IOM Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Catastrophic Events
Disaster Preparedness, Response and Recovery Considerations
for Children & Families

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American Religious Mosaic
The American Religious Landscape

- 90% of Americans say they are religious or spiritual
- 43% say they attend worship services regularly
- At approximately 345,000 U.S. houses of worship
- 105,000 non-religious schools and universities
- American is the most Christian country in the world
- 80% of Americans self identify as Christian
- Landscape evolved rapidly (Since 1965 Immigration Act)
- More Muslims than Episcopalians & Presbyterians
- Faith communities are as diverse as the population

Where We Are Today?

- Faith communities have historically responded to disasters and human suffering – some are experts
- Growing interest from government for greater faith community engagement
- Growing interest from and need for faith communities to work with government on disasters
- Large knowledge gaps remain between the two
- Lack of religious literacy and competency
- Spirituality and Religious Needs Void… in DCM, Disaster Mental Health, EMS/Medical & Planning
What is Religious Literacy & Competency?

Religious Competency:
Knowing how to navigate and engage each faith community (and individual adherents) competently and respectfully - as a trusted, knowledgeable and effective partner.

Religious Literacy:
1. A basic understanding of the history, sacred texts, beliefs, rituals, and current manifestations of multiple faith traditions, AND
2. The ability to understand the intersection of religions and social/political/cultural life through multiple lenses
What Would Improve Disaster Planning for Children?
• Greater religious literacy and competency in EM/PH
• Competent government outreach to congregations, faith-based organizations and religious families.
• Educate religious leaders on the needs of children in disasters and the effects of emotional & spiritual trauma

Disaster Planning for Children Should Include;
• FBO Risk communication & PSAs oriented to the full range of children's ages and/or their caregivers
• Spiritual needs of children in all DMH planning
• Mass Care and Mass Fatality Plans with specific direction in the care or disposition of religious children.
Engagement - What to Do Next?

• Train on religious landscape, ecology & partners
• Incorporate Faith Communities as “Sector” – not NFP
• Coordinate FBO engagement across sectors
• Include and assess religious competency in plans
• **Repeat – the landscape is always changing**
• Engage only what can be sustained locally
• Be honest and offer before you “ask for”
• Plan/Exercise with Children & FBOs
• Create competent materials and trainings which specifically address needs of religious children/families
Be A READY CONGREGATION

26 Tip Sheets for U.S. Religious Leaders

In May 2011, NDIN launched the "Be a Ready Congregation" campaign. Key to this campaign are our "Disaster Tip Sheets for U.S. Religious Leaders." Each Tip Sheet offers all-hazards best practices and resource links about U.S. disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery - specifically of relevance to religious leaders, faith communities, and faith-based organizations. NDIN also offers trainings based on these tip sheets.

Because U.S. religious leaders are among the first and most trusted sources of information and guidance in times of crisis, they are called upon not only in crises of worship and faith, but in the neighborhoods and communities where they serve, they have a critical role when disasters strike. These Tip Sheets are to support and assist religious leaders and congregations as they prepare to serve and respond in effective, inclusive, and compassionate ways.

CURRENT NDIN TIP SHEETS FOR U.S. RELIGIOUS LEADERS:

1. Disaster Basics for Faith Communities
2. The Disaster Lifecycle, Where Do Religious Leaders Fit In?
3. National Faith-Based Disaster Service Organizations
4. The Role of Faith Communities in Disasters
5. How to Use Your House of Worship in a Disaster
6. Disaster Backlash: Bias Crimes & Mitigation
7. Active Shooter in a House of Worship
9. Self-Care for Religious Leaders
10. Disaster Spiritual Care
11. Faith Communities & Disaster Mental Health
12. Faith Communities & the Disaster Distress Helpline
13. Faith Communities & Trauma Resilience
14. Faith Communities & Risk Communication
15. Faith Communities & Evacuation Planning
16. Faith Communities & Disaster Sheltering
17. Faith Communities & Long Term Recovery
18. Faith Communities & Debris or Mud Removal
19. Faith Communities & Cold Weather Hazards
20. Faith Communities & Hot Weather Hazards
21. Faith Communities & Disaster Volunteerism
22. Faith Communities & Donations Management
23. Immigrant Eligibility & Disaster Assistance
24. Children & Disasters
25. LGBT Needs & Disaster
26. Vulnerable Populations & Disasters

