

Canadian Disaster Child Care



ACTIVATION GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

While Canadian Disaster Child Care (CDCC) centres provide child care following disaster, our services are specialized to respond to children's specific post-disaster needs. Our goal is to mitigate the immediate and/or long-term suffering of children who have experienced disaster.

Adults react to disasters with normal and natural fears; children take their parents fears, both observed and perceived, as proof that the danger is real. These combined factors serve to increase the child's anxiety. With less experience in distinguishing a real threat, the child is also likely to be plagued by fears that are compounded by his/her imagination. It is important to note that perceived danger can seem as real and threatening as "real" danger.

When parents are evacuated and taken to a Reception Centre one of their first tasks is to complete paperwork for the various assisting agencies. This process involves telling their story to the different agencies, and may include talking to a personal services volunteer. As adults, we use this retelling as an outlet for our worry, to express our fears, to start the recovery process by reviewing what happened, and to start thinking about what we will do next. Accompanying adults who are telling and retelling their stories may be children who were told to sit quietly while the adults talk. Consequently, children are exposed to numerous tellings of the disaster story. They may be unable to realistically process what they have experienced and heard.

Canadian Disaster Child Care contributes to the healing that begins in a Reception Centre. By providing childcare services, parents have the opportunity to focus solely on the issues they must address and children can spend time in an atmosphere devoted to their needs. Located in the Reception Centre, not out of sight of the parents, our volunteers will provide:

- A calm presence
- Assurance of safety and security in honest, realistic and understanding terms
- Validation of feelings of fear, grief, anxiety, loss, anger, and confusion
- Encouragement and acceptance of emotional venting, acting out and playing out of the experience in the child's own way
- Reassurance that the child is not being abandoned
- Reassurance and explanations that the child is not to blame for the disaster

The Disaster Child Care program in Canada began in 1995, modeled on a program operating in the U.S. since 1979. In 2002, a group of volunteers, dedicated to developing the potential of the program decided to continue and build the program as a non-profit society. Since our incorporation we have accomplished the following:

- A Board of Directors comprised of professionals committed to developing the capabilities of the society to respond to the needs of children experiencing trauma as a result of a disaster.
- We are registered as a charity and non-profit society under the Income Tax Act.
- By invitation we facilitate volunteer training in local communities
- A web site has been developed and published to ensure volunteers have access to current information and an opportunity to network with our society; www.canadiandisasterchildcare.ca

We provide a 27 hour volunteer training course which leads to volunteer certification. After training and certification our volunteers are encouraged to work with children locally to keep their skills updated and contribute to their own communities. In disaster response situations CDCC has gained valuable experience at various locations in the United States including the California earthquakes and flooding in Oregon, Washington and Louisiana. In Canada CDCC worked at shelters following the Montreal Ice Storms and with Health Canada at four military sustainment sites with Kosovar children who came to Canada under Operation Parasol, a response that was multidimensional and sustained over a relatively long period of time.

We have a mutual aid agreement with the US Disaster Child Care program and participate in cross country training and responses.

If you would like more information about CDCC or our workshops please contact our Director/Training Coordinator, Marlene Mulder at (780) 479 2648 or our Administrative Coordinator, Donna Grobell at (250) 489 5058.

SETTING UP A CHILD CARE CENTRE

Call Out

- Upon receiving a call from Canadian Disaster Child Care (CDCC) please review the worker care self assessment located on page 21 of this guide and decide if this is a good time to volunteer
- Review your training manual (manual is also available on our website – www.canadiandisasterchildcare.ca)
- Discuss with the CDCC representative which expenses are covered by CDCC and how you will be reimbursed
- If the criminal record check that was completed when you joined CDCC, or when you last responded, is more than 6 months old, go to your local police or RCMP office and request a current Criminal Record Check(CRC). Have the CRC faxed to CDCC. Please check our website for the current fax number.

Criminal Record Check

- It is up to the “Local Governing Authority” to decide if a Criminal Record Check (CRC) is required of all volunteers at a Child Care Centre. For CDCC managed sites and CDCC registered volunteers, a current CRC is mandatory.
- When requesting a CRC, please explain to the RCMP why the check is being requested. Ask if this process can be expedited because you are required to respond to an emergency. Some locations will waive the fee for volunteers.

Child Care Site & Management Options

The Local Governing Authority (LGA) will decide if child care is needed only at the reception centre or at shelters as well. In shelters it is usual to have child care during pre-determined daytime hours. Child care at a reception centre is required during hours of service, and this can mean 24 hours per day, at least for the initial response.

