

Every day. **In times of crisis.** For our future.



What Are You Waiting For?

2014 National Report Card on Protecting Children in Disasters

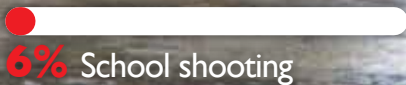
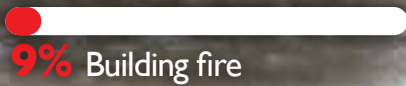
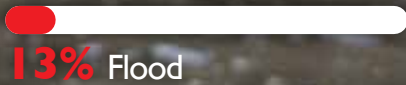
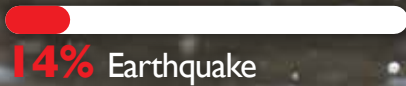
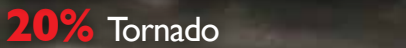
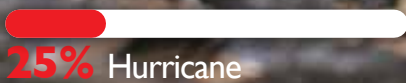
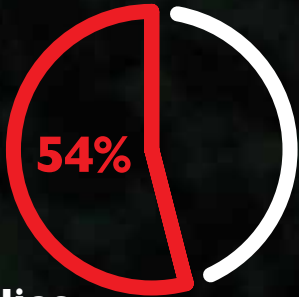
COVER: Director Deborah Holmes and her child care students Jaquan, 3, and Brenda, 5, survey the ruins of their child care center, destroyed by a late-April tornado in Louisville, Miss.

THIS PAGE: Strong currents and deep water made it nearly impossible for some Evans, Col. families to evacuate flooded areas without help last September.

Disaster can strike anywhere...

...and when it does, children are the most vulnerable. Their little bodies, young minds and future development are at risk.

More than half
of U.S. families have been affected by some type of disaster.



Parents are anxious...

Chastity, 2, at Save the Children's Child-Friendly Space in the Red Cross shelter in Tupelo, Miss. after April tornadoes.



A year of disasters

Colorado children were airlifted as houses filled with floodwaters. An Atlanta ice storm stranded thousands of school children overnight. An infant boy was the first victim of a devastating rash of tornadoes across the Midwest and South. In the past year, the United States has experienced at least 20 school shootings and 50 major natural disasters. Along the way, thousands of children lost homes, belongings, loved ones, and their sense of security. But, who is safeguarding children before the worst happens? For seven years, Save the Children has tracked how prepared states are to protect children from disasters. This year, we also asked: What about parents?

...but not active

A new poll

To find out, we commissioned Harris Poll to survey 1,012 parents of children under 18 enrolled in school or child care. We found that nine years after Hurricane Katrina separated thousands of children from families, American parents remain deeply skeptical of U.S. preparedness. Three in four parents believe the government is not very prepared to protect their children should disaster strike.

Disaster is not an abstract concern. Our poll finds that half of U.S. families have already been affected by disaster, and that more than two-thirds of parents worry about risks to their children from natural disaster or school shootings. Many parents (35%) fear school shooting risks are rising.

Yet when it comes to preparing to keep children safe, parents admit they are doing little. The average parent spent only one hour on disaster supplies and emergency plans this year, and many invested no time at all. In contrast, most parents spent at least five hours organizing back-to-school supplies this summer.

How concerned are you about the risk your child faces from each of the following?

70%
at least somewhat concerned



School Shootings

35%
very or extremely concerned

66%
at least somewhat concerned



Natural Disaster

25%
very or extremely concerned

55%
at least somewhat concerned



Terrorism

23%
very or extremely concerned



74%

of parents think the federal government is not very prepared to protect their children in the event of a disaster or emergency.

The average parent spent:

5
hours
organizing back to school supplies this summer.

vs
A

1
hour
on emergency preparedness over the past year.

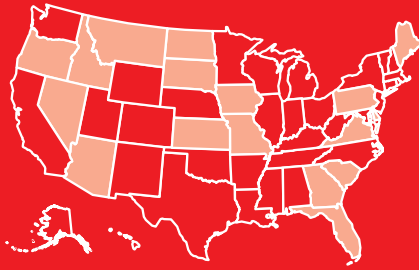
Poll methodology:

This Emergency Preparedness Survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Poll on behalf of Save the Children USA between July 21-24, 2014 among 1,012 parents of children under the age of 18, who are enrolled in child care, preschool or school (grades K-12). This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated. For complete survey methodology, including weighting variables, please visit: SavetheChildren.org/US-Disaster.

