Preparedness for People with Intellectual Disabilities: The Prepare To Prosper Approach

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Disaster Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations

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Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters

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People are People!

• People have a wide range of skills and abilities.
• People who are considered by others as intellectually challenged also have a wide range of skills and abilities.
• All people can be trained if we break down the steps of preparedness and reinforce that training through repetition.
• A key is TEAM WORK: the training of the individual and their support staff.
• Another key is Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy.
CARD – The History

• 24/7 Media Coverage: 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake pre-empted the World Series.

• Despite great effort -- government, Red Cross and traditional response organizations could not address immediate, short-term or long-term needs for the most vulnerable residents. **This has always been true.**

• CARD was created **BY** local community agencies, **FOR** local community agencies, and works **WITH** community agencies and committed partners to fulfill on a vision of a prepared, inclusive, resilient, humane society.

**Lessons Learned:** Using fear and threat, prioritizing tomorrow’s traditional disasters over today’s community needs is entirely counter to the missions and mindsets of nonprofits, faith agencies, and service providers.

    CARD’s philosophy – **Prepare to Prosper!**
You **Must Go Fear-Free**

- Fear of the disasters
- Fear of failure
- Fear of the overwhelm

Fear blocks our ability to be our best.
Fear clouds our judgment.
Fear becomes the insurmountable obstacle.

**We are where we are as a nation, because we have long used the fear frame for preparedness.**
Normalize/Socialize Safety Behaviors

*Everyday Brilliance BUILDS Disaster Resilience*

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Collaboration: Make it **REALLY** Work

- **Be honest** – be *brutally* honest. No honesty, no trust.
- **Celebrate/leverage your differences** – it’s a competitive advantage
- **Stay focused on COMMON goals, values, needs** – do not deviate!
- **Protect your collaborators from your bureaucracy/oddities** – do unto others, keep your weird relations/habits/shortfalls to yourself.
- **Create micro successes** – string many small wins together.
- **Embrace Technology** – make technology your empowering partner.
- **Work the Journey!** – Make the process valuable, and a genuine bonding experience for all the partners.
Choose a Great “Why”

Why Should Your Business Embrace Fear-Free Readiness?

Traditional Message:

• Prepare for disasters
• Take classes/trainings
• Get kits, store supplies
• Do exercises and drills
• Because disasters happen!

Empowered Service Provider Message:

• Transform the lives of your clients
• Have readiness and resilience as a competitive advantage
• Be a more valued partner with local businesses/government
• Make your agency more fundable for related grants/donations
The Becoming Independent Disaster Preparedness Committee

- Has been in place for eight years.
- Meets quarterly
- Represents all programs in the agency
- Creates and updates staff trainings
- Coordinates outside trainings
The Becoming Independent Disaster Preparedness Committee

• Creates and maintains Emergency Plans and supplies
• Creates and maintains the 'buddies list'
• Works with local partners
• Maintains contact with local businesses, churches and groups to use as resources in the event of a disaster
It is important to get everyone on board the preparedness bandwagon.

- Drills
- Outside trainers
- All new employees are given disaster preparedness orientation and tested
- All staff, Supported Living Services and Day Service participants are trained, tested, participate in drills
- Preparedness has become part of the Becoming Independent Culture
Agency Emergency Plan

• CARD format- cardcanhelp.org
• Supplies on site
• Neighborhood connections for all sites
• Incident Command System roles
• Agency go-kits

• Keep Calm and follow the Emergency Plan
The Becoming Independent Earthquake Response Story

• 6.1 Napa Quake
• Contacted everyone within 30 minutes
• Got to each person's home to assist with clean up, assessment, determining needs.
• The training, testing and re-training paid off in many ways.
• Everyone was ready!
Lessons Learned

• Regardless of the fact that all the training paid off, trainings and drills continue as part of our culture
• We found that our disaster kits needed a few more items. (Small dust pans, some trash bags)
• We keep the 'buddies' and community partners lists updated and current.
Thank You!

For further information go to:

THE JOY OF PREPAREDNESS:
HTTP://WWW.THEJOYOFPREPAREDNESS.COM/

BECOMING INDEPENDENT (BI):
HTTP://WWW.BECOMINGINDEPENDENT.ORG/

CARD - COLLABORATING AGENCIES RESPONDING TO DISASTERS:
HTTP://CARDCANHELP.ORG