

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES

# Emergency Planning Guidance

Civil Defence Emergency Management  
BEST PRACTICE GUIDE [BPG 6/11]



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

*Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga*

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION SERVICES

## Emergency Planning Guidance [BPG 6/11]

ISBN: 978-0-478-35557-4

December 2011

Version 1.0

This document has been jointly prepared by the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM) and the Ministry of Education.

Published by the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management.

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## Foreword

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When an emergency such as an earthquake occurs, the safety of a person's family is generally their first consideration. Parents who entrust the care of their children to others want the reassurance that those caring for and educating their children will do all they can to keep their children safe, particularly when those children are very young.

New Zealand early childhood education (ECE) services take this responsibility very seriously, and frequently seek guidance from their local government civil defence emergency management (CDEM) representatives when determining how best to prepare themselves for emergencies. The experiences of ECE services during the responses to the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010-2011 have highlighted the need to ensure that ECE services understand the hazard environments they operate in, and that they are well prepared to ensure they can respond to emergency events.

ECE services have the responsibility to ensure that learning environments are emotionally and physically safe for children and young people. The Ministry of Education supports and regulates ECE services to do so. The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM) acts as an advocate for a co-ordinated approach to emergency planning including risk reduction, readiness, response and recovery activities that are undertaken at national and community levels.

In order to assist ECE services, MCDEM and the Ministry of Education have jointly developed this practical guidance to be used for planning before emergencies occur, and as a reference during a response and the recovery. We want ECE services to be well prepared and able to react safely and effectively during the response to an emergency, and then be able to transition swiftly into a smooth recovery.

The material provided in this guidance captures expertise from the early childhood education sector and CDEM practitioners from throughout New Zealand, including several individuals who have experienced real emergencies and witnessed the real contribution that thorough emergency planning can make to a good result. We acknowledge the commitment and involvement of all of those who have assisted in developing and producing this guidance. Their work will ensure the next generation will be safe and well cared for in an emergency.



John Hamilton  
Director  
Ministry of Civil Defence &  
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Lesley Longstone  
Chief Executive  
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# Introduction

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## About this guidance

This guidance has been written to help those involved in the education and care of young children at Early Childhood Education (ECE) services to develop Emergency Plans and put them into practice. The focus of the guidance is the planning process which, if followed, should result in a comprehensive, relevant and practical Emergency Plan, which can enable a safe response to emergencies related to natural hazards. Given that some aspects of planning for natural hazards is not that different to planning for other hazards that ECE services could face (such as fire, power failure, bomb threats, threatening behaviour etc), this guidance is intended to fit with procedures you might already have in place.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution that can address every situation you might face. Therefore, this guidance is not intended to be a set of rules, but provides some general planning steps, and information to support you to develop an Emergency Plan. These steps include the types of issues that should be covered in your Emergency Plan, how to gather information to help you write your plan, and who should be involved and consulted during the Emergency Plan's development.

Making sure children and staff at ECE services are safe during the response to an emergency situation is paramount and is the main focus of this guidance. It also includes information about recovery following an emergency or disaster. Recovery is a process encompassing the following activities:

- Minimising the escalation of the consequences of the emergency,
- Providing clear communication and support to allow the continuation of the services you provide to help regenerate the social, emotional, economic and physical well-being of individuals and communities, and
- Reducing future exposure to hazards and their associated risks.

*Your ECE service is a vital part of the community. It provides important and ongoing support for children and parents during difficult transitions and changes. Your ongoing operation is important to the recovery of the wider community, by allowing family members to return to work and by providing access to support and information. By considering recovery issues ahead of time, your ECE service will be better placed to fulfil its important role in the community's return to usual functioning.*

## How to use this document



This document has resources, checklists and case studies to help you write your Emergency Plan. An explanation of terms commonly used also has been included for your reference in Annex One.

Look for this symbol, which is used to indicate where checklists and templates are available to help you work through the stages of the planning process. The symbol is also used to indicate where annexes provide additional information on some topics.

Case studies from ECE services that have developed plans or experienced emergencies have been included, so that you can learn from their experiences and adapt what others have done and learned to fit your own needs.

**Who is this guidance for?**

The ECE Services Emergency Planning Guidance has been designed to be of assistance to the wide range of ECE services that exist in New Zealand. It takes into account that early childhood education and care takes place in many different settings, such as homes, school classrooms, community halls, marae, purpose-built facilities, and modified facilities in industrial, commercial and multi-storey buildings. Whether your ECE service has many staff or just a few, this resource aims to provide advice to enable you to develop an Emergency Plan that is relevant for your specific situation. However, you know your situation best and some interpretation will be required to modify or scale the advice so that it is appropriate for your needs.

**Electronic resource available for download**

The ECE Services Emergency Planning Guidance is available for download from the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management ([www.civildefence.govt.nz](http://www.civildefence.govt.nz)) and the Ministry of Education ([www.lead.ece.govt.nz](http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz)) in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) format.

# Context

## The civil defence emergency management system



Annex 2 contains more information on the CDEM framework.

Before you develop your Emergency Plan, it is important to understand the civil defence emergency management system (CDEM) for managing risks from natural hazards in New Zealand, what an emergency plan covers, and what the requirements are for you to have one for your ECE service.

In New Zealand, CDEM is the name given to the cooperative system for emergency management overseen by the Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management (MCDEM), and implemented by regional CDEM Groups, central government agencies, emergency services and lifeline utilities. The CDEM approach recognises that not all hazard risks can be reduced to zero, but that their impacts and consequences can be reduced through the 'four Rs' of comprehensive emergency management - reduction, readiness, response and recovery. The CDEM framework seeks to create a resilient New Zealand in which communities understand and manage hazards and their risks. An important underpinning principle of the New Zealand approach is the central role that individuals, families, communities and organisations all play in effective disaster preparedness and disaster response and recovery.

Councils in your region work collectively in CDEM Groups – there are 16 regional CDEM Group Offices in New Zealand. The CDEM Act 2002 requires every regional council to join with local authorities within its region to establish a CDEM Group and prepare a CDEM Group Plan outlining how they will manage hazards and risks in its area. CDEM Group functions include hazard risk management, and providing for emergency readiness, response and recovery. While the CDEM Groups provide a structure for the planning and coordination of efforts in the region, delivery still takes place at the level of the local authorities.

The CDEM Act 2002 also requires the development of a National CDEM Strategy. The current Strategy, which came into force in 2008, includes the Government's vision that New Zealanders understand and act routinely to reduce and avoid the adverse effects of hazards.

*The Strategy is a strategy for ALL New Zealanders – by developing Emergency Plans for your ECE services, you are helping to achieve these goals, as you will be increasing your preparedness, mitigating the risks in your own environment; enabling your ECE services to safely respond and manage their emergencies; and developing your own capability to get back to business as usual.*

The Ministry of Education recognises the important role ECE services provide to children and their families in the event of an emergency and works alongside CDEM Groups to support planning for and response to emergencies.

## What IS an Emergency Plan?

An Emergency Plan is an action plan developed, agreed upon, and documented in consultation with management, staff and families. It should have the support and involvement of parents and the local community (such as your neighbours), so they will know what they can do to help you in an emergency if necessary. Your local Emergency Management Office and the Special Education Team at your local Ministry of Education office should also be involved in your planning. Specifically, these experts can assist by helping you identify the specific local hazards and risks facing your ECE service, and can advise you of best practice in planning and preparing for emergency events.

*Being prepared allows you to anticipate any problems you might have so that any resources you need to respond effectively are in place now, before an emergency occurs.*

An Emergency Plan can consist of maps, written procedures for how you will respond during emergency situations, written administrative details of responsibilities and relationships with organisations and services, contact lists, checklists, and pre-prepared forms to be completed (such as a closure notice). There is no set definition of a perfect Emergency Plan, but as you work through your planning steps, you will identify what is specific and relevant for your ECE service.

*It is worth noting that every household should also have an Emergency Plan – encourage your staff and the parents to develop their own for themselves and their families, which will then be taken into account while you develop your ECE service’s Emergency Plan.*

Information on creating household Emergency Plans can be found at <http://www.getthru.govt.nz/web/GetThru.nsf/web/BOWN-7H37SG?OpenDocument>.

### Are you legally required to have an Emergency Plan?



*Annex 3 contains more information on ECE service statutory requirements and who has the responsibility at your ECE service for ensuring these requirements are met.*

ECE services have legislative requirements to ensure the safety and well-being of children and staff at ECE services. It should be remembered that all types of ECE services have obligations to provide a safe environment for the children in their care.

ECE services are required to meet a range of legislative requirements, including provisions of the Fire Service Act 1975, the Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2006, the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, and the Building Act 2004.

Also, there are criteria within the 2008 ECE services regulatory framework that require ECE services to have written procedures and basic supplies for dealing with emergencies. The ECE services regulatory framework can be found on [www.lead.ece.govt.nz](http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz).

As you undertake your emergency planning, you will find that you have already developed many processes and procedures to meet these legislative requirements, and you may simply need to refine those existing processes and procedures in order to incorporate some of the natural hazard context.

However, there are no statutory requirements under the CDEM Act 2002 for ECE services to have emergency plans. That is, under this legislation, you do not need to have your Emergency Plan signed off or approved by your local or Group Emergency Management Office, nor do you need to submit it to MCDEM for approval. However, some CDEM Groups specifically include schools and ECE services as having responsibilities to develop emergency plans as part of their regional CDEM Group Plans – your local Emergency Management Office will be able to advise you if any such requirements exist in your region.

*Regardless of whether or not there are any legal requirements for you to have an emergency plan, given New Zealand’s challenging hazard environment, it is considered essential that you do so, to help ensure your ECE service’s safety and well-being.*

# Planning steps

## Developing a plan



*Annex 4 contains a checklist to guide you through the planning steps required.*

Now that you know what an Emergency Plan is and why you need one, the following sections will take you through five basic steps to developing a plan.

| Step | Action  |
|------|---|
| 1    | Establish your planning process and identify your key sources of information  |
| 2    | Identify the natural hazards that may affect your ECE service and actions to address their impacts and consequences |
| 3    | Involve your community  |
| 4    | Write your Emergency Plan   |
| 5    | Put your Emergency Plan in place  |

When you have read the steps and are starting to put a plan together, use the checklist at the back as a way of making sure you have covered everything.

*Make sure your Emergency Plan is useful for you by adapting the content of the plan to reflect your needs and your specific hazards and risks.*

- You should record what needs to be done and by whom in the event of an emergency. How these decisions are reached and who has been involved in deciding them can be as important as the written Plan itself.
- The templates and checklists included in the annexes are intended as a guide only.

Consider displaying the checklist so that all staff and helpers can see it as parts are completed. Some of the steps can be worked through simultaneously.

## The planning process



## Step One – Establish your planning process and identify your key sources of information



### Getting started



*Make use of the checklists and templates in the Annexes particularly if you have limited numbers of people to help pull the plan together.*

Decide who will be your plan co-ordinator, who will be in your planning team and how you will plan for your size and resources.

The **plan co-ordinator** should ideally be someone who is likely to be on the premises during an emergency, and who can provide strong leadership. The co-ordinator should later be responsible for monitoring, reviewing and updating the ECE service's emergency resources and the completed plan as required.

Consider a small **planning team** to support the co-ordinator and help undertake the various tasks required. The number of people needed on the planning team will vary depending on the size of your organisation. The planning team should comprise a mix of people involved in the ECE service and areas of responsibility. This way you get the best spread of input to the plan. You should also consider involving parents in this process.

Although not everyone in your ECE service may be in your planning team, everyone **must** be involved in training, regular exercises and briefings on safety procedures in an emergency.

**By including others**, the ownership and responsibilities can be shared ensuring more people contribute to making sure that your plan will work when needed.

### Information management

Think about how you will collect and store the information you will use to write your Emergency Plan. A computer-based system is probably the most practical in the long-term. However, as accessing information from computers is reliant on the power working, it is also a good idea to back up electronic files and to store paper copies. Also, for privacy reasons, it is important that this information is securely stored and not used for a purpose other than that for which it has been collected, e.g. to enable a safe response to an emergency<sup>1</sup>.

### Making contact with local Emergency Management Offices and local Special Education (Ministry of Education) offices

It is strongly advised that you contact your local Emergency Management office to let them know you are developing an Emergency Plan. If possible, a visit to your local Emergency Management Office (or a visit from them to your site) is encouraged, to get up-to-date information on the range of specific local hazards your ECE service could be at risk from. They will also be able to advise you on mitigation measures that can be taken within your ECE service, and may be able to arrange community information sessions that could draw several ECE services together. Finally, they will be able to explain the local arrangements for responses to emergencies in your community, such as the establishment of Emergency Operations Centres, and welfare centres etc.

