



## Be Disaster Safe 3-5

### At Home



Visit the American Red Cross Web site  
at [www.redcross.org/disaster/masters](http://www.redcross.org/disaster/masters)

## LESSON PLAN 9

# Reduce Hazards and Communicate

Children need support to help their families reduce hazards and follow an emergency contact plan.

### Key Terms and Concepts

contacts	plan
emergency	prepare
hazard	unexpected

### Purpose

To help the students and their families be safer by reducing hazards and creating and following an emergency contact plan

### Objectives

The students will—

- Determine ways families can be prepared for the unexpected, based on a fictional story.
- List the most common disasters in their area and use *Help Reduce Hazards* to write and share after-the-disaster scenarios for families who have reduced the hazards and for those who have not.
- Use *Help Reduce Hazards* to guide their families in making a family disaster plan. (Home Connection)
- Identify preparedness steps the school has taken to reduce the hazards and protect the students as well as the steps that could make the school better prepared. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- List the reasons people need to communicate in an emergency situation and how this can be accomplished.
- List the information that must be included in a family contact plan and compare it with the information on *Family Contact Plan* and *My Yellow Pages*.
- Use *Family Contact Plan* and *My Yellow Pages* with their families to list important people and their contact information. (Home Connection)
- Use maps to discover pertinent information about out-of-town family contacts. (Linking Across the Curriculum)
- Use maps to measure distance, determine possible difficulties and plan alternative routes to get family members together during an emergency or immediately following a disaster. (Linking Across the Curriculum)



# Be Disaster Safe 3-5

## LESSON PLAN 9 Reduce Hazards and Communicate

- Research to write a brochure that explains the importance of having a corded phone during an emergency. (Linking Across the Curriculum)

### Activities

“Reduce the Hazards”

“Stay in Contact”



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## Be Disaster Safe 3-5

### LESSON PLAN 9

## Reduce Hazards and Communicate

### Materials

- *Help Reduce Hazards*, 1 copy per writing team, and 1 copy per student for the Home Connection
- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers



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## "Reduce the Hazards"

SET UP 5 minutes CONDUCT 50 minutes

**Social Studies: Personal Responsibility; Science: Health; Language Arts: Writing**

1. Tell the following story to the class:

The family had been away from home when the earthquake struck. When they walked into their home, they could see that all the cabinet doors in the kitchen were opened, and glasses and dishes were broken on the floor. The tall cabinet had fallen across the dining table and broken it, strewn their grandmother's pretty porcelain statues in pieces across the floor. Pictures and mirrors were shattered on the floor in every room. In the parent's bedroom their favorite picture lay across the bed. The lamp, computer and DVDs were shaken off the desk.

They went down into the basement and saw that the water heater had pulled away from the wall and the pipe had broken—water was flowing everywhere.

They all shook their heads, each one saying, "I didn't expect this to happen."

2. Ask the students to discuss what went wrong in this imaginary story. How could the family have been better prepared for the "unexpected"? (The kitchen cabinets could have had latches or locks so that the doors would not have opened, and the contents would not have spilled out. The tall cabinet could have been bolted to the wall stud so it would not have fallen over. All the pictures and mirrors could have been fastened securely to wall studs, the lamp and computer secured to the desk and the water heater secured to the wall.)
3. Explain that planning for the unexpected is one way to help decrease the possibility of a sad outcome—this is called reducing the hazards. Have the students list the most common risks their community faces, such as earthquakes, flash floods or hurricanes. Remind them that residential fire is the disaster most common to all communities.
4. Distribute *Help Reduce Hazards* to teams of students. Have each team consider one possible disaster and use the activity sheet to write two scenarios—one in which a fictional family was prepared for the disaster and had reduced the hazards, and one in which a family was unprepared.



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### Wrap-Up

Ask writing teams to share their scenarios depicting the fictional families who were unprepared.



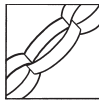
For each type of disaster, challenge classmates to describe what the family could have done to reduce the hazards and lessen the effects of the disaster. Have the writing teams share and compare their scenarios depicting preparedness.

**TEACHING NOTE** The depth of this discussion depends on the number of *Masters of Disaster* or other preparedness activities in which the students have participated.



### Home Connection

Distribute *Help Reduce Hazards* to the students. Ask them to use their class discussion and the information on the activity sheet to help their families reduce the hazards at home to make any disaster scenario have a happier outcome. Have the students and their families go through the checklist and save the information as part of their family disaster plans.



