

Young Iowans urged to prepare for emergencies

DES MOINES – Whether at home or at school, children need to know what to do in emergencies and disasters. During Preparedness Month in September, parents and educators are being urged to help young Iowans learn how they can be more prepared.

Children should be active participants in disaster planning. By getting them involved early, it will help alleviate their fears as well as prepare them to take action in an emergency situation. The more they help plan, the more ready they will be.

The Iowa Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) and the Iowa School Safety Coalition (ISSC) have teamed up to offer some tips on emergency preparedness for kids, parents and educators.

- Get children involved in creating a family emergency plan. Talk about the plan on a regular basis to help them remember what they should do and where they should go during an emergency.
- Have them help to assemble an emergency supply kit and make sure they know where that kit is located.
- Talk about the different types of emergencies and what they should do for each.
- Talk with them about emergencies that could happen when they are at school and what they should do.

“While the focus of the Iowa School Safety Coalition is assisting schools, we recognize that prepared students contribute to the overall preparedness of their families, schools and communities,” said Mary Gannon, chair of the ISSC and attorney at the Iowa Association of School Boards.

Preparedness resources for kids, parents and educators are available on the [Ready Iowa](#) and [Ready](#) websites.

Iowa’s Preparedness Month is held in conjunction with National Preparedness Month, which was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in an effort to educate the public on how to prepare for emergencies. For more information on Preparedness Month, visit the [Ready Iowa](#) website.

The ISSC, formed in 2012, provides schools with a number of resources, including the Iowa School Safety Guide to provide a planning resource when creating school safety plans. To learn more, visit the [Iowa School Safety Coalition](#) website.

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