You can also seek advice from your local Ministry of Education - Special Education office. Special Education staff run annual workshops to support ECE services to plan, form teams and respond to emergencies, and your local office can advise when they will be held in your region. These workshops will provide you with the opportunity to network and share plans and experiences. You can find your local Special Education office offices here: **Ministry of Education - Special Education contacts**.

<sup>1</sup> Section 6 of the Privacy Act (1993) states that "Personal information shall not be collected by any agency unless (a) the information is collected for a lawful purpose connected with a function or activity of the agency; and (b) the collection of the information is necessary for that purpose."

## Step One – Establish your planning process and identify your key sources of information – *continued*

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### Additional resources

There are a number of resources available to assist in your planning process:

- The Ministry of Education website for Early Childhood Education Leadership, Management and Administration, [www.lead.ece.govt.nz](http://www.lead.ece.govt.nz), provides information on emergency and safety requirements for ECE services.
- The Ministry of Education's Traumatic Incident service provides advice and assistance for preparing and responding to emergency events. Information on the resources they offer can be found at: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/TraumaticIncidentManagementSupportForSchoolsAndECEServices.aspx>. They will also respond and support your service after an emergency (phone 0800 TI TEAM (0800848326)).
- The Emergency Management Plan template (Ministry of Education - Emergency management plan) can be used and adapted to suit your specific needs. The template can be found at: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EmergencyManagement/Preparedness/EmergencyManagementPlan.aspx>. If you would like any help with your emergency planning, please contact the Ministry of Education's Emergency Management Team by emailing [emt@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:emt@minedu.govt.nz).
- The Turtle Safe resource, designed specifically to teach preschool children what to do if they are inside or outdoors when an earthquake occurs, can also be downloaded from [www.getthru.co.nz](http://www.getthru.co.nz). This also provides information on how families and individuals can be prepared at home and at work.
- Hazard-specific messages and advice from a variety of sources and organisations can be found on [http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/wpg\\_URL/For-the-CDEM-Sector-Consistent-Messages-for-CDEM-Index?OpenDocument](http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/wpg_URL/For-the-CDEM-Sector-Consistent-Messages-for-CDEM-Index?OpenDocument)
- The MCDEM website, [www.civildefence.govt.nz](http://www.civildefence.govt.nz), provides information about CDEM in New Zealand, including how to contact your regional and local CDEM offices <http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/memwebsite.nsf/wpgURL/Locate-the-nearest-council-Index?OpenDocument>

## Case Study Example One – Capital City Preschool, Wellington

The Capital City Preschool, located in the heart of the Wellington CBD, has come up with some creative ways to ensure they are well prepared for any emergency. Civil defence is high on the preschool's radar and, right from time of enrolment, preparedness is included in the children's programme.

### Civil Defence Policy and Procedures

The preschool has developed a civil defence policy and associated procedures, which cover various emergency scenarios, including earthquakes, storms, and tsunamis. The policy and procedures are updated annually to reflect any procedure changes, to incorporate new ideas, and to take into account any staff changes. The whole team at Capital City will sit down to review the two documents and to discuss whether or not they are doing what the documents outline. If they are doing things differently due to suitability, then they will make the appropriate changes. Where possible, individuals have not been assigned specific tasks due to the risk of assignees not being present at the time of an emergency. Whoever is in charge on the day will verbally assign tasks.



### Safety Bags

Each child is provided with a safety bag and a checklist of items for parents to fill the bag with. Items include spare warm clothes, water, a torch with spare batteries, a hypothermia blanket, emergency contact details, medication, and comfort food. A sticker on the outside of the bag indicates that everything needed has been included. All the children at the preschool are aged 3 and 4 and they are therefore able to carry these on their back in the case of an emergency. The children are very familiar with their bags and practise taking the bags out with them during emergency drills and walking around with them.

### Emergency Drills

At the beginning of each year the health and safety officer at Capital City Preschool puts together a robust plan for exercising emergency procedures. Three scenarios (fire, earthquake, and dangerous person) are tested monthly. The teachers take turns at leading the drills and taking charge in an emergency event as they realise that certain teachers may not be present in the case of an actual emergency. The centre is very honest about their performance and, through recording thorough details of each drill, are able to identify things to improve upon and talk to the children about. For example, if children are seen tying their shoes and taking their time when their first priority should be to evacuate quickly, then these types of issues are talked through with the children. If there is an influx of new children to the centre, the teachers will discuss the drills with the children beforehand. Otherwise, the drills are spontaneous. Due to the centre being located in a multi-storey building, all of building drills are held twice a year as well. Evacuation procedures for the centre are well sign posted in every room to ensure visitors and relievers are aware of what to do.

### Civil Defence Week

The centre dedicates a week per year solely to civil defence and many activities are undertaken during this time. The children practise each of the drills, and eat the food they have been provided with in the event of an emergency, such as baked beans and spaghetti. During this week, the staff and children take the opportunity to review the contents of their safety bags. They check that the food is still within its use-by dates and make sure the spare clothes are appropriate and still fit. Members of the Police, Ambulance, and local civil defence usually come during this time to discuss emergencies and safety to the children and staff.

## Step Two – Identify the natural hazards that may affect your ECE service and actions to address their impacts and consequences



### Hazard identification



*A hazard identification sheet which you could use as part of your ongoing hazard identification is included as Annex 5.*

Every workplace is subject to the provisions of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992. The Act requires every employer to have a system in place to identify and manage hazards, as well as to develop procedures for dealing with emergencies that might arise while employees are at work. Therefore, identifying hazards in the wider environment such as earthquakes, floods and tsunami should be a natural extension of the workplace hazard identification and management process that is already required.

Every region in New Zealand is typically subject to multiple natural hazards, which can include flooding, landslides, severe weather, earthquakes, tsunami, and volcanic eruption. Each of these hazards can have a number of different physical impacts with consequences that require managing in an emergency. These consequences include things such as communities being isolated due to roads being blocked, the electricity going out, and buildings being damaged.

However, each region faces different types and levels of hazard risk, which is why it is advised that you work with your local Emergency Management Office – they are the experts in your region, who know the most about the potential consequences of different natural disasters in your area. Although there are other resources available to educate you on hazards and their consequences, having the local perspective and context is necessary for you to develop an effective Emergency Plan.

### Working with the local Emergency Management Office



*When consulting with your local Emergency Management Office, check the summary list of questions to ask in Annex 6.*

As you work with your local Emergency Management Office, identify the likelihood of your service being affected by hazards, and the possible impacts. Is there anything your service can practically and feasibly do (bearing in mind cost) to reduce some of these impacts? These should be identified and discussed with staff, as well as recorded in your existing hazard identification sheet. Your regional CDEM Group office will be able to provide you with the CDEM Group Plan that addresses hazards in your area, and explains how they are rated.

For example, if earthquakes are likely in your region, some actions you should take to reduce the impacts include:

- fixing large bookcases and shelves to the walls so they don't fall over,
- closing chain links on ceiling heaters,
- fixing hot water cylinders to the wall so they don't fall over and flood the facility with hot water (and so a valuable source of drinking water is not lost),
- removing any shelves above cots to avoid things falling onto babies during an earthquake,
- having the building(s) assessed by a structural engineer to check on the seismic safety of the structure, including the foundations, and
- ensuring everyone knows what to do when an earthquake happens. Identify safe places within your interior and exterior environments for various scenarios, and practise "Drop, Cover and Hold" with children and staff.

## Step Two – Identify the natural hazards that may affect your ECE service and actions to address their impacts and consequences - *continued*

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### Reviewing hazards

Remember to consider your physical neighbourhood when you are reviewing hazards. This becomes important if you have to completely evacuate your premises and travel to another destination. Knowing your area's potential dangers will help you when planning the best evacuation route.

Discussing these types of hazards and their impacts will help you identify some of the issues you will face if an emergency occurs, and some of the procedures you will need.

One good way of doing this is to run some “what-if” scenarios about potential hazards in your location. You could discuss these in your planning team and record your responses. Or you could involve all the staff in a workshop to brainstorm some of the problems that you'll need procedures for.

## Step Three – Involve your community

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### Knowing your community

*Just as it is important to work with your local Emergency Management Office and to know the hazard environment that your ECE service operates in, it is important to know the community around you. Your ECE service is part of a wider community of resources, and the relationships and understanding you establish with your community before an emergency occurs will enable you all to assist each other when needed.*

Before you write your Emergency Plan, consider the following:

- Your neighbors might be able to provide on-the-spot help, extra resources or an extra pair of hands to, for example, help clean up. Your ECE service might also have resources that would be able to assist them.
- Your local community centre, church, marae or school might be able to provide a temporary place to move to if you need to evacuate the ECE service.
- Your local medical centre might be able to provide assistance in the event of injuries.
- Your local radio station will be able to broadcast messages about the ECE service (e.g. closure notice; location of a temporary facility).

In some cases you might want to consider a written arrangement with, for example, your local church community for use of their facilities in the event you have to evacuate the ECE service. In other cases, all that might be needed is a good relationship established prior to the event.

## Case Study Example Two – Bizzy Buddyz Homebased Childcare and Education Service

Bizzy Buddyz Homebased Childcare and Education Service is located in Whakatane and the Waikato. Unlike emergency planning for ECE services based in centres, where staff and children are co-located in one location, Bizzy Buddyz and other homebased ECE services must ensure that numerous geographically-dispersed facilities are all prepared for the emergencies they may face. Bizzy Buddyz has an emergency evacuation policy in place for all its locations, which covers most emergency situations, with detailed practice for fire and earthquake events (earthquake being a prevalent hazard in the Whakatane region).

Each 'Educarer' (those in charge at each site) practises their safety drills each month and their evacuation plans are reviewed monthly by Bizzy Buddyz's visiting teachers.

Each child that attends Bizzy Buddyz Homebased Childcare and Education Service comes daily with their own bag that contains their needs for the day, eg a change of clothes, food and drink and any other requirements they may have.

Each Educarer has an emergency supply kit in their home that they can pick up to take with them when the need arises. This emergency kit gets assessed and re-stocked when items get close to expiry or batteries need to be replaced.

Although over the years earthquakes have been treated as the most likely hazard to prepare for where Bizzy Buddyz operates, they have ensured they revise their planning in keeping with the reality of emergency events. For example, over the last two years Whakatane has experienced a number of flooding events along with two tsunami alerts. Along with the flooding events, there have been some major slips. Luckily for Bizzy Buddyz none of their Educarers were affected by any of these events, but they have changed their planning to incorporate these types of hazards as well. Specifically, some changes and new criteria have been put in place for any Educarer who may be affected by flooding or tsunami, including:



Once the flooding has reached a certain level, the Educarer contacts the parents of the children in care on that day, to come and collect their children. The Educarer will then contact the Bizzy Buddyz Office about the intention to evacuate and where they are going with the children.

If the parent is unable to collect their child/ children immediately (as is often in the case in the immediate aftermath of a flood or a slip event), the Educarer will evacuate their home with the children to a civil defence evacuation centre. Once there, the Educarer contacts the parent to advise them of their location and where the child can be collected from.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan



### Purpose of writing your plan



*Annex 7 contains a sample set of contents for an emergency plan.*

By now you will have worked out how to minimise the effects of an emergency and what to do when an emergency occurs. The next step is to write your plan to document your decisions. This is done for a number of reasons to provide:

- a reference for staff on the agreed emergency response,
- a basis for emergency training,
- a basis for checking emergency response equipment and systems, and
- evidence of emergency preparedness for legal or audit purposes.

Keep in mind that the structure of the Emergency Plan is almost as important as the content. You have already done the hard work in compiling the information required to complete your Plan, so make sure that the way you display it is clear and logical, with relevant headings and dividers.

### Issue identification



*Annex 8 contains a wide range of Frequently Asked Questions that can help prompt your thinking about what you need to address.*

The next step is to think about the issues you actually need to address in YOUR Emergency Plan. The issues listed in this guidance may not be the only issues you need to address – you will have to identify situations that are likely to occur in your specific ECE service. For example, if you are a home-based ECE service with only a few children in your care, it is unlikely that you will need to worry about having a PA system to announce your warnings!

The hazard identification process will guide you as to what issues need to be addressed. This guidance offers generic response advice that is appropriate for all hazards, but your Emergency Plan will need to contain procedures tailored to your specific hazard environment, whether it is in your usual location or in other areas you frequent (such as libraries, swimming pools etc).

