur every year in Michigan, so it is important to have plans in place to keep children and staff safe at all times. Practicing the plans and making sure everyone knows what to do during these situations will help make implementation of the plans, if necessary, go as smoothly as possible. ❖

Man-Made Disasters

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All child care facilities, whether a home or center, should be aware of the potential man-made disasters, such as utility interruptions or failure, a sewer back-up, flooding due to a water main break, or a chemical spill. As of January 2, 2014, the Child Care Center Licensing Rules will require centers to develop written emergency procedures for man-made disasters. All providers should have plans in place to calmly react and manage these types of disasters. The elements to effectively manage these emergencies is to plan, prepare and practice.



Unexpected utility failures or interruptions are common occurrences and may happen at the most inopportune times. An undetected gas line leak may

require only a spark to set off an explosion or cause a loss of a heat source. Flooding from a broken water main may cause extensive damage to the property and facility and cause further complications such as electrical failure. An electrical failure may result in the loss of basic lighting and loss of refrigerated food or medicines.

As there is no warning of these types of events, preparation is the key. You will want to think about and identify the possible effects that the loss of one or more of these utilities may have on your home or center. As an example, loss of electricity might affect the heating and cooling system. Loss of water will discontinue the use of toilets. Plan and develop procedures for an emergency shutdown of utilities, such as:

- Know where the building main gas valve is and how to close it.

- Know where the main water valve is and how to shut it off.
- Know where the main electricity breakers/fuses are and how to disconnect them and how to reset/change them.
- Maintain a list of emergency utility telephone numbers as well as trusted repair service companies.

Routinely review and practice these procedures with all caregivers and children, if applicable, as emergency situations are not conducive to calm and composed thinking.

When you lose power, you will want to determine why the power is out. Check your neighborhood, and if you are the only one without power, check your circuit breakers or fuses and reset or replace them as necessary. Keep extra fuses on hand. If the power outage is caused by severe weather, you will want to unplug any appliances, electrical equipment or electronics that were in use. Leave one light on to indicate when the power returns.

Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. If a well is your source for water, plan ahead to determine how you will get drinking water such as storing extra containers of water. Know how to open your garage door manually if it is equipped with an automatic opener. If the weather is cold, ensure everyone is warm enough. Get them all moving by doing some type of physical activity or movement game to generate heat. Never use an oven as source of heat. Only use an available generator outdoors and far from open windows and vents. If the weather is hot, move to lower floors and ensure everyone drinks plenty of water. Be sure to notify your electric company. If at any time you determine there is a danger of fire, you will need to evacuate.

Gas leaks are very dangerous and it is important that you know how to recognize and report a gas emergency. Natural gas is odorless and colorless, so a harmless substance is added to make it smell like rotten eggs so you can easily detect a gas leak. In the event of a gas line break or leak, you will want to evacuate immediately and go to a location where you no longer smell gas, outside of the house or building. Shut off the gas main valve and notify the local utility company and police and fire departments. Be sure to have your Child Information Cards (BCAL-3731) with you when you evacuate so you are able to immediately contact all parents. Do not reenter the home or center until emergency officials say it is safe.

Water main breaks are unfortunate and inconvenient. They occur for many reasons such as contractors accidentally breaking the mains or failure due to age. When a water main break occurs, a home or center may have a temporary halt in its water supply. Breaks can also result in property damage, street and sidewalk closures and business disruption. The local health department will instruct customers on how to properly treat the water when service resumes. This usually requires boiling all water used for drinking and cooking for at least one minute. Water should be obtained from an alternate potable source such as bottled water until you are notified that the tap water is safe to drink. It is recommended to always have an adequate supply of bottled water on hand for unexpected emergencies.

Your best approach to these unplanned interruptions is to plan, prepare and practice. ❖

Do I have to close my child care during an emergency?

