

PARENTS WITH PREPAREDNESS

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DAN O'CONNOR
FAMILY PREPAREDNESS
IS A TEAM SPORT



STACY GERLICH
TEACHING CHILDREN
HOW TO USE THEIR
SUPERHERO SKILLS



DR. TERRY OROSZI
READY, SET, GO



MARK TOOROCK
Play to Prepare

FIRST RESPONDERS
TO THE
FIRST RESPONDERS
HEATHER
ISSVORAN

PARENTS WITH PREPAREDNESS MAGAZINE

SPECIAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH EDITION

PARENTS WITH PREPAREDNESS

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Welcome to *Parents with Preparedness Magazine*



Hello National Preparedness Month! It is a time which brings emotional memories of the anniversary of 9/11 and reminders of how much we have changed as a Country in the last 21 years. We as always honor those on the frontlines in uniforms of all types from law enforcement, military, fire-fighting, medical and emergency management and those who both support and educate these communities of heroes.

This year signals another type of disaster, a natural one 'Hurricane Ian,' which for millions will mean catastrophic loss and years of rebuilding. Homes, schools and places of worship will be impacted, the routines of transportation, grocery shopping, child, elder and petcare will all change. For Florida that will mean kids without classrooms and a return to remote learning when critical infrastructure can support communications. It provides an opportunity to rethink how we think about preparedness as well, and that is thinking about it as an individual responsibility. It means having discussions about preparedness, engaging even our youngest kids in the discussions. Their understanding will help to alleviate fear and to also teach the important lessons of saying thank

you to those who protect them. They will always surprise you with their ideas and creativity.

We decided for this magazine that we would publish an anniversary edition for parents highlighting some of the most important issues on preparedness we face as families and as communities. This issue contains information on technology planning, design thinking (for everyone); the importance of experience and also of play, and about empowering kids to embrace their superhero skills. As always we include information for parents on the need for awareness and vigilance on threats that continue to grow in relation to human trafficking.

A huge thank you to our authors; our PWP Team and to our Creative Director! Remember as always, Preparedness Matters!

Kathleen Kiernan, EdD
FOUNDER PWPORG.ORG



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Family Preparedness *Is a Team Sport - Ideas for Engagement*

By Dan O'Connor



Every September the United States' emergency management community reminds us that it is National Preparedness Month. This is a reminder and an opportunity to reflect and embrace the importance of preparing for life's interruptions, disasters and emergencies and that they could happen at any time.

Understanding this, I am always reminded of a quote regarding readiness from Louis Pasteur. Pasteur, the late French microbiologist, chemist, pioneer of germ theory of disease, and inventor of the process of pasteurization noted "chance favors only the prepared mind." By this, he probably meant that your preparation could improve a bad situation and what can be done in unexpected or surprising times.

Preparation used to be a hallmark American behavior trait. Preparation was actually a necessity. We'd grow vegetables, preserve meats, can foods, capture seeds, put "something away for a rainy day" and take ownership of our ability to weather the bad times. A lot has changed over the years. We have been blessed with an abundance and access to many conveniences. The technical marvels and logistical magicians have blessed (and cursed) us with a have anything, anytime, brought to us anywhere culture. That ideology doesn't promote readiness and preparedness and can really undermine self-reliance.

The overwhelming majority of Americans have an expectation that someone else will do "it". How is that? There are certainly many reasons and historical points along the way but our great logistic acumen, abilities to harness economies of scale, and a transition from a near exclusive manufacturing economy to a service and consump-

tion economy drove a change in consumer and preparedness behavior. A variety of other circumstances also moved us away from the ability to plan and prepare. Life is innately busier now than, say, 50 years ago. One simply needs to see the necessity for two incomes, the cost of living, and a host of other factors keeping people busy, working, and distracted. The attention economy also prohibits us time to simply stop and think. We've become conditioned to assume that someone else will do it and the can-do American spirit has waned into paralysis. We became apathetic.