*Remember this document is intended as guidance only. In all instances, the same common sense and good judgement that you apply to other emergency situations will assist you in making the decisions you need to make to keep your children and staff as safe as possible from the consequences and impacts of natural hazards.*

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

### Consideration of issues

So what issues might arise during the response to an emergency? What procedures do you already have in place or will you need to develop in order to allow you to address these issues? The Ministry of Education has a number of checklists and tips sheets for responding and supporting children and parents and staff after a traumatic event ([www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz) keyword “traumatic”). You can also work through the issues in the table below to complete this step in the process.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Emergency responsibilities and warning systems - have you assigned emergency roles to staff and is everyone familiar with them? How will you receive and give emergency warnings? How will you ensure everyone is accounted for? How do you induct relief teachers and visitors into your Emergency Plan?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do you have emergency communications procedures in place that will allow you to get information from, and provide information to, emergency services, families, staff, etc? What will you do if you are unable to contact parents or caregivers in order to arrange pick-up?</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sheltering-in-place and evacuation issues, including temporary closure of the site – when is it safe/appropriate to send children and staff home? Do you have up-to-date evacuation plans and do they include hazard-specific procedures?</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How will you ensure that children are released safely out of your care and reunited with their parents and caregivers? What will you do with the children who are unable to be picked up quickly?</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Extended or increased occupation of your site – what resources will you need? Are there any special needs for the children or staff? What are the implications of a loss of services – how will you address the effects of losing all or some services (electricity, water, sewerage, telephones)?</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recovery – have you started thinking about what you can do ahead of time to assist your ECE service in reopening and getting back to normal? What physical and psychological health effects might you have to prepare for? Does your ECE service have a process for dealing with the media during a response to an emergency?</li> </ul> |

### Emergency roles and responsibilities

Your Emergency Plan will need to identify roles and describe what kind of response team or emergency management structure you decide to put in place for your service. Typically this structure will not cut across day-to-day levels of management but will clarify who is responsible for doing what, when an emergency threatens. Your plan should include a list of actions to be taken by the response team when you receive notification of a possible emergency situation.

Consider how to make your response structure the same as your day-to-day management structure. This could even be extended to the children, if your ECE service already has a buddy system or tuakana-teina relationship in place. In addition to helping keep the children safe, it could help distract them during an emergency by giving them a “job”.

Ensure that each staff members’ individual and household Emergency Plans are considered when roles are being assigned, as staff will likely have family they will need to contact and/or possibly leave to meet according to their own Emergency Plans.

For the larger services, as well as having a Coordinator (the main person in charge during the emergency and responsible for overall decisions), your emergency response team might have people in charge of:

- childcare – under twos,
- childcare – over twos,
- first aid,
- communication (with parents, emergency services etc),
- documentation (ensuring all information is reported and forms are completed),

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

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### Emergency roles and responsibilities (continued)

- safety and security,
- children, staff and visitor accounting, and
- supplies and equipment.

Make sure you describe the roles and responsibilities of each team member in your plan. You may also want to name specific individuals as back-ups for these roles, in case the primary person is unavailable.

You might also want to consider basing your structure around your fire warden arrangements if you have them in place.

### Emergency warnings

For natural hazards like a volcanic eruption, cyclone or a distant tsunami, you will get a warning through a variety of media (TV, radio, overseas contacts, family, formal public alerting system through local CDEM etc). Find out from your local Emergency Management Office what types of warnings are issued for different hazards and what public notification channels exist for your area.

Decide what sort of alerting signal will work best for your ECE service depending on your size, location and what sort of hazard risks you are facing. In the first instance, examine what sort of warning signals you already use for other emergencies such as fires or dangerous people. Determine whether these warning systems and associated response procedures will work for emergencies caused by natural hazards. For example, if you use an alarm reliant on mains power for fire or other emergencies, you should incorporate other warning systems that do not rely on mains power, in case the power fails.

Also, one thing to note is that while your fire alarm is a signal that means evacuate the building/buildings, in some cases it will be connected to the fire control board which notifies the Fire Service and initiates their call out procedures. This might not be what you want to have happen, as the Fire Service will then be prompted to respond when you don't need them to.

Consider what you would do if your alarm system failed. What back-up plan would you have for letting people know there was an emergency? Options could include by word of mouth, SMS messages, signaling devices such as whistles or battery operated megaphones.

### Ensuring everyone is accounted for

If you do not already have one, please note that a sign-in and sign-out register for the children can become an important source of information about who is at the service in an emergency. If your ECE service maintains such a register, someone will need to be given the responsibility for picking it up to use as an evacuation checklist if an evacuation is required. In an emergency, you will need to know what visitors are on the premises – relatives of children, tradespeople etc. If you are a larger ECE service, consider ways you can track this depending on the size and extent of your buildings. A visitor's book at the front desk for people on the premises for extended periods (an hour or more) is a good idea.

Staff also need to be aware that they will need to give guidance to these visitors on safety in an earthquake or evacuation in a fire or other emergency.

### Sheltering-in-place



*A general outline of what to do and consider when sheltering-in-place is contained in Annex 9.*

In many circumstances it may be safer to remain in your building(s), rather than evacuate. These include emergencies involving storms, high winds, volcanic ash and when there has been the release of hazardous materials (toxic fumes etc) in the vicinity of the ECE service. You may be instructed by the emergency services under these circumstances to shelter-in-place. This might mean selecting a small, interior room(s), with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not necessarily mean sealing off your entire building.

Make sure you identify shelter-in-place locations on your site map and document any actions or procedures in your Emergency Plan.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

### Evacuation issues



*A general outline of what to do and consider in an evacuation is contained in Annex 9.*

An evacuation will be necessary when it is unsafe to remain on the premises but should only be considered as a last resort. An evacuation means moving children, staff, and visitors away from a threatened area to a safer place. In many cases the event could be sudden and evacuation will be an immediate, urgent need (fire, gas leak, tsunami).

Evacuating could simply mean exiting the building or it could mean leaving the immediate area. Evacuation may have to be done on foot or transportation may be needed. In any of these situations, having pre-determined evacuation procedures in place and practising them on a regular basis will help ensure that everyone gets out safely, is accounted for, and is reunited with their family as soon as possible.

Licensed ECE services will already have been required to describe evacuation procedures for the approval of the NZ Fire Service. These procedures will become an important part of your Emergency Plan, once you have reviewed them in the natural hazard context. Make sure that your site map shows the evacuation routes and assembly points that can be used for the specific emergency situations your ECE service might face.

A good site map makes it easy for everyone to find exits, services, supplies, evacuation routes and assembly areas. A good locality map shows the facility's site and its relationship to its surroundings and community features. It should contain any off-site assembly locations (e.g. reserves, open spaces), roads, distances to emergency services and location of pre-arranged community assistance and places to evacuate staff and children to (e.g. schools, churches, other community facilities). When reviewing your existing evacuation procedures in the natural hazard emergency context, make sure you consider your premises and immediate surroundings, up to two kilometres away.

Check for hazards and their possible consequences along your possible evacuation route at:

- industrial and commercial sites (e.g. factories or petrol stations) that might use chemicals and/or petrol. These places may also be affected by the event (e.g. earthquake),
- hazards at venues you use regularly (e.g. swimming pools; playgrounds; libraries) but which are away from your main facility in case you are at these places when an event such as an earthquake occurs,
- nearby underground hazards, e.g. drains (which could flood), tunnels (which could collapse), and
- over-head and ground-level hazards, e.g. power lines which might fall down (possibility of electrocution), old buildings which could collapse, buildings with lots of glass windows (broken glass on footpaths and roads after an earthquake).

Ensure your written evacuation procedures include information about:

- who is in charge of the evacuation,
- how you will communicate the need to evacuate to your staff,
- what staff need to take with them when they leave (e.g. emergency response kits, Emergency Plan, personal belongings and medical supplies),
- how children with special needs are taken care of,
- location of outside assembly area(s),
- transportation procedures, if applicable,
- how procedures differ by type of hazard event,
- procedures for contacting parents/caretakers and releasing children to their families,
- how often evacuation exercises are done at each site, and
- likely assembly points for children and staff families.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

### Temporary relocation and/or closure of your ECE service



*Suggested guidance for closure can be found in Annex 10.*

Based on the types of hazard consequences you may experience, some of the additional decisions you will need to consider and include in your evacuation procedures are:

- how you will determine whether to re-occupy the buildings or site,
- whether to move to emergency shelter or emergency accommodation,
- when to formally ‘close’ the ECE service and how to notify parents and guardians, and
- setting up arrangements with:
  - your local school,
  - your local marae,
  - your local church community for use of their hall or other community facility,
  - local parents/caregivers and teachers, and/or
  - neighbours.

Where possible, document the arrangements you have made and make sure these are regularly checked and updated. You might want to consider having a written agreement with the organisation concerned.

In circumstances where the wider community is affected, check that your pre-determined arrangements will still apply. In situations where the community is overwhelmed and emergency services resources are stretched, local CDEM will establish welfare centres and arrange emergency accommodation for the public. They may be able to assist you to arrange a temporary location to evacuate to, and assist with, transport. As part of your planning, discuss this with your local Emergency Management Office to determine who to ask for assistance if this type of situation arises.

If during an emergency the ECE service needs cannot be met from its own resources or by its pre-arranged community assistance, your local Emergency Management Office and local Ministry of Education office should be contacted for advice and assistance.

### Extended operations – emergency resources, special considerations etc

In some circumstances, you may be forced to keep children in your care for an extended period of time. Parents may not be able to reach your ECE service to collect their children, and/or emergency services may not be able to reach you with additional supplies. Think about what you will need in your specific situation – again, not every ECE service is the same, and will need different resources to allow for extended operations.

### Emergency resources



*A checklist of suggested emergency resources you will need on hand and also if you evacuate is contained in Annex 11. Annex 12 contains an example of a basic safety equipment and emergency supplies register if you do not already have one in place.*

One of the most frequently asked questions received by CDEM staff around New Zealand is – how much is enough? What do I need to get through? The national advertising campaign “Get Ready, Get Thru” ([www.getthru.govt.nz](http://www.getthru.govt.nz)) recommends having enough supplies for at least three days. However, this is targeted at ensuring people have enough supplies in their homes. It may be that your ECE service will only be open for a few extra hours or overnight, particularly as experience has shown that parents will go to great lengths to collect their children as quickly as possible, so it is vital you decide what resources you need available based on your circumstances. For example, you need to ensure you have adequate water for washing and drinking, but this will vary based on the number and ages of children in your care.

Carrying out a stocktake of the supplies and resources that are currently on hand and that could be put to use in an emergency will help you be sure you have everything you need and that servicing is up-to-date, as well as help you to identify any gaps. Make sure you include an updated list of the emergency resources and supplies you have at the ECE service in your Emergency Plan.

*This is also an opportunity to involve families in your planning. Some ECE services ask families to bring a non-perishable food item and a bottle of water at the beginning of the year. This sets the scene for children and their families being involved in emergency planning, and may even open the door to conversations about preparedness at home.*

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

### Emergency resources – *continued*

If you need to evacuate the ECE service, make sure you know what equipment, information and resources you can take with you without compromising children’s safety. Having backpacks located around the ECE service containing a basic set of emergency supplies and essential information is a good idea. These can be quickly picked up if you need to leave. They can also be taken as a matter of course on any ECE service outings.

### Information about the children in your care

You will need to maintain current information about the children and staff in your care so you can make sure everyone’s needs are addressed during response and recovery. You should already have most, if not all of this information, already on file.

*Consider a situation where one of the children goes missing. How easily could you provide Police with a description of the child they will be looking for?*

At a minimum, you will need:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| ▪ Full name (and nickname or other name they respond to)   | ▪ Special needs - any medical conditions, medications, disabilities, allergies                      |
| ▪ Normal residential address   | ▪ Age/date of birth   |
| ▪ Parent/ guardian/ next of kin name and contact details including work and home phone numbers and addresses | ▪ Physical description - height, eye colour, hair colour, skin tone, identifying marks, scars, etc. |
| ▪ List of people authorised to collect the child   | ▪ Ethnicity   |
| ▪ List of any specific people not authorised to collect the child  | ▪ A recent photograph (in addition to their physical description)                                   |

If you don’t already, consider specifically requesting some of the above information for emergency management purposes as part of your service enrolment procedures. Parents and caregivers will be pleased to learn that you have an Emergency Plan and what information is required from them to help you. This also helps parents become involved in your planning process from the outset. You may also wish to ask them to provide a clearly-labeled pack for their child that contains any required emergency medications, and any special dietary requirements and clothing, to ensure specific needs are met.

### Developing an assistance register

You may have children and staff at your ECE service that require additional assistance in an emergency. If you don’t already have one, a register of these people should be prepared and updated regularly, so that you can ensure their specific needs can be met during an emergency. For example, if your service is responsible for caring for the very young (babies and under 2s), you will need to address the issues related to transporting babies and young children not yet able to walk.