Questions to ask to determine whether the child care should close in an emergency situation, such as a power outage:

- How long is the emergency situation expected to last? For example, how long will the power or water be off?
- Are there any working telephones?
- Is there food or formula that needs to be refrigerated? Is the temperature of the refrigerator 41 degrees or lower?
- Are the sinks working? Are the children/staff able to wash hands under warm running water?
- Can the toilets be flushed?
- Is the temperature of the facility 65 degrees Fahrenheit or above 2 feet above the floor?
- Are you able to take measures to cool the temperature of the facility if it is above 82 degrees Fahrenheit?
- Is there enough lighting to provide for appropriate supervision of the children?

Relocating in an Emergency

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Whether faced with a fire, tornado, other natural or man-made disaster, an intruder, a bomb threat, or a serious illness or accident, effective January 2, 2014, the Child Care Center Licensing Rules will require your facility to have written plans for all of these types of emergencies. All child care homes are required to have written plans for fires, tornadoes and serious accidents and injuries



Some types of emergencies may require you to evacuate children off the child care premises quickly in order to keep them safe. Also effective January 2, 2014, all emergency

plans for child care centers must include a plan for evacuating and safely moving children to a relocation site and a method for contacting families. It is recommended the plans for child care homes include this information as well.

It is vitally important to have well-written plans for off-site evacuations. The preparedness of child caregivers to protect the lives of children during crisis periods will depend on the effectiveness of your evacuation plan, the resources available and staff training. Good plans also often involve coordinating and utilizing parents, neighbors, community partners and county emergency management staff. The following guidelines will help you develop your off-site evacuation plans.

The first item to have in place for an emergency evacuation is a list of emergency phone numbers. Examples of people you might have on your list of emergency phone numbers, include, but are not limited to:

- Facility director.
- Emergency - 911.

- Police (non-emergency).
- Fire (non-emergency).
- Poison control.
- Local health department.
- Local hospital or medical center.
- Building inspector.
- County or local emergency management agency.
- Licensing consultant.
- Alternate/evacuation site.

Make sure emergency supplies are available that you will want to take with you when evacuating and moving to a relocation site. You can tailor the list to the needs of your home or center. It is recommended that you keep these items in a backpack that can be easily taken with you. Supplies may include, but are not limited to:

- Child Information Records (BCAL-3731).
- A contact list for staff families.
- Emergency medications and written parent permission forms.
- A charged cell phone.
- A first aid kit.
- A few diapers of varied sizes.
- Flashlights with extra batteries.
- Wet wipes and tissues.
- Water and non-perishable foods.
- Formula or breast milk for infants.
- Blankets.
- Toys, books and activity materials.
- Battery-operated radio with extra batteries.

Note: Make sure Child Information Records (BCAL-3731) and other records in your backpack are kept up-to-date.

Consider assigning specific responsibilities for staff during an emergency. You may do this by assigning each staff person a duty or by staff role (e.g., lead caregivers, kitchen staff, etc.). Keep in mind, if assigning specific staff

members a task, they may not be present the day an emergency occurs. Responsibilities to consider:

- Who takes the emergency backpack?
- Who will bring the attendance records?
- Who will call 911?
- Who will contact parents?
- Who will call the relocation site to let them know you are coming?
- Who will supervise different groups of children?

Arrange for relocation with other facilities and schools in your area. Try to make an agreement with some place close by that is big enough to accommodate the number of children you have. Some suggested off-site locations might include churches, schools, community centers, hotels. You should obtain a written agreement from an authorized person at the identified relocation site. Also, be sure to specifically list the off-site location, contact person and phone number in your written plan.

To plan for major disasters or locality-wide emergency evacuations where nearby, pre-arranged relocation sites may also be affected, call your county emergency management agency to find out where its shelter is. You can find this information in your phone book or by contacting your county sheriff's office. The facility name, number and contact person should also be listed in your plan.

Develop a plan for the safe and prompt evacuation of infants, toddlers and non-ambulatory children. If you are going to use cribs during an emergency evacuation, then be sure that all doors within the route of escape are wide enough to readily accommodate the crib evacuation.

Plan to post the relocation site address in a conspicuous location that can be seen from outside. You should also notify local law enforcement where you are taking children, first so they might assist you, and second, so

they can let calling parents know where their children have been taken.