The LGA has many options regarding how much and the level of CDCC support required. LGAs often utilize local child care providers to care for the children of disaster responders. It is best to have separate locations for children of responders and children of survivors. CDCC is flexible in meeting community needs; however, our mandated first priority is to provide care for survivors of the disaster. CDCC is

open to exploring how best to assist your community in providing services for children. The following scenarios show some CDCC involvement options:

- CDCC operates and manages child care centres at reception centres. CDCC provides needed supplies and volunteers. All volunteers are trained and certified by CDCC. Every effort is made to involve locally trained volunteers as local expertise is of great importance.
- CDCC provides volunteers to work at LGA sites. LGAs would then hold responsibility for assuring the safety and wellbeing of children, management of the site, and recruiting and managing volunteers. LGAs would hold all responsibility for the care and safety of children.
- For a long term response CDCC will train volunteers within the community and proximity while the response is in progress. This way local volunteers can utilize their skills immediately following training and gain experience to support the community during the longer recover phase.

Volunteers Arriving on Site

- Upon arriving at the Reception Centre locate the Volunteer Coordinator and sign in as a child care volunteer
- Volunteers must sign in and out daily on a CDCC Task Registration Form (copy on page 25). This ensures that volunteers have Workers Compensation Board coverage while volunteering. You must sign in to legitimately be on-site. The original CDCC Task Registration Form is retained for the CDCC office; if possible, fax a copy daily to CDCC.
- During your time at the child care centre you will be provided with one meal per 4 hour shift. Meals for child care volunteers will be arranged by the Project Manager or Lead Caregiver who will contact the Reception Centre Manager. While feeding provision may vary by situation, child care volunteers will fall under the umbrella of all registered volunteers and will receive support as per all other legitimate, registered volunteers.

The remainder of this manual pertains to CDCC managed child care centres. LGA managed sites will implement their own protocols and guidelines.

Requisition of Goods

The process to requisition goods will vary depending on the Province or organization that is managing the Reception Centre.

The Project Manager or Lead Caregiver is in charge of requisition of goods. He/she will find out from the Reception Centre Manager what system or forms need to be completed and which items are recoverable.

Replacement of “Kit of Comfort” items which are consumed or broken during an activation need to be requisitioned during the close of the centre from the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)

Setting Up

- When you arrive at the child care centre, report to the Project Manager. If the Project Manager has not arrived, have a team meeting and select a temporary lead caregiver if one has not been appointed by CDCC.
- The Reception Centre Manager will inform you as to the size and location of the Child Care Centre
- Is the traffic flow good? Are you close to a bathroom? Is there an emergency escape route? How many children would you have in this space?
- Space Considerations – BE FLEXIBLE. The space you get may not be ideal. However, children’s safety is of the utmost importance so think about security and how to safely take children to the toilet. Usually we find that if we are at full capacity for our space, we will be allotted more as it is available. It is important that the Reception Centre Manager understand WHY we make certain requests regarding space.
- Amount – may be spacious or crowded. This will determine how many children we can safely accommodate/
- Adaptability – space limitations may dictate the number of children that are accepted in a centre. Be as creative as you can with the allotted space. Use boxes, benches or tables (turned on their side) for boundaries. If space is an issue, the decision to not take children under the age of two might be helpful.
- Availability – look for the location of bathrooms and water supply; check traffic flow of the public Outdoor setups – use the outdoors if the weather is good. Be sure to set boundaries to space (snow fences work well). Ensure protection from the elements, from the media, and that you have access to washrooms.
- Environmental protection considerations – cover tables and carpet where water, paint and play dough are used.
- Traffic flow – if the public must travel near your space, be careful of activities in or near the walkway. Having traffic flow within the childcare area would be unmanageable, so you may consider reducing the space or setting up two distinct areas.
- Congestion – if space is limited, keep activity centers from looking cluttered. Have fewer play centers and change them throughout the day.
- Borrowed articles – the lead caregiver is responsible for borrowed items used in the centre. List these items and to whom they belong to ensure that they are returned at the end of the assignment.

- Staff can gather all useful play things and/or equipment for the care centre from the Kit of Comfort, from local resources or otherwise.
- If your community has no child care supplies, make a request to Logistics for some basic items. Be specific in listing these items so that we are not overwhelmed with items that are not useful. Do not be afraid to ask for what you need – even for those larger items such as a glider rocking chair or playpens, etc.

Child Care Centre Check-in

- All Child Care areas need a Check-In Desk that is monitored by designated staff at all times
- All information pertaining to children must be held confidential
- At the Child Care Check-In Desk :
 - All children must get signed in upon entering the Child Care area
 - Ensure the child's name is spelled correctly on the sign in sheet.
 - Tell parents/guardians that the same person signing-in the child must also sign them out, and that a signature is required
 - Place a piece of masking tape on the child's back with their name and a colour code for medical conditions or allergies. This way caregivers can read the child's name and can approach them using their name.
 - Ask about the age of the child, allergies and other special needs (including medications), and permission to give snacks.
- Advise parents that the child care service is available only while the parent is in the Reception Centre
- Check-in can be increased to meet security needs. For example, in addition to the procedures listed above, following 9-11 photos of children and their accompanying adult were taken and kept on file until the adult returned to get them. At that time the photo was given to the adult
- We DO NOT receive children who do not want to be with us. If the child is upset or distressed every effort will be made to calm the child and to have the parent understand that the child should not experience further distress. Usually children very quickly begin to play and enjoy the environment and consent to the parent leaving for a short time. If a child becomes upset and is inconsolable, a volunteer will need to find the parent and ask them to return to be with the child.
- We do not dispense medications.
- Ill children WILL NOT be accepted into the Child Care centre.
- Walk in volunteers may be utilized to staff the Check-In Desk but not as caregivers.