Preparedness Fast Facts
American Red Cross
www.redcross.org

Other Sources for DISASTER TIPS:

- Be Red Cross Ready
- Shelter-in-Place Emergencies
- Earthquake Safety
- Flood Safety
- Flu Checklist
- Heat Wave Safety
- Hurricane Safety
- Pets and Disaster Safety
- Returning Home After...
- Taking Care of Your Emotional Health after a Disaster
- Tornado Safety
- Wildfire Safety
- Winter Storm Safety

www.citizencorps.gov
www.ready.gov

Citizen Corps
Ready Program
www.ready.gov

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Building Disaster Resilient Communities

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Be A READY CONGREGATION

Tip Sheet: Children & Disasters

Tip Sheet: Active Shooter
Competency Guidelines for Sheltering & Mass Care

• Buddhist
• Hindu
• Jewish
• Muslim
• Sikh

In Mass Care registration or service setting, a Buddhist person may or may not choose to self-identify and, despite common assumptions, their outward dress or appearance may not identify them as Buddhist. Typically, Buddhists conform to the clothing style of country where they live. However, recent trends also suggest that Buddhist and Hindu may wear more clothing, or robes, respectively. Therefore, given the geographic origins of participants and the cultural and religious observance for Asian or South Asian groups, religious apparel should not necessarily indicate religious affiliation. For example, Christians, Shinto, Hindus, and others may wear the same/similar ethnic clothing. Although some Buddhists may feel comfortable assuming concepts about their religious needs, others may resist their requests regarding any or all of the following issues.

In order to create an environment conducive to healing and recuperation, attention must be paid to the specific needs and customs of all faith groups. This document provides guidelines to ensure that care and support is delivered in a manner that is respectful of all faith traditions.

SHELTERING

Greetings and Physical Interaction: Upon entering a Mass Care setting, families and individuals may perceive a need for an equanimous, or empathetic manner. Respect and nurture each person's spiritual needs. Each person's spiritual needs may be deeply influenced by their own cultural and religious values. While Buddhist and Hindu are the two main religions, they are not necessarily connected by their beliefs. Readiness to establish a relationship is key for both groups. Cross-cultural sensitivity and religion should be avoided between these two faiths. Special needs, such as dietary restrictions or religious observances, should be respected. In the Thai Buddhist tradition, food is considered holy and should not be shared. Therefore, all dishes should be separate. Special meals or snacks should be served during events and activities. All religious holidays should be observed in the same manner as those observed in the community. Muslims should be allowed to observe their religious observances. Sikh specific observances, such as wearing the turban, should also be respected.

SHELTER SETTING: To Buddhists, there are no specific religious restrictions regarding sleeping arrangements. However, for more specific needs, separate sleeping quarters should be made available for men and women. In many cases, separate sleeping arrangements should also be made available for geographic areas that may have cultural or language differences. In the same manner as those observed in the community, special meals or snacks should be served during events and activities. All religious holidays should be observed in the same manner as those observed in the community.

PRAYER

• Prayer: Buddhist prayer methods and rituals should be made aware of, at a minimum. Buddhist rituals can be adapted to suit the needs of the group. Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment. Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment.

• Preparing a Buddhist Prayer Service: Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment. Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment. Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment. Participation in a Buddhist Prayer Service is important to all those seeking spiritual fulfillment.
RELIGIOUS LITERACY:
By Stephen Prothero

What Every American Needs to Know — And Doesn’t