### Linking Across the Curriculum

#### **Social Studies: Community; Science: Health**

Guide the students to list the preparedness steps you, the class and the school have taken to reduce hazards to protect them. For example:

- They have participated in drills and evacuations.
- There are smoke alarms and sprinklers in the classroom.
- The bookshelves and cabinets are bolted to the wall.
- They keep the aisles clear.
- They know two ways to exit the classroom.
- There are no matches or candles in the classroom.

Have the students find and share other ways the school community could be better prepared.



## Be Disaster Safe 3-5

### LESSON PLAN 9

## Reduce Hazards and Communicate

### Materials

- Chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers
- *Family Contact Plan*, 1 per student
- *My Yellow Pages*, 1 per student



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## "Stay in Contact"

SET UP 10 minutes CONDUCT 50 minutes

Language Arts: Communication; Science: Health; Social Studies: Personal Responsibility and Community

**TEACHING NOTE** Before class, write the words "Emergency Communications" at the top of the chalkboard. Underneath, in separate columns, write "Communicate with Family" and "Communicate with Authorities."

1. Guide the students to list the reasons they might need to communicate in an emergency situation. (Possible answers include—to let people know I'm safe; to find other family members if we are separated; to find out more about the situation; and to tell authorities about specific problems.) As the students discuss the question, put the information in the correct column on the chalkboard.
2. Next to each reason, have the students discuss and list how this communication might occur. (Possible answers include—calling family members at emergency numbers; meeting family members; listening to the radio for advisories from local officials; and calling 9-1-1.)
3. As a class, consider possible problems that could occur in communication. For example:
  - Family members could be in so many different places that it would be difficult to let everyone know you are safe.
  - Local telephone lines might be down.
  - Cell phone systems might be overloaded or disrupted.
  - Roads are closed and there is no way to get together with the family.
  - Electricity is out and no one is sure when it will be restored.



### Wrap-Up

Have the students discuss how they would solve the problem presented. Based on the class discussion, students will determine that each family must have a contact plan and the entire family must know how to follow it. Remind students that there are always communication disruptions during disasters, but when families are prepared, these disruptions are less worrisome.



Divide the class into small groups and provide just a few minutes to develop a list of the most important information to be included in a family contact plan—contact names, alternative contacts, home and work phone numbers, cell phone numbers, e-mails and meeting places.



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## Reduce Hazards and Communicate

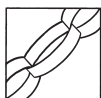
Distribute *Family Contact Plan* and *My Yellow Pages* to each student to have them compare each activity sheet with the list the groups developed. What information did they miss? What information do they believe should be added to the plan?

**TEACHING NOTE** This contact plan is set up for family members to keep in touch with each other. Lesson Plan 3 in *Be Disaster Safe* can be used to help your students learn to call 9-1-1 in case of an emergency.



### Home Connection

It is important to have accurate and up-to-date information to guide the students in contacting families in case of an emergency. Everyone in the family must know how to stay in touch. Distribute *Family Contact Plan* and *My Yellow Pages* to each student. Have them complete the activity sheets with their families as part of their family disaster plans.



### Linking Across the Curriculum

#### Social Studies: Geography and Personal Responsibility

On a map of the United States, have the students find and mark where their out-of-town family contacts live. Ask the students to discuss—

- Does your contact live in a different time zone? What problems could this cause?
- Could the contact's city be experiencing the same emergency conditions? Why or why not?
- What might be a backup plan if there's a problem getting in touch with the contact?
- What information would you leave on an answering machine?
- Is there a way you could pick up information from that answering machine?

#### Social Studies: Mapping; Science: Technology; Mathematics: Measurement

*For this activity you will need either Internet access and a printer or local street maps.*



Use an Internet mapping program or local street maps to help the students map routes throughout the community—

- From their homes to school.
- From the school to their parents' workplaces.
- From their siblings' schools to their school.
- From the school to their outside-the-neighborhood family meeting place.

Using these maps, have the students calculate distances and discuss barriers, such as bridges that might be unsafe during a flood or major intersections where traffic lights could be dark because of a power outage. Discuss distances and difficulties that might occur when family members are trying to meet during an emergency or after a disaster.



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## Reduce Hazards and Communicate

Challenge the students to use the maps to discover alternate routes from place to place and be able to describe them clearly in terms of miles, turns and landmarks.