Food

- Snack items should be listed and posted for parents to see at registration of the child
- Snacks should only be served if the food item is safe for the health concerns of all the children in the Child Care area
- If the emergency situation necessitates the serving of a meal, parents should collect their children for this activity

Bathroom

- Parents should be encouraged to toilet their children prior to sign-in.
- In the event that a child needs to use the bathroom and there is no parent available there are two options:
 - One caregiver and several children can go to the washroom together
 - Two caregivers can take one or more children to the bathroom
- Cubicle doors are to be open at all times.
- Children should be assisted only as required, and only with their permission.
- If at all possible, have parent or accompanying adult change diapers.
- In a situation where a child care giver must change a diaper, it should be changed in the designated change area and rules of accompaniment apply.

Supporting Children Post-Disaster

If we are working in a Reception Centre, we can be with the children for as little as 30 minutes to as long as several hours. While we may have a general knowledge of the disaster we do not know the child's experience, and it is not appropriate to ask. Our job is to provide a safe and comforting place where children can rest, relax and begin to adjust to their new reality. Our job is not to teach, structure play, make friends, reprimand or to in any way interpret the disaster experience for children. The centre is a place where the child can gain control of his/her environment after experiencing loss associated with disaster. Our job is to facilitate this process.

What the Child Needs

- A **calm** presence
- **Contact** with adults that understand the feelings and needs of disaster survivors
- **Assurance** of safety in honest, realistic and understanding terms

- **Validation** of their feelings of fear, grief, anxiety, loss, anger, confusion
- **Encouragement** and **acceptance** of emotional venting in a safe environment
- **Reassurance** that he/she is not abandoned, and that the community is helping one another during the emergency
- **Explanation** that is appropriate to the child's understanding and needs

What the Caregiver Can Do

- Create a setting where the child can choose and direct their activities.
- Do not force participation
- Be present to establish a rapport if the child wants to talk with you.
- Accept the child as they are. Remember that the child sets the agenda.
- Be at the child's level. Use a soothing voice.
- Do not approach a child from behind. Be sure they see you coming toward them.
- Be calm and consistent. Be patient and supportive of the child's choices.
- If a child is behaving in a way that may be harmful to other children or caregivers, create a safe place for the child to express his/her feelings.
- Be non-judgemental. Following a disaster, children may display behaviours that are unacceptable in a normal situation. Allow free expression as long as the child does not injure self or others.
- Practice reflexive listening
- Physical contact as initiated or invited by the child.

Supporting Parents

- Listen to parents as they come to the child care area. Do not let them sneak away from the child but encourage them to stay until their child is comfortable with them leaving
- Assure the parent of their child's safety in the centre. Following a disaster, both parents and children may suffer from separation anxiety.
- Assure parents that regressive or changed behaviours following a disaster are normal responses to an abnormal event.
- Share information by giving parents the brochure "Disaster – Helping Your Child Cope".

SAFETY PROTOCOL

Purpose

The purpose of the Child Care area is for children to be safe, while allowing them to be themselves in a relaxed and fun area. It is also to give parents and guardians an opportunity to register their families and receive necessary services (a process that could take several hours).

Children should return to their families when possible for their own health, safety and well being. The size and scope of Child Care may grow as the disaster situation continues, but it is primarily a short-term care area. Parents are to remain in the Reception Centre.

General Safety Protocol

- No media is allowed into the childcare area.
- No pictures of the children are allowed. If the LGA wants pictures of the child care area arrange to have pictures taken when no children are on site.
- A Child Care centre must have at least 2 staff before opening. One staff person is designated to monitor the check-in table, and one must remain with the children
- Parents of children are to remain in the Reception Centre.
- The number of children in the Child Care area should not surpass the number that can be reasonably managed by the number of staff (aim for a 5:1 ratio)
- **Recommended Age of Children Ratio (Children : Worker)**
 - < 5 years 3:1
 - 5-10 years 5:1
 - >10 years 7:1
- The Child Care area is for children developed enough to reasonably communicate their desires and with limited assistance required for bathroom use. Children not meeting this developmental stage should stay with their parents/guardians. Child Care workers are trusted to make decisions in the best interest of all children.
- No bathing or changing of any children will be done by the Child Care workers; in such an event children should be encouraged to change themselves in a private area and/or parents/guardians should be notified
- No medication will be distributed by any Child Care worker.

