



**American  
Red Cross**

# Household Preparedness Workbook



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# Introduction to the American Red Cross

Long ago, during the Civil War, a former teacher named Clara Barton sat tending to a wounded soldier when a bullet whizzed by and tore through the sleeve of her dress. That didn't stop Clara from caring for the young soldier. Risking her life to help others was something she did every day. That was why the soldiers called her the "Angel of the Battlefield."

After the Civil War ended, Clara continued to help others. She realized that, whenever emergencies happen, someone should always be there to give people a helping hand. So in 1881, with the aid of the United States Congress and President Chester A. Arthur, Clara Barton and 14 volunteers founded the American Red Cross.

Today, the Red Cross has thousands of volunteers and works to help people in many ways. We have five lines of service to help people:

- **Disaster Relief:** We help people who've experienced an emergency AND teach people to be better prepared and how to stay healthy and safe!
- **Blood Services:** We host blood drives where we collect blood for people who have medical emergencies.
- **Service to the Armed Forces:** We support our military members.
- **Training Services:** We teach CPR, First Aid, Babysitting and Lifeguard classes.
- **International Services:** We help people in other countries.

We have come a long way since Clara Barton's day. But like Clara, whatever the situation, the Red Cross is still always ready to help!



## A Message to Grown-Ups

We hope your child has enjoyed learning about how to stay safe and healthy through our "Be a Preparedness Champion!" online learning course. Each year, the American Red Cross responds to an average of more than 60,000 disasters, most of which are home fires. Knowing this, the Red Cross provides free disaster emergency preparedness education to help youth take action during emergencies and foster safer communities by sharing what they have learned with family and friends.

Traditionally, our preparedness presentations are offered in-person to youth across the country and abroad. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we developed this interactive presentation for students in grades 3-5 or ages 7–11 years old. Topics discussed in this presentation include: an introduction to the American Red Cross, proper hand washing techniques, a guided coping skills activity and home fire preparedness safety education.

After going through this resource, your child should now:

- Understand and communicate the work of the Red Cross in their communities.
- Learn proper handwashing techniques to prevent the spread of germs.
- Use coping skills to help manage stress during emergencies and in everyday situations.
- Understand the science behind home fires and identify ways to prevent one from occurring.
- Gain confidence to be prepared for and stay safe in the event of a home fire through interactive activities.
- Use their knowledge to act as advocates for emergency preparedness in their homes and communities.

In this workbook you will find activities and advice on how to prepare your home for an emergency and directions for how to create a home fire escape plan. We hope this resource encourages further conversation with your child as you develop your household's emergency preparedness plan.

# Curriculum Overview

## Learn, Practice and Share—Hand Washing

The Red Cross uses a **Learn, Practice, Share** framework when teaching children about emergencies. Children **Learn** how emergencies happen and how to stay safe when one occurs, we then ask them to **Practice** what they learned so they will be ready when an emergency happens and then we ask them to **Share** what they learned so everyone in their household knows how to stay safe in an emergency. We taught your child that learning a new skill, like proper hand washing techniques, is just like learning how to prepare for an emergency.



- Ensure your child understands the importance of washing their hands and the proper hand washing techniques (page 4).
- Encourage your child to practice and share what they learned about proper hand washing!

## Coping Skills

Research has found that teaching children coping skills not only increases a child's ability to respond during an emergency in a productive way but also cope with the psychological impact of that experience in a better way.

- Reinforce feeling scared, nervous or worried is normal and okay. Encourage them to use the coping skills they learned (page 5) when any thoughts and feelings like that arise.

## Home Fire Safety

Home fires are the most frequent emergency that the Red Cross responds to. Home fires are "act fast" emergencies and the most important thing you can do is get out as quickly and as safe as possible. Here are actions you can take with your child to become better prepared in the event of a home fire.

- Create an escape plan with a home fire drill (pages 6–7) and practice at least twice a year. Make sure everyone can get out in less than two minutes!
- Choose an Outside Meeting Spot. It should be a fixed location at a safe distance from your home, and in front, so you can meet emergency responders when they arrive and tell them that everyone in the household is safe.
- Reinforce that for an Outside Meeting Spot to work, everyone needs to know where it is and stay there — Get out, Stay Out and Call 9-1-1!
- Ensure your household has working smoke alarms by testing them every month. On page 7 you can work with your child to choose a date that you will test the smoke alarms in your home. Have your child keep track ensuring the smoke alarms are tested every month with the Smoke Alarm Testing section on page 7.
- During an emergency, it's important to stay in contact with everyone in your home, especially if you get separated. Work with your child to create an Emergency Communications Plan (page 8) and fill in an Emergency Contact Card (page 9).

# How to Wash Your Hands



1. Wet hands with clean, running water (warm or cold)



2. Apply enough soap to cover all surfaces of hands



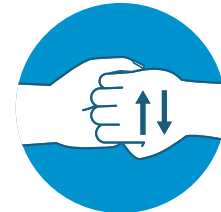
3. Rub hands palm to palm



4. Rub back of hands



5. Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



6. Rub back of fingers with opposite palms with fingers interlocked



7. Rub in a circle at the base of thumbs



8. Rub fingers in circle in palm, cleaning around and under fingernails and scrub wrists



Be sure to scrub for at least 20 seconds! That's singing Happy birthday, twice!



