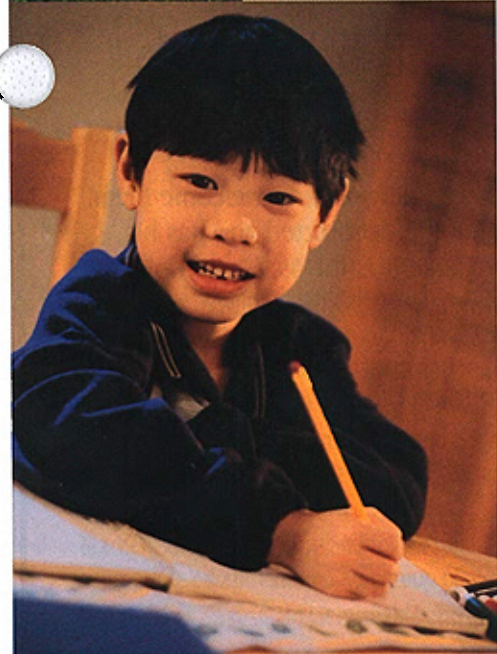
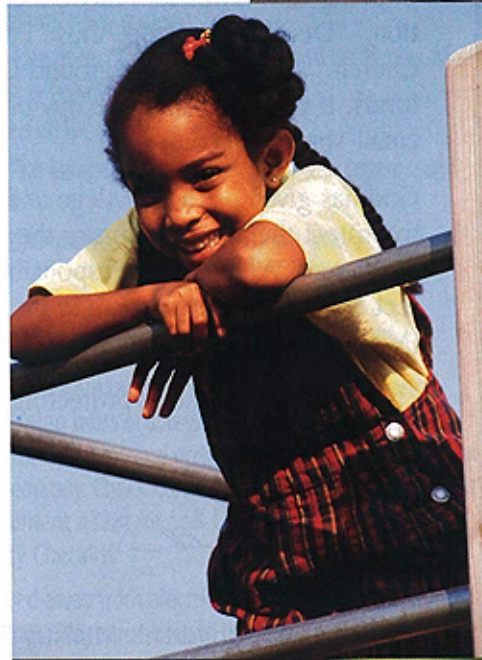


# Oklahoma Baptists Protecting Children



A PLAN FOR  
PROTECTING  
PRESCHOOLERS AND  
CHILDREN IN  
OKLAHOMA BAPTIST  
CHURCHES



## PHASE III

(A REMOVABLE SUPPLEMENT TO  
THE *EQUIPPING* MAGAZINE)





Dear Pastor and Church Leaders,

The "Playground Safety, Disaster - Emergency Preparedness" and the two "Forms" are Phase III of the **Oklahoma Baptist Protecting Children** folder. After careful review of this information and the forms, consider how your church should prepare safe outdoor play space for children and preschoolers and how your church will respond should an emergency occur.

Extensive research has been done to equip leaders in beginning their development of Safety precautions in these areas. However, in no way is the information provided in Phase III all-inclusive; therefore, the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma assumes no liability for reliance on information provided herein. Each church is advised to get a qualified team (committee) to research local codes that apply to your community.

The information in the Phase III booklet may be copied and distributed to preschool and children's leadership, church members, and the committee responsible for formulating these safety policies. If you need further assistance, please contact your associational office or the Preschool and Children's Ministry Specialist Office of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. These pages may be removed from this magazine and filed with Phase I and Phase II.

Your church should have received Phase I and Phase 2, Oklahoma Baptists Protecting Children in November 1998 and November 2000. Phase I inserts included "Developing Policies for Your Church," "A Safe Environment: A Major Step in Protecting Children," "Security System: A Top Priority for Protecting Preschoolers in Your Church," and "Hygiene Practices and Policies." Phase II included "Preventing Child Abuse: The Church's Obligation," "Developing Child Abuse Policies," "Sample Child Abuse Policies," "Responding to Allegations at Church," "Obtaining Background Checks" and sample employment application forms, consent and reference forms. If you need another copy of Phase I or Phase II inserts, please call me at (405) 942-3800 ext. 642 or email sbabb@bgco.org.

God has given us the privilege and responsibility to teach preschoolers and children diligently, to welcome them, to protect them, and to insure they believe in Him. A child can only learn when he feels protected and has his needs met. What a great responsibility we have, and yet, what a blessing and privilege it is for us, His people, to "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:13-14).

Thank you for teaching, protecting, and guiding preschoolers and children in your church.

You are a blessing!

Sheri Babb  
Preschool and Children's Ministry Specialist  
Church and Family Equipping Team  
Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma

A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was,  
the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove,  
but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a CHILD.  
.... Author Unknown

If clarification on this information is desired, contact Sheri Babb, Preschool and Children's Ministry Specialist, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, 3800 N. May, Oklahoma City, OK 73112. Telephone 405 / 942 - 3800 ext. 642. Email sbabb@bgco.org. **PREPARED BY:** Sheri Babb, Preschool and Children's Ministry Specialist, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

# Playground Safety: The SAFE Checklist

Preschoolers and children are attracted to playgrounds and opportunities to play outdoors. Families with young children are attracted to churches that offer outdoor play as a part of ministry to children. A church that considers all areas of a child's development shows parents that they are truly interested in meeting the needs of young children. Many churches purchase, install, and maintain playgrounds that add to their children's ministry experiences. These outdoor play experiences give teachers and volunteers at church great opportunities to use Bible truths and talk with children about God and His world during active outdoor play. For children to grow and develop physically, spiritually, emotionally, socially, and intellectually, the church is trusted to provide and maintain safe outdoor play areas and experiences.