- NOTE: an exception exists for vital medication in an emergency situation such as an inhaler or epi-pen; in this case a parent must fill-out a medical information sheet on their child and leave it with Child Care Check-In
- Child Care Workers are not to remove children from the Child Care Centre (not even with the permission of the parents)
 - Sick children and/or caregivers should not be present at the childcare centre. If a child becomes ill while in CDCC care, consult the designated nurse or health care worker. Disaster Child Caregivers do not dispense medication, however, medications are to be kept by the designated healthcare person or nurse to dispense.
 - Every effort should be made to keep the child care room as neat and clean as possible. Wash, and disinfect all surfaces, on a daily basis.
 - An escape plan should be in place and every volunteer should be familiar with the plan. In the event of another disaster, it is imperative that caregivers know how to safely evacuate the children.
 - Observe your space. Look for hazards such as sharp corners, open electrical outlets and/or unstable furniture.

Unattended Children

An unattended child is one that comes into care (arrives at the Reception Centre, Group Lodging, etc) without knowing the whereabouts of parents or guardians, and without the means to find them. The following provides steps to help these children.

1. When an unattended child is sent to the Child Care area, notify the Child Care Supervisor promptly.
 - Unattended children will be checked into the Child Care area as any other child
2. The Child Care Supervisor will inform the Specialized Services Branch Coordinator of the situation and a decision will be made to proceed with calling the Ministry of Child and Family Development. At the time that these procedures are being written, MCFD is in the process of identifying their role with respect to unattended children. If they are able to respond at the time they are notified, proceed to the next step. If they are not able to respond, skip to number 3.

- If MCFD is able to assist the unattended child, they will take-on the guardianship of the child and will seek out the proper parents/guardians. The MCFD workers must be identified by Staff ID cards.

3. If MCFD cannot respond they should be able to provide advice. The Child Care Supervisor will carry-out this advice with utmost care, reverting to the Specialized Support Services Branch Coordinator for additional support, while keeping Child Care workers informed of the direction given by MCFD.

**Throughout this process the unattended child should be admitted into the child area following the regular procedures. If the child is of a maturity that allows the identification of their own special needs (ie. allergies) then they may also partake of snack and meals. If they do not know their limitations then feeding should occur at regular meal times and should proceed with extreme caution. The First Aid station should also be notified of the child, in the event that unforeseeable medical concerns arise.

**If a parent/guardian arrives to retrieve an unattended child, MCFD should again be called for guidance as to the appropriateness of releasing the child to the adult. The Reception Centre Manager can assist with this process.

KIT OF COMFORT

The “Kit of Comfort” is a suitcase full of toys, materials, and activities that will assist the child in therapeutic play. It is brought to the disaster site by trained child caregivers. Throughout Canada volunteers have purchased “Kit of Comfort” suitcases with the assistance of Churches, Services Clubs and Provincial and Federal Government Grants. Assigned volunteers are housing “Kits of Comfort” at various locations across Canada.

When Disaster Child Care is contacted to assist during a disaster our organization will get in touch with local volunteers and ask them to bring their “Kit of Comfort” with them.

If your community has no “Kit of Comfort” and the “Kit of Comfort” from CDCC Head Office has not arrived we suggest these low cost alternatives:

- Rolled paper
- Paints / crayons
- Home Made Play dough/Paint/Soap Bubbles
- Puzzles from the local Thrift store

Each “Kit of Comfort” has a list of the items in the kit. Following an activation make a list of items used or broken items that need to be replaced. Ensure this list is forwarded to CDCC. The Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) will reimburse CDCC or the community for used items.

Kit of Comfort Items

- Suitcase (I can usually get one from a Liquidation place for \$ 30 to \$ 50)
- Outlet plugs
- Masking Tape
- Garbage Bags
- 2 Plastic Bins that can be used for sand and water play
- Paper for painting/colouring/drawing
- Several aprons as extras (Volunteers are to bring their own)
- Baby quilt or blanket

Basic Items

- Paints (the solid disks are good)
- Non-spill paint pots
- Paint brushes (sturdy ones for small hands)
- Play dough and tools (rolling pins, cutters, presses, syringes)
- Crayons/markers (washable)
- Painting aprons or shirts
- Pencils
- Tea Set (Bambola makes a good one – flexible and dishwasher safe)
- Dolls – washable, fixed eyes, several cultures (water babies work well)
- Doll feeding set
- Baby blankets (for dolls and children)
- Phone (a simple one with the least noise possible)
- Flashlight (Playschool brand is good)
- Small vehicles (Viking makes flexible plastic vehicles that are safe, as children cannot bite the wheels off. They are also dishwasher safe. Rescue vehicles-Shelcor makes a rescue vehicle set that is safe, is not gender biased, and represents visible minorities).
- Town/Road Mat (The plastic sheet variety takes up the least space in the kit and washes easily)
- Tool Kit
- Medical Kit
- Blocks (compressed foam is light and safe)
- Puzzles (Compressed foam, Ravensburger tray puzzles with the finger holes – a variety for various age ranges)
- Boxed bear puzzle (It is a box with mom, dad and child bear. Each bear has three pieces and many options within those pieces – head, upper body and lower body. The face pieces have numerous expressions making this puzzle a good tool for talking about feelings or for encouraging a child to communicate feelings without words)
- Punching clown or balls