9. After scrubbing for 20 seconds, rinse hands under clean, running water until all the soap is gone



10. Dry hands using a clean or disposable towel

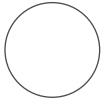


11. Use towel to turn off faucet and when touching other surfaces before leaving the hand washing area

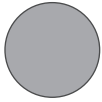
# Your Coping Skills

Be prepared for the thoughts and feelings that may come up during an emergency by practicing these coping skills.

## Breathing with Color



People breathe faster when they are worried or scared. Breathing slowly helps you relax. You can use colors to help you breathe slowly!

- Fill the top circle with a bright color for your good, calm feelings.
  - Imagine that the gray circle is the color of your nervous, uncomfortable feelings.
- 
- Close your eyes and take a slow breath through your nose. Imagine that you are breathing in your good color.
  - Now slowly breathe out through your mouth. Imagine that you are breathing out those gray feelings.
  - Keep breathing with color, very slowly, with your eyes closed, five more times.
  - Then open your eyes and keep those good, calm feelings inside you!

## Symbol of Strength

We all have a power inside that can help us get through tough situations. Here's a way you can turn on that power when you need it!

- First, think of something you do that makes you feel strong and confident. It can be anything, like being a good whistler or a good speller or being good at games.
- Next, close your eyes and picture yourself doing the thing that makes you feel strong. Use your imagination to turn that picture into a mental selfie.
- Now put your mental selfie on an imaginary shield. That's your Symbol of Strength!

Grab your shield whenever you need to feel the special power inside you. Even in tough situations, your Symbol of Strength is always there!



## Share a Song

What song makes you feel happy? Write the name of your song and some of the words here—or make up your own words, if you want!

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## Yes You Can!

Think about how you coped with a tough situation in the past. Maybe you talked with a grownup or told yourself a good story. Write down what you did. Remember, if it helped once, it can help again!

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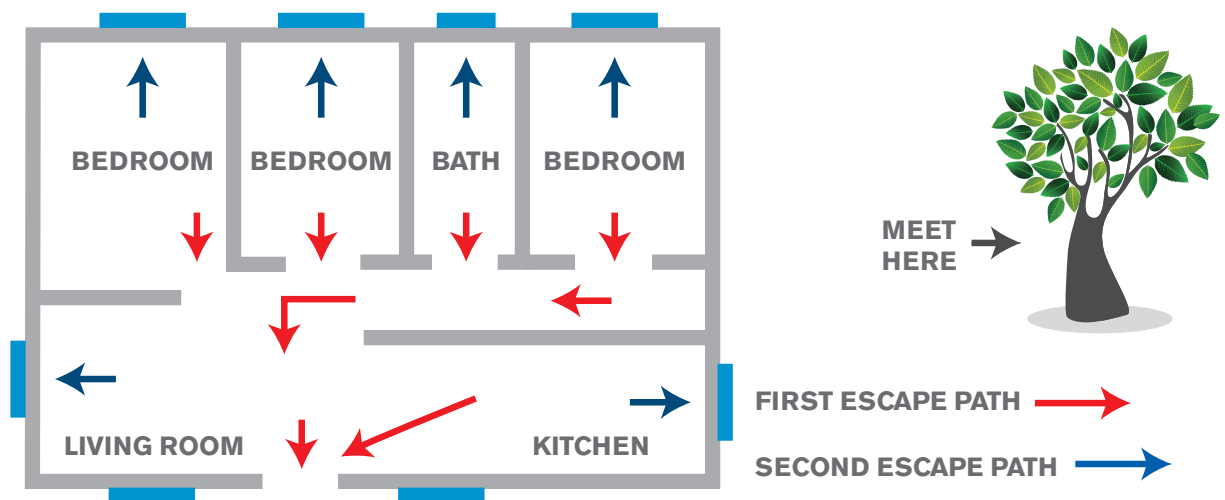
# Our Home Fire Escape Map

**Learn** by using this example to make a fire escape map for your home. Draw your map in the box on the next page, or use a separate piece of paper.

1. Draw all the rooms in your home (use the example to help you).
2. Use a red pen to show the quickest path to get outside from each room.
3. Use a blue pen to show a second path to get outside from each room.
4. Draw a Meeting Spot outside your home where everyone will go as soon as they get out. Label it MEET HERE.

Things to remember:

- You need a Meeting Spot so you know that everyone in your home is out.
  - Once you get to your Meeting Spot, call 9-1-1.
  - **No one should go back inside**—firefighters will arrive shortly and rescue anyone who needs help, even your pets.
5. When you are all done, hang your map where everyone can see it!



**Practice** your escape plan with a Home Fire Drill at least twice a year. Have a grownup press the “test” button on a smoke alarm in your home and have everyone go to your meeting place. Time your Home Fire Drill to find out how long it takes for everyone to get to your meeting place. Keep practicing until everyone can get out in less than 2 minutes!