People have the most extraordinary ability to rationalize and explain away their apathy. Apathy is a lack of interest in life activities or interactions with others. It can affect your ability to maintain a relationship, develop skills, perform at a job and thrive in a crisis. Over time, life and all its challenges can become monotonous. Apathy can and does touch everyone at some point and for a variety of reasons. Our attitude and awareness of apathy is real. What we choose to do about it is also real. We can overcome our apathy and paralysis by maintaining a bias for action. A bias for action is an intentional willingness to evaluate and take risks, a willingness to seize the initiative and embrace the fact that we're far more capable and adaptable than we realize.

So, what can you do? Here are three things everyone can do to elevate and enhance their readiness; gamify, rehearse, and think about decisions. The first one is gamifying the problem. Gamifying is the application of elements of game playing to an activity and problem to be solved. It's also a superior way to get children to be-



come critical thinkers. How? Propose a problem. How would you do “X”? Where does our drinking water come from? What should we do? Can we charge our phone without a charger? How? What five things should we bring on every trip? The exercise and follow-on conversation create unique opportunities to learn and the ability to see a solution instead of seeing only problems.

Then, once conversations are done there can be a transition to the second thing; rehearsals and drills. Practice, practice, practice! The rehearsals and exercises don’t have to be elaborate or sophisticated. A family huddle prior to an event can constitute an exercise. Assigned regular tasks and chores build the capacity of responsibility and a sense of ownership. Thinking and doing these kinds of activities is no different than any board game and can be really fun.

Another thought exercise or drill is to schedule some time every week to conduct a readiness evaluation. It’s also not a sophisticated or arduous task. Putting something on a schedule builds an intentional, thinking time and reflective space to evaluate “what if” scenarios. It can be as simple as identifying things you might need in a “go” bag with food, water, and batteries all the way to identifying relocation spots and evacuation routes.

Third, try using some of that exercise and reflective time to build a few decision trees. Decision trees can be very helpful in identifying how and what to do to maintain initiative and self-empowerment in an emergency. A decision tree is a tool that uses a branching or “tree” model of decisions and their possible consequences, including potential outcomes, resource costs, and each decision’s utility. For example, what would a decision tree look like if there was no power? What about disruptive weather? Even breaking down on the side of the road can be exercised beforehand. Thinking negates the crushing feeling of helplessness. We are never helpless. We are powerful beyond our wildest dreams if we’re thinking and problem solving.

Choosing to be prepared and choosing not to be prepared are decisions we make. If we decide to exercise the pain of discipline and be an active participant, when interruption and crisis happen, we’ll be more capable and responsive. If, however, we choose not to be disciplined in our approach and procrastinate what can be done today for tomorrow, then we will have the pain of regret. We don’t want to regret not being active participants in our success. Playing games, exercising and drilling, and making time for thought and decisions will always pay dividends and hone your skills for that time when calamity comes.

The prepared mind always beats the paralyzed one. Be prepared! 💖



About The Author

Dan is sought after and recognized homeland security authority with a wealth of experience in exigent leadership, crisis management, emergency management, continuity of operations, and security/anti-terrorism.

He is a graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School, Harvard Kennedy School, Swedish Defense University, FBI National Academy, and the United States Marine Corps Command and Staff College.

Dan has played a significant role in numerous high profile and critical assignments. Dan has provided security and emergency management across the United States and its territories, and internationally. He has directly supported more than 800 declared disasters and served as the anti-terrorism officer/emergency manager in Washington, DC, during the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

He has consulted and produced various security and emergency management operations at the 1996 Summer Olympics, 2002 Winter Olympics, the 2004 Summer Olympic Games, and the 2016 Summer Olympics. He is a presenter, lecturer, and published authority in emergency management, asset protection, information security, leadership development, and physical security. He has also consulted for four of the largest marathons in the United States and the Super Bowl. The combination of leading Marines, large event management, emergency management, organizational leadership, anti-terrorism, and high-risk experience makes Dan O'Connor uniquely qualified for helping an organization both operationally and strategically.

First Responders to the First Responders

By Heather Issovran

"No One Can Do Everything, but Everyone Can Do Something"

Max Lucado

Cops, soldiers, fire personnel, emergency managers, and other first responders run toward the danger. The adrenaline filters through their body to save lives, property, and ideals that could cost them their lives, limbs, and mental health. Their daily work is to respond to the worst day in the lives of the citizens they serve. The risks they take every time they go to work are an incredible responsibility and reward. They risk everything to protect the lives and property of their community as well as the ideals of our nation. I have always admired men and women who served a cause greater than themselves.