- Balls – blow up ones take less space in kit – also Koosh balls are great (Beware that children who have experienced war may see them as land mines)
- Sand and water toys
- Sidewalk chalk
- Unspillable Bubble Pot with numerous wands and bubble liquid
- Family dolls – It is always hard to find these – Little Tikes makes a good set but they are hard to find – Playmobile makes a good set and they do have five cultures but you would probably have to order them.
- Puppets – no full body puppets as the opening is usually on the bum and that is not appropriate for children who have endured sexual abuse. Be sure the hand goes into the neck or half body only. (Washable is important)
- Skipping rope
- Baby toys – small rattles (Without holes or cracks so they can be washed in the dishwasher)
- Games – Ravensburger Lottino, Uno
- Books – Books for the pre-school level on dealing with disasters/fears are good but also general story books with lots of pictures (Look carefully to be sure of the appropriateness) some suggestions: Franklin and the Dark, From Far Away – Robert Munsch, Children know and love Robert Munsch stories. Picture books are good for children who do not speak English and for creating you own story. Word and picture books can be used to bridge language barriers. The “Carl” books are wonderful for making up stories.)
- Camera

Optional Items

- Paint sponges
- Duplo blocks
- Finger puppets
- Dress-up Clothes
- Games/puzzles for older children – Ravensburger Mixed up Max, Snakes and Ladders, Memory
- Face Paints
- Lacing Cards - yarn
- Children’s scissors/construction paper – basic craft supplies

Home Made Play Items

Play Dough #1

1 ½ cups boiling water with food colouring added
½ cup salt
2 T powdered alum
1 T oil
2 ½ cups flour

In bowl, mix salt, flour oil and alum. Add boiling water, stir quickly. Knead. May add a little flour during kneading. Store in plastic bag.

Play Dough #2

1 cup flour
½ cup salt
2 tsp. cream of tartar

Put in a saucepan; add:

1 cup water
1 T oil
Several drops of colouring and fragrance

Cook, stirring 3 minutes or until mixture pulls away from pan. Remove dough and knead immediately. Store in plastic bag.

Bubbles

4 oz. Glycerin
9 oz soap (dish washing)
2 qt. Water

Homemade Finger Paint

Cooked Starch Method (Time: 10 minutes plus cooling)

Mix in a bowl: 1 cup laundry starch or cornstarch dissolved in small amount of cold water.

Slowly add 5 cups of boiling water to dissolved starch.

Cook the mixture until thick and glossy. Add 1 cup mild soap flakes. Add colour in separate containers. Cool before using.

Useful Ideas!!

- For sand play use birdseed instead of sand. It is much easier to clean up.
- Use a drop of dish detergent when mixing paint for easier clean-up.

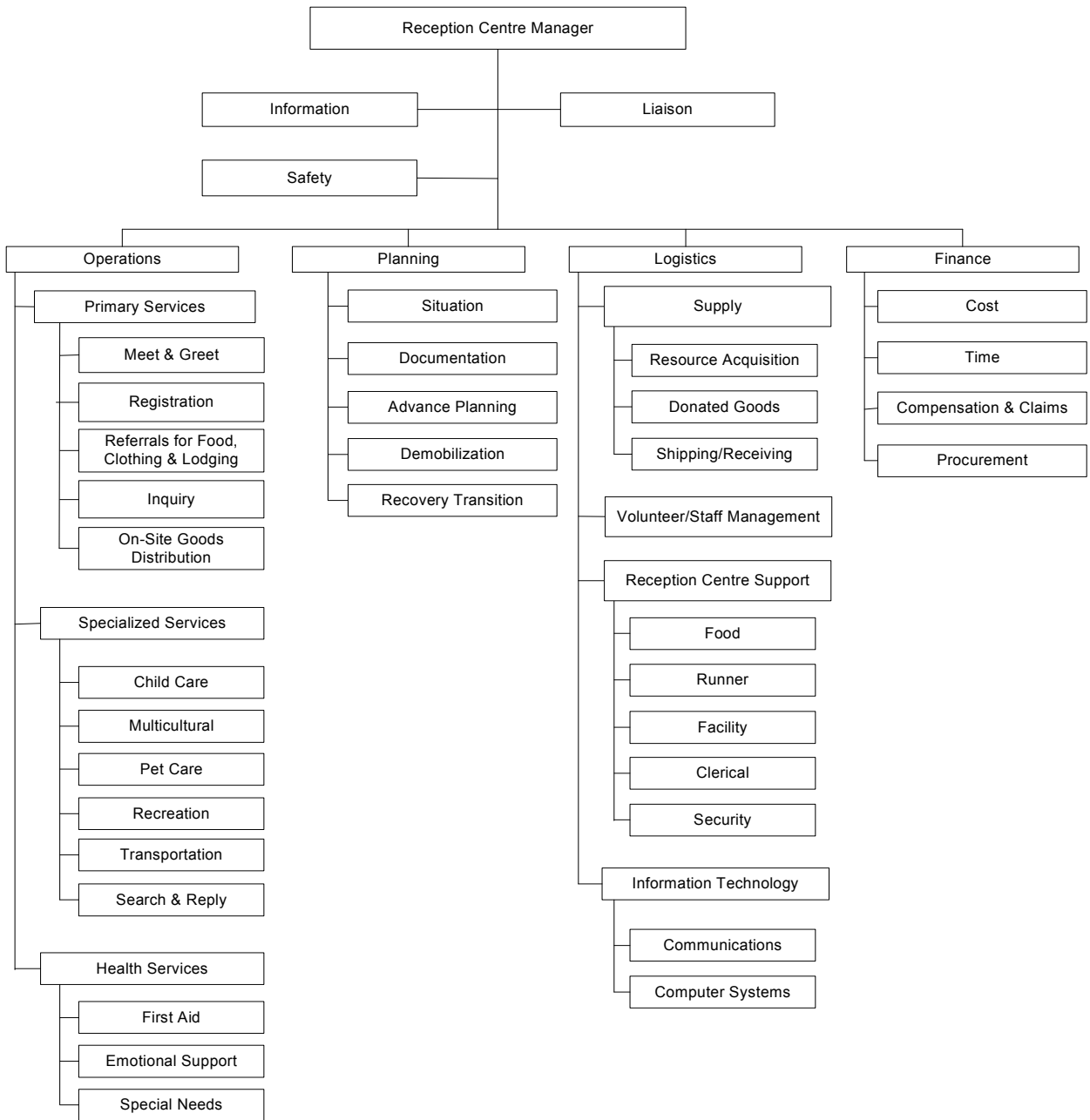
EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES (ESS)