The register should be kept in a predetermined place and should identify who is responsible for assisting very young children and people with disabilities. A table in your Emergency Plan may be sufficient to meet this need.

### Pets

The safety of the children is the prime concern. However, your ECE service may have some much-loved pets that may also need to be looked after in an emergency. You could assign someone to be responsible for pet welfare during your response, whether you are remaining in your building or evacuating. You would also need to ensure you have adequate food and water for your pets if you have to look after them for an extended period of time, for example, if your ECE service is closed, and you cannot access other supplies.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

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### Emergency communications – Keeping parents and caregivers informed

Clear and timely communication with parents and caregivers is vital right through the planning process but especially during and after an emergency.

This includes:

- Advising parents that the ECE service has an Emergency Plan. Consider including information on the plan or general emergency procedures as part of introduction or enrolment material about the ECE service. This will help reassure parents and caregivers that you are prepared for an emergency and you will take responsibility for the care of their children until they are able to pick them up.
- Requesting from parents and caregivers any additional information needed for emergency management purposes, as suggested earlier.
- Involving some parents in the preparation of the Emergency Plan itself. This might become important to do for smaller ECE services with limited staff resources. Involving parents will give you access to more skill sets and will help to spread the workload.
- Making it a priority to provide parents and caregivers with information as soon as possible after an event. This may include the condition of the premises, whether it will remain open, requests for parents to collect children and where from, notification of the closure of the ECE service or which premises the ECE service has relocated to. Your Emergency Plan should include how parents will be notified (phone call, SMS message, public broadcast, notices in windows etc). Be prepared to use multiple communication channels to ensure messages get through.
- Establishing what you will do if you are unable to contact parents or caregivers.

### Emergency contacts

Part of good communication is ensuring you have the right contacts. In developing your Emergency Plan, you will be establishing and maintaining relationships with various people and organisations such as the emergency services, your local Emergency Management Office, the Ministry of Education and other useful people in the wider community. As well as helping you prepare your Emergency Plan, they may also be the people you need to contact in an emergency.

A list of contact people, together with business and after-hours contact numbers if relevant, should be displayed in a prominent place at your ECE service, probably near the telephone. A copy should also form part of your Emergency Plan. All emergency contacts should be regularly updated, at least once every six months. The Ministry of Education traumatic incident resources can provide you with templates for these contact lists.

You should also have a list of key staff contacts on hand as well. The list should include your Emergency Plan co-ordinator, trained staff (e.g. first aiders), fire wardens, caretakers and ECE service management. Make sure you have a list of up to three emergency contact numbers for each staff member.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

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### Safe release of children – Reuniting Children with Parents and Caregivers



*A general outline of what to consider when releasing children can be found in Annex 13, while Annex 14 contains a sample release form.*

One of the most important responsibilities towards the end of an emergency is reuniting parents and children. The best way to deal effectively with this situation is to plan ahead, so in your Emergency Plan make sure you include:

- contact lists of children and families (home and work) OR descriptions of where this information can be found, and
- policies and procedures for reuniting children with parents and caregivers. Consider including information on:
  - how parents will obtain information about their children during an emergency,
  - who is allowed to pick up children from the site and what the back-up arrangements are,
  - where the pick-up point will be located (designate both an on-site and off-site pick up location),
  - location and maps (if necessary) of primary and backup pick-up points, and
  - what the arrangements are if children cannot be picked up.

Consider including in your service enrolment pack a reminder that children will only be released to those pre-designated adults that have been listed on the child's emergency information contacts form and that adults must have proper identification. You should emphasise to parents in regular meetings that this will be enforced in an emergency situation and that this is to protect their children.

### Recovery

It may be difficult to imagine the time after an emergency, particularly when you are in the middle of one. This is why it is important to think about recovery now and include key recovery activities in your Emergency Plan. If you understand the issues surrounding recovery before an emergency occurs, getting your ECE service back into a position to provide vital education and care for children will be faster and easier.

Also, in keeping with good practice, business continuity planning in advance will help you to reopen as soon as possible after an emergency. For example, if you keep administrative information on a computer, make sure that you also have current backup files on disk. Back up important files on a regular basis and store the backup disks at a site away from your main information system. As noted earlier, your Emergency Plan should also be backed up, as well as printed off for ready access during an emergency event.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

### Reopening the ECE service

Getting back to business after an emergency can be difficult, but it is important. Starting work again can be scary or emotionally stressful for some people, as they may not want to leave their families and homes. This is true for both your staff and for the children and their families. Returning to a usual daily routine is an important part of the recovery process for everyone.

As reopening can be particularly challenging if buildings, equipment, utilities, or transportation routes have been damaged in an emergency, identifying alternative locations and methods to access assistance before an emergency occurs can help. Some other considerations to plan for include:

- Getting regular information to parents and staff and dealing with any media attention, and
- Keeping in touch with parents and staff after emergency to advise of reopening times. You will need to ensure staff considerations have been planned for in advance as staff will want to make sure their own families are safe before returning to work.

*Parents after an emergency situation may also use the ECE service as a place to ‘talk’ about the event. Be aware of the effect this may have on young children and provide places away from children and staff to cater for this need.*

The Ministry of Education’s Traumatic Incident service can provide advice and assistance on how to plan for your specific recovery needs. More information about the resources they offer can be found at:

**<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/TraumaticIncidentManagementSupportForSchoolsAndECEServices.aspx>**.

### Keeping people informed about ECE service status

As noted above, it is important to keep people informed when the ECE service intends to reopen, even if this is reassessed in the early days after the emergency. How you will do this should be documented in your Emergency Plan and contained in information given to parents and caregivers at the time of enrolment.

### Supporting well-being



*Annex 15 contains some advice on psychological first aid.*

Attending to the emotional well-being of the children and their families as well as staff is a critical part of the recovery process. Emergencies create upheaval and stress in people’s lives. It is important to help the children and families address their fears and concerns. You should also monitor your own emotional health in addition to that of all the staff. If emotional health issues are not addressed when they arise, longer-term problems may develop.

Children are better able to cope with a traumatic event if parents, friends, family, teachers, and other adults offer support and assistance. More information is contained in the Ministry of Education resource “Managing emergencies and traumatic incidents” available at:

**<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EmergencyManagement/Preparedness/EmergenciesTraumaticIncidents/TheGuide.aspx>**.

### Record-keeping

The value of good documentation cannot be overestimated. A thorough inventory of key equipment will help you determine what you’ll need to replace after an emergency to get your ECE service functioning again. Recording important information such as resources purchased before, as well as during and after, a disaster will improve your ECE service’s chances of receiving financial assistance and reimbursement for losses. In addition, careful record-keeping and documentation can be very helpful if any legal or liability issues arise.

## Step Four – Write your Emergency Plan – *continued*

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### Record-keeping – *continued*

Be sure to include all relevant forms and worksheets in your Emergency Plan, including:

- relevant insurance documents for hazard, fire, and liability coverage OR information on where these are located,
- record-keeping forms to use in itemising damage and losses, and
- important phone numbers for your insurance company.

### Media interest

The media may be interested in covering how your ECE service has responded to, and dealt with, the emergency. Make sure your planning identifies who the media spokesperson for the ECE service is, in keeping with any existing media-related procedures you might have in place.

### Approval of your Emergency Plan

When you have completed your Emergency Plan, make sure your governance and management group approve it.

There is no legislative requirement to have your Emergency Plan formally approved by either MCDEM or your local Emergency Management office. Prior to completion, you may wish to send a draft of your Emergency Plan to your local Emergency Management Office for their review and input, but their sign-off is not required.

## Case Study Example Three – Early Childhood Learning Centre (E.C.L.C.), University of Canterbury

The Early Childhood Learning Centre (E.C.L.C.) at the University of Canterbury is well aware of the importance of carefully-considered preparation for emergencies. With numerous significant earthquakes occurring in the Christchurch area since 4 September 2010, the E.C.L.C. has had multiple opportunities to test their emergency preparedness plans. Steps taken by the E.C.L.C. to increase awareness of what to do prior to, during, and after an earthquake in the two months leading up to 4 September, held them in great stead for the earthquakes that were to occur. Centre staff received a great deal of praise and feedback from extremely grateful parents. Chances to re-evaluate and test their plans have been provided with subsequent large earthquakes occurring during centre hours, particularly those of 22 February and 13 June 2011. As a result multiple lessons have been identified.

### Steps taken prior to the earthquakes

Although the E.C.L.C. already had an emergency plan, monthly fire and earthquake drills, and emergency supplies, in July 2010 the Centre stepped up its efforts by incorporating earthquake preparedness training into everyday activities with the children. Some of these activities are detailed below.

- Drawing upon personal experiences during the 1987 Edgecumbe earthquake, earthquakes were discussed and photos shown during mat times with the children.
- The Ministry of Civil Defence & Emergency Management was contacted for ideas - they provided a copy of the Turtle Safe DVD, which became thoroughly practised by all.
- As earthquakes were increasingly talked about, spontaneous talk from the children occurred during play, especially with Duplo. If a building was knocked down, it was now attributed to earthquakes, and this led to further discussion about who would come to help if an earthquake occurred.
- A parent evening was held between parents, staff, and University of Canterbury emergency management staff in July to discuss emergency preparations, which proved to be of great value to those who attended.
- The preparedness programme culminated with an earthquake scenario led by members of the University of Canterbury's rescue team on 19 August, just over 2 weeks before the 4 September M7.1 earthquake. The rescue team came in and chatted to the children about what the team's role was in an earthquake on campus and ran the children through a disaster-rescue scenario, much to their delight.



### Earthquake experiences

As the 4 September M7.1 earthquake struck while the centre was closed (04:35am), their emergency procedures were not directly tested. However, the preparation just completed by the centre greatly impacted on the reactions of the children, and in turn, their families. As contact was made with each of the families, stories emerged of the children singing the Turtle Safe song and/or finding their children in the Turtle Safe position immediately following the earthquake. Most of the children were able to remain relatively calm and, in some cases, were able to instruct adults what to do.

The 22 February M6.3 earthquake proved to be a different story as it occurred during centre hours, at 12:51pm. Despite a lot of the children being able to scramble under tables and assume the turtle position, there was still visible distress. However, once the children were assembled in groups, they calmed down a lot. Evacuation occurred immediately, and as a lot of children had been asleep, some were wearing minimal clothing. Blankets had been taken outside for them but some were inadequate against the cold

### Case Study Example Three – Early Childhood Learning Centre (E.C.L.C.), University of Canterbury

drizzle that was occurring that day. Once evacuated, the staff realised that no thought had been given to grabbing the emergency supplies and these were now inaccessible. Luckily a few staff members had some basic food supplies on them. Even though the children had just had lunch, food proved to be an amazing distraction and very much appreciated by them. Contacting some parents proved to be very difficult due to power and cellphone outages, and staff had to remain with some of the children for almost 3 hours before they were collected.

#### Lessons identified

A number of valuable lessons have been learned from the earthquakes, especially from those that occurred during centre hours, notably those on 22 February and 13 June 2011.

- Evacuation – Evacuation points need to be well thought through and communicated thoroughly to staff, relievers, and parents. Choosing a car park is not always the best option with everyone wanting to get away. For similar reasons, avoid having to cross a road as traffic proved to be absolutely manic following the earthquakes. Clarity around when exactly to evacuate and in what scenarios evacuation is required, also needs to be carefully considered and well communicated.
- Relievers – Ensure that relievers are well briefed on the centre's emergency procedures.
- Accessibility of emergency supplies – Ensure that emergency supplies are stored in an appropriate location for quick and easy retrieval in the need of evacuation. The E.C.L.C. now store their basic emergency supplies in a wheelie bin outside in an easily accessible resource shed.
- Cell phone – Ensure that the centre has a cell phone which is always fully charged and loaded with parents' contact details, as well as other important numbers.
- Staff families/dependants – Ensure that prior thought is given to staff with families and dependants. It is important to have designated staff members without dependants (if possible) who can assume control if those with dependants need to leave.
- Emergency contact details – Ensure the emergency contact details of each child and staff member are updated on a regular basis. Perhaps more emergency contacts are required?
- Clothing – It is important to review what is done with the clothes of children while sleeping. The belongings of those sleeping at the E.C.L.C. are now put into individual pillow slips, and in case of evacuation, there is an empty wheelie bin to put all of these in and taken out so that the children can be dressed outside.
- Key personal items of staff – The basic belongings of staff members, such as keys and cellphones, are put into one bag that can be easily grabbed during an emergency.
- Babies/toddlers – Remember that more help with the babies and toddlers will be needed in evacuation than with the older 3 to 4 year olds.
- In the case of children not being picked up – It is important to have in place some plan to deal with children not being picked up. Some staff will need to be prepared to stay as long as is required. In the case of the E.C.L.C., these staff have now been identified.
- Preparation pays – The earthquake events of 2010/2011 have proved how successful preparation can be. The children clearly retained what they had learned, and the Turtle Safe song was an invaluable part of the children being able to cope with the aftermath.