More than 2000,000 children are treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms each year for injuries associated with playground equipment.<sup>1</sup> However, churches can prevent playground accidents by identifying potential playground hazards, taking steps to provide safe play areas and promote greater safety awareness among those that purchase, install, maintain, and use playgrounds. Use the SAFE checklist for installing and maintaining playgrounds for children.

**S**(upervision)  
**A**(ge-appropriate)  
**F**(all Surfacing)  
**E**(quipment maintained)

## SUPERVISION

- ◆ At least two teachers should be on the playground with the children at all times. A third teacher is designated to take children to use restrooms, attend scrapes, and help with getting drinks. Pupil teacher ratio is maintained.
- ◆ Teachers separate themselves so that they can observe, interact, and guide the children, and are aware of and responsible for ongoing activities of each child on the playground.
- ◆ Limits are set for playground safety and behavior; the teachers consistently follow the guidelines and consequences are followed when unsafe play occurs.
- ◆ Teachers know how to use and follow guidelines for developmentally appropriate equipment and age group play areas.
- ◆ Teachers have a first-aid kit available and are trained to use it.

## AGE-APPROPRIATE

- ◆ Separate areas are designated for preschoolers birth through 2, 3 through 5 years of age and children 5 through 12 years of age. A fence separates play areas.
- ◆ All playgrounds are protected from streets and parking lots by a fence at least 6 feet high.

Equipment is sized and appropriate for each age group served, with climbing heights limited to the reaching height of children standing erect. (Suggestions for age-appropriate equipment may be found in the *Handbook for Playground Safety*).<sup>2</sup>

- ◆ Equipment is placed at least six feet from fences and buildings and spaced apart to give play space between equipment pieces. Fences are in good repair and gates have safety locks. Signs to designate age play areas are posted on fences.
- ◆ Children are dressed appropriately for playground play, avoiding strings, loose clothing, buttons or hooks and stringed items around necks that can catch on playground equipment and strangle children.

## ALL SURFACES

- ◆ Surfaces around and under play equipment have at least 12 inches of impact material such as: hardwood mulch/fiber, pea gravel, sand, or safety-tested synthetic surface rubber tiles, mats or poured surfaces; and shredded rubber tires. (A table, "Critical Heights (in feet) of Tested Materials"<sup>3</sup> is available in the Handbook for public safety)
- ◆ Protective surface materials extend at least 6 feet in all directions from play equipment. For swings, be sure surfacing extends, in back and front, twice the height of the suspending bar.
- ◆ All playground surfaces are checked daily for hazards such as broken glass, metal or sharp objects, sticks, rodents, or unsafe materials and objects.
- ◆ A list of poisonous plants is obtained, reviewed, and play areas are kept free of such plants. (See page 6).
- ◆ Surfaces are kept free of fertilizers, weedkillers, and pesticides. Make sure your play area is poison-proof.
- ◆ Sand bed is covered when not in use.
- ◆ Tripping hazards, like exposed concrete footings, tree stumps, and rocks are removed.
- ◆ Elevated surfaces, like platforms and ramps, have guardrails to prevent falls.

## EQUIPMENT MAINTAINED

- ◆ Equipment is examined for missing or loose parts, protruding bolts or screws, sharp edges and corners, splintering wood, and open "S" hooks. Repairs are made immediately. Check Consumer Product Safety Checklist (Document #328) for Soft Contained Play Equipment Safety Checklist<sup>4</sup>
- ◆ Equipment is placed away from electrical or outdoor power lines, fences, and buildings. Play structures of more than 30 inches high are spaced nine feet apart.
- ◆ Handrails and steps are in good condition.
- ◆ Spaces that could trap children, such as openings in guardrails or between ladder rungs, measure less than 3.5 inches or more than nine inches.
- ◆ Platforms are surrounded with a guardrail (2–5 years of age at least 29 inches high; 5–12 years of age at least 38 inches high.)
- ◆ Frames of all equipment are anchored well.
- ◆ Metal playground equipment with potential hot surfaces is shaded to prevent burns to young children.

## SWINGS

- ❖ Survey types and quality of swings (CAUTION: Moving equipment causes most playground injury, thus, should be supervised closely or avoided on playgrounds).



- ❖ Swings such as animal swings, metal or wooden swings should be replaced with soft seat swings.
- ❖ Only two swings are placed on each framework.
- ❖ Swings are 24 inches apart at the base and 30 inches from any support.
- ❖ Fall zones for swings are two times the height of the swing hanger (EXAMPLE: 10 feet = 20 ft. fall zone in front and 20 ft. in the back with 6 ft. on each side of the swing).