Every province has an Emergency Social Services or ESS plan. In British Columbia ESS is administered by the ESS Program Office which is part of the Provincial Emergency Program. In some provinces ESS is administered by a Non Government Organization (NGO) such as the Canadian Red Cross or Salvation Army.

In times of emergency, ESS cares for evacuees. ESS registers evacuees and provides them with emergency food, clothing and shelter for 72 hours. They reunite families and friends who have been separated during a disaster and provide a 1-800 number for friends or family from around the world to phone for information on evacuees. ESS may also provide childcare, counselling, first aid, pet care and management of the hundreds of volunteers who come forward to help in a disaster.

ESS will open a Reception Centre to provide these services. Some ESS centres are operated using the Emergency Response Management System (ERMS) or Incident Command System. A copy of a Reception Centre Organizational Chart follows on the next page.

ESS Reception Centre Organization Chart - Functions -



WORKER CARE

For some people volunteering or working in a Reception Centre during an evacuation can be a wonderful and rewarding experience but for others it is a difficult and confusing occurrence.

When volunteering in a Reception Centre it is important to remember:

- Everyone is performing a job they have never done before
- Everyone wants to do a good job
- Some people believe their job is the most important work being done

So be patient, be kind and be forgiving.

Following are some ideas developed by “British Columbia Disaster Worker Care Committee”

During Your Shift

- Know when your shifts start and end
- Know who's in charge
- Check in with yourself several times during your shift
How am I doing? What do I need?
- Take 5 minutes alone or with a colleague
- Get up, stretch and take a deep breath
- Drink water, water, water
- Take toilet breaks!!
- Fuel yourself – eat healthy
- Look out for each other
- Talk clearly and calmly
- Take time to listen
- Address issues when they arise
- Remember to smile
- Ask for help if you need it
- Shift should not exceed 8 hours without just cause

After Your Shift

- Know who is your emergency contact person
- Get together with colleagues
- Find some way to connect
- Get some sleep
- Get some exercise – walk, swim, run....
- Fuel yourself – eat healthy
- Phone family and friends
- Do what is relaxing for you
- Talking helps
- Have a beer – not 10!

If you've had a bad day – Remember you've made a difference!

1. Health

Disasters are very demanding and if you are not in good health, not only may you jeopardize your own health, but you may further tax the already stretched resources of the local community to respond to your health issues.

1. Are there any particular health hazards associated with this disaster response (e.g., smoke and poor air quality in forest fires) that would exacerbate any pre-existing health conditions?
2. Have you had a recent surgery or recently undergone any extensive medical treatment?
3. Are you on any medications that may make working long hours without regular sleep and/or meals difficult?
4. Is acquiring sufficient medication to take with you on this disaster assignment a problem?
5. Would you have any difficulty working long hours or walking a fair distance if regular transportation is not available?
6. Would an inability to acquire tobacco and/or alcohol create a stressful situation for you?
7. Have you had a recent medical check-up? Would your doctor disapprove of you going on this disaster assignment?
8. Have you had a recent dental check-up? Is there any reason to suspect any dental problems may surface?

