

- SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 ● TERROR ATTACKS IN NEW YORK, WASHINGTON DC & PENNSYLVANIA KILL 3,017 PEOPLE AND INJURE 6,291
- OCTOBER 2, 2001 ● FIRST OF SEVEN ANTHRAX LETTERS DISCOVERED, EVENTUALLY KILLING FIVE PEOPLE IN DEADLIEST BIOLOGICAL WEAPON ATTACK IN AMERICAN HISTORY
- OCTOBER 25, 2003 ● CALIFORNIA CEDAR FIRE IGNITES, DESTROYING 2,232 HOMES AND REGISTERING AS WORST CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE TO DATE
- MARCH 21, 2005 ● RED LAKE, MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT KILLS TEN STUDENTS, INCLUDING HIMSELF
- AUGUST 29, 2005 ● HURRICANE KATRINA STRIKES GULF COAST, KILLING 1,836 AMERICANS AND DISPLACING ONE MILLION MORE
- APRIL 16, 2007 ● STUDENT KILLS 32 FELLOW STUDENTS AND INJURES 23 AT VIRGINIA TECH
- AUGUST 1, 2007 ● COLLAPSE OF I-35W BRIDGE IN MINNEAPOLIS KILLS 13 AND INJURES 100
- FEBRUARY 5, 2008 ● DEADLIEST TORNADOES IN 20 YEARS KILL 57 PEOPLE
- SEPTEMBER 13, 2008 ● HURRICANE IKE MAKES LANDFALL IN THE UNITED STATES, FLOODING 100,000 HOMES IN TEXAS
- DECEMBER 1, 2008 ● WORST RECESSION SINCE 1930S OFFICIALLY DECLARED, 5.7 MILLION JOBS LOST
- JUNE 11, 2009 ● H1N1 INFLUENZA VIRUS DECLARED FIRST PANDEMIC IN 41 YEARS

# THE DISASTER DECADE

## LESSONS UNLEARNED FOR THE UNITED STATES

TERROR ATTACKS

TORNADOES

WILDFIRES

NATURAL D

A

## THE DISASTER DECADE — the catastrophic events that defined the last ten years — changed America and the world forever.

Here at home, we struggled to prepare for and respond to unforeseen security threats: natural, manmade, health and economic. As we did so, our youngest and most vulnerable citizens were left even more vulnerable by a disaster relief system that didn't address their needs.



### CHILDREN IN SCHOOLS OR CHILD CARE ARE AT RISK

There are 67 million children in American schools and child care facilities at any given point on a weekday. Children are most vulnerable when they are away from their families. If a disaster strikes, it's crucial that parents are able to quickly reunite with their children in a safe place. After Katrina, it took up to six months to reunify some children with their families. Of all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Save the Children found that:

- 14% of states meet all four basic emergency preparedness standards for licensed child care facilities and K – 12 schools.
- 41% require all licensed child care facilities to have a written evacuation and relocation plan.
- 29% require all licensed child care facilities to have a written plan to notify parents during an emergency.
- 22% require a written plan for accommodating all children with special needs during an emergency evacuation and relocation.

### KIDS ARE INVISIBLE DURING DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS

When forced to evacuate from their homes, many people—particularly the poor—have no choice but to turn to emergency shelters. Unfortunately, our national sheltering system doesn't adequately account for the unique needs of children, making them vulnerable to injury and abuse.

- Children are only sometimes counted separately from adults in shelter facilities, making it difficult to provide services that meet the specific needs of children and keep them safe.
- Shelters rarely keep families separated from the rest of the population, making kids vulnerable to abuse, violence and even rape.
- Convicted sex offenders are only asked to self report when entering a shelter. Following Hurricane Ike, it was reported that at one shelter alone, 35 sex offenders self reported. It's likely that many more didn't report, making children in the shelter especially vulnerable.

DISASTERS

HURRICANE

ANTHRAX LETTER



RECESSION

## A FIVE-POINT PLAN TOWARD POSITIVE CHANGE

# 5

### THE RECESSION PUTS THE NEXT GENERATION'S FUTURE AT STAKE

During the current recession, evidence is mounting that children are being harmed by the serious economic effects on families.

- One in 33 Americans is facing foreclosure, which means families are forced to double up with family members, move to cheaper housing, or worse, homeless shelters.
- A change in home often means a change in school as well, and researchers have found that when kids change schools, high school graduation rates are reduced by 50 percent.
- Hospitals across the country have seen a recent spike in child abuse, much of which they attribute to the stress of families' financial difficulties: the number of cases screened rose 20 percent at Boston's Children's Hospital. At Seattle Children's Hospital the number of confirmed cases rose 27 percent.
- Since June 2008, food assistance requests have risen by as much as 40 percent, and food programs have been forced to turn away people who are hungry.

