

ReadyWisconsin: Encourages parents and educators to teach students about emergency preparedness

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MADISON, Wis. – It's never too early for kids to learn what they should do during an emergency. September is Preparedness Month, and ReadyWisconsin encourages parents and educators to take time this month to teach kids to be better prepared for the unexpected.

“Disasters can be scary for kids, but learning how to be prepared for tornadoes and floods can help to ease some of those fears,” said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Greg Engle. “We encourage everyone to take an active role in helping children understand the possible dangers in their community and include them in planning for how to respond to an emergency.”

Parents and other family members can help children prepare by talking about what to do if there is an emergency when they are at home, school, or out in the community. Make sure they know who to contact and identify a safe meeting place. They can also have children help put together an emergency supply kit and identify what items should go inside.

You can find tips on making emergency plans and kits at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov>.

The classroom is another place where students can learn to be prepared. Educators who interact with fourth and fifth grade students in Wisconsin are encouraged to offer the state's Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP) program to students this spring. Over the last decade, STEP has helped over 90,000 children in the state learn about the importance of planning for emergencies.

This curriculum, developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is made available for free to educators who agree to teach the basic STEP curriculum. Participants are also provided with free materials to help students build their own emergency kits.

Educators interested in offering the STEP program during the spring of 2023 can find registration information online at <https://readywisconsin.wi.gov/step/>. Registration is now open and runs through Dec. 15. Program materials will ship to educators in January of 2023.

The STEP program is funded with financial support from AT&T. Since 2012, AT&T and the AT&T Foundation has provided \$110,000 to support the STEP program in Wisconsin.

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