## Step Five – Put your Emergency Plan in place



### Storage and copies

When completed, your Emergency Plan should be placed in a clearly-labelled solid, easily-recognisable ring-binder or folder. Keep it where all staff know about it and can use it, in a safe and accessible location (preferably close to your first aid kit and emergency supplies). If there is supporting material for the plan that is too large to include in the body of the plan, keep it with the plan in a separate folder.

A copy of your Emergency Plan should be stored off-site in case you can't get into the ECE service. You might also want to consider giving a copy to your local Emergency Management Office.

You should also let parents and caregivers know that your Emergency Plan has been finalised, and make copies available to them. You may also wish to give your Emergency Plan to your neighbours in your community, to make them aware of what you may be doing should an emergency occur.

### Displaying information

Information about evacuation (routes to take and the emergency assembly area/s) should be displayed in prominent places around the ECE service.

Ideas for the placement of evacuation signage include:

- near emergency equipment – such as extinguishers,
- in kitchens,
- near light switches,
- canteen/tea room,
- backs of toilet doors, and
- foyer.

### Training and review

During the development of the Emergency Plan, you may have identified some training and development needs, such as who needs first aid training. Make sure these needs are documented, and training is provided for staff in key roles.

### Emergency exercises and drills

The best plans are those that become familiar through regular practice and review.

Hold regular exercises so that staff and children at your ECE service are well practised. Some exercises will not be suitable for children and how you communicate to children when doing an exercise will be important. Document your exercises and include these as part of staff training. It is a good idea to have an exercise at least once every six months. Rotate the scenarios (i.e. earthquake, tsunami etc) so that different procedures get practised each time for the specific hazards that you face (evacuation; shelter-in-place; facility closure etc). Your local Emergency Management Office and the Ministry of Education Traumatic Incident service can provide you with advice on how to develop scenarios and conduct these exercises and drills.

*The more you practise what to do in an emergency, the quicker and more automatic your response will become and the less reliant you'll be on the written plan.*

## Step Five – Put your Emergency Plan in place - *continued*

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### Emergency Plan and procedures review

With new information and lessons identified during exercises, your Emergency Plan will need regular updating. It is a good idea to do this routinely after each exercise to make any changes to procedures. You'll find that with ongoing practise during exercises, you'll find better ways of doing things and your plan should be updated accordingly. Revisions to your Emergency Plan should be notified to parents and caregivers as well, through newsletters or parent meetings, or perhaps through publication on your ECE service's website if you have one.

Contact lists and other information such as hazards should be updated at least once a year (although six-monthly updates are better if possible).

## Annex One – Explanation of Terms

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Some of the terms commonly used throughout this document are explained below.

### ECE services

- **Centre-based ECE services** have a variety of different operating structures, philosophies and affiliations, and are known by many different names - Playcentres, Early learning centres, Montessori centres, Childcare centres, Kindergartens, Crèches, Preschools, Aoga amata, Rudolf Steiner kindergartens, Reggio Emilia services etc.
- **Te Kōhanga Reo** (affiliated with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust) provide a total immersion te reo Māori whānau (family) programme for mokopuna (young children) from birth to six years of age to be raised within its whānau Māori, where the language of communication is Māori.
- **Home-based ECE services** arrange for education and care to be provided to children in private homes.
- **Hospital-based ECE services** operate from hospital premises and provide education and care only to children who are patients of that hospital.
- **Playgroups** are groups of parents meeting regularly with their children to facilitate play. They include Puna Kōhungahunga, Pacific Islands early childhood education groups, and community language playgroups.

### Service provider

- In relation to a centre-based ECE service, Kohanga reo, or hospital-based ECE service, the body, agency, or person that operates the service.
- In relation to a home-based ECE service, the body, agency, or person that arranges, or offers to arrange, that education or care.
- In relation to a playgroup, the person or persons who operate the playgroup.

### Person responsible

#### Licensed early childhood education and care service

These are persons who are directly involved in, and primarily responsible for, the day-to-day education and care, comfort, and health and safety of the children.

#### Licensed home-based education and care service

The co-ordinator has primary responsibility for overseeing the education, care, comfort, and health and safety of the children; and providing professional leadership and support to educators within the service.

### The staff

Individuals (who may also be parents) who assist the primary person responsible in the day-to-day care, education and safety of the children at the service.

### Visitor

A person visiting an ECE service who is not staff.

### Parent

Includes caregiver or guardian or whānau.

### Building

Refers to an ECE service's accommodation excluding the grounds.

### Premises

Refers to an ECE service's buildings and grounds.

## Annex One – Explanation of Terms – *continued*

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|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Civil Defence<br/>Emergency<br/>Management (CDEM)</b>               | Refers to the all-hazards, all risks, multi-agency, integrated and community-focused emergency management approach used in New Zealand.  |
| <b>Local Emergency<br/>Management Office<br/>and CDEM Group Office</b> | All local councils have CDEM arrangements, and most councils have an <b>Emergency Management Office</b> that is responsible for CDEM planning for your local council area. It is the first place you should go for advice on natural hazards in your area and for local CDEM advice. Councils in your region also work collectively in <b>CDEM Groups</b> – there are 16 regional <b>CDEM Group Offices</b> in New Zealand.                              |
| <b>Emergency<br/>Management Officer</b>                                | Each Emergency Management Office has one or more <b>Emergency Management Officers</b> . Their role is focused on building community resilience through enhancing the CDEM Group's operational capability and the community's readiness to cope with emergencies, coordinating an effective response and ensuring the best possible recovery.   |
| <b>Local Ministry of<br/>Education Traumatic<br/>Incident Service</b>  | Your local Ministry of Education office has a traumatic incident service that will support your planning and response to emergencies. There are 16 regional Special Education offices in New Zealand.  |
| <b>Emergency</b>   | An <b>emergency</b> at an ECE service means a situation that is the result of any happening (e.g. natural hazard) that results in injury, or loss of life, causes distress or endangers the safety of the children and staff (or has the potential to do so). Such a situation requires emergency planning in advance to respond to the consequences of the emergency effectively and to enable ECE service staff to manage all but catastrophic events. |
| <b>Hazard</b>  | A <b>hazard</b> is something that may cause, or contribute substantially to the cause of an emergency. This guidance provides planning advice for emergencies related to <b>natural hazards</b> , i.e. hazards such as large earthquakes, severe storms (wind, snow), tornadoes, cyclones, floods, landslides, tsunami and volcanic eruptions.   |

The CDEM framework includes:

**The CDEM Act 2002**, the purpose of which is to:

- provide a basis for the integration of national and local planning,
- encourage the coordination of planning and activities across the wide range of agencies and organisations preventing or managing emergencies,
- improve and promote the sustainable management of hazards, and
- encourage and enable communities to achieve acceptable levels of risk.

The Act requires every regional council to join with the territorial authorities, emergency services and other relevant agencies within its region to establish a CDEM Group. There are 16 CDEM Groups: Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Manawatu-Wanganui, Wellington, Chatham Islands, Nelson-Tasman, Marlborough, West Coast, Canterbury, Otago, and Southland.

The key underlying principles of the Act are regional and local cooperation and coordination. Local authorities have responsibility for the delivery of CDEM in New Zealand with the Act giving the CDEM Groups and their member local authorities responsibility to manage and plan for hazards and risks at the local level. The primary goal is for communities to be self-reliant so that they can reduce the likely impact from, prepare for, and be able to respond effectively to, and recover from, emergency events on their own.

**The National CDEM Strategy** details the objectives to achieve the vision of a Resilient New Zealand: communities understanding and managing their hazards. The Strategy has four goals:

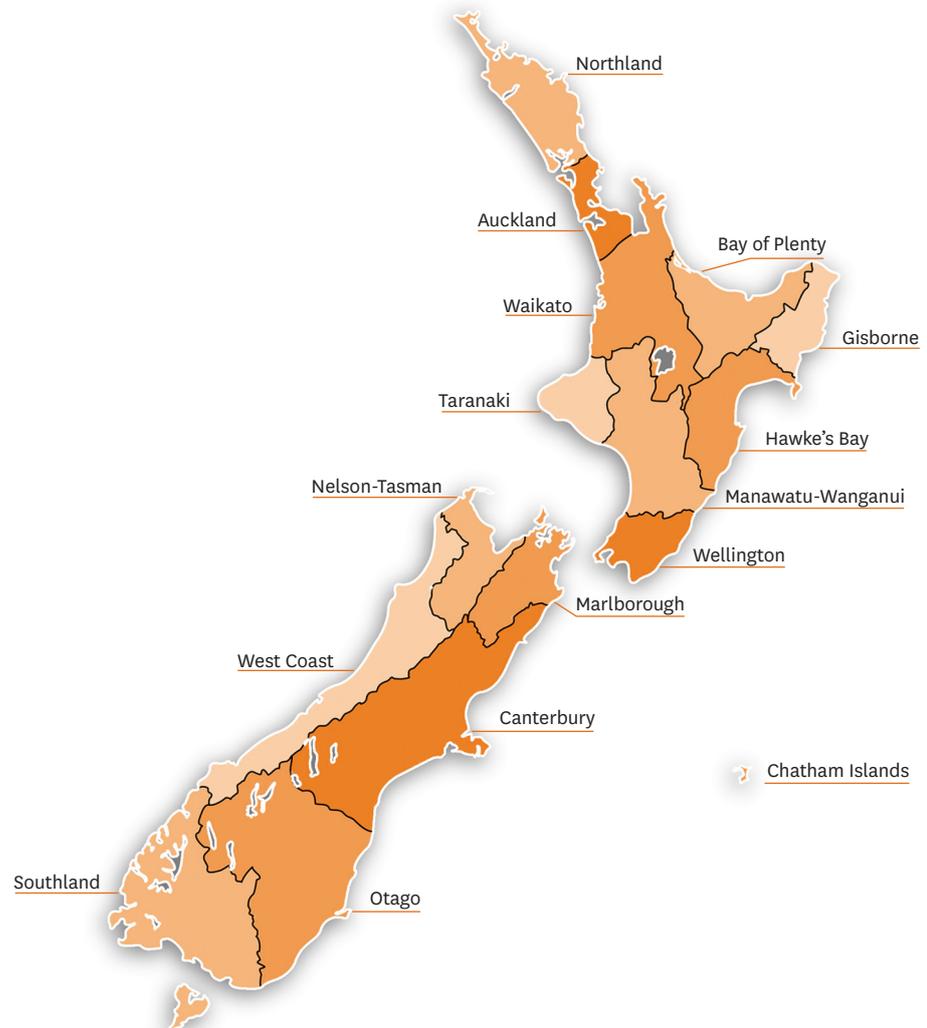
- increasing awareness, understanding, preparedness and participation in civil defence emergency management,
- reducing the risks from hazards to New Zealand,
- enhancing New Zealand's capability to manage civil defence emergencies, and
- enhancing New Zealand's capability to recover from civil defence emergencies.

**The National CDEM Plan Order 2005** sets out the CDEM arrangements necessary to meet those hazards and risks which require management at a national level. The Plan also sets out how support will be provided for the management of local civil defence emergencies. The National CDEM Plan is accompanied by the Guide to the National CDEM Plan, a MCDEM publication that assists and supports New Zealand agencies to implement the Plan. Where the Plan states the principles, arrangements, commitments and frameworks that apply to the management of civil defence emergencies, the operational detail of these is set out in the Guide.

**CDEM Group Plans** set out regional arrangements for the management of hazards and risks across the four Rs of reduction, readiness, response and recovery.

Together, the Act and the National CDEM Plan establish the structure for the management of civil defence emergency events. Emergencies are generally managed by CDEM Groups' local personnel with routine assistance from government agencies, lifeline utilities (e.g. power companies), emergency services and non-government organisations in the affected area. The Group can coordinate the region-wide response to an emergency if the event exceeds either the capacity or geographic boundary of a single territorial authority. If it is considered necessary, a state of local emergency can be declared (usually by the affected Council's mayor or chair of the CDEM Group) for affected areas, districts, or the CDEM Group's region.

Civil Defence  
Emergency  
Management Groups



*Source: MCDEM and the Ministry of Education, current as at October 2011*

### **Education Act 1989**

Currently, there are two regulatory frameworks for the licensing of ECE services; Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 1998 and Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008. For ECE services, the statutory responsibility to ensure that a facility meets the legislative requirements for operation lies with the licensed service provider, that is, the body, agency, or person who or that operates the service.