Your relocation plan should include the method of transportation. If driving, make sure vehicles have at least a half a tank of gas at all times and that keys are readily accessible. If you are walking to your relocation site, make sure it is a safe, easily traveled route. You may want to walk the route occasionally to make sure the route hasn't changed.

Your plan should include how parents will be contacted. Examples of methods are a mass email or text message, phone trees, or notifying the local police department.

When children are being released from the relocation site, make sure the time is documented on the attendance record and ensure that the child is only released to persons approved by a parent.

Because emergencies are not always conducive to calm or composed thinking, staff must review procedures periodically. The licensing rules for homes require that each assistant caregiver and emergency person be informed of the overall evacuation plan and his or her individual duties and responsibilities in the event of an emergency. Center rules require that each staff member be trained on his or her duties and responsibilities for all emergency and evacuation procedures at least twice per year.

Evacuation and relocation can be scary for caregivers and children. Planning and preparation can help alleviate anxiety and chaos. ❖

Water Emergencies in Child Care Settings

Jacyln Caroffin, Former Licensing Consultant
Reprint from Issue 81



Water activities bring both happy times and danger to children in the child care setting. To maximize child safety, it is crucial that the child care provider directly supervise these activities at all times.

According to the Safe Kids Worldwide, drowning is the leading cause of injury-related deaths among children between 1 and 4 years old. In 2010 alone, 11 children under the age of 4 drowned in Michigan. Nine children between the ages of 5 and 14 drowned. These deaths can be prevented. Child care providers in both homes and centers can be proactive to assure that children in their care do not become a statistic.

Water hazards can be located both on and off the child care property. Swimming pools, lakes, rivers, canals, streams, hot tubs, wading pools, and bathtubs are just a few of the hazards that are tempting for children to explore. More than half of drownings among children under age 1 occur in bathtubs. Other hazards are toilets, sinks and buckets. It is estimated that 30 children drown in buckets containing water or other liquids every year.

Children do not make noise or splash around when they are drowning; they slip quietly into the water and can drown within 30 seconds. Two minutes after submersion, the child loses consciousness and brain damage occurs in four to six minutes.

Although drowning is the most severe water emergency, there are other water emergencies that are of importance. Injuries can occur from diving board and/or slide accidents, playing around anchored boats, swimming during lightning storms, and electrical appliances near bodies of water, just to name a few. Children can contract illnesses from having contact with contaminated water. It is important to make

sure that the body of water that children are swimming or playing in is clean.

As home child care providers, complying with the water hazards and water activities rules will aid in the prevention of water emergencies. This rule includes:

- Maintain the caregiver-to-child ratio as required by the rules.
- Barriers with a minimum height of four feet must exist to prevent children from gaining access to any water hazard located on or adjacent to the property.
- Spa pools and hot tubs must not be used while children are in care and require a locked hard cover.
- Wading pools need to be emptied and cleaned after each play period or when they become dirty or contaminated and must remain empty at all times they are not in use.
- Public swimming areas may be used only if there is a lifeguard present.
- Rescue equipment must be readily accessible at all times.
- A working telephone must be immediately accessible in the water activity area.
- There should be an established emergency plan for water emergencies.
- Water must be clean, safe and sanitary.

Child care centers must comply with the following rules to prevent water emergencies: caregiver-to-child ratios, supervision during swimming activities, instructional swimming, and swimming activity area safety measures. These rules include, but are not limited to:

- A lifeguard must be on duty at all swimming activities and must not be included in the caregiver-to-child ratio.
- All caregiving staff counted in the caregiver-to-child ratio must be actively engaged in

providing direct care and supervision and must be physically able to assist children quickly.

- Instructional swim must be conducted under the supervision of a qualified water safety instructor in an organization where instructional swim is part of the organized program.
- Swimming areas must be maintained in a clean and safe condition.
- A public or private pool used for swimming must be inspected and issued a permit for operation by the local health department.
- A working telephone and safety equipment must be readily accessible on the premises.
- The use of private wading pools and hot tubs is prohibited.

