

# HOW YOU CAN HELP

Let children know they can talk to you about their fears. Be calm and listen to what they have to say. Never force children to talk if they aren't ready.



Don't talk about your own fears in front of children. They need to know that you are calm.



You may want to keep your children away from TV or radio news covering the hurricane. Too much news is scary for children.



If you evacuate, try to keep things normal. Try to keep the same bedtimes, mealtimes, and rules.



Help your children deal with fears by drawing pictures, writing in a journal, listening to music, singing or exercising.



Talk with your children about the family's hurricane plan.

**Completing a safety plan can help your child feel a sense of control, security, confidence, and independence.**



**Children's Health Fund**  
[www.childrenshealthfund.org](http://www.childrenshealthfund.org)

The Children's Health Fund (CHF) produces low-literacy, culturally relevant health education booklets and brochures to simplify complex medical issues affecting families and children. The materials make vital health information accessible to children, teenagers, parents and other care givers. They are created by clinicians within CHF's national network and undergo an extensive review process, which includes external topic experts and cultural anthropologists. English and Spanish materials adhere to low-literacy writing and design conventions and are tested for appropriate reading levels.

The New Orleans Children's Health Project is a partnership between the Children's Health Fund and Tulane School of Medicine, Department of Pediatrics. NOCHP is one of three projects in the Gulf Coast area formed to respond to the mental health, public health and clinical care needs of this region, following Hurricane Katrina. The NOCHP is dedicated to providing comprehensive healthcare to all children ages 0-24.

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My Hurricane Safety Plan was supported by a grant (1H795M058577-01) from the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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## PARENT GUIDE TO

# My Hurricane Safety Plan

**Be Prepared:**

How to Help Your Children During Hurricane Season



During hurricane season or a hurricane warning, children may feel or act differently. Because they may not be able to tell you how they are feeling, they may try to let you know by their actions.

Your children may act:

## SCARED



It's normal to be afraid of hurricanes. Children may become more scared of being alone, going to sleep, or being away from you. Sometimes frightened children act younger than they are – even bedwetting or using baby talk.

## ANGRY



Some children get mad because they don't understand what's happening. They may not know a better way to show you they are afraid. Children may talk back, refuse to listen or even hit.

## SICK



Children may feel sick when they get scared. They may have stomach aches, problems eating or problems sleeping.

# Develop a “Hurricane Safety Plan” and share it with your children.

Children feel safer if they know what they are supposed to do during a hurricane. It helps them to know that their families have a plan to keep them safe.



# 1

Make a plan. The adults in the family should decide on the family's plan for a hurricane and evacuation.

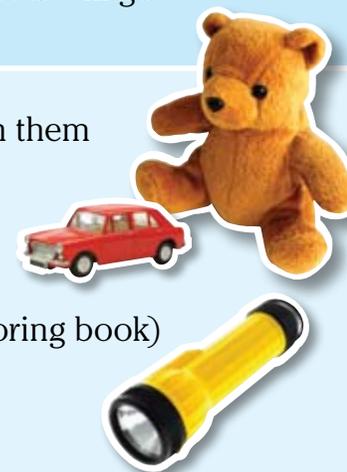
# 2

Share this plan with your children. Make sure to talk about who will evacuate with them, and where other loved ones and pets will go.

# 3

Talk with your children about what they can bring with them during an evacuation.

- a comfort item (blanket, stuffed animal)
- one or two special things
- a few different activities (portable game, books, coloring book)
- a flashlight or glow stick
- snacks



# 4

Have a special bag set aside for children to use for their evacuation kit.