...leaving children at risk at school and child care...

21 states

and D.C. don't require all schools and child care providers to have basic emergency plans.



See the full disaster report card on page 10.

69 million

children are separated from their parents every work day*

for an average of
9 hours

and an average
18 minute
trip away

*U.S. Census Bureau

When disaster keeps families apart

Parents drop their kids off every day assuming they will be safe. When a fierce winter storm struck Atlanta this January, many parents experienced disaster in a way they never would have predicted. Icy conditions paralyzed traffic just as school was letting out and thousands of children were stranded far from their families. Some children had to be rescued by firefighters and the National Guard after many cold and hungry hours on the bus. More than 2,000 children spent the night at schools across the metro area.

Some parents spent hours behind the wheel trying to get to their children, while others walked miles through the snow to reunite with little ones. Frantic parents lashed out at schools, accusing them of poor planning and communications. One mother writing on the Marietta City Schools Facebook page said her son was stuck at middle school: "I can't get to him since my car is stuck! I called for over 3 hours and couldn't get through due to busy lines and no one answering. I haven't spoken to my son and am worried sick!!!"

AT RIGHT: Abandoned cars in the I-75 median after a January snow storm in Atlanta.



AP Photo/David Tulis



Save the Children

Za'Torrah, 10 months, was pulled from the rubble of her Louisville, Miss. child care by a heroic teacher after a tornado ripped her from his arms. Pictured here with Save the Children's Sarita Fritzler.

Holding schools and child care accountable

This year, our disaster report card (page 10) finds that seven states have made important progress in protecting children from disaster. But 21 states and the District of Columbia still fail to require basic emergency plans at schools and child care. Parents should be outraged, but the truth is, most are unaware of the gaps.

Our poll shows that 69 percent of parents in failing states mistakenly assume protections are in place. Regrettably, most parents everywhere (63%) admit that they are not very familiar with emergency plans at their child's school or child care. Having plans on the books is also not enough. They must account for multiple types of hazards and be practiced frequently to be effective. Yet two-thirds of parents don't know if drills are held at least every two months.

Shockingly, nearly one in five parents (18%) has not given their child's school or child care their contact information. Nearly half (46%) haven't given an out-of-town emergency contact, which is crucial if disaster disrupts local communications. Should disaster strike, it may be difficult for children and families to reunite, in the short or even long term. After Hurricane Katrina, it took seven months for the last child to be reunited with her parents. And that was after an event with prior notice.

Even if states do require emergency plans ...



1 in 5 parents say their child's school or child care doesn't have their current contact information.



67% of parents don't know if their child's school or child care practices emergency drills frequently.



42% of parents don't know where to reunite with their child if their school or child care center is evacuated.



7 months:

time it took to reunite last child with her parents after Hurricane Katrina.



REUTERS/Evan Semon

ABOVE: Parents and students are reunited after a shooting at Reynolds High School in Troutdale, Oregon June 10, 2014.



John Spink/Atlanta Journal-Constitution/MCT/Landov

LEFT: A teacher at E. Rivers Elementary School in Atlanta covers sleeping children in the gym Wednesday morning, Jan. 29, 2014, as school children were stranded overnight.

...and at home.

If disaster strikes, children will look to parents to know how to react and respond.