## SLIDES

- ❖ Are well anchored
- ❖ Have firm handrails for gripping
- ❖ Have steps with good traction with holes to drain water
- ❖ Have platforms and slide beds that do not have any space for cords or clothing to catch and cause strangulation, and are shaded or covered to prevent burns from hot sun.
- ❖ With cargo nets that could allow head entrapment and strangulations are checked. Net openings should either be too small to permit entry of child's body or large enough to permit free passage of a child's head.



## SEESAW

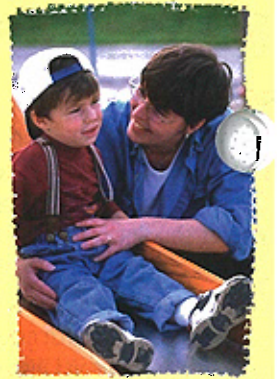
- ❖ Area is reviewed and handles are secure and easy to grip.
- ❖ All pivot points are covered to prevent pinched fingers.



## MERRY-GO-AROUND

- ❖ Is firmly anchored
- ❖ Has handles that are easy for children to grip
- ❖ Has the equipment surface positioned so that a child cannot slide under the merry-go-around
- ❖ Has a covered gearbox where fingers cannot get caught
- ❖ Does not have any space where any part of a body may become entrapped.
- ❖ Has a regulator (governor) attached on the equipment to control speed.

# Playground and Safety Guidelines



Teachers and volunteers that work with children at church or in childcare centers should establish guidelines and be consistent in following the guidelines each time a child comes to church.

1. Teachers will instruct children on safe play before going outdoors and see that the children maintain safe play while on the playground. (See Keeping Children SAFE when Playing Outdoors).
2. Teachers will read and be trained on proper SAFE outdoor play.
3. All teachers and workers will be consistent in following SAFE play guidelines each time a child or children are on the playground.
4. A teacher will remain by the swings keeping children from walking in front of or behind the swings.
5. Workers remain off the equipment.
6. Fanny packs with first-aid kits or another type of first aid kit will be on the playground each time the playground is in use. Check with your local Red Cross for first-aid contents.
7. Teachers will wear disposable gloves when wiping noses, handling scrapes and cuts, or handling any bodily fluids.
8. Children are taken to and from the playground in an orderly manner. Example: Provide a long piece of rope. Select several colorful stretch hair bands. Attach the bands along the rope at least two feet apart. Invite each child to hold his or her favorite color of band as they make a line along the stretched out rope. One teacher will hold one end of the rope and lead the children while another teacher holds the other end of the rope and follows the children.
9. Boxes of tissue and trash receptacles are strategically placed around the playground.
10. Children are not permitted on the playground unless trained teachers or leaders are supervising the playground.

<sup>1</sup> Handbook for Public Playground Safety, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C.; or call 1-800-638-2772; or visit [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Consumer Product Safety Commission, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of Information and Public Affairs, Washington, D.C. 20207 or call 1-800-638-2772 or email [info@cpsc.gov](mailto:info@cpsc.gov) or [www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/328.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/328.html).

# Keeping Children Safe When Playing Outdoors

**W**hen playing outdoors children should be encouraged to take care of themselves and the safety and happiness of their playmates. Talk with children about growing like Jesus grew "in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" Luke 2:52. Add: "Jesus grew wise and smart, to show God's love to all, to care and love others, and he grew healthy and strong." Help children understand that exercise and outdoor play are good for them and that playground safety is necessary for happy and healthy play. The following guidelines insure SAFE and happy play for children while on playgrounds. Inform the children before going out to the play area and be available to observe, redirect, and remind children of the following consistent guidelines.

## SWINGS

### **Instruct Children To:**

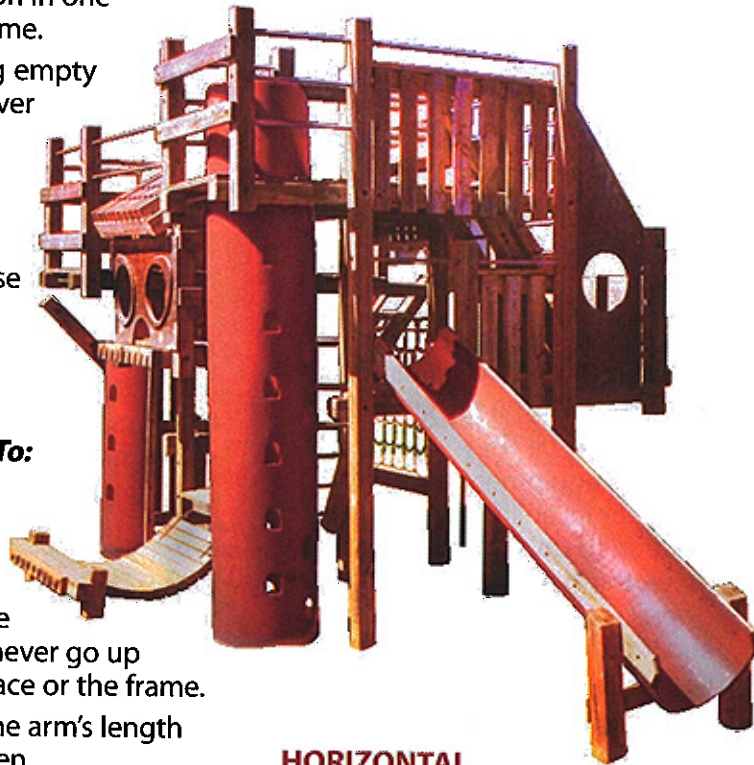
- Sit in the center of the swing; never stand or kneel.
- Hold with both hands.
- Stop the swing before getting off.
- Walk way around the swing—not too close to the front or back.
- Never push anyone else in the swing or allow others to push him or her.