Remember that for child care homes and centers, written parental permission is required before participating in water activities. Make sure that your CPR and first aid certification is current so that you are able to effectively assist in an emergency.

Other helpful tips for prevention of water emergencies include:

- Never leave children in charge of other children.
- Empty all buckets immediately after use and store out of children's reach.
- Keep the toilet seat down and consider a toilet clip or safety lock to prevent children from accessing the standing water in the toilet.
- Never leave standing water in the bathtub or sink.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool area, especially riding toys.
- Install pool alarms and door locks.
- Install barriers and fencing whenever possible.
- Do not swim during lightning storms.
- Keep electrical appliances away from the pool and other water hazards.
- Do not swim in areas where boats are anchored or active.

- Check the water first if a child is missing.

Consider water activities such as hoses and sprinklers. Be creative with these two options, as they can be great fun for children. Children enjoy playing with water just as much as being in the water. The best prevention for water emergencies is constant supervision. ❖



Instinctive Drowning Response

Drowning is not the violent, splashing call for help that most people expect. Drowning is almost always a deceptively quiet event. The Instinctive Drowning Response (IDR), named by Francesco A. Pia, Ph.D., is what people do to avoid actual or perceived suffocation in the water. Dr. Pia, in an article in the Coast Guard's On Scene magazine, described the IDR like this:

1. "Except in rare circumstances, drowning people are physiologically unable to call out for help. The respiratory system was designed for breathing. Speech is the secondary or overlaid function. Breathing must be fulfilled before speech occurs.
2. Drowning people's mouths alternately sink below and reappear above the surface of the water. The mouths of drowning people are not above the surface of the water long enough for them to exhale, inhale, and call out for help. When the drowning people's mouths are above the surface, they exhale and inhale quickly as their mouths start to sink below the surface of the water.
3. Drowning people cannot wave for help. Nature instinctively forces them to extend their arms laterally and press down on the water's surface. Pressing down on the surface of the water permits drowning people to leverage their bodies so they can lift their mouths out of the water to breathe.
4. Throughout the Instinctive Drowning Response, drowning people cannot voluntarily control their arm movements. Physiologically, drowning people who are struggling on the surface of the water cannot stop drowning and perform voluntary movements such as waving for help, moving toward a rescuer, or reaching out for a piece of rescue equipment.
5. From beginning to end of the Instinctive Drowning Response people's bodies remain upright in the water, with no evidence of a supporting kick. Unless rescued by a trained lifeguard, these drowning people can only struggle on the surface of the water from 20 to 60 seconds before submersion occurs."

This doesn't mean that a person that is yelling for help and thrashing isn't in real trouble—he/she may be experiencing aquatic distress. If present, aquatic distress doesn't last long before the IDR begins. Look for these other signs of drowning when persons are in the water:

- Head low in the water, mouth at water level.
- Head tilted back with mouth open.
- Eyes glassy and empty, unable to focus.
- Eyes closed.
- Hair over forehead or eyes.
- Not using legs—vertical.
- Hyperventilating or gasping.
- Trying to swim in a particular direction but not making headway.
- Trying to roll over on the back.
- Appear to be climbing an invisible ladder.

Sometimes the most common indication that someone is drowning is that he doesn't look like he is drowning. The person may just look like she is treading water and looking up at the pool or water edge. One way to be sure? Ask the individual, "Are you all right?" If he can answer at all—he probably is. If the individual returns a blank stare, you may have less than 30 seconds to get to her. Children playing in the water make noise. When they get quiet, you need to get to them and find out why. ❖

Swimming Activity Ratio and Supervision Requirements

Child Care Homes

Two caregivers are required if some of the children are not in the pool. A caregiver is required in the pool with the children and a caregiver is required outside of the pool providing care and supervision for those children. A one caregiver to one child ratio is required for all children under 3 years of age who are in the water.

Note: This rule does not apply to wading pools. If a wading pool is used, caregivers must ensure that they can properly supervise all children in their care.