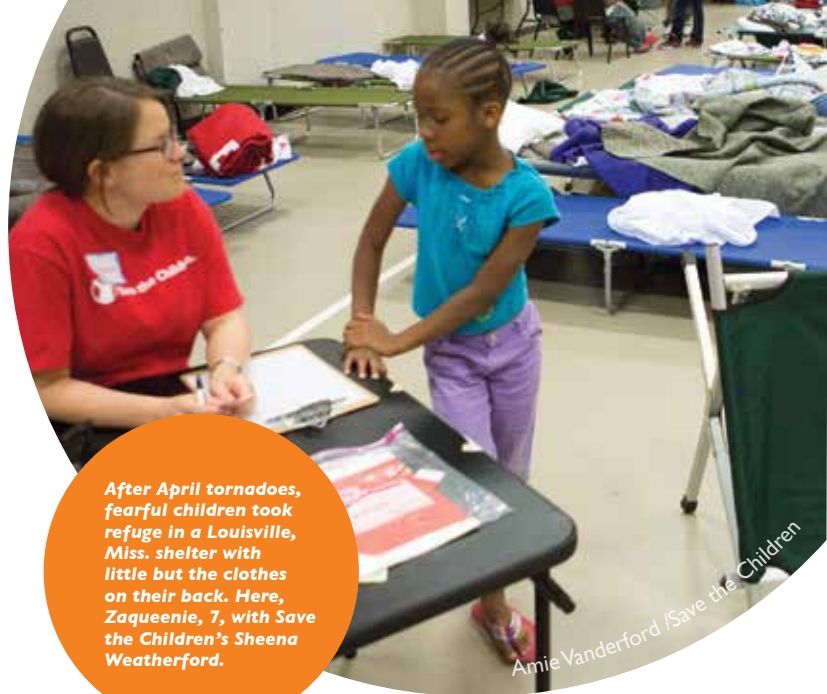
Parents are the first line of defense

While it's always important to stay as calm as possible during an emergency, that goes double for parents. Children depend on moms and dads to keep them safe. They also take their cues from grownups. A scary situation becomes more terrifying when kids see that parents are in distress and unsure of how to respond. Yet, nearly half of parents say they don't feel very prepared to protect their children from disaster.

Having an emergency plan and talking about it as a family is key. If disaster strikes, parents will be ready to respond quickly, effectively and calmly. Three in five parents say they have a family plan. But even among the more-prepared families, our poll finds many gaps that leave children at risk. For those with no emergency plan, more than half say they never thought of it. Nearly a third say they procrastinated or forgot.

What are you waiting for?

Parents want the best for their children, and protecting their safety is fundamental. Yet, disaster is unpredictable and—until it happens—often not top of mind. Still, parents owe it to their children to make the effort before the worst occurs. Being prepared could make all the difference. If parents don't act, who will?



After April tornadoes, fearful children took refuge in a Louisville, Miss. shelter with little but the clothes on their back. Here, Zaqueenie, 7, with Save the Children's Sheena Weatherford.

Amie Vanderford / Save the Children

Why not?

56% Never thought of it.

29% Procrastinated/forgot.

15% Don't know how to set one up.

8% Too busy.

Even when parents have a plan:

59% Don't know where to seek shelter locally.

55% Don't include a comfort item for children.

53% Don't have agreed-upon out-of-town contact.

42% Don't include medications/prescriptions.

35% Don't have at least two days' of food and water.

31% Don't have a family meeting place.

Investing in children

Our poll shows that 35 percent of children express anxiety about severe weather, natural disaster or school shootings. Imagine how much worse fears are after children live through a major disaster themselves. For the children of Moore, Oklahoma, returning to relocated schools and child care centers after last year's complete destruction of their former classrooms—and in many cases their homes, too—was a welcome relief. A familiar routine and a nurturing environment of friends, teachers and activities comforted children and allowed them to better cope with stress. Yet the lack of storm shelters and fact that seven 3rd-graders had perished at school caused ongoing anxiety for many kids and parents alike. A statewide debate over funding for school shelters ended with no investments and ultimately, the Moore School District moved forward on its own. Child care centers were not even part of the debate.



Memory Taylor

AT LEFT: Aria, second from left, helps break ground on a new storm shelter at Agapeland Learning Center in Moore, Okla. If it hadn't been for a teacher who caught and held Aria's leg, the 2013 tornado would have sucked her into the sky as it ripped off the center's roof.



Breety Deering/Getty

ABOVE: Save the Children helped the center quickly relocate and then helped them build their first storm shelter this year.

BELOW: Ryan, 7, at New York City's P.S. 64, enjoying Journey of Hope parachute activities.

