

Back-to-School Preparedness

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Host] Hey, kids and parents! It's back-to-school time! As you shop for school supplies and get ready for class, make sure you have emergency plans in place. Did you know that emergency preparedness plays a major role in school life? Throughout the year, schools actively prepare for natural disasters, outbreaks, and other emergency situations. Students and parents need to be aware and learn what to do during an emergency.

Every family should build an emergency kit, make a family disaster plan, and be informed about events that could affect their community. Parents—take a few extra steps to help children be prepared.

- Make sure they know the full name, address, and phone numbers of parents or guardians. In our high-tech world of cell phones, memorizing emergency phone numbers is very important! Include a copy of this information in their backpack.
- Other items to keep in their backpack include water and non-perishable snacks; a pocket-sized first aid kit; a whistle to alert others for help; and a list of allergies, medical conditions, and medications—make sure their school and teacher have a copy, too.
- Be familiar with different routes and ways to travel home, like walking, taking the bus, or riding home with another student who lives nearby.
- Establish a secret code word with your child and whoever takes them home from school to protect against an unauthorized person picking them up.

This list is a great starting point to prepare your student for the upcoming school year. Customize these steps to fit your child's capabilities and needs.

Ask school administrators and teachers about emergency preparedness plans so you know what steps they are taking to keep your child safe. Many schools have guidelines on how to shelter-in-place during natural disasters, how to secure classrooms during an emergency lockdown, and how to teach preparedness curriculum to students.

Remember, emergency preparedness is important for everyone. Children who are prepared are more confident during stressful emergency situations. By following preparedness guidelines, parents, children, and school staff can improve their safety and peace of mind.

For more information on school emergency preparedness, visit [cdc.gov/children/schools](https://www.cdc.gov/children/schools).

To learn more about disasters and emergency preparedness, follow @CDCEmergency on Twitter or visit [emergency.cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/emergency).

So, let's get prepared! Have a great school year!!

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.