2. Employment and Finances

In some cases your agency or organization will be paying for your wages while on assignment, in other cases you will be going on assignment as a volunteer. In either case, it is important to ensure that financial matters are looked after while you are on assignment.

If you are a volunteer and are employed

9. Will your employer be reluctant to allow you to take this assignment?
10. Will taking this assignment jeopardize your job in any way?

16. Will you have to take holiday time to go on assignment? If so, will this disrupt any vacation plans with your family?

If you are a volunteer and are not employed

11. Are you in midst of any projects that would make it difficult for you to leave the office?
12. Have you recently been promoted?
13. Have you applied for another job and is it likely that you would be asked to an interview in the near future?
14. Will your employer pay for your time away from your job? If not, will it be financially difficult for you to take this assignment?
15. Have you talked to your colleagues about taking this assignment, and will taking this assignment create difficulties in terms of coverage?

17. Are you looking for employment and if so, will this assignment jeopardize any possible job offers?
18. Will it be financially difficult for you to take this assignment?

19. Will taking this assignment affect your eligibility for Employment Insurance or BC Employment and Assistance?

In either case . . .

20. Will there be any problem paying bills while you are away?
21. Will there be any problem depositing cheques or making bank deposits during your absence?

3. Personal and Family Life

Circumstances can change – sometimes very quickly. Everyone has times when one's life situation is more stable than during other times. Going on disaster assignment is demanding enough without having to worry about what is happening at home or leaving when things have been very stressful (either positively or negatively).

22. Has your life situation changed recently – for example: have you recently experienced a separation, divorce, or a period of marital discord? have you recently married or decided to live common-law? has their been a recent birth in the family? has a family member been seriously ill and/or is anyone in your family undergoing medical treatment?
23. Have you returned recently from another disaster assignment?
24. Have there been any recent traumas and/or critical incidents in your life?
25. Have you recently moved?
26. Have you recently lost your job or been laid off work?
27. Are there any significant financial stresses in your life?
28. Are there any important family occasions in the near future – for example, a graduation, expected birth of grandchild, significant wedding anniversary, or birthday?
29. Are there any religious observances that you follow that might make this disaster assignment difficult?
30. Do you have plans for a family vacation or anticipated trip?
31. Have you made any important commitments (family or organizational) that would be difficult to change and/or postpone (e.g., providing child care, caring for an elderly parent)?
32. Has it been a long time since you have had time off to yourself and/or to simply relax and enjoy life?

33. Has it been a long time since your will and other personal affairs have been updated?

34. Will taking this assignment be welcomed as an escape from having to cope with ongoing problems at home or in the workplace?

35. Will your family disapprove of you going on this assignment?

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions you should seriously consider whether going on a disaster assignment at this time is a good choice for you. Experienced disaster responders know that there will always be another disaster and that before going to help others you have an obligation to yourself and your family to ensure that you are physically, financially, and emotionally healthy.

Developed by:
British Columbia
Disaster Worker Care Committee

Self-Assessment:
**Prior to Disaster
Assignment**



Your Child Needs You

Children who have recently experienced a traumatic event are likely to show signs of distress. It is not uncommon for children to display a wide range of physical and/or emotional reactions after experiencing a sudden disturbing event. Children may likely act or behave differently whether they were directly or indirectly involved in the event.

It is hard for young children to understand what has happened to them. Some may have completely mixed-up views of the situation, while others, depending on age and level of involvement, may have a clear understanding. The certain fact is that children in distress need your guidance and understanding to help them grow through experience. How you help children work through this difficult time may have a lasting effect.

It is important to be aware that young children can experience the same intense feelings that you feel about the traumatic event. All children react differently, even children from the same family. Some may show their feelings immediately, others may wait until a later time. Most children will likely be confused by all the sudden interruption to their routine. Whatever their reaction, be assured it is normal for children to be upset and display feelings about what has happening around them and to them.

This brochure has been prepared to help parents and caregivers become aware of the various ways children may react to a traumatic event. Inside is a list of ways parents and/or caregivers may help children cope with reactions to a traumatic event.

Canadian Disaster Child Care (CDCC) trains volunteers to provide specialized childcare that focuses on using play to help children work through their feelings and regain control over their environment following a disaster. Workshop topics include: defining disaster (ranging from death in the family, war, earthquakes, etc.); recovery stages; children's behaviours and how they change in disaster; how we respond; celebrating cultural richness; empathetic listening; setting up a child-centred space; and team building.

*This resource was prepared by
Dr. Karen Doudt, Professor of Education at
Manchester College, North Manchester,
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who was instrumental in developing the
Disaster Child Care training curriculum.*

*For more information on Canadian Disaster
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TRAUMA

Helping Your Child Cope



Guidelines for Parents and Caregivers After Traumatic Events



After a Traumatic Event Children's Typical Behaviour May Change

You may notice one or more of these behaviours as your child struggles to cope with the stress and loss resulting from a disaster.