- Have one person in one swing at one time.
- Avoid swinging empty swings, and never twist swing chains.
- Avoid putting head and feet through exercise rings on the swing sets.

## SLIDES

### **Instruct Children To:**

- Hold on with both hands as they go up the steps of the slide, taking one step at a time; never go up the sliding surface or the frame.
- Keep at least one arm's length between children
- Slide down feet first, always sitting up, one at a time.
- Be sure no one is in front of the slide before sliding down.
- Be patient, avoid pushing or shoving, and wait their turn.
- Leave the bottom of the slide after they have taken their turn.
- Never use a metal slide that has been sitting in the sun.



## HORIZONTAL LADDERS AND BARS

### **Instruct Children To:**

- Start at the same end of the apparatus and move in the same direction.
- Stay well behind the person in front and watch out for swinging feet.
- Never use apparatus when it is wet.
- Avoid speed contests or trying to cover too large a distance in one move.
- Drop from the bars with knees slightly bent and land on both feet.

## CLIMBING APPARATUS GEODESIC DOMES OR ARCHES AND JUNGLE GYMS

### **Instruct Children To:**

- Use the correct grip; use both hands.
- Be careful of climbing down, and watch out for those climbing up.
- Avoid having too many people using the apparatus at one time.

## SEESAWS

### **Instruct Children To:**

- Sit facing each other, not leaning back.
- Keep a firm hold with both hands.
- Never stand or run on the board.
- Keep feet out from underneath the board as it descends.

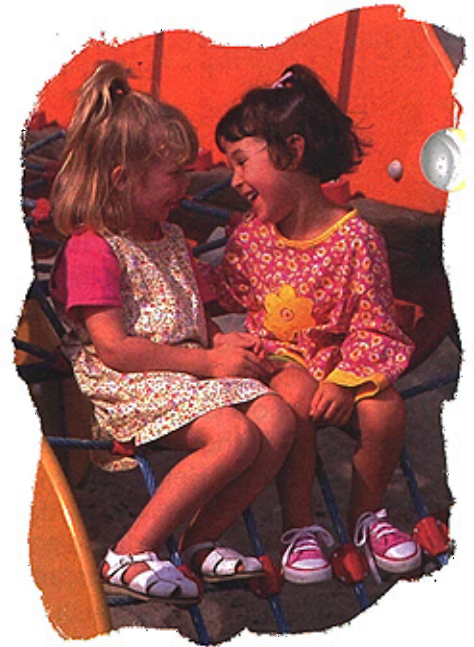


# Suggested Play Equipment

Consider the importance of natural play experiences that give children opportunities to climb, hop, skip, experiment, and create. Children today have fewer opportunities for unstructured outdoor play thus limiting their creativity and imagination. Outdoor playgrounds should enhance a child's creativity, thinking ability, and problem solving.

- Select equipment and play space that help children develop strong bodies and minds.
- Examine equipment and play space for its ability to encourage children to do something - to move, think, and use their God given creativity to solve problems and interact with others.
- Use materials that give children opportunities to create rather than themes that limit their thinking and creativity. Select equipment than can become an animal, a tall building, a church, or whatever children think thus helping children develop their minds, bodies, and relationships with God and others.
- Include an overall design with play zones that invite and integrate play across the whole yard or area.
- Have plenty of large loose parts and toys for sand play, water play, construction, and artwork.

- Provide structures and props that encourage dramatic and social play.
- Provide vehicle pathways that go somewhere (slabs and linear sidewalks are unsuitable).
- Include sand and water play opportunities and other activity settings as well as surfaces, textures and equipment to stimulate children's learning and development.
- Plan nature and shade areas for play and rest.
- Avoid blind spots when placing equipment on the playground.



## Resources for Playground Safety

*Handbook for Public Playground Safety*, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C.; 800-328-0035 (hotline 800-638-2772) or <http://www.cpsc.gov>.

Oklahoma Poison Control Center, Children's Hospital of Oklahoma, Room 3512, 940 North East 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73104; 405-271-5454; or 800-764-7661.

Landscape Structures, PlaySense, WebCoat and Cedar Forest Products, Arkoma Playgrounds & Supply, LLC, 31 E. Center Street, Suite 202, Fayetteville, AR 72701, 501-443-0066 or 888-340-7529 or Email: [Arkoma@4funlsi.com](mailto:Arkoma@4funlsi.com). This company offers several catalogs that help plan playgrounds as well as equipment.