Child Care Centers

For children under 3 years of age, there shall be an in-the-water ratio of 1 caregiver to 1 child.

For all non-swimmers 3 years of age and older, there must be an in-the-water ratio of 1 caregiver to 4 children when the water level is at the child's chest height or lower. When the water level is above the child's chest height, there must be an in-the-water ratio of 1 caregiver to 1 child.

For swimmers 3 years of age and older, there must be an in-the-water ratio of caregivers to children as follows:

- Three year olds – 1 to 10.
- Four year olds – 1 to 12.
- School-age (5 to 12) – 1 to 18.

For a child to be considered a **swimmer**, the child must be able to do both of the following without the use of a flotation device:

- Keep afloat for five minutes by any means possible.
- Swim the length of the pool using any stroke (minimum of 25 yards).

Note: The above caregiver to child ratios must be maintained at all times, even if the children are wearing life jackets.

Want to Receive Credit for Reading Michigan Child Care Matters?

Licensing has now developed tests based on the content of each issue of this newsletter. Each article will include a symbol (below) in the title of the article to identify the content as appropriate for center caregivers, home caregivers or all caregivers. The tests will have tests geared to those articles.

To receive one clock hour of annual training, you must read all of the home- or center-related articles in three different issues and pass the tests associated with those issues during that calendar year. Only one clock hour of your annual training requirements each year can be earned by reading issues of Michigan Child Care Matters.

When taking a test, you will need an access code. To obtain an access code, just email Colleen Nelson (NelsonC7@michigan.gov) with your name and license number.



Article is appropriate for **all** child care providers.



Article is appropriate for **center** child care providers.



Article is appropriate for **home** child care providers.

As a licensed or registered child care provider, you must immediately report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Children's Protective Services (CPS) through centralized intake (CI). You must make a written report within 72 hours in addition to the immediate verbal report. You can use the Report of Actual or Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect (DHS-3200) form [online at http://michigan.gov/documents/dhs/DHS-3200_224934_7.pdf]. You can fax or email this form to CI.

CI accepts and processes reports of alleged abuse and neglect 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

(855) 444-3911

Toll-free number for CPS & APS complaints

(616) 977-1154, (616) 977-1158, or
DHS-CPS-CIGroup@michigan.gov
FAX numbers and email address for
DHS-3200 reports

Speak up about abuse and neglect. Call any time, day or night.
One number. **One** call. **One** person can make a difference. If you suspect abuse or neglect, call now!

The Child Care Licensing website has a wealth of helpful information for providers and parents. Take some time to review the information on our website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare. In the left column under Licensed Provider Resources:

- There are links to the licensing rules and the Child Care Organizations Act (1973 PA 116).
- The Technical Assistance link takes you to our Technical Assistance and Consultation manuals.
- The Forms link allows you to download all forms required by licensing.
- The Resources link offers in-depth information on a variety of topics.
- The Newsletter link takes you to all previous issues of this publication.

You can also sign up for the licensing listserv to receive: information on a different licensing rule each week, notice of training opportunities, information on resources available, and notice of rule and other changers. Just click on the red envelop on the right.

The child care licensing website is updated often. Check it occasionally to find new and helpful information.

Michigan Child Care Matters

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Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Infant/Child Product Recalls (not including toys)

These recalls have been added since Issue 97 of MCCM (August 2013):

- Baby Jogger recalls car seat adaptors for strollers due to fall hazard.
- IKEA recalls junior beds due to laceration hazard.
- Nan Far Woodworking recalls Rockland Furniture round cribs due to entrapment, suffocation and fall hazards; sold exclusively at jcpenny.
- Kids II recalls Baby Einstein activity jumpers due to impact hazard; sun toy can snap backward.
- Thermobaby bath seats recalled by SCS Direct due to drowning hazard; sold exclusively at Amazon.com.

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the CPSC's website (www.cpsc.gov). Post this page in your facility to be in compliance with the Children's Product Safety Act (2000 PA 219).

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