### **Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008**

The Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 set out the licensing requirements for early childhood services, licensed since 2008. All ECE services will be required to transition to the 2008 regulatory framework by 2014. The following are the key sections that relate to emergency planning and health and safety requirements:

- Clause (9)(1)(c) - Every application for a licence to operate a centre must also be accompanied by - a copy of an operative evacuation scheme for public safety that meets the requirements of section 21B of the Fire Service Act 1975 and Part 2 of the Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2006.
- Part 2 Standards (1) - Each licensed service provider required to comply with each of the following minimum standards:

(d) the health and safety practices: general (regulation 46).

- 46 health and safety practices standard: general

(1) The health and safety practices standard: general is the standard that requires every licensed service provider to whom this regulation applies to –

(d) take all reasonable steps to ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to deal with fires, earthquakes, and other emergencies.

### **Licensing Criteria 2008**

In order to assess whether an early childhood service meets the requirements of the licensing regulations, criteria have been developed and are deemed regulations prescribed by the Minister of Education. The criteria are used by the Secretary for Education to assess compliance with regulated standards of education and care.

### **Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education and Care Centres**

The following criteria are relevant to the health and safety (including emergency planning) requirements.

Criteria to assess health and safety practices standard:

*Emergencies:*

- **HS4** The premises have a current Fire Evacuation Scheme approved by the New Zealand Fire Service (documentation required).
- **HS5** Designated assembly areas for evacuation purposes do not unnecessarily place children at further risk.
- **HS6** Heavy furniture, fixtures, and equipment that could fall or topple and cause serious injury or damage are secured.
- **HS7** There is a written procedure and supplies such as food, water and spare clothes, necessary for ensuring the care and safety of children attending the service in the case of an evacuation or other emergency (Documentation required)

There must be a written procedure and list of supplies sufficient for the age and number of children attending the service. The procedure outlines how staff will access appropriate help and support in a variety of emergency situations (e.g. sudden illness or injury, fire, threats, civil disaster, etc).

There must be an evacuation procedure for the premises.

- **HS8** Adults providing education and care are familiar with relevant emergency drills and regularly carry these out with the children (documentation required).

### **Hazards:**

- **HS12** Equipment, premises and facilities are regularly checked for hazards to children. Accident/incident records are analysed to identify hazards and appropriate action taken. All practicable steps are taken to eliminate, isolate, or minimise hazards to the safety of the children. Consideration of hazards must include, but is not limited to:
  - cleaning agents, medicines, poisons, and other hazardous materials,
  - electrical sockets and appliances (particularly heaters),
  - hazards present in kitchen or laundry facilities,
  - vandalism, dangerous objects, and foreign materials (e.g. broken glass, animal droppings),
  - equipment faults,
  - poisonous plants, and
  - bodies of water.

Documentation of a hazard identification and management system is required. The system can be consistent with the requirements of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, but goes beyond the consideration of significant hazards to employees to include all hazards to children.

### **Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 1998**

The Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 1998 set out the licensing requirements for early childhood services licensed prior to 2008. The following are the key sections that relate to emergency planning and health and safety requirements:

- Clause 3(5)(a) – Every application for a licence must be accompanied by a copy of an operative evacuation scheme for public safety that meets the requirements of section 21A of the Fire Service Act 1975 and Part 2 of the Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2006.
- Clause 23 Fire and earthquake protection
  - (1) The licensee of a licensed centre must ensure that there exists for the centre an operative evacuation scheme for public safety that meets the requirements of section 21A of the Fire Service Act 1975 and Part 2 of the Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings regulations 2006.
  - (2) The licensee of a licensed centre must ensure that the centre has adequate provision for protection against earthquake damage, and for dealing with the consequences of an earthquake.
- Clause 24 the licensee of a licensed centre must ensure that –
  - (1)(j) a plan for the evacuation and care of the children in emergencies is prominently displayed on the premises;
  - (2) The licensee of a licensed centre must notify – (a) the Local Controller of Civil Defence; or (b) where there is not Local Controller or person acting as Local Controller, the Regional Controller of Civil Defence – of the centre’s location.

- (3) The licensee of a licensed centre, must ensure that all staff are trained in fire and earthquake drills, and in other emergency procedures, and that regular evacuation drills are carried out.
- (4) Every person responsible for the control of a centre, every staff member of a centre, and the licensee of a licensed centre must ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, hazards to the safety of the children are corrected, repaired, removed, or made inaccessible to the children.

### ***Education (Home Based Care) Order 1992***

Prior to 1 December 2008, home-based education and care services were regulated by the Education (Home Based Care) Order 1992. From 1 December 2008, home-based ECE services are regulated under the same regulatory framework as other types of licensed early childhood education and care services. The framework includes the Education Act 1989, the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008, and the associated licensing criteria. From the end of 2014, existing home-based services will no longer be able to operate under the Education (Home Based Care) Order 1992.

### ***Licensing Criteria for Home-Based Education and Care Services 2008***

The Licensing Criteria for Home Based Education and Care Services 2008 set out criteria for emergency preparedness under the general Health and Safety regulations. The requirements are that:

- **HS4** There is a written procedure and supplies such as food, water, and spare clothes, necessary for ensuring the care and safety of children attending the service in the case of an evacuation or other emergency.
  - Documentation required:
    - A procedure for dealing with emergencies, that is relevant to the premises where children attend. The procedure outlines how educators will access appropriate help and support in a variety of emergency situations (e.g. sudden illness or injury, fire, threats, civil disaster, etc).
    - Evacuation procedure for the premises. **HS5** Designated assembly areas for evacuation purposes do not unnecessarily place children at further risk.
- **HS6** Heavy furniture, fixtures and equipment that could fall or topple and cause serious injury or damage are secured.
- **HS7** Educators are familiar with relevant emergency drills and regularly carry these out with the children.

### ***Licensing Criteria for Kohanga Reo 2008***

- **HS4** The premises have a current Fire Evacuation Scheme approved by the New Zealand Fire Service.
  - Documentation required:
    - A current Fire Evacuation Scheme approved by the New Zealand Fire Service.
- **HS5** Designated assembly areas for evacuation purposes do not unnecessarily place children at further risk.
- **HS6** Heavy furniture, fixtures, and equipment that could fall or topple and cause serious injury or damage are secured.
- **HS7** There is a written procedure and supplies such as food, water, and spare clothes, necessary for ensuring the care and safety of children attending the service in the case of an evacuation or other emergency.

### ***Certification Criteria for Playgroups 2008***

- **HS2** There is a written procedure and supplies such as food, water, and spare clothes, necessary for ensuring the care and safety of children attending the service in the case of an evacuation or other emergency.
  - Documentation required:
    - A written procedure and list of supplies sufficient for the age and number of children attending the service. The procedure outlines how staff will access appropriate help and support in a variety of emergency situations (e.g. sudden illness or injury, fire, threats, civil disaster, etc).
    - Evacuation procedure for the premises.
- **HS3** Positive steps are taken to prevent injury to people and damage to property resulting from unsecured heavy furniture, fixtures, and equipment falling.
- **HS4** Emergency drills are practiced.

### ***Fire Service Act 1975***

In section 21A of the Fire Service Act 1975, a building used for providing early childhood facilities is defined as a ‘relevant building’. Section 21B provides that the owner of a relevant building must provide and maintain an evacuation scheme that is designed to enable evacuation from the scene of a fire safely and within a reasonable limit. Section 21C provides that the owner of a relevant building is to apply to the National Commander for approval of the evacuation scheme provided for the building under section 21B.

### ***Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2006***

Under the Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations 2006, buildings housing ECE services are required to provide and display a fire evacuation scheme approved by the New Zealand Fire Service. An evacuation procedure must be in place for the safe, prompt, and efficient evacuation of the building’s occupants in the event of a fire emergency. The procedure must provide for the occupants to be evacuated to a place of safety so that all the buildings occupants can be accounted for. Information about the evacuation procedure must be readily available to the building’s occupants, including information about the routes of travel to the place of safety for the building; the fire alarm signals used and any firefighting equipment available for use. Trial evacuations of the building are required to be undertaken at least every six months.

The evacuation scheme also needs to include maintenance of a register of persons with disabilities and an assistance register identifying people able to assist those with disabilities in an evacuation.

### ***Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992***

The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requires that employers must take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of staff while at work.

Under this Act, ECE services are responsible for the:

- safety of employees and other people who are at the ECE service (including children),
- identification and management of hazards that may cause employees harm, and
- establishment of procedures for dealing with emergencies that may arise while employees are at work.

Among other things, the employer must:

- Have procedures for identifying and eliminating hazards. If this is not practicable, then they must isolate or minimise the hazard.
- Regularly review identified hazards to see whether the hazards are significant and require further action.
- Record all accidents or serious harm that occur at work.
- Investigate whether an accident or serious harm was caused by a significant hazard,
- Report all incidents of serious harm to the Department of Labour.

For further information about the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, go to:  
[www.osh.govt.nz/law/quickguide/index.shtml](http://www.osh.govt.nz/law/quickguide/index.shtml)

### ***Building Act 2004***

Under the Building Act 2004, ECE services housed in buildings which contain certain installations for the safety or health of users (such as sprinklers, lifts, fire alarms) are required to have Compliance Schedules. The Compliance Schedule is issued by the territorial authority and lists the inspection, maintenance and reporting procedures to ensure that the installations are kept in good working order.

These buildings are required each year to supply to the territorial authority a Building Warrant of Fitness certifying that the building and its specific features have been inspected and maintained and comply with the Compliance Schedule. The Building Warrant of Fitness must also be publicly displayed in the building.

The Building Act is not retrospective so existing centres do not need to be upgraded to comply with the New Zealand Building Code. However, the Act requires that new building work meet the Building Code's current requirements. When a building is altered, or has a change of use (e.g., from a house to a new ECE service), the Act requires upgrading to existing parts of the building.

## Annex Four – Steps for Developing an Emergency Plan

### 1. Establish your planning process and identify your key sources of information

| Task  | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|---|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Appoint a person to be in charge of the Plan development project and name Plan Coordinator in your Emergency Plan   |                |        |      |         |
| Appoint a Planning Team (between 2-5 people). Name them in your Emergency Plan and include their role in the team.  |                |        |      |         |
| Make contact with your local Special Education (Ministry of Education) office.                                      |                |        |      |         |
| Make contact with your CDEM Group office and your local Emergency Management Office (as advised by the CDEM Group). |                |        |      |         |
| Quickly review the emergency material you have available right now and scan the suggested resource.                 |                |        |      |         |

### 2. Identify the specific natural hazards that may affect your ECE service and actions that can be taken to address their consequences

| Task  | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|---|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Identify the hazards and risks that could lead to an emergency for the ECE service.   |                |        |      |         |
| Meet with local Emergency Management Office (at the local council) for an update on hazards for the area.   |                |        |      |         |
| Complete a hazards list or add to your existing one: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify consequences and likelihood</li> <li>▪ Identify what steps the ECE service could take to reduce any impacts</li> </ul> |                |        |      |         |
| List any resulting procedures you have identified you will need.  |                |        |      |         |

### 3. Involve your community

| Task  | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|---|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Identify which neighbours might be able to help you (and how you might be able to assist them). |                |        |      |         |
| Draw up written arrangements as needed with community partners.                                 |                |        |      |         |

## Annex Four – Steps for Developing an Emergency Plan – *continued*

### 4. Write your Emergency Plan

| Task   | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|--|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Determine the management structure you will use for emergencies.   |                |        |      |         |
| As a team, consider all the things that could generate an emergency and decide on actions to be taken for specific emergency scenarios.                                  |                |        |      |         |
| Appoint staff to be responsible for different roles in an emergency.   |                |        |      |         |
| Gather together contact details for staff, contractors, emergency assistance etc.  |                |        |      |         |
| Determine how people at the ECE service will know when an emergency has occurred - siren, alarm, flashing lights, phone calls, PA messages, word of mouth, whistles etc. |                |        |      |         |
| Decide how to keep track of visitors on the premises.  |                |        |      |         |
| Draw up a locality map showing the ECE service in relation to the wider community.   |                |        |      |         |
| Decide on what basis you would close the ECE service.  |                |        |      |         |
| Determine your evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures.   |                |        |      |         |
| Identify all the safety and emergency resources the ECE service already has and identify what else is needed (for children, staff and pets).                             |                |        |      |         |
| Ensure you have the necessary information about each of the children in your care and make sure this is an accessible form in an emergency.                              |                |        |      |         |
| Prepare a list of people with special needs at the ECE service who require extra assistance in an emergency.   |                |        |      |         |
| Determine how communication will work with parents during and after emergencies.   |                |        |      |         |
| Gather together contact details for staff, contractors, emergency assistance etc.  |                |        |      |         |
| Be clear about your ECE service's child release policies.  |                |        |      |         |
| Discuss recovery planning – what will you do to get your ECE service back to normalcy.   |                |        |      |         |
| Decide how you will know if your buildings are safe to use after an event.   |                |        |      |         |