If parents don't act, who will?

Of every \$10 in federal emergency preparedness grants,



less than **1¢** has gone towards activities targeting children's safety* (2004-2012)

*In April, FEMA issued a review of emergency preparedness grants awarded to states from 2004-2012. It concluded that \$13.2 million went to activities dedicated to children's needs. Save the Children compared those figures to \$16.7 billion in preparedness grant appropriations during that period. Only 19 states dedicated funds to children's safety, accounting for a mere 0.08 percent of total preparedness grants.

Helping them cope

Emotional turmoil is less visible than a destroyed house or school. As such, children don't always get the help they desperately need after disaster. Children can struggle for months and often years with the most terrifying event of their young lives—not to mention the stresses on their family and community that follow. More than a year after surviving the Oklahoma tornadoes, Hurricane Sandy and the Sandy Hook school shooting, many children still experience anxiety, nightmares and depression. Save the Children's Journey of Hope program allows children to examine their emotions and develop coping skills that can last a lifetime. Children are naturally resilient. By preparing before disaster and giving them the right support after, children can bounce back. We owe them that chance.



Parents have the power to protect children before disaster strikes.

Disasters happen. It's how we prepare for them that makes the difference. Do you have a plan in place to help ensure your children are safe and secure if a disaster strikes?



Get Ready, Get Safe checklists

Our downloadable checklists and posters tell parents and child care professionals what they need to know to Get Ready, Get Safe and what to have on hand in case of emergency. Because being prepared is the first line of defense in a disaster.



[SavetheChildren.org/Checklists](https://www.savethechildren.org/Checklists)

Make a family plan

Before a disaster strikes, make sure you and your family all know these details to help stay safe:

- Which facilities will be used as shelters in your community in case of emergency
- Where to seek shelter in the event of an emergency or disaster
- A family contact outside of your area who would not be affected by a local disaster

Teach your kids

Your children may need to act in an emergency, make sure they know:

- Basic personal information to identify themselves if separated from you
- Home phone number
- How to dial 911
- Family's meet-up locations
- How to reach the family's out-of-town contact

Have a communication strategy

Communication systems are often unreliable during emergencies. Be sure to have a back-up plan:

- All family cell phones should have "ICE" (In Case of Emergency) programmed into their phone's contact list with all family phone numbers plus out-of-area contacts
- Remind family members that text messages often get through in an emergency, even when a phone can't

Stock up at home

In addition to basic survival items like water, flashlights, a battery-powered radio and extra batteries, have kid-friendly supplies on hand.

Check in with caregivers

What happens if disaster strikes while you're separated from your children? Reach out to your child's school or child care provider to:

- Ensure your contact information is up to date
- Ask what types of emergency plans are in place and how you will be notified in case of an emergency
- Identify meet-up locations, in case children are evacuated



For more information and support:
[SavetheChildren.org/GetReady](https://www.savethechildren.org/GetReady)

What gives your child comfort when afraid?

29% Stuffed animal

23% Favorite toy/game

22% Blanket

22% Favorite book/reading material

Make a "Go Kit"

Prepare a backpack for each family member with essential toiletries, medical and contact information and a comfort item for kids.

STATE	Child Care Standards				CRITERIA MET	
	Evacuation/ Relocation Plan	Family-Child Reunification Plan	Children with Special Needs Plan	K-12 Multiple Disaster Plan		
Alabama	●	●	●	●	4	
ALASKA*	●	●	●	●		
Arkansas	●	●	●	●		
California	●	●	●	●		
COLORADO*	●	●	●	●		
Connecticut	●	●	●	●		
Hawaii	●	●	●	●		
ILLINOIS*	●	●	●	●		
Kentucky	●	●	●	●		
Louisiana	●	●	●	●		
Maryland	●	●	●	●		
Massachusetts	●	●	●	●		
Mississippi	●	●	●	●		
Nebraska	●	●	●	●		
New Hampshire	●	●	●	●		
New Jersey	●	●	●	●		
New Mexico	●	●	●	●		
New York	●	●	●	●		
NORTH CAROLINA*	●	●	●	●		
OKLAHOMA	●	●	●	●		
RHODE ISLAND*	●	●	●	●		
Tennessee	●	●	●	●		
TEXAS	●	●	●	●		
Utah	●	●	●	●		
Vermont	●	●	●	●		
Washington	●	●	●	●		
West Virginia	●	●	●	●		
Wisconsin	●	●	●	●		
Wyoming	●	●	●	●		
Delaware	●	●		●	3	
District of Columbia	●	●	●			
Kansas	●	●	●			
Missouri	●	●	●			
Ohio	●	●		●		
Pennsylvania	●	●		●		
Virginia	●	●		●		
Florida		●		●	2	
Indiana		●		●		
Minnesota		●		●		
Nevada	●			●		
South Carolina		●		●		
Arizona				●	1	
Georgia				●		
Idaho				●		
Maine				●		
North Dakota	●					
Oregon				●		
South Dakota				●		
Montana				●		
Iowa						0
Michigan						