Lakeshore Learning Materials, 6300 North May Avenue, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 405-858-8778 or 800-428-4414, or [www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com).

Constructive Playthings, 13201 Arrington Road, Grandview, Missouri 64030-2886, 800-448-4115 (orders) or 800-448-1412 (customer service) or email: [ustoy@ustoyco.com](mailto:ustoy@ustoyco.com); [www.constplay.com](http://www.constplay.com).

Direct Sales, LifeWay Christian Stores, 127 Ninth Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37234; 800-622-8660 email: [jstults@lifeway.com](mailto:jstults@lifeway.com). They carry *Grounds Play* and *Howell Equipment Company* Playground Equipment. Before purchasing from any company, call Direct Sales and ask for a bid. They are committed to trying to get a discount for every church.

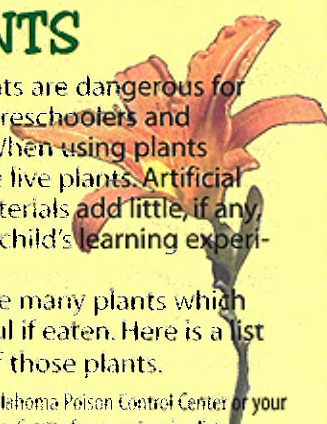
Oklahoma County OSU Extension Center, 930 North Portland, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73107, or call 405-713-1125 to order facts sheets on Poisonous Plants.

## POISONOUS PLANTS

Some plants are dangerous for use with preschoolers and children. When using plants always use live plants. Artificial nature materials add little, if any, value to a child's learning experience.

There are many plants which are harmful if eaten. Here is a list of some of those plants.

\*Contact the Oklahoma Poison Control Center or your County Extension Center for an extensive list.



Acorn  
Amaryllis  
Anemone  
Angels Trumpet  
Azalea  
Apricot Seed  
Arrowhead  
Autumn Crocus  
Avocado (leaves)  
Baneberry  
Bird of Paradise (tree)  
Bittersweet  
Black Locust  
Bleeding Heart  
Boston Ivy  
Buckeye  
Buttercup

Caladium  
Calla Lily  
Castor Bean  
Cherry tree (not fruit)  
Daffodil  
Delphinium  
Devils Ivy  
Dieffenbachia  
Dumb Cane  
Elderberry (except fruit)  
Elephant Ear  
English Ivy  
Euonymus Species  
Foxglove  
Golden Chain  
Hemlock  
Holly

Hyacinth  
Hydrangea  
Iris  
Jack in the Pulpit  
Japanese Yew  
Jimson Weed  
Jerusalem Cherry  
Jonquil  
Larkspur  
Laurels (all)  
Lily of the Valley  
Magnolia  
Mayapple  
Milkweed  
Mistletoe  
Morning Glory  
Mother-in-law Tongue

Narcissus  
Oleander  
Peony  
Periwinkle  
Philodendrons  
Poinsettia (rare)  
Poke  
Potato (sprouts and plant)  
Privet  
Rattleweed  
Rhododendron  
Rhubarb (leaves)  
Sweet Pea  
Tomato (not fruit)  
Wisteria  
Yew (all parts)

# Disaster! Disaster! Disaster!—Are You Prepared?

**D**isaster can strike anywhere at anytime with little or no warning. Storms, tornadoes, earthquakes, chemical spills, power failure, fire or any other disaster can be a frightening experience for children and adults. With planning and practice, churches can improve safety and decrease fear and panic for everyone involved should an emergency take place. Churches both large and small should have a written emergency plan. When developing and reviewing an emergency preparation plan elect an Emergency Coordinator (staff or church leader) and/or a church emergency committee (include health, legal, and disaster professionals) to formulate, evaluate, and implement good policies and procedures.

## The responsibilities of the Emergency Coordinator and church elected committee should be to:

- Write policies and procedures for each emergency
- Provide copies of the policies and procedures for the church body to review
  - Discuss the emergency plan and have it adopted by the church body
  - Post written procedures in each classroom and hallway
  - Educate the church body on emergency procedures
  - Train volunteers, teachers, and staff on the plan and how to implement the plan

When developing and reviewing emergency policies and procedures, the committee should gather information from sources such as the local, state, and national fire departments and associations, national and local storm centers, National Health and Safety Performance Standards, childcare state licensing agencies, attorneys, churches, and insurance agencies.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- 1. **National Weather Service**, 1200 Westheimer Drive, Norman, OK; (405) 360-5928, Monday—Friday, email: [w-oun.webmaster@noaa.gov](mailto:w-oun.webmaster@noaa.gov), website [www.srh.noaa.gov/oun](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun).

- 2. **American Red Cross**, 431 18<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20006; (202) 639-3520; [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).
- 3. **Red Cross**, 601 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73104; (405) 232-7121, [www.redcross.org/ok/okc](http://www.redcross.org/ok/okc). Or your local Red Cross.