## Annex Four – Steps for Developing an Emergency Plan – *continued*

### 4. Write your Emergency Plan - *continued*

| Task   | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|--|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Determine what you need to do to be able to reopen the the ECE service and how you will communicate it.  |                |        |      |         |
| Determine how to maintain contact and communication with parents if emergency continues or if the ECE service needs to close for a period of time. |                |        |      |         |
| Decide what elements of business continuity you will put in place.   |                |        |      |         |
| Make sure you know who to contact for advice on supporting the ongoing emotional health of children and staff.                                     |                |        |      |         |
| Compile important insurance information and have forms ready to record information about damages and losses.                                       |                |        |      |         |
| Ensure you know your ECE service's policies around media.  |                |        |      |         |
| Determine a structure and layout for your plan.  |                |        |      |         |
| Fill in the detail of the Emergency Plan.  |                |        |      |         |
| Ask your local Emergency Management Office for advice on content.  |                |        |      |         |
| Complete any written or graphic material that needs to be displayed in public.   |                |        |      |         |
| Make sure everyone in the Planning Team reviews the draft.   |                |        |      |         |
| Ensure the Emergency Plan is approved by the service provider.   |                |        |      |         |
| Advise parents, staff, and neighbours of the Emergency Plan.   |                |        |      |         |

## Annex Four – Steps for Developing an Emergency Plan – *continued*

### 5. Put your Emergency Plan in place

| Task  | Responsibility | Due by | Done | Initial |
|---|----------------|--------|------|---------|
| Display your evacuation information.  |                |        |      |         |
| Erect signs for exits, evacuation routes, assembly areas, shelter-in-place locations, safety equipment and first aid. |                |        |      |         |
| Install emergency warning systems (sirens, PA system) if applicable.  |                |        |      |         |
| Develop and deliver a training programme for staff with emergency responsibilities.                                   |                |        |      |         |
| Conduct an exercise based on the Emergency Plan (at least every six months).  |                |        |      |         |
| Review the Emergency Plan after every exercise.   |                |        |      |         |
| Update contact lists and other information in your Emergency Plan annually (six months is advised).                   |                |        |      |         |

## Annex Five – Hazard Identification List

Source: Adapted from the Department of Labour’s Hazard Identification Sheet, <http://www.osh.govt.nz/order/catalogue/forms.shtml>

| Hazard and Consequences   | Likelihood | Significant |    | All practicable steps to minimise |    | Controls required (including existing) to minimise   | Person responsible | Date to be completed by | Completed (date / initials) |
|---|------------|-------------|----|-----------------------------------|----|--|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   |            | Yes         | No | Yes                               | No |  |                    |                         |                             |
| Large earthquake causing significant damage to the building and requiring evacuation. | Possible   | ✓           |    |                                   | ✓  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fix all shelving units to walls</li> <li>▪ Tie back hot water cylinder</li> </ul> |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |
|   |            |             |    |                                   |    |  |                    |                         |                             |

Notes: Likelihood:

- Likely = The event is expected to occur in most circumstances e.g. 60%+ chance of occurring in the next year.
- Possible = The event may occur at some time e.g. 20-59%+ chance of occurring in the next year.
- Unlikely = The event is unlikely to occur e.g. less than 20% chance of occurring in the next year.

## Annex Six – Questions to ask your Emergency Management Officer

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When preparing your Emergency Plan and developing your relationship with your relevant Emergency Management Officer (EMO), it is a good idea to arrange a visit to your local Emergency Management Office or have them visit you (if possible). They will be able to help you with information about hazards and risks in your area and assist in advising what specific precautions you can take.

The following is a list of specific information requirements your local Emergency Management Office can help you with:

- Whether or not ECE services in your region have any responsibilities to plan for emergencies as detailed in local CDEM arrangements.
- The latest information on hazards and risks in the area and in the ECE service, how likely these are to occur and whether the service is in any known hazard zones (e.g. flood, tsunami, liquefaction etc).
- Information about specific precautions the service could be taking to reduce damage and other consequences (such as securing items so they won't move in an earthquake).
- Whether the Emergency Management Officer would like a copy of the service's plan or map on file, service contact details etc.
- Information about the local warning arrangements for different types of hazards.
- Information about local response arrangements and advice on where to get help during a civil defence emergency.
- What circumstances the ECE service might expect priority assistance from the Emergency Management Officer and emergency services (e.g. some CDEM Groups have assigned themselves the role of ensuring priority assistance to the elderly and children in an emergency).
- Assistance/advice on transport options when needing to evacuate the ECE service.
- Advice on potential evacuation routes and sites within the community.
- Assistance/advice on running training or exercises, and the opportunity to participate in appropriate CDEM drills and activities.
- Information on holding public meetings about how to prepare for emergencies that ECE service staff and parents may be interested in attending.

## Annex Seven – Sample Contents: Emergency Plan

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*Sample only – adapt as appropriate for your ECE service.*

### Part One: Pre-Event

#### Section 1A: Introduction

- Purpose of the plan
- Plan development team
- List of organisational participants
- Documentation of plan approval
- Policies for plan implementation
- Policies for plan maintenance and review (after exercises and actual events)
- Supporting signatures/list of stakeholders

#### Section 1B: Emergency Contacts

- Essential emergency phone numbers (both local and outside the area)
- Contact information for students and families OR description of where this information can be found
- Contact information for staff
- Contact information for local aid and community organisations such as the Red Cross, local church, radio stations, neighbours

#### Section 1C: Education and Training

- Updated list of staff who are trained (First Aid, CPR etc)
- Policy and procedures for education and training of staff, parents, and children
- Documentation of training and exercises conducted
- Documentation of evacuation exercises (log)

### Part Two: Response

#### Section 2A: Organisation and Assignment of Responsibilities

- Organisational chart of ECE service emergency response team
- Description of the responsibilities of each role and persons assigned to them

#### Section 2B: Emergency Supplies

- List of emergency supplies and emergency kits on site
- Locations of supplies and kits
- Your procedure for replenishing and rotating supplies

#### Section 2C: Maps

- Site (facility) and locality maps
- Maps of evacuation routes

#### Section 2D: Sheltering in Place

- Shelter in place policies and procedures

**Section 2E: Evacuation Policies and Procedures**

- Evacuation policies and procedures
- ECE service closure forms

**Section 2F: Reuniting Children with Parents and Caregivers**

- Policies and procedures for reuniting children and parents and caregivers
- Copy of information about to whom the child can be released
- Attendance (sign-in) forms
- Children release forms

**Section 2G: Hazard-Specific Information**

- Completed hazard assessment
- Informational sheets about relevant hazards (or where to get them)
- Hazard-specific procedures, when applicable

**Part Three: Recovery**

**Section 3A: Organisational Recovery**

- Policies and procedures for organisational recovery
- Relevant insurance forms
- Record keeping forms
- Important phone numbers: insurance company, lawyer, accountant

These questions were developed by representatives from ECE services, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Labour, regional CDEM staff and MCDEM, as a sample of some concerns that have been raised in real situations. These are **examples only** – should other questions arise that you are unsure about what advice to provide, please contact your local EMO or MCDEM for assistance. In all instances, you are encouraged to refer to your existing policies and procedures for your specific answers – for example, if you have a transport policy for taking children on field trips that details how to transport children safely, use the same procedures as part of your evacuation process.

### 1. Where do we take the children during an emergency? To their families, to a welfare centre, to alternative locations?

- Every ECE service will need to have a range of options developed in consultation with the parents, as every family will have its own arrangements for how they want to pick up their children (if possible under the circumstances) or will need to be informed of where the ECE service has relocated to.

### 2. When should we evacuate?

- If the building appears safe and sound following an emergency event, there is no need to move – in fact, staying in place may be the best option for working with frightened children. But common sense and judgement should be applied, if there are large visible cracks or water is flooding in, or the ECE service is within a known tsunami evacuation zone it will be more obvious that it is time to leave.

### 3. Who is responsible for figuring out that the buildings are safe?

- The ECE service supervisor (or delegated authority under each ECE service's individualised Emergency Plan) has this responsibility. Although they may not be building safety experts, they are competent people who can use their best judgement about what is right for the situation. The Ministry of Education provides a tool to help inspect buildings from both the inside and the outside at (<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/theMinistry/EmergencyManagement/ChchEq13June2011/Schools/Property/PropertyAssessments.aspx>).

### 4. What are the options for taking the babies/ under twos away when evacuating? Can I put many children in a car to evacuate quickly during an emergency?

- Your ECE service's excursion policy will be the best place to start looking at safe transport options. If you don't have a policy in place, have discussions with your staff about what your safe options are, in your specific hazard environment. For example, if you are evacuating following an earthquake, a cot on wheels might not be practical for transporting under twos since liquefaction may have occurred and the wheels might get stuck. You will have to make some judgement calls based on the type of emergency, but learning about hazards and their consequences ahead of time will help you prepare.
- The most important thing you can do is be prepared ahead of time, as this will be able to help you remain as calm as possible during the emergency. By conducting a thorough planning process, you will identify what the local arrangements are, so you can get help when you need it.

### 5. Should babies who are sleeping/resting in cots in an earthquake be left in their cots or taken out?

- If the necessary safety measures have been undertaken in the CE service (securing furniture, removing overhanging shelves in the sleeping area etc.) then generally it will be safer to leave sleeping babies/children in cots/beds during the period of earthquake shaking. In severe shaking it is dangerous to try and move and caregivers should 'drop, cover and hold' until the shaking has stopped.

### 6. How many hours/days of emergency supplies should the ECE service hold?

- The consistent guidance is that individuals should have enough on hand to look after themselves for three days. However, as parents will want to collect their children as soon as possible, it is unlikely that you would need enough for each child in your care for that long. You would also not need that much if you were forced to evacuate. Our suggestion is to aim for at least enough water, food supplies and other emergency resources for one overnight stay, but assess your own location and hazard environment (in conjunction with your local Emergency Management Office) to determine your specific requirements.

### 7. Where do we go after an emergency? Where do we go for additional information and support during an emergency?

- Prior to any emergency, one of the best things you can do is work with your local EMO to get a basic understanding of your local CDEM response arrangements, which will include the best sources of information on where to go after emergency events, and also how to access information during an emergency response.
- If the power is on, television/radio/and the Internet (local council websites) etc will all be valuable sources of information. If the power is out, battery operated radios can be used instead. Social media such as Twitter and Facebook can also provide you with helpful (but often unverified) real-time information throughout the response period.
- Grouping together with others in your community can also help, as they may have other connections that you lack. This is why reaching out to your neighbours is a vital part of the development of your Emergency Plan.

### 8. What should we do about pets? Do we leave them behind?

- While the children are the prime focus, if you evacuate your ECE service, pets should evacuate too. Ensure all equipment required for this is readily available, e.g. store carriers/cages and a portable pet emergency kit in an easy to carry container. Make sure you include these procedures in your Emergency Plan.

## Annex Nine – Evacuation and Sheltering-in-place Procedures

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### In an evacuation?

This checklist can be used as the basis for the ECE services' evacuation procedures, a copy of which should be included in your Emergency Plan. The main actions you will need to undertake during an evacuation are:

- advise service staff of the need to evacuate (alarm, word of mouth etc) and activate the Emergency Response Plan and evacuation procedures,
- evacuate all persons in a calm and orderly manner,
- pick up your portable emergency response kits as you leave,
- meet at the pre-designated safe assembly area,
- take a roll call to determine who is present or missing,
- administer first aid to any injured person,
- locate missing people and rescue trapped people if it is possible and safe to do so,
- reassure children and staff,
- listen to the radio for advice and for information on what is happening in the wider community, and
- contact the ECE service's pre-arranged emergency and community assistance (e.g. additional people, resources, alternative premises).

### Decide whether to:

- re-occupy the buildings or site,
- move to emergency shelter or emergency accommodation, and
- contact Emergency Management Office for advice or assistance if needed.