Like many after 9/11, the anger of the attacks engendered a need in me to do SOMETHING. When a good friend told me about a job at a nearby Naval base, I was curious, and a bit intimidated. I definitely wanted to apply. I am not a first responder. However, when I learned that the job I was applying for was to serve those who were, I was incredibly proud to get the offer. At the beginning of 2003, I was hired as an operations coordinator for the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS), a brand new center at the Naval Postgraduate School that offered the country's first master's degree in homeland security. It was an exciting time. In the shadow of all the death and destruction, our task was to create a cadre of first responders who

could think critically about our domestic threats. We were an answer to the 9/11 Commission Report's criticism that the nation suffered from a "failure of imagination." Everyone at CHDS was passionate about working together to create policies and strategies to make our country safer. CHDS is a place where we can test ideas that could be implemented faster because the people writing the policies were the ones who had the power to put them into action. Our students are encouraged to be provocative, collaborative, and think beyond the day's crisis. It was ok to fail in our classroom in order to succeed in the real world.

After a few months as a coordinator, our director, Paul Stockton, looked at me one day and said, "I want you to be the face of CHDS!" I was excited because I loved working with our students and helping them get through the program. It was gratifying to see them ascend leadership and get promoted. Over time, I became the operations director. I felt the pull to help the students even more and left that position to develop our strategic communications department. I traveled to every state in the country to work with the leadership of local, state, tribal, territorial, federal, and military agencies to convince them to send their best and brightest to CHDS. It was quite an ask because most of the people we wanted were already busy doing their





jobs at the mid to senior levels. We want them to pull away for 18 months to do actual research, make a difference, and improve their agencies' security. In addition, I help all our alums retain a sense of community, to call on each other when they need to learn new smart practices. One of the best parts of my job is to tell the stories of how our graduates, students, and faculty implement what they have learned. It is not enough for CHDS students to learn. They must iterate and innovate to keep up with their dynamic threats. I am proud that our graduates work hard and collaborate in our alums community for years and sometimes decades after graduation.

Working alongside these heroes is my act of service. I am filled with adrenaline whenever I address a group of our alumni or their agencies. After almost 20 years, I still get excited to tell our stories and recruit more agencies to attend our programs. It is an energy that is contagious and born out of a passion for helping those who selflessly help all of us in our quest to be safe in our communities and nation. I have the best job in the world! ❤️



About The Author

For two decades, Heather Issvoran has been the bridge between federal, state, local, and tribal homeland security practitioners and officials with global thought leaders on resilience, homeland security, and emergency management. Ms. Issvoran scours the country ensuring the Center enrolls the very best candidates for its executive and graduate programs. Her responsibilities include contract support for strategic communications, agency outreach, student and alumni relations, recruitment, and public affairs. She supervises and coordinates Center communications on the national level for print, broadcast, and web-based media, working closely with both the Naval Postgraduate School and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security leadership on these endeavors.

Ms. Issvoran leads a strategic communications operation and department that shares, shapes, and demonstrates the impact and success stories of CHDS students, faculty, staff, and alumni and reaches out to a national audience of academics and practitioners.

In her previous position in contract support for the Center as the Director of Program Operations, Ms. Issvoran enhanced and streamlined program operations while working with government partners to accommodate additional programmatic goals.

Ms. Issvoran provided logistical planning, coordination, and execution of the Center's master's degree programs, executive leaders programs, conferences, and workshops. Prior to the Center, Ms. Issvoran worked as the Director for Human Resources for FamilyCare of Monterey Bay. In this position, she was responsible for human resources for 40 employees and 5 physicians. She also successfully helped lead the company through bankruptcy and corporate reorganization.

Ms. Issvoran has a background in the fields of education and marketing in addition to her operations experience. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies from Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California.



