



Dear Educator:

Thank you for welcoming The Pillowcase Project into your classroom. This American Red Cross program aims to bring emergency preparedness education to 3rd through 5th graders across the United States. We truly enjoyed the opportunity to talk with your students about emergency preparedness, and we hope that you and your students learned a lot from our presentation.

This packet is for you to keep. In it you will find:

- An At-a-Glance description of The Pillowcase Project (on the back of this letter)
- The *My Preparedness Workbook* that was provided to each student during the presentation
- A *Science of Safety* teaching kit that contains a one page teacher's guide and three reproducible student activity sheets
- The Be Prepared, Coping Skills, and Hazards Map posters that were used during the presentation

Throughout the presentation, the *My Preparedness Workbook*, and the *Science of Safety* teaching kit, we stress the importance of Learn, Practice, Share:

- **Learn:** provide students with basic information about an emergency that is most likely to happen where they live and instruct them in the key protective actions.
- **Practice:** give students the opportunity to participate in a physical activity that reinforces what they have learned.
- **Share:** encourage students to share what they have learned through collaborative small-group, problem-solving and discussion activities.

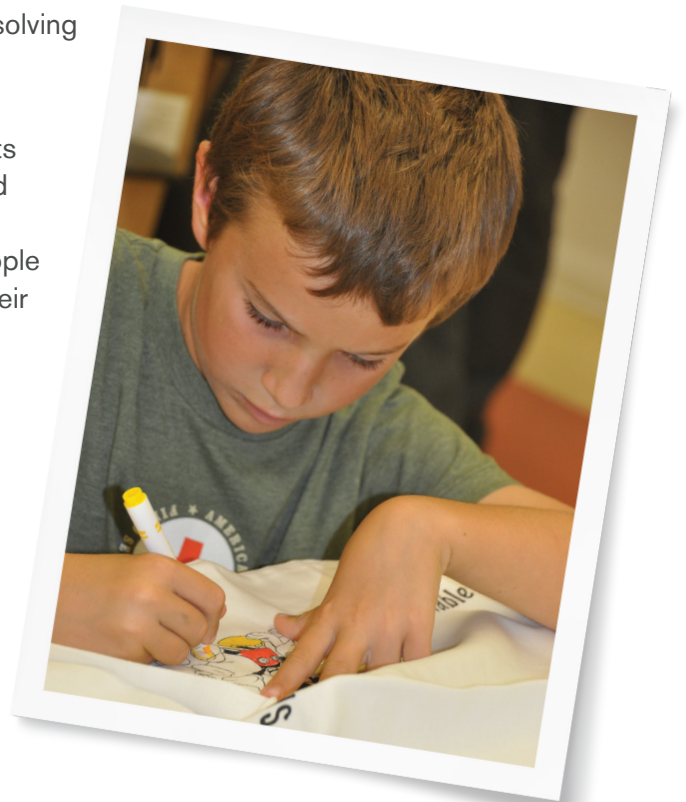
These interlocking concepts allow students to explore the science behind emergency preparedness. Students will also learn about how emergencies are experienced in the real world, so that they will understand both the environmental causes of natural hazards and what people should do to prepare themselves, their families, and their communities for emergency situations.

We hope that the materials in this packet are helpful and that you will be able to use them to better prepare your students for emergencies of all kinds.

Visit redcross.org/pillowcase to download additional hazard worksheets, a guide to the education standards supported by The Pillowcase Project, and digital copies of the *Science of Safety* kit. Please also consider completing the brief educator survey at redcross.org/pillowcase so we can continue improving our materials with your valuable feedback.

Thank you,

Your Friends at the American Red Cross





The Pillowcase Project At-a-Glance

Origin

The Pillowcase Project was created by the American Red Cross Southeast Louisiana Chapter and implemented in New Orleans schools following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. New Orleans CEO Kay Wilkins had learned that Loyola University students carried their belongings in pillowcases when they were evacuated for Katrina. This inspired Wilkins and her team to work with an art therapist to create a program around decorating pillowcases for the children living in makeshift communities across New Orleans during Katrina recovery. Soon, their Pillowcase Project became a preparedness education program for elementary school students, and after just a few years had been adapted and implemented by several other Red Cross chapters with substantial success. In early 2013, Disney sponsored the design and development phase of a multi-year effort to build on this success by creating a standardized, state-of-the-art preparedness education program. As a result, The Pillowcase Project can now be customized for use by Red Cross chapters across the United States and expanded internationally to reach hundreds of thousands of elementary school-aged children both in the classroom and in after-school settings.

Vision

To create a generation of children who understand the science of hazards, are empowered to take action by practicing how to prepare

for emergencies, and understand that by sharing what they have learned with family and friends, they can help create a better prepared community.

Goals

The Pillowcase Project is a national youth preparedness program that:

- Increases youth awareness of hazards and the importance of personal preparedness.
- Builds skills in hazard-specific protective actions to reduce the impact of emergencies on youth and their families.
- Increases coping skills to manage emergencies and build resilience in youth.
- Increases household preparedness levels across the country.
- Incorporates preparedness education into elementary school curriculums.

Learning Objectives

Students who participate in The Pillowcase Project will be able to:

- Identify the best ways to stay safe during emergencies that can occur in their communities.
- Identify the best ways to prevent and stay safe during a home fire.
- Use coping skills to help manage stress during emergencies and in every day situations.
- Gain confidence in their abilities to be prepared for emergencies through hands-on activities.
- Create an enhanced sense of community through collaborative preparedness activities.

- Use their knowledge to act as advocates for emergency preparedness in their homes and communities.
- Discuss the role that science plays in emergency preparedness.
- Understand and communicate the work of the Red Cross in their communities.

Program Structure

- Implemented by Red Cross chapter staff and volunteers
- Presented in schools and after-school programs
- Standardized curriculum that combines instruction with physical and small-group collaborative learning activities
- Meets performance expectations for Common Core Math and Language Arts Standards and Next Generation Science Standards for grades 3-5

Curriculum Components

- Preparedness education based on three steps: Learn, Practice, Share
- Emergency preparedness skills customized to prominent local hazards
- Coping skills for emergency situations
- Home preparedness and personal preparedness (pillowcase kit)
- *My Preparedness Workbook*
- Student assessment
- *Science of Safety* teaching kit for teachers



We Value Your Feedback

Please visit redcross.org/pillowcase to provide feedback for The Pillowcase Project and the materials in this teaching kit. Your comments and suggestions will help us make The Pillowcase Project even more relevant and effective for 3rd through 5th grade students across the United States.