

## Emergency Preparedness for Infant and Toddler Caregivers:

# Evacuation

Child care providers have many responsibilities, including providing for the health and safety of the children in their care. One component of health and safety includes emergency preparation.

**Evacuation is necessary when** conditions are safer outside the building than inside the building.

**Be Prepared:**  
*It Can Happen To You*

**20%** 

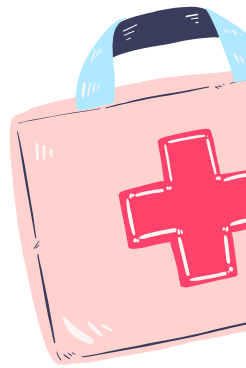
Almost 1 in every 5 child care providers have had to evacuate infants and toddlers due to an emergency.



### Infants and Toddlers Have Unique Needs

- Physical and emotional reliance on caregivers to keep them safe
- Communication limitations, including lack of ability to identify themselves and their family
- Limited mobility
- Need for safety and protection from harmful items
- Physical needs, including greater susceptibility to chemicals and smoke
- Nutritional needs that require special emergency planning
- Emotional needs
- Need for routine and comfort

# Be Prepared Before An Emergency:



## ✓ **Have A Written Plan and Make Sure Everyone Knows Their Role**

- Maintain an updated emergency plan.
- Provide staff and volunteers with regular training on the emergency plan.
- Be sure your plan accommodates children's changing developmental needs.
- Emotional needs
- Need for routine and comfort

## ✓ **Perform Regular Practice Drills**

- Include infants and toddlers in every practice drill, regardless of the weather or time of day

## ✓ **Have A Method to Evacuate Multiple Children At Once**

- Evacuating infants and toddlers can be difficult because they are often non- mobile or not strong walkers. Evacuation cribs, strollers/buggies, or wagons can be helpful.
- Make sure your evacuation device works in all types of weather.

## ✓ **Have Emergency Supplies Prepared and Readily Available**

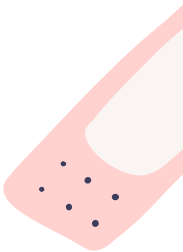
- Emergency supply kits should be prepared and stored in a place where they can be accessed quickly.
- Consider how to safely transport formula or breast milk and how you will make individual comfort items, such as pacifiers or blankets, available.
- Ensure you have a way to protect children from all types of weather.

## ✓ **Ensure that Adults Stay Calm**

- Speak to children in a calm voice and give simple instructions.
- Songs can be used to provide instruction and to calm the children.

## ✓ **Make Sure There Are Enough Adults to Help with Infants and Toddlers**

- Be sure you can safely evacuate all children with the adults who are available.
- Extra staff, older children in your care, and neighbors can assist, but be sure to make arrangements with them in advance.



*Child Care Aware of America® asked early learning professionals how they prepare for and respond to emergencies when caring for infants and toddlers. Survey responses contributed to this information.*