METHODS OF MIGRATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING

By Gwendolyn Quintana and Dr. Christian A. Nanry

Have you ever seen a victim of human trafficking? Contrary to common beliefs, chances are you have. Human trafficking involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion in exchange for labor, services, or a commercial sex act and hinges on the exploitation of an individual. Victims work and live in our communities and can be found in surprisingly “safe” places. Victims have been known to work inconspicuously as landscapers, construction workers, janitors, agricultural workers, migrant laborers, foreign national domestic workers, childcare providers, and in other hospitality-focused business places. Parents should pay particular attention to signs of trafficking with their children, as human trafficking targets people of all ages, affluence, and demographics.

Perhaps the greatest chance of identifying victims lies with law enforcement. Most identified victims are referred to support agencies through initial identification by law enforcement suggesting the importance of informed law enforcement. Recommendations as per The [U.S. Department of State 2021 Trafficking in Persons Report \(TIP\)](#) pertaining to law enforcement include screening immigrants in custody for human trafficking indicators, encouraging state and local authorities to implement policies to not prosecute victims for unlawful acts their traffickers compelled them to commit, training investigators, prosecutors, and judges to increase the number of forfeiture orders and mandatory restitution orders for trafficking victims. Children are also trafficking through illegal immigration. [The Human Trafficking Training Center](#) conducts training for local or state law enforcement that focuses on providing current data and law enforcement interventions for combating human trafficking.

Another critical point of interaction between victims and

community members is in the healthcare systems, especially emergency departments. Healthcare providers may be the only professionals’ victims encounter while they are under the control of traffickers. Many victims do not believe they are being trafficked, making their identification in healthcare problematic. Children can attempt to conceal signs of trafficking from parents, teachers, and counselors. Medical professionals have the ability and opportunity to treat and prevent further abuses to children and patients. Several state and professional medical societies have endorsed the requirement for formal training on human trafficking victim identification for healthcare provider licensure, on victims of all ages. See [CDC Train](#) for more information.

Human traffickers’ use of the internet to recruit victims has increased during the pandemic. Unfortunately, advancements in the use of simulated, virtual metaverses has provided traffickers the opportunity to socially interact one-on-one with prospective victims online. These online metaverse realities provide an ideal place for traffickers to meet, groom, pay, persuade, and lure victims, particularly minority males. Online [gaming platforms](#) have also become of particular interest as a gateway to child exploitation and human trafficking. [Thorne](#) and the Crimes against Children Research conducts research using ads on Facebook to ascertain vulnerable demographic profiles and provide statistical analysis of targeted victimization. The [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) has created an online toolkit to help educate parents on the dangers of online exploitation in order to better protect their children.

Promising practices for identifying victims include training and education of professionals and the community, screening practices and interview protocols, and task forces. Governmental and medical agencies, such as [APHA policies](#), are adapting



preventative and treatment procedures as we better understand victim profiles, where they live, and their journey.

Parents are encouraged to cultivate calm nonjudgmental environments to encourage open-ended dialog with their children to persevere through difficult situations. Thanking their children for speaking to them on often uncomfortable and embarrassing situations is important, building trust for future endeavors. Adults with intersecting relationships should approach parents with sensitive and learned information discretely, not to embarrass the child in question. This could cause the child to withdraw, negatively affecting treatment and legal remedies.

If you suspect child sexual exploitation is occurring, please contact the [National Center for Missing and Exploited Children](#) CyberTipline at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678). Find a crisis counselor with resources in your area by calling 1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453).

To report suspected human trafficking crimes or to get help from law enforcement call [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement](#) at 1-866-347-2423.

To request general information about human trafficking crimes, call [National Human Trafficking Resource Center](#) at 1-888-373-7888 or text HELP or INFO to BeFree (233733).

The [National Human Trafficking Resource Center](#) provides an interactive map, which includes in-depth state and local resources. ♡



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



DR. CHRISTIAN A. NANRY

Dr. Christian A. Nanry is a veteran and serves his community as a law enforcement official. Dr. Nanry's research has focused on the relationship between higher education and law enforcement performance, and Human Trafficking and Exploitation.

His current research aims to evaluate the criminal justice degree curriculum in America and the associated occupational needs using a decision analysis to determine its efficacy and make recommendations for meeting the current law enforcement needs of our communities.

