

Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center

POST-DISASTER REUNIFICATION RESOURCE GUIDE

Planning

- [Multi-Agency Reunification Services Plan Template](#) (National Mass Care Strategy). This document provides guidance and sample procedures for multiple agencies within a community to consider as they each develop coordinated Reunification Annexes. This resource was developed in coordination with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department Agriculture, American Red Cross, and other state agencies and national organizations.
- [Post-Disaster Reunification and K-12 Schools Fact Sheet](#) (ED's Office of Safe and Healthy Students [OSHS] & REMS TA Center). This resource provides an introduction to reunification planning and methods to integrate reunification planning into school and school district emergency operations plans (EOPs).
- [Post-Disaster Reunification of Children: A Nationwide Approach](#) (FEMA, HHS, American Red Cross, and NCMEC). This publication, published with contributions from ED and DOJ, provides a comprehensive overview of the coordination processes necessary to reunify children separated from their families in the event of a disaster. Included are the roles of various agencies responsible for the temporary care of children and overseeing reunification efforts at the local, state, and national levels, including Tribes, Territories, and nongovernmental and private-sector organizations.

[Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](#) (U.S. Department of Education [ED], U.S. Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, U.S. Department of Justice [DOJ], Federal Bureau of Investigation, and HHS). This publication describes planning principles and the six step process to create a K-12 school EOP. Recommendations for developing a Family Reunification Annex may be found on page 31.

Location Systems

- School-specific accounting tools. Schools and school districts can use internal documentation, such as classroom membership and staff records, to account for school members at an assembly area.

A variety of free location tools are also available:

- [Facebook Safety Check](#) (Facebook). Facebook users in an area affected by a disaster can click on an "I'm safe" button, which will send notifications to friends and family.

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- [Google Person Finder](#) (Google). This system, which can be integrated into first responder Websites, can be used after natural or humanitarian disasters to report or locate missing people. First responder agencies can also upload or download data from the site.
- [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children \(NCMEC\)](#). NCMEC serves as a resource center and clearinghouse on topics related to missing and sexually exploited children. The Center supports law enforcement, the public, and private organizations.
 - [National Emergency Child Locator Center \(NECLC\)](#). This disaster call center assists local, state, and Tribal governments, as well as law enforcement agencies in the location of children under the age of 18, as well as reunification with their families. NECLC is only activated through a request by a state agency during a state-declared disaster or by FEMA from a state, Tribe, or territory during a presidentially declared disaster. When activated, the toll-free number (1-877-908-9570) is staffed 24 hours per day.
 - [Unaccompanied Minors Registry](#). This online platform collects information from the public related to children who have been separated from their families due to a disaster. NCMEC then uses this data to expedite the reunification process by assisting local law enforcement and by cross-referencing the information about the child against information provided by families who have contacted NCMEC to report their child missing. The public, including education facilities, may report basic information about unaccompanied minors directly into the tool in the aftermath of a disaster.
- [National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System \(NEFRLS\)](#) (FEMA). This online platform and call center allows displaced individuals to report their current location and well-being, as well as communicate with and provide personalized messages to specified family members or individuals. NEFRLS is only activated in cases of presidentially declared disasters and facilitates the reunification of adults over the age of 21. When activated, the toll-free number (1-800-588-9822) is staffed 24 hours per day.
- [People Locator](#) (National Library of Medicine). This service is provided after a disaster to aid in reunification. The Web page can be used to register missing or found people. A smartphone app ([ReUnite](#)) can also be downloaded to report missing or found people, which is integrated with the People Locator service.
- [Safe and Well](#) (American Red Cross). This online platform allows displaced individuals to report their current location, contact information, and well-being, as well as communicate with and provide personalized messages to family members or friends. Additionally, the

Critical Consideration

Schools and school districts will likely find that social media used in an emergency will be more effective if it is already used by the school community and is incorporated in training and exercises.

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tool allows family members and friends to search for information on displaced individuals who have voluntarily self-reported their information. This tool is available 24 hours per day.

Collaboration

- [Collaboration: Key to a Successful Partnership Publication](#) (OSHS & REMS TA Center). This publication provides considerations for initiating collaboration, managing a collaborative team, and strengthening the partnership. This includes identifying potential collaboration members, engaging members appropriate to community and school needs and capabilities, developing a positive interpersonal network, building a strong communications network, developing mutually beneficial working relationships and procedures, adapting to changing need and capacity, and sustaining collaboration.
- [Developing High-Quality School EOPs: A Collaborative Process Webinar](#) (OSHS & REMS TA Center). This Webinar focuses on the importance of collaborating with community partners in planning efforts. It covers what roles community partners can play during the EOP development and maintenance process, obstacles that can occur during the collaborative process and methods for mitigating them, and examples of successful collaboration with community partners.
- [Families as Partners in School Emergency Management Helpful Hints Publication](#) (OSHS & REMS TA Center). This publication provides considerations for the development of a Family Reunification Annex, identification of reunification sites, and maintenance of emergency information cards and student release forms. It also discusses the importance of involving families in school emergency management planning, provides strategies for forming partnerships with families, and offers information on training families and developing a Communication and Warning Annex that accounts for communicating with families.

Other Resources

- [Backpack Contact Information Card](#) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). This printable worksheet prompts families to indicate basic information about their child and the best contact information for the family. This card may be placed in the backpacks of students so that they may have pertinent contact information en route to and from school, during before-school and after-school activities, and while school is in session.
- [Do the Prep Step! Web Page](#) (Save the Children). Resources and information on this page address providing In Case of Emergency contacts, making a home emergency plan, and gathering disaster supplies.

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- [In Case of Emergency Card](#) (Save the Children). After parents or guardians enter their information, their child's information, and those of emergency contacts on this Web page, a PDF is automatically generated that can be kept with a child to facilitate communication during an emergency.
- [Make a Plan Web Page](#) (FEMA). This page includes information and resources on how to address specific needs of family members, create a written plan, and practice the plan with your household.
- [Student-Parent Reunification After a School Crisis \(Be on the Lookout, Project Bulletin #5\)](#) (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services). This publication examines reunification, including resources such as the "I Love You Guys" Foundation's Standard Reunification Method and reunification information cards. Additionally, the resource contains information on "go-kits" and an example of a reunification go-kit checklist.
- [Tracking and Reunification of Children in Disasters](#) (National Center for Disaster Medicine & Public Health). This online course is designed for health professionals and provides information on key tasks for tracking and reunifying children during a disaster. This includes the identification of designated individuals and/or agencies for assistance, depending on their role, institution, and state/local contexts. The course is accompanied by a reference card that participants may continue to use upon course completion.