



Dear Child Care Directors and Providers:

As we have seen from the evacuation of the area north of Durango, wildfires will impact our community this summer! Emergencies occur and the probability of an emergency occurring during the hours of operation at a child care facility – home, center or school – is high since nearly 50% of children under the age of 5 spend their daytime hours with someone other than their parent. The director and facility staff are responsible for the health, safety and welfare of children and are frontline responders and coordinators of emergency preparedness actions and requirements with families, children, the community, city, county, and state public safety officials, and first responders (police, fire fighters, etc.).

Important Steps to be Prepared:

- Sign-up for CODE RED emergency text and call notifications: <https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/BFEA18547A8D>
- Provide written notice to families and staff regarding center operations in the event of a pre-evacuation or evacuation order: See attached **EMERGENCY EVACUATION & COMMUNICATION PLAN**
- Review and revise Parent Handbooks, Disaster Preparedness Plans and Family Communication Plans to reflect changes (this may require approval from your Board of Directors)

Please be vigilant about the health risks for young children exposed to smoke. **Children are more likely to be affected by health threats from smoke.** Children’s airways are still developing and they breathe more air per pound of body weight than adults. Also, children often spend more time outdoors engaged in activity and play.

- Review the wildfire updates at San Juan Basin Public Health Department regarding air quality health advisories: <http://sjbpublichealth.org/416-fire-updates/>
- Review recommendations for protecting yourself from smoke inhalation : <https://www.cdc.gov/features/wildfires/index.html>

- Review recommendations and provide families with educational materials regarding air quality and recommendations for protecting young children from respiratory distress: <https://www.childrencolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/parenting/parenting-articles/wildfire-smoke/>

The attached documents and templates, found below, are resources that your center can use to develop or revise your Disaster Preparedness Plan and Family Communication Plan. The more notice you provide to staff, families and community members the less anxiety and confusion you will experience before, during and after an emergency.

Resources for Disaster Prep and Crisis Management

Relocation Shelter Agreement

Evacuation & Communication Form for Families

Child Care Emergency Plan

Disaster Preparedness (Example)

Crisis Response Manual (Example)

Please reach out for assistance and stay safe!

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