- 4. **Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA)**, 500 C St. SW, Washington, DC 20472; (202) 646-4600; website: [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).
- 5. **National Weather Service, NOAA**, 1325 East-West Hwy., Silver Springs, MD 20910; website: [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov).

- 6. **National Fire Protection Association**, 1 Batterymarch Park, PO Box 9101, Quincy MA 02269-9101, (617) 770-3000, website: [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org).
- 7. **Occupational Safety & Health Administration**, Office of Public Affairs, Room N3647, 200 Constitution Avenue, Washington D.C. 20210, (202) 693-1999, website: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).
- 8. **American Academy of Pediatrics**, 141 Northwest Point Boulevard, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098, (847) 434-4000, website: [www.aap.gov](http://www.aap.gov).
- 9. **Center of Disease Control and Prevention**, 1600 Clifton Road, Atlanta, GA, 30333; (404) 639-3534 or (800) 311-3435, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- 10. **U.S. Consumer's Product Safety Commission**, Washington D.C. 20207-0001, (800) 638-2772, website: [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES TO KEEP ON HAND

- 1. 72-hour supply of extra bottled water, formula, bottles, food, juices, clothing, disposable diapers, baby wipes, and prescribed medications stored where accessible.
- 2. Store strollers and blankets near emergency safe places.
- 3. Have children's emergency cards up to date.

# Preparing for All Emergencies – Knowing Your Role

## EMERGENCY COORDINATOR

### Before An Emergency:

- Enlist and train floor or hallway leader(s).
- Enlist volunteers to assist in evacuating persons with disabilities and with babies.
- Train volunteers, teachers, and staff on the plan and how to implement the plan.
- Train teachers in administering first-aid intervention, choking and CPR.
- Have a definite method and procedure for informing parents of emergencies and practice drills.
- Check equipment and procedures monthly to see that the emergency plan is maintained.
- See that emergency lighting is kept in working condition.
- Ensure emergency numbers are posted by the telephone and mounted on a cordless or cellular phone.
- Make sure all preschoolers are located on ground floor when rooms are assigned (exceptions should be approved by the State and local Fire Marshal).
- Conduct practice drills and procedures first with leadership, then with the church body.



- Conduct a sweep of your floor and ensure that all doors are closed.
- Assure all persons are evacuated from your floor.
- Report to your designated safe area.
- Coordinate with the emergency coordinator or staff for further instructions.

### LEAD TEACHER

- Make sure flashlights in your room are kept in working order with new batteries and are used only for emergencies.
- Upon hearing the alarm, takes the sign in/sign out sheet (or attendance record) and follow the evacuation process given for the emergency.
- Once in a safe haven surround your children and take a head count.
- Reassure the children that they are safe.
- Wait for further instructions from the floor leader (church staff member or coordinator on duty) before taking any action on informing parents, releasing children, or returning to your room. Again, during your teacher only drill take time to role-play ways to reassure children they are safe. Discuss possible first-aid that may be needed.

### SEARCHER TEACHER

- Bring up the rear, checking the bathrooms and areas where children or adults may linger.
- Join the lead teacher with the other children at the designated emergency safe haven.
- Remain calm and reassure the children.
- Wait for directions from the lead teacher before releasing a child or returning to the classroom.

### FIRST AID TEACHER

- Grab the first aid kit, information sheets and emergency sheets on the children and adults. All information should be updated and kept in a folder by the classroom door.
- Remain with the children in their designated area administering first aid as necessary.



### During An Emergency:

- In an emergency, call for the "Action Plan" and see that the "Action Plan" is carried out.
- Conduct a sweep of the floor(s) and ensure that all doors are closed, elevators are empty, and critical operations are stabilized.
- Assure all persons are evacuated.
- During the emergency keep in contact with other church staff or emergency personnel for further instructions. Keep teachers, parents, and volunteers informed with adequate and accurate information as agreed upon by church staff and emergency personnel.

## FLOOR OR HALLWAY LEADER(S)

- Assign teachers in each ministry classroom roles of lead teacher, searcher teacher, and first aid teacher.
- Keeps teachers calm and see that teachers remain calm and speak to the children in a reassuring manner.

# Conduct Emergency Evacuation Drills

1. Go through a practice drill following various procedures for each emergency with all the teachers.
2. Make sure volunteers and teachers get babies out first. Guide teacher's attention to a crib marked with fluorescent tape that will be used to transport babies to a safe location. The crib should have large wheels that roll easily when several babies are being transported. It should fit through the doorways and passageways easily and crib springs be reinforced with wooden or metal strips so that it holds several babies at one time.
3. Have teachers take the same steps you would use with the children.
4. Talk about ways to reassure and calm the children.
5. Keep in mind whether a practice or actual emergency, children may be frightened of the alarms and movement. When you have a practice drill with the children, record how many persons were evacuated and where trouble areas were. If you have a Childcare Center, a form to record fire and other emergency drill information can be obtained from state childcare licensing agencies.





