



Helping Children Prepare for Disasters

Full Mitigation Best Practice Story

State-wide, Arkansas

Pulaski County, AR—“When disaster strikes, would your child know what to do?”

Children are among the most vulnerable disaster victims, so giving them safety guidelines before a disaster strikes is critical. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has an excellent disaster-specific program just for kids called FEMA for Kids. The program is designed to help children be better prepared in the event of future disasters.



In the first quarter of 2008, Arkansas was one area of the nation pummeled by severe weather and natural disasters. FEMA staff partnered with State and local officials, and organizations such as the American Red Cross to take the FEMA for Kids program to fourth graders in schools. On the two-week tour, over 500 fourth-grade students in counties impacted by the disasters were educated on disaster preparedness.

The outreach was so successful that FEMA targeted the Cub Scouts of Little Rock, Arkansas. Tamara Bellock, who managed a summer camp for approximately 200 scouts ranging from ages eight to ten, joined with FEMA staff and staff at Reservoir Park to accommodate troops throughout the State. The objective in making the Cub Scouts an integral part of safety initiative was to heighten parental awareness of the need to be more proactive in preparing their children who are often home alone.

“We had about 25-30 scouts in each session,” reported Community Education and Outreach Specialist, Brianne Charles. “We hosted six 45-minute classes. Students participated in a question and answer session regarding the video, ‘Getting Ready for Disaster: One Family’s Experience,’ and the scouts had an opportunity to view the contents of a disaster supply kit.”

Charles continued, “There were lots of questions and students responded rapidly. We asked questions such as: ‘What kind of disaster has happened in your area, What can be done to prepare for them in the future, What about contact information, Where would you go, What would you do, What should be placed in your family’s disaster supply kit?’”

Students eagerly participated in the five stations set up around the campsite. These stations included Fire Safety; First Aid; Preparing a Family Disaster Kit; Pets in Disasters; and Express Yourself Through Art.

“It’s important to educate the kids because they are the ones who are most likely to be home alone,” Charles said. “If parents aren’t there, these kids need to be prepared on what to do.”

Region VI continues to foster the program to school-age children by educating school districts on disaster preparedness.

Activity/Project Location

Geographical Area: **State-wide**

FEMA Region: **Region VI**

State: **Arkansas**

Key Activity/Project Information

Sector: **Public**
Hazard Type: **Severe Storm; Tornado; Flooding; Hurricane/Tropical Storm; Fire**
Activity/Project Type: **Education/Outreach/Public Awareness**
Activity/Project Start Date: **02/2008**
Activity/Project End Date: **Ongoing**
Funding Source: **Other FEMA funds/ US Department of Homeland Security**

Activity/Project Economic Analysis

Cost: **Amount Not Available**
Non FEMA Cost: **0**

Activity/Project Disaster Information

Mitigation Resulted From Federal
Disaster? **No**
Value Tested By Disaster? **Unknown**
Repetitive Loss Property? **No**

Reference URLs

Reference URL 1: <http://www.fema.gov/kids>

Main Points

No Main Points were entered.



Region VI's External Affairs and Hazard Mitigation staff partnered with the Arkansas Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross



FEMA DAEs discuss video and disaster supply kit with cub scouts