USING THE FAMILY DISASTER PLANNER

This is a guide to using the Family Disaster Readiness Planner, which is presented in an easy to use planning format that can be used with children with access and functional needs. Pictures show examples of disasters and a clearly labeled set of talking points to begin conversations that emphasize family members working together, or with a trusted partner, such as a friend, neighbor or family support worker to take action steps for family emergency preparedness. The Planner provides discussion areas that emphasize families making key decisions to encourage safe practices when staying, leaving or sheltering.

SITUATION

The purpose of this step is for you to start thinking about all the places that family members may be when a “known” disaster like hurricane or an “unknown” disaster like earthquake strikes. Begin by checking off situations apply to you.

CONCERNS

What are your concerns about a disaster striking the area where your family lives? Do you have enough food, water, and medications in your home to last a week? Take time to think about what your family would do if the power went out for a week or more. Think about how your family would reconnect with each other if a disaster struck.

HELP

The importance of this step is you realize that you don’t have to do everything alone. There are people and organizations that can help. Remember that the purpose of this planner is for you and your family to begin planning. Work through each step and seek help as needed.

COMMUNICATION

How would your family communicate with each other, if the power was out and cell phone towers were down? Communication is one of the most important aspects of readiness. Have more than one way to get alerts and warnings and have more than one way to send information.

DECIDING

What factors determine if your family stays or leaves before or during a disaster? When facing a disaster, one of the most important decisions that your family can make is whether or not to stay or go. In advance, determine what considerations would be factored into your decisions. In certain situations your family may be told to leave by authorities.

STAYING

Do you have enough supplies to sustain your entire family for a week? Shown are a few suggested items to consider when building your STAY IN PLACE KIT. Your kit should reflect the needs of your family. As your family changes make sure to check your kit to make sure that it is still functional.

LEAVING

If your family has to evacuate the home, where would you go and what would you take with you? Shown is an image of a GO-KIT. A GO-KIT contains the same items as your STAY IN PLACE KIT. The difference is that you need enough supplies to get where you’re going. Make a GO-KIT for each member of your family, including pets. It is also important to take cash, picture ID and other legal documents.

TRAVELING

How would your family travel if they had to leave? Have multiple options planned out, beforehand, and be aware of local and state emergency transportation plans and routes.

SHELTER

Most public shelters only operate for a few hours or days before they are closed and people return home or to intermediate shelters such as hotels. Plan now to avoid having to take your family to an emergency shelter. Consider staying with family or friends.

RESUMING

It may take months, years, or decades for an area to recover from a disaster. Steps that you take now will speed up your recovery. Know what your insurance policy covers. In advance, know who at work, school, or day care you would contact to receive updates.