# Preventative Steps for Specific Emergencies

## FIRE

1. Make sure your church meets fire and building codes. Call your local fire department and insurance and building code agency to gather specific building, classroom, and age-group safety requirements. Each community will vary in codes such as the number of fire extinguishers or smoke detectors.
2. Keep all hallways, doorways, and exit areas clear and unblocked from the inside and outside.
3. Check exits regularly to make sure they are unlocked and functioning properly.
4. Inform teachers of where the written procedures for fire emergencies are posted in their room.
5. Make teachers and all volunteers aware of the posted fire evacuation diagram showing two (a primary and a secondary) fire exit routes from each classroom to the outdoors. This plan records ways to evacuate children when a fire may be blocking various exits.
6. Schedule fire drills.
7. Have fire evacuation cribs available (See "Conduct Emergency Drills" page 8). Have a supply of fire safety blankets on hand.
8. Make sure screens can be pushed out of windows so that babies may be placed on fire-safety blankets and evacuated through a window if the doorway is blocked.
9. Inspect gas, electric, and utility equipment often.
10. Make sure all toys, window covering, and flooring meet flammability safety codes (check with fire officials).
11. Mark hot water spigots with red florescent stickers, and do not drink hot drinks in the presence of preschoolers and children. Set water heater on 120 degrees to prevent burns from scalding.
12. Inform teachers on locations of fire alarm manual pull stations and fire extinguishers.
13. Keep all fire extinguishers, alarms, and sprinklers in good working order. Ask your local fire department to test your

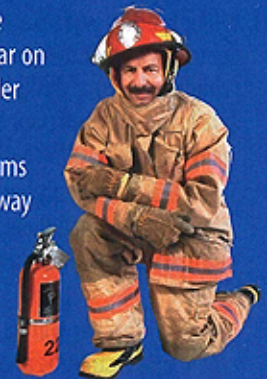


detectors and equipment at least once a year. Post the date fire extinguishers are serviced on the extinguishers.

14. Make sure extinguishers are lightweight, low on the wall, accessible and unobstructed.
15. Train teachers in use of extinguishers. Inform new teachers how to use fire extinguishers and answer questions about fire drills.
16. See that smoke detectors in each room are operational (batteries changed every six months) and can be heard above the noisy chatter of the room.
17. Have the building sprinkler system (if available) inspected each year.
18. Have lead teacher upon hearing the alarm, take the sign in/sign out sheet (or attendance record) and lead everyone in a single line into the hallway.
19. Search teacher brings up the rear, checking the bathrooms and areas where children or adults may linger and closing all windows and doors to keep the fire from spreading.
20. First-aid teacher gathers first aid kit, information sheets, and emergency sheets (sheets should be updated and kept in a folder by the classroom door).
21. Announce where the smoke is coming from and leave the building through the farthest exit from the smoke.
22. Immediately evacuate the building upon hearing the fire alarm.
23. Once out of the building go to an area far away from the building and safe from traffic (should have one designated safe haven). Surround your group, take a head count, and reassure the children they are safe.
24. Before reentering the building or taking any actions, wait for instructions from the floor leader or fire fighter.
25. Retrace your tracks when you reenter the building.

## TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT FIRE SAFETY

1. Invite a firefighter to visit your church or visit a fire station. Have the firefighter visit in street clothing. Seeing a firefighter put his/her gear on helps young children know that the firefighter is a "real person" under protective clothing and equipment.
2. Discuss fire safety such as not playing with matches or any other items that have open flame or are flammable, and how and why to stay away from stoves, ovens, and fireplaces.
3. Teach children what to do if their clothes catch fire. Ask children to "Stop" in their tracks, "Drop" to the ground, and "Roll" over and over. Practice "Stop, Drop, and Roll" method of putting out flames.
4. While you are talking about fire drills, place some props in the Homeliving area. Use plastic fire hats, a telephone, a bell, and some pictures of firefighters.
5. Keep all electrical outlets covered and never let children pick at a cover or outlet.
6. Avoid using extension cords. However, if one is necessary never run it under a rug or carpet. Place the cord behind furniture and along wall so that children cannot trip, pull at, or possibly put the cord in their mouth.



## POWER OUTAGE

- Remain calm, take flashlights from designated area and turn them on.
- Sit down with the children and sing songs or tell stories until they have further instructions from the designated floor leader.
- When parents arrive use your churches assigned security system and/or have parents sign to receive their child.



## TORNADOES, STORMS, and SEVERE WEATHER

In just five minutes a tornado may travel two to four miles on the ground. From the time the National Weather Service (NWS) issues a warning, to the time it takes for the message to be received precious minutes have elapsed. Churches must be listening for the initial warning and have a plan in place to evacuate immediately.

Drills are necessary to have an effective plan. Have a practice drill with your leadership and then an announced drill with your congregation. Next, have an unannounced drill. After each drill have an evaluation noting necessary changes. Follow the following steps when conducting a practice drill and in an actual storm.