States listed in GREEN meet all four standards for the first time.

* Denotes draft regulations meet criteria and will be adopted in 2014.

AT RIGHT: Oklahoma officials in front of the statehouse after becoming one of 29 states that now meet all four standards. In 2008 only four states met all standards.

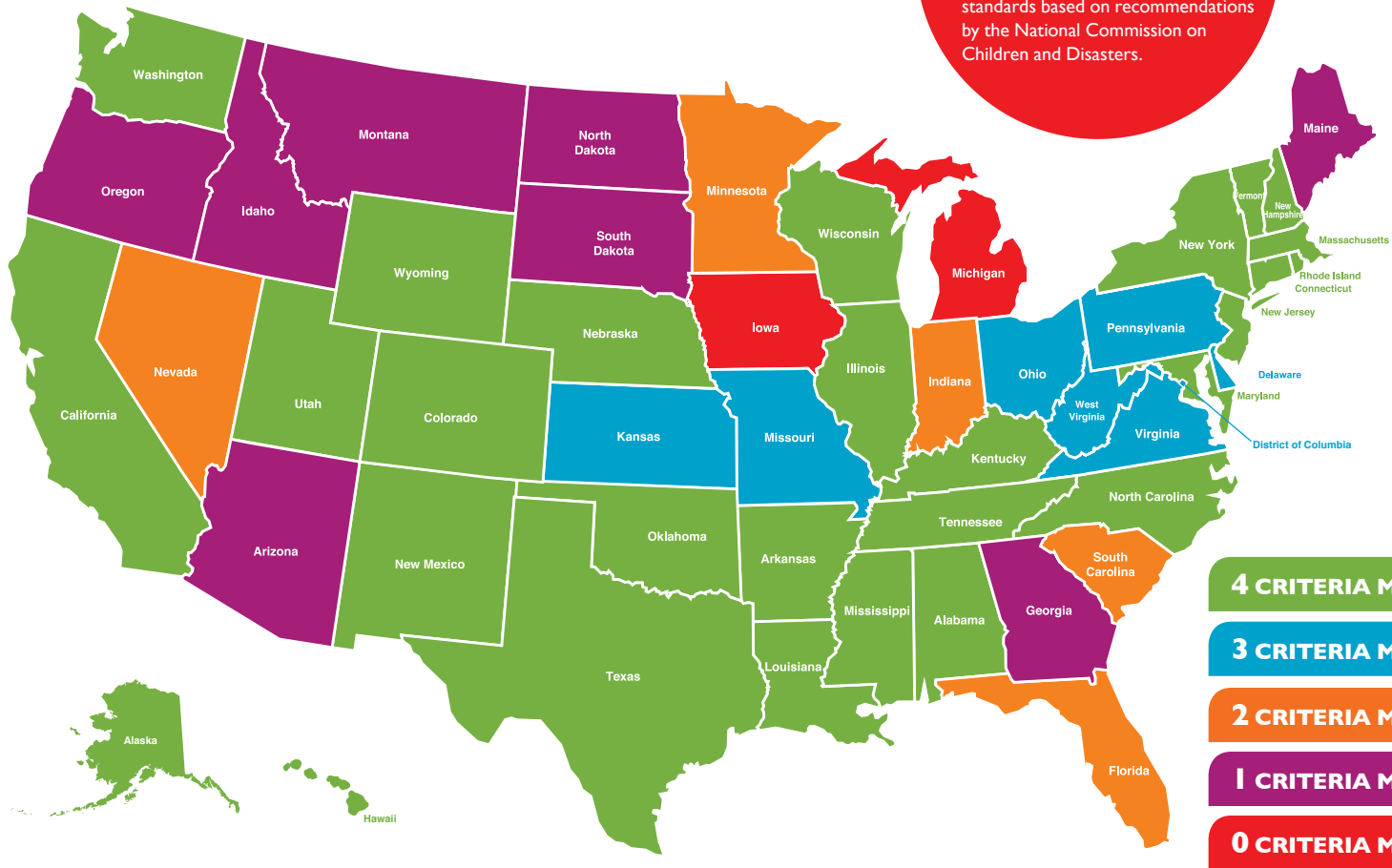


2014 Disaster Report Card

Which states protect children by requiring emergency plans at schools and child care? This year, seven new states meet four minimum standards. For the first time more than half the states—29—make the grade.

21 States and DC fall short

Nine years after Hurricane Katrina, they still fail to meet minimum standards based on recommendations by the National Commission on Children and Disasters.



Methodology: Definitions and Applications for Save the Children's Report Card Standards

In Save the Children's annual National Report Card on Protecting Children In Disasters, a state is not considered to meet a particular standard unless (1) the substance of the standard meets national guidelines; (2) the standard is mandated; and (3) all regulated child care providers—or in the case of standard No. 4, all schools—are subject to the standard. Substantive descriptions of the standards are presented below. A rule is considered mandated if it is (1) in statute, (2) in regulation, or (3) provided by the relevant agency as mandatory guidance. Mandatory guidance includes forms, templates, and technical assistance that are provided to child care providers and are required to be completed or implemented.

Standard 1: A plan for evacuating children in child care

The state must require that all child care providers have a written plan for evacuating and safely moving children to an alternate site. The plan must include provisions for multiple types of hazards. Many states have different licensing requirements and regulations for different kinds of providers.

Standard 2: A child care plan for reuniting families after disaster

The state must require that all child care providers have a written plan for emergency notification of parents and reunification of families following an emergency. Again, a state may have multiple classes of child care with separate regulations and the standard must apply to all regulated child care providers.