Remember, these are natural reactions.

By showing patience and acceptance, you will reassure the child and encourage the process of getting back to normal.

Young children may...

- Demonstrate angry feelings by hitting, kicking, throwing things.
- Become more active or restless.
- Worry about what will happen to them.
- Be afraid to be left alone or afraid to sleep alone. They may have had dreams or want to sleep with a parent or sibling.
- Behave as they did when they were younger, want a bottle, suck their thumb, wet the bed, want to be held.
- Be afraid that the event will reoccur, asking, "Will it happen again?"
- Be upset at the loss of a favourite toy, blanket, teddy bear, etc.
- Have symptoms of illness such as fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, headaches, loss of appetite.
- Become quiet and withdrawn, not wanting to talk about the experience.
- Cry excessively, whine, cling to a parent.
- Express feelings of guilt that they caused the event in some way.
- Feel neglected by parents who are busy with other tasks.
- Refuse to go to day care or school. Children may not let you out of their sight.
- Become afraid of loud noises, storms or unfamiliar people.
- Show no outward sign of being upset. Some children may never show distress because they do not feel upset. Others may not give evidence of being upset until several weeks or months after the event.

What You Can Do To Help Children Understand Their Feelings

TALK with your child. Respond to questions patiently. Give simple, accurate information about the situation. Correct misunderstandings.

TALK with your child about your own feelings. However, it is important not to expect your child to provide you with emotional support.

LISTEN to what your child says and how she says it. Watch for behaviours that give clues to stress, fear and anxiety. Let your child know you are concerned by repeating her words back to her. "You are afraid that..." or "You wonder if this will happen again." This helps both you and the child clarify feelings.

REASSURE your child. "We are together. We are safe. We care about you. We will take care of you."

HOLD and cuddle your child. Touching provides comfort and security.

ALLOW your child to grieve the loss of a special toy, blanket, or article of clothing. In time it may be helpful to replace the lost object.

SPEND extra time putting your child to bed. A warm bath can be soothing. Talk and offer extra assurances, like a night light or reminders that you are nearby.

OBSERVE your child at play and listen for concerns expressed through the play activities. A child will deal with anger, fear, or insecurities while playing with dolls, blocks, small vehicles or imaginary play with other children.

PROVIDE play experiences such as play dough, finger paints, or a tub of water. These activities help a child release tension. If your child seems to want to hit or kick, give him something safe, like a pillow, nerfball or bean bag game.

ASK FOR HELP for yourself or for your child if prolonged emotional or physical distress persists. Talk to your pastor, your family physician, a school counselor or mental health professional. There are people in your community who understand and will help.



Canadian Disaster Child Care Society

Detailed Child Registration Form (to be completed if your child has health or safety concerns).

Child's Name: _____

Child's Age: _____

Language: _____

Child Care Centre Location: _____

Date: _____

Time In: _____ Time Out: _____

Parents Name: _____

Parents Location: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Medicine: _____

Allergies (foods, medicines, animals, etc) _____

Permission to photograph child(ren)? Yes/No

Other: _____

CDCC Daily Situation Report

PEP Task # _____

Date / Time _____

Note to CDCC caregiver completing this report:

This report is to be completed daily with CDCC keeping the original. A copy of pages 1 and 2 are forwarded to the Reception Centre Manager daily. If possible; please fax a copy of Pages 1-3 to the CDCC office at our current fax number. (check website)

Completed by: Name of person compiling report _____	This Update Covers Dates and Times: (DD/MM/YR – 2400 Hr) Date: _____ From: _____ To: _____
--	--

Facility Name:	Community:
Facility Address:	
Designated Facility Contact:	Position:
Phone Number: ()	Fax Number: ()

Services Provided Statistics:	How Many this report	Running Total
Number of children registered at this Child Care Center		
Number of Child Care volunteers activated in this report :		
Local Volunteers		
Community Staff		
Ministry Staff		

Financial Estimates of Event:	How much this report (\$)	Running Total (\$)
Estimated cost of centre costs (food, diapers, cleaning supplies, etc)		

Comments/Issues: (for completion by Project Manager or Lead Caregiver). Please comment if any incidents reports or referrals to professionals have been completed.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS REPORT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FOR USE OF ESS Program Office or EOC ONLY

Check One:

This report was:

- Received by fax
- Created via phone call from facility contact
- Received via radio transmission
- Other specify:

CDCC Incident Report

Name of Child _____ Age _____

Details of Incident

Date: _____ Type: _____
(accident Illness Etc)

Time: _____ Place: _____
(Kitchen, playground, etc)

Describe Incident

Action Taken _____

Follow-up Required _____

Parent/Guardian/Other Notified:

Name _____ Date: _____ Time _____

Name _____ Date: _____ Time _____

Witnesses:

Name _____ Contact Phone No: _____

Name _____ Contact Phone No: _____

Lead Caregiver:

Name: _____ Date: _____