**Share** these preparedness skills with everyone in your home:

- **Get Out, Stay Out, Call 9-1-1**—If you hear a smoke alarm or see smoke, follow your escape plan and get out immediately. Don’t stop to grab anything, and don’t go back for anything. Stay outside at your meeting place and call 9-1-1.
- **Get Low and Go**—In a fire, smoke is often more dangerous than flames. Crouch low or crawl on your hands and knees to avoid breathing in smoke. Smoke rises, so the air near the floor is cleaner. This is really important if you don’t have two ways out of your room.

**Be Prepared!** Have a smoke alarm on every level of your home and inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas. Remind the grownups in your home to test smoke alarms every month to make sure they all work. If a smoke alarm doesn’t work, replace the batteries or the smoke alarm. Have a plan to wake everyone up if the smoke alarm goes off while you’re sleeping. In a fire, if you see smoke on your way out, turn around and go the other way. Be sure to always stay away from dangerous smoke!

**To Learn More** about fire safety, visit [redcross.org/prepare](https://www.redcross.org/prepare).





# Our Emergency Communications Plan

During an emergency, it's important to stay in contact with everyone in your home, especially if you get separated. Fill out this form so that everyone knows how to stay in contact during an emergency. Or create your own form on a separate piece of paper if you need more space.

**Our Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Info for People Who Live in Our Home

Name	Work.School Phone	Cell Phone	Email
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Pet's Name	Type of Pet	Color/Markings	Registration
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

## In Case We Get Separated

Choose two meeting places where the people in your home will get back together if you are separated in an emergency. One meeting place should be near your home. The other should be outside your neighborhood, in case the area around your home is unsafe.

1. Our meeting place near home: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Our meeting place away from home: \_\_\_\_\_

Choose an emergency contact who lives outside your area, someone everyone can call in case you can't call each other.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

When an emergency happens, if possible call your family and friends to let them know you are okay. With a grownup, visit [redcross.org/safeandwell](http://redcross.org/safeandwell) to learn more about how to get in contact with friends and family during an emergency if you don't have access to a phone.

Congratulations on completing your emergency communications plan! Now, clip it out and keep it where everyone in your home can easily see it.




Contact information can change, so plan to update your emergency communications plan at least once a year.

**We update our Emergency Communications Plan every year on:**

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Our Emergency Contact Cards

Use this template to create an emergency contact card for every person in your home. Ask everyone to keep their card with them at all times. That way everyone will be prepared for an emergency.

<p><b>My Emergency Contact Information</b> </p> <p>My Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Home Address: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Email: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(fold)</p> <p><b>Important Phone Nos.</b> </p> <p>Police: Call 9-1-1 or _____</p> <p>Fire Dept.: Call 9-1-1 or _____</p> <p>Doctor: _____</p> <p>Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222</p>	<p><b>People to Call or Text in an Emergency</b> </p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(fold)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Out-of-Area Contact Person _____</p> <p>Phone _____</p> <p>Meeting Place Outside of Neighborhood: _____</p> <p>_____</p>
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**Important Emergency Contact Phone Numbers:** During an emergency we may need help from other people, like firefighters, doctors or veterinarians. It's important to know how to call them. Work with a grownup to fill in these phone numbers, then make a list like this for your home and put it somewhere easy to see in case you need to use it.



- Local Emergency Number: 9-1-1 or \_\_\_\_\_
- Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_
- Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_
- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222 or \_\_\_\_\_
- Telephone Company: \_\_\_\_\_
- Gas Company: \_\_\_\_\_
- Electric Company: \_\_\_\_\_
- Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Veterinarian: \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency Vet: \_\_\_\_\_

# Resources

## Be Prepared!

For more information about being prepared for emergencies, visit the American Red Cross website, [redcross.org/prepare](https://redcross.org/prepare).

This all-inclusive app lets you monitor more than 35 different severe weather and emergency alerts, to help keep you and your loved ones safe.

Go to [redcross.org/apps](https://redcross.org/apps), text GETEMERGENCY to 90999 or search 'Red Cross Emergency' in the App Store® or Google Play™.

Aplicación Emergencia — ahora disponible en español también!



**Download the Red Cross Emergency App!**

Monitor over 35 different severe weather and emergency alerts to keep you and your loved ones safe.

**American Red Cross**

## Pedro's Fire Safety Challenge

Pedro's Fire Challenge is a fun and engaging interactive game for children ages 4–8 years old that teaches home fire safety.

With the Pedro's Fire Challenge Skill through Amazon Alexa, children can learn how to crawl underneath smoke in a fire, identify the location of smoke alarms in the home, as well as age-appropriate coping skills that teach children how to handle emergencies and other stressful situations.

Enable this Skill on an Amazon Alexa-enabled device today!



Say "Alexa, enable Pedro's Fire Challenge"

**This game can be played on a mobile device as well!**

**Learn more at [redcross.org/pedro](https://redcross.org/pedro) or scan the QR code below.**