Standard 3: A plan for children with disabilities and those with access and functional needs in child care

The state must require that all child care providers have a written plan that accounts for children with disabilities and those with access and functional needs. This standard must go beyond specific classes of special needs that may exist elsewhere in state code—it must include a specific requirement indicating how all children with special needs will be included in the emergency plan. The requirement must apply to all regulated child care providers.

Standard 4: A multi-hazard plan for K-12 Schools

The state must require that all schools have a disaster plan that addresses multiple types of hazards and covers a number of responses, including evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lock-down situations. Mandating fire or tornado drills alone is not sufficient for states to meet the standard since these activities do not address other types of hazards.

Take the Pledge

I pledge to protect children.

I will learn how to keep my kids and children in my community safe in emergencies.

I will share this information with my friends and family. And I will take action to prepare my home and community.

So when disaster strikes, we'll be ready and our children can be safe.



Save the Children's Animal Ambassador Lassie at a Prep Rally to help children learn how to Get Ready, Get Safe.

THIS PAGE: Susan Warner/Save the Children

Get Ready. Get Safe.

Get Ready Get Safe is a pioneering Save the Children initiative designed to help U.S. communities prepare to protect and care for the most vulnerable among us in times of crisis—our children. We help generate child-focused emergency plans, provide emergency training and ensure emergency resources are in place before crisis strikes.

Get involved. Hold a **PREP RALLY** in your community. Save the Children's new emergency preparedness program for children and families mixes disaster education with engaging activities like the disaster supplies relay race. The curriculum is free and can be shaped to meet the specific needs of your program—whether it's after school, at summer camp or for the start of tornado season.



 [SavetheChildren.org/PrepRally](https://www.savethechildren.org/PrepRally)