*Remember, it is very important that these steps be practised by staff, visitors, and children on a regular basis.*

### Re-occupation of building?

The buildings should only be re-entered if it is deemed they are safe. This can be hard to determine, but often, common sense can be your best guide. For example, if the evacuation was in response to an earthquake, check for the following potential hazards:

- obvious cracks in walls,
- dislodged furniture or fittings which could fall in after-shocks,
- leaks in gas and water pipes,
- breaks and/or blockages in sewerage drains and fittings,
- breaks in electrical wires (which can cause fires),
- spillage or insecure storage of hazardous goods, such as cleaning chemicals,
- areas of shattered glass, and
- fires which have not been completely extinguished.

*Where a building is obviously badly damaged it should not be re-entered. If there is any doubt, do not re-occupy and move to an alternative location.*

### Move to emergency shelter or temporary emergency location?

If the decision is made to move the staff and children to emergency shelter or a temporary emergency location, the main actions you will have to do, are:

- assemble and identify the children,
- ensure all children and staff are adequately clothed and have footwear if possible,
- collect emergency supplies if possible,
- retrieve register of personnel for that day,
- retrieve Emergency Plan folder,
- retrieve emergency resources and supplies,
- retrieve children release forms,
- if possible turn off appliances and services (if not already done), and secure the premises,
- place a clear note in a window close to the entrance, advising of the ECE service's destination for any parents or custodians arriving later, and
- if not done already, contact the ECE service's pre-arranged community assistance.

### Sheltering in place?

If the emergency requires you to shelter in place, depending on the hazard, consider the following:

- Close the building. Use reverse evacuation procedures to bring children, visitors and staff to the predetermined locations (interior rooms where possible, away from glass and external windows).
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside.
- Close window shades, blinds, or curtains if you are told there is danger of explosion.
- Have staff familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans and heating and air conditioning systems (to prevent the circulation of fumes and volcanic ash).
- Gather essential emergency resources and supplies.
- Call emergency contacts.
- Seal all cracks around the door(s) and any vents into the room with duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap).
- Write down the names of everyone in the room and notify emergency services.
- Listen for an announcement from emergency services via portable radios, phones and stay where you are until you are told that it is safe to leave.

## Annex Ten – ECE Service Closure Prompts

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Source: Adapted from “Emergency Preparedness Plan Guidelines for Early Childhood Services” Christchurch City, March 2007.

You may be notified by emergency services to close your ECE service, or you may have to decide to do so. Before making the decision to close, you may wish to ask yourself the questions below:

### Before ECE service hours

- Who has the authority to close the ECE service? Who is the alternative?
- Will parents/caregivers or staff members be at risk whilst making their way to the ECE service?
- Listen to a local radio station for hazard information and road conditions and/or check local authority websites and the MetService website.  
**www.metservice.co.nz**
- Were there radio announcements from emergency services advising to close the ECE service?
- Will staff living some distance away from the ECE service be able to get there? For example, if snow conditions or flooding prevent 60% of the staff making their way safely to the service, will the staff who do make it in be able to cope with the shortfall? Note: relief teaching staff may not be easy to obtain during adverse weather conditions.
- Are staff who are not able to make it safely to the ECE service able to call in because of phone and/or power failure?

### During ECE service hours

- If you are considering closing the ECE service, will the situation remain the same or worsen in the next hour (or 2 or 3 hours)?
- Are there concerns for the safety of the ECE service buildings and/or access into the buildings if the current situation continues (e.g. storm, earthquake, tsunami warning)?
- Will you put parents/caregivers collecting children at further risk by closing the ECE service? For example, are the roads safe to travel or are we better off leaving the ECE service open?
- What is the plan for evacuating remaining children (those not collected by parents/caregivers)? If the ECE service buildings or surrounding areas are unsafe, what alternative location could be used? Can we get the children there safely? Do we have access to this location?
- Have you made arrangements for those children whose parents/caregivers you cannot contact, to notify them of the ECE service closure? These children remain your responsibility until an authorised person arrives to collect them OR you are otherwise advised by emergency services. You might consider:
  - Leaving a message on the ECE service phone voicemail advising of the location, and
  - Putting up a sign at the ECE service advising where the children have been moved to (map, address, contact number) for parents who arrive after you have left
- Ensure you have an ECE service policy on the collection of children in this situation.

### When you decide to close the ECE service

- Contact local radio stations (as per any procedures already in place) to notify them of the ECE service's closure. Note: telephone lines down or phone 'overload' could well be an issue.
- Inform parents/caregivers of closure. For larger ECE services this could be a challenge due to the number of children, but for smaller ECE services is a possibility.
- Inform parents/caregivers how long the ECE service will be closed for if possible. It is probably more realistic that in most adverse conditions this decision is made on a 'day by day' basis.
- Aim to leave an appropriate phone message for parents/caregivers phoning the ECE service.
- Aim to put up a sign in the window advising where children have been taken to in the event the ECE service is evacuated. Place the sign in a location where it can't be easily removed except by an authorised person with access to the facility.
- In circumstances where it is not possible for children to return home (parents can't be contacted or are missing), alternative arrangements must be made in consultation with Police or Child Youth and Family.

### Prearrangements with parents/caregivers

- In your introduction or enrolment pack include information for parents/caregivers of any prearranged systems related to ECE service closure based on the issues raised above.

## Annex Eleven – Suggested Emergency Resources and Supplies

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Source: *Get Ready Get Thru and the Head Start Early Childhood Service Resource*, University of California Los Angeles

### 1. Emergency resources and supplies for use at the ECE service

An ECE service will already have most of these for daily use. Consider keeping some of the less used items aside together in a separate location(s). Several ECE services have commented that keeping supplies in a wheelie bin, ready to go, is very helpful.

- Water (enough for each child and staff member for at least one night, but based on your determination of each individuals' needs)
- Torch(es) and extra batteries
- Battery powered radio and extra batteries
- Plastic rubbish bags and toilet paper
- Nappies, wet wipes and baby formula
- Sanitiser gel
- Blankets
- Personal hygiene items and feminine supplies
- Non-perishable food items, including food for children and others with special nutritional needs (plan for at least one night)
- First aid kits (at least one of which is portable)
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications
- Emergency Plan including map of area for evacuating and for locating shelters
- Duct tape and plastic sheet
- A whistle or a battery operated loudhailer (something to signal for help)
- Paper cups, plates, and plastic utensils
- Cash
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- Matches in a water proof container
- Paper and pencil or pen
- Games/activity items for children, in order to distract them from the emergency
- Copies of enrolment records and emergency contacts for each child and staff member
- Keys to all your service's buildings
- Children release forms
- Gloves
- Face masks
- Small gas burner
- Buckets

### 2. Take these with you in an evacuation

Consider placing these resources in backpacks around the organisation, so they are easy to pick up and take with you.

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Battery powered radio and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Prescription and over-the-counter medications
- Emergency Plan including map of area for evacuating and for locating shelters
- Paper and pencil or pen
- Games/activity items for children, in order to take the focus off of the emergency
- Copies of class lists and emergency contact information for each child and staff member
- ECE service's building keys
- Student release forms
- Water
- Non-perishable food items, including food for children and others with special nutritional needs
- Spare clothes for each child (if possible)

## Annex Twelve – Safety Equipment and Emergency Supplies Register

Refer also Annex Eleven

| Equipment                 | Location       | Last Inspected | Next Inspection | Completed by                       | Comments and Actions  |
|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Fire Extinguisher         | Entrance Foyer | 1/2/11         | 1/5/11          | Chubb Security                     | Replacement due 12/12 |
| Smoke Alarms              | All rooms      | 1/2/11         | 1/3/11          | Fred (maintenance)                 |                       |
| Non-perishable food store | Kitchen pantry | 1/2/11         | 1/8/11          | Mary (Emergency Plan co-ordinator) |                       |
| First aid kits            | Office Kitchen | 1/2/11         | 1/8/11          | Mary (Emergency Plan Co-ordinator) |                       |
|                           |                |                |                 |                                    |                       |
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## Annex Thirteen – Children Release Guidelines

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*Source: Adapted from “Emergency Preparedness Plan Guidelines for Early Childhood Services” Christchurch City, March 2007.*

Steps should be taken to advise parents/caregivers of the location and condition of their children as soon as possible. Prior discussion with parents/caregivers regarding the provisions in your Emergency Plan made for re-uniting children with their families is advisable.

When an emergency occurs, the ECE service staff remains responsible for the children until the children are collected by a parent/caregiver OR an emergency service.

Always release children in accordance with your ECE service’s current ‘release guidelines’.

The following information should be noted:

- name of person collecting a child or children,
- time of collection,
- address and phone number of person collecting the child or children,
- signature of person collecting the child or children, and
- where the child or children will be taken to.

If applicable or if unsure, check the list of names to whom a child or children should NOT be released.

In circumstances where it is not possible for children to return home, alternative arrangements must be made in consultation with the Police or Child Youth and Family.

**Annex Fourteen – Children Release Form**

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**Date:**

**Time:**

**Log completed by:**

| Name | Time | Collected By* | Authorising Staff |
|------|------|---------------|-------------------|
|      |      |               |                   |
|      |      |               |                   |
|      |      |               |                   |
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\* Person collecting the child must be listed as authorised to do so, or be emergency services personnel. If in doubt check with the Police or Child, Youth and Family.

*Source: Adapted from: Ministry of Education Resource “Managing emergencies and traumatic incidents –the guide” and “Managing emergencies and traumatic incidents – the resources” February 2010 . HeadStart.*

Attending to the emotional wellbeing of the children and their families as well as staff is a critical part of the recovery process. Emergencies create upheaval and stress in people’s lives. It is important to help children and their families address their fears and concerns. You should also monitor your own emotional health in addition to that of all the staff. If emotional health issues are not addressed when they arise, longer-term problems may develop.

Following an emergency, provide information to help the children adjust to the events that have occurred. This may include new protective actions that you might want children to practise so this will keep them safe. Some children will want to talk about their experiences - it is good to have a range of activities available so children can express their feelings and thoughts about what has changed in their world. Not all children will want to do this, however, and it is important that you respond to their needs and redirect conversations and activities to focus on how people helped each other and the good things children did to help. It is also important to manage adult conversations about the event as some young children can interpret ongoing conversations as new and frightening emergencies.

Children are better able to cope with a traumatic event if parents, friends, family, teachers, and other adults offer support and assistance. The following are recommended suggestions from health professionals for helping children cope in the aftermath of a tragedy.

**1. Be aware of your own reactions.**

Children often take cues from significant adults in their environment, so it’s important to model calm behaviour.

**2. Make yourself available for providing extra attention to the children.**

This attention reaffirms a sense of closeness and security.

**3. Be mindful of the child’s cognitive and emotional functioning levels.**

Depending on the child’s age, they may react differently and have different needs. For example, adolescents may try to downplay their concerns, while younger children require simpler explanations.

**4. Use empathic communication by expressing appreciation of the child’s experience.**

Attempt to understand the feelings beneath the words and convey that understanding.

**5. Do not speculate or give false information.**

Misrepresentation of facts may make the situation worse. It’s okay to admit that you do not have all of the answers.

**6. Monitor exposure to media.**

Use alternate audio and video materials to distract children from live television viewing.

**7. Provide realistic reassurance about their safety.**

Assure them that steps are being taken to make their world safer, while remaining reasonably honest.

**8. Consider the reactions of children with histories of past traumatic experiences.**

Be observant for thoughts and feelings that indicate that a child has been reminded of a past experience.

### 9. Make an effort to maintain a “usual” routine.

While this may be difficult, it will help to maintain a sense of connectedness to the past and allay fears about the future.

### 10. Monitor your own emotional status.

Be aware that you may also be affected. Do not hesitate to ask for professional assistance.

Making the strategies mentioned above available to parents and caregivers will help them to help their children after a disaster. Equally important is addressing psychological health issues for yourself and your staff.

Suggestions to help you and your staff cope include:

- have a support system in place,
- share your feelings,
- get adequate sleep,
- eat properly,
- incorporate enjoyable activities into your daily routine, and
- do not hesitate to ask for help.

Finally, remember that you don’t have to manage all of these psychological health issues alone. Outside sources for counselling for children, staff, and volunteers will prove invaluable to you after a disaster.

The Ministry of Education, Special Education traumatic incident service offers local training to help ECE services and schools prepare policies, plans and procedures. They will also work alongside an ECE service’s or school’s traumatic incident or emergency response team to respond to an incident.

For example, Special Education staff can:

- assist traumatic incident and emergency response teams to respond to an incident and help maintain day-to-day operations,
- assist staff to communicate appropriately with children, young people and the community about the incident,
- make people aware of basic coping and self-help strategies such as re-connection with daily routines and care,
- provide advice about typical traumatic incident responses,
- ensure the safety of children, young people and staff by developing processes and systems with the ECE Service or school traumatic incident or emergency response team, and
- link to Māori networks and other culturally appropriate services.