Disasters can strike at any moment. Natural catastrophies, the threat of terrorism, health threats and other disasters will continue unabated. There are steps we can take that will go a long way toward making sure that a disaster's impact on children doesn't become a disaster in its own right.

1. Establish National Disaster Preparedness Standards for Child Care Centers and Schools
2. Establish an Office of Children's Advocacy at FEMA
3. To Ensure Child Care Facilites Can Rebuild and Restore Services More Quickly Following a Disaster, Make them Eligible for Federal Disaster Aid
4. Establish a White House Commission on the Effects of the Recession on Children
5. Create a Federal Public Awareness Campaign to Educate Families about Protecting Children During Disasters

**SAVE THE CHILDREN'S U.S. PROGRAMS** runs one of the most innovative and robust private disaster programs for children in the United States. Our teams are on the ground before, during and after major events to ensure the safety and well-being of children in shelters, as well as recovery for the local communities. We also advocate for policy changes at the local, state and federal level.

# A REPORT CARD:

ARE THE STATES PREPARED TO PROTECT CHILDREN DURING DISASTERS?

## EVACUATION PLAN

A law or regulation requiring all licensed childcare facilities to have a multi-hazard written evacuation and relocation plan.

## REUNIFICATION EFFORTS

In order to facilitate reunification of children and parents in the event of an emergency, a law or regulation requiring all licensed child care facilities to have a written plan to notify parents of an emergency.

## SPECIAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN IN CHILD CARE

In context of a written emergency evacuation and relocation plan, a law or regulation that requires a written plan for accommodating all children with special needs enrolled in a particular licensed child care facility.

## K-12 WRITTEN PROCEDURE FOR DISASTER PLANNING

A law or regulation requiring a multi-hazard hazard disaster plan.

RESEARCH WAS CONDUCTED BY BROWN BUCKLEY TUCKER AND REFLECTS ACTION IN RELEVANT STATE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES AND STATE LEGISLATURES AS OF JUNE 10, 2009. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS REPORT—INCLUDING METHODOLOGY OR BACKGROUND MATERIALS—PLEASE CONTACT SAVE THE CHILDREN'S U.S. PROGRAMS AT 202-640-6600.

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\* = Regulations under revision

|                 | Evacuation Plan | Reunification Efforts | Special Needs of Children in Child Care | K-12 Written Procedure for Disaster Planning |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| ALABAMA         | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| ARKANSAS        | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| HAWAII          | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| NEW HAMPSHIRE   | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| MARYLAND        | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| MASSACHUSETTS   | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| VERMONT         | •               | •                     | •                                       | •  |
| DELAWARE        | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| NEW YORK        | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| NORTH CAROLINA  | •               |                       | •                                       | •  |
| OHIO            | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| OKLAHOMA*       | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| CALIFORNIA*     | •               |                       | •                                       | •  |
| MISSISSIPPI*    | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| PENNSYLVANIA    | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| SOUTH CAROLINA* | •               | •                     |   | •  |
| ALASKA          |                 |                       | •                                       | •  |
| COLORADO        |                 | •                     |   | •  |
| TENNESSEE       |                 |                       | •                                       | •  |
| TEXAS           | •               |                       |   | •  |
| UTAH            | •               |                       |   | •  |
| ARIZONA         |                 |                       |   | •  |
| CONNECTICUT     |                 |                       |   | •  |
| D.C.            | •               |                       |   |  |
| FLORIDA*        |                 |                       |   | •  |
| GEORGIA         |                 |                       |   | •  |
| KENTUCKY*       |                 |                       |   | •  |
| MINNESOTA       |                 |                       |   | •  |
| NEVADA          | •               |                       |   |  |
| NEW JERSEY      |                 |                       |   | •  |
| NEW MEXICO*     |                 |                       |   | •  |
| NORTH DAKOTA    | •               |                       |   |  |
| OREGON          |                 |                       |   | •  |
| RHODE ISLAND    |                 |                       |   | •  |
| SOUTH DAKOTA    |                 |                       |   | •  |
| VIRGINIA*       |                 |                       |   | •  |
| INDIANA         |                 |                       |   | •  |
| ILLINOIS        |                 |                       |   | •  |
| MAINE           |                 |                       |   | •  |
| WASHINGTON*     |                 |                       |   | •  |
| IDAHO           |                 |                       |   |  |
| IOWA            |                 |                       |   |  |
| LOUISIANA       |                 |                       |   |  |
| MISSOURI*       |                 |                       |   |  |
| KANSAS*         |                 |                       |   |  |
| MICHIGAN        |                 |                       |   |  |
| MONTANA         |                 |                       |   |  |
| NEBRASKA*       |                 |                       |   |  |
| WEST VIRGINIA   |                 |                       |   |  |
| WISCONSIN       |                 |                       |   |  |
| WYOMING*        |                 |                       |   |  |