1. Emergency Coordinator receives critical weather through a NOAA Weather Radio with a battery backup and a "tone alert" feature (available from electronic store—cost \$30 - \$80) or through radio and television stations that are a part of the NOAA Weather radio.
2. Emergency Coordinator will inform floor leaders when it is time to take action.
3. Floor Leaders will take action to inform the teachers as quickly as possible to take the children to a pre-designated shelter. Use of walkie talkies, cell phones, or cordless phones may help relay information quicker.
4. Lead teacher will gather the sign in/sign out sheet (attendance sheet) and take children to Tornado and High Wind Safety Zone in the church.
5. Searcher Teacher will do a quick search of the room and restrooms and join lead teacher and children.
6. First-aid teacher will gather first aid kit and emergency forms and quickly join the lead teacher and children.
7. Children, teachers, babies, and toddlers are evacuated to small interior rooms, bathrooms, and windowless, interior hallways and

interior load bearing walls that provide better protection. If your church has more than one story evacuate the upper level to the lowest level in the building. Do not use portable buildings.

8. Designated Spotters, trained in spotting severe weather (training is free of charge from your National Weather Service Office under a program called SKYWARN) watch the approaching storm.
9. As the storm reaches the building have children, parents, and teachers drop immediately to the protective position (Face down and arms folded over head).



10. Once the storm has past, a designated team shuts off main power (electricity) and gas if the building is damaged.
11. Children and parents will remain in area until the Emergency Coordinator gives the Floor Leaders instructions and the instructions are effectively communicated to everyone.
12. If you have a bus or van ministry, never put persons in the vehicles and transport them home until a warning is completely over. If a storm is approaching and the persons you are to transport will not have time to be delivered and walk safely to their home, delay the departure until the storm has passed.

## EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes occur without warning. Should an earthquake occur, instruct everyone to immediately take cover inside building.

1. Gather children in locations such as:
  - Standing in a doorway.
  - Getting under a desk or heavy table.
  - Standing flat against an interior wall.
2. Remain away from hanging objects, tall heavy furniture that could topple, glass areas, hot water heaters, gas lines, electrical wires, and flammable liquids.
3. Assist physically disabled persons and young babies and toddlers to safety.
4. Once shaking has stopped the Emergency Coordinator and Floor Leaders will assist in gathering valuables and evacuate the building as quickly as possible.

5. When leaving the building, use stairwells only to move to the designated area of safety.
6. Once in a safe area, count the children and teachers. If a person cannot be accounted for, the Staff, Floor Leaders, or designee may direct emergency personnel to search for the missing persons.
7. The staff or another designee should call the local emergency services.

## Hazardous Material Accidents

Once local media has communicated a hazardous material incident has occurred...

- Emergency Coordinator will notify Floor Leaders to which strategy to implement for the emergency.
- Teachers may be instructed to:
  - Close all windows
  - Turn off heating and cooling systems
  - Move all children and teachers to the SAFE haven shelter located in the inner hallways of the first floor.
- Government or community officials may evacuate the building. This action plan may include:
  - Walking to a specified door to be evacuated.
  - Using the directions given by the community officials to walk or drive away from the area.

## VIOLENCE

Your awareness of violent acts may only occur through sounds of an explosion, gunfire and scuffling.



### For Explosions:

- Follow the same plan and procedure as for a fire.

### For Gunfire:

- Take refuge in a room with a door that locks.
- The room should provide limited visibility to anyone outside.
- Secure the door and have the children hide under a table, in a closet, or in a corner. Do not leave the room for any reason until police have searched the building and given you permission to leave your room.
- In case of a hostage situation, immediately vacate the area taking no chances to endanger the life of the hostage.

# Emergency Medical Care

(to be completed by parents)

In the event that I cannot be reached to make arrangements for emergency medical attention, I authorize \_\_\_\_\_ staff to take my child to an Emergency Room, or to the following physician or his/her associates, for medical care.

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Special Instructions \_\_\_\_\_

I give consent for any and all treatment deemed necessary by the attending physician.

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

*(Attach a photocopy of your insurance card.)*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*(Signature of Parent/Guardian)*

State of \_\_\_\_\_ County of \_\_\_\_\_

This instrument was acknowledged before me on (date) \_\_\_\_\_

(Notary Seal)

by \_\_\_\_\_

*(Signature of Notary Public)*

**OBTAIN Child's Health Record from parents. Parents will bring the record from their physician. For Child Development (Day Care) Centers a form can be obtained from the state health department.**

# CHILD'S INFORMATION SHEET

(to be completed by parents)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Person to Contact in Case of Emergency \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Home \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Home \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Work \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Work \_\_\_\_\_

If not living with parents, with whom does child live? \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Church Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Church Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Brothers and Sisters \_\_\_\_\_

Others living in home \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Father's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Does child attend daycare, preschool, or kindergarten? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, where? \_\_\_\_\_

Pets \_\_\_\_\_ Pet's Names \_\_\_\_\_

Favorite Things to Do \_\_\_\_\_

Does child have allergies? If yes, describe \_\_\_\_\_

Any medical conditions or special instructions? \_\_\_\_\_

List any special words the child may use to go to the bathroom \_\_\_\_\_

List any special words for mommy, daddy, & grandparents \_\_\_\_\_

List other church activities in which child participates \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information \_\_\_\_\_