### Science: Technology and Physical Science; Language Arts: Research



Challenge interested students to conduct research for a brochure that explains why it is important to have at least one corded phone that plugs directly into the phone line. The brochure needs to include the scientific differences between corded and cordless phones and why cordless phones cannot be used when the power is out.

“How Stuff Works” is an excellent online resource for this comparison.

- How Cordless Telephones Work (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/cordless-telephone1.htm>)
- How Telephones Work (<http://www.howstuffworks.com/telephone.htm>)



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# Help Reduce Hazards

Page 1 of 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Making your home safer is a key part of any family disaster plan. During a disaster, objects in your home can cause injury or damage. Anything that can move, fall, break or cause a fire is a home hazard.

**Consider these points as you walk around your home and reduce the hazards:**

**Secure items that can shift or fall.**

- ☐ Look in every room to see what could tip over or fall during an earthquake or if a child climbs on it.
- ☐ Attach tall furniture like bookcases and cabinets to wall studs.
- ☐ Secure televisions, computers and other heavy items to shelves or walls.
- ☐ Hang heavy objects, such as large pictures or mirrors, away from beds and chairs.
- ☐ Make sure that the water heater is strapped to studs.
- ☐ Install secure latches or locking devices on all cabinet doors.

**Check for fire hazards.**

- ☐ Keep lighters, matches and candles out of the reach of children.
- ☐ Keep space heaters and candles away from curtains and furniture.
- ☐ Never leave a lighted candle unattended or with children.
- ☐ Make sure that flammable items are away from heat sources—fireplaces, stovetops or lamps.
- ☐ Store hazardous and flammable materials on low shelves in locked cupboards, away from heat sources and children.





# Help Reduce Hazards

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## **General safety:**

- ☐ Keep hallways and stairs clear of obstacles to prevent tripping and to ensure easy evacuation.
- ☐ Keep electric cords and other obstacles away from evacuation paths.
- ☐ Make sure that there are two clear and safe exits from every room in your home.
- ☐ Place and maintain smoke alarms on each level of your home, inside and outside each bedroom and right outside the kitchen.
- ☐ Identify and secure any areas in your home that should be off-limits to children.
- ☐ Identify any areas outside your home that should be off-limits to children because of the danger of flood, flash flood or other hazards.

**Keep this sheet as part of your family disaster plan.**





# Family Contact Plan

Page 1 of 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Staying in contact is part of any good family disaster plan. Go through the checklist below to make sure your family has correct information. Then, fill in *My Yellow Pages* with the names and numbers your family needs.

## Everyone in our family knows—

- ☐ His or her full name, complete address, phone number and the nearest cross street to our home.
- ☐ The full name of our parent, guardian and/or adult caretaker.
- ☐ Our family's meeting places:  
Outside our home (by a tree or streetlight) \_\_\_\_\_  
Outside our neighborhood (at friend or relative's home) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ If there's an emergency, \_\_\_\_\_ will pick us up from school.
- ☐ Where I keep *My Yellow Pages*, all the important numbers I need to stay in contact. (backpack, school bag or wallet) \_\_\_\_\_

## Everyone in our family understands—

- ☐ How to call 9-1-1 in an emergency. We know what a real emergency is. If there is a fire, we get out of the building BEFORE we call 9-1-1.
- ☐ Our family has a corded, touch-tone phone that does not require electricity, in case the power is out.
- ☐ We know that calling 9-1-1 from a cell phone means that the dispatcher may not have our location or be able to call us back. Even if our number has been cancelled or there are no more minutes in our plan, we can use a cell phone to call 9-1-1. The only thing to remember is to keep the cell phone charged—it won't work if the battery is dead.
- ☐ If there is an emergency during school, it could be quite awhile before someone from the family arrives. It's important to leave school only with adults designated on the school's emergency information sheet.
- ☐ If local phones don't work, our family will call our out-of-town emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ If possible, and phones are not working, we can e-mail emergency contacts that are listed on *My Yellow Pages*.
- ☐ If the phones don't work, we need to be patient and remember that our family knows how to stay safe in an emergency.
- ☐ Everyone in the family must keep *My Yellow Pages* information up-to-date.

**Keep this sheet as part of your family disaster plan.**





# My Yellow Pages

Page 1 of 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

These are important phone numbers that all my family knows.

## My emergency information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Nearest cross street to my home: \_\_\_\_\_

Local emergency number is 9-1-1 or \_\_\_\_\_

## Family members' contact information when I'm at school

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Neighbor's, friend's or relative's contact information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## Out-of-town contact's information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