GWENDOLYN QUINTANA

Gwendolyn Quintana is a clinician and public health professional with expertise in Texas public health policy. Her interests include safe haven programming for women and children, policies for reducing human trafficking, and health systems thinking.

She currently serves on several boards and works as a family medicine resident physician at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio.

READY, SET, GO

By Dr. Terry Oroszi

There has been an uptake in climate and weather-related disasters. We have seen a surge five-fold over 50 years. An increase in global temperatures means more droughts, floods, rising sea levels, and increased intensity of storms. Changes in the climate intensify hazards and the risk of extreme weather disasters. The evidence is overwhelming and the results devastating. The number of climate-related disasters has tripled in the last 30 years, and more than 20 million people a year are forced from their homes by climate change.

What this means for the average citizen is that their chance of experiencing a natural disaster has increased. Natural disasters are not our only threat; every one of us could also suffer a localized or personal disaster, such as a neighborhood power outage, a house fire, or a citizen uprising.

Live the Capable Lifestyle! Capable people can be best described with the Coast Guard motto, "Always Prepared"! Capable people have a realistic expectation about the world, its dangers, and the fact that there are many ways we can adapt to make our lives safer.

Capable people have no expectation of calm; they understand that, while many of the places they go are relatively safe, the environment can change, and a threat may appear.

Capable people are not complacent; they understand that complacency can cause us to ignore our environment and become caught up in our activities. Complacency causes us to lower our guard and assume we are safe regardless of what may actually be happening around us.

Capable people take advantage of technology rather than being distracted by it. Capable people make use of modern technology (internet, cellphones, social media) to enhance their ability to learn about their environment, especially any threats. Technology helps them make good planning choices and then allows them to rapidly adapt those plans when things change.

Capable people plan ahead, and they plan with contingencies. They think about possible alternative outcomes and additional factors that may have an impact on their activities – they take into consideration the "What If" scenario.

Who will be able to help us in a crisis? Organizations with missions to help the public during



times of crisis locally include the police, fire, and EMS. The American Red Cross, an organization started by social reformer and nursing pioneer Clara Barton in 1881, was created to aid Americans suffering from disasters or serving on the battlefield.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is another organization that responds nationally. FEMA's mission is to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards. The maximum dollar amount a FEMA survivor can receive is set by Congress and is currently \$35,500. The average grant is less than \$8,000.

"Beyond COVID – many of you are also seeing your resources drawn into the opioid crisis, tackling homelessness, dealing with social unrest and the consequences of domestic terrorism, the impacts of cybersecurity breaches, and numerous other types of crises. And of course, there's climate change, which is turning the storms, floods, and fires that we manage into profound, long-term, cascading incidents."

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell's Remarks to the NEMA 2021 Annual Forum

First responders are the first line of defense for our communities, responding to both natural and man-made threats; however, they

cannot do it alone. We must recognize the need for personal preparedness. There are several things we can do to be better prepared.

To start, if you don't have it already, get homeowner's / renter's insurance! Talk to your agent about coverage, such as fire, flood, wind, mold, and debris removal. A standard policy covers water damage from a burst pipe or broken HVAC or protective sprinkler system.

Wind-driven rain that enters through a hole in the roof or window would also be covered. Flooding, surface water, water that seeps up from the ground, and water that backs up through sewers or drains or overflows through a sump pump are all typically excluded from coverage. A water backup coverage endorsement can be added to your policy for as little as \$30 a year.

Create a family disaster/safety/crisis plan. It is very important that your family be prepared for a disaster before it strikes. One way to prepare is by assembling an EMERGENCY Go-Bag.

A Go-Bag is a portable kit that includes the items that you need to survive while you are away from your home. Once a disaster hits, you will not have time to shop or search for supplies. However, if you gather supplies in advance, your family can endure an evacuation or home confinement.

Emergency Go-Bags should include a minimum of the following twenty items. Check the

expiration dates on nonperishable food items, bottled water/beverages, and medications.

1. Water: one gallon per person, per day (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
2. Food: non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home).
3. Flashlight
4. Solar, battery-powered, or hand-crank radio
5. Extra batteries
6. First Aid Kit.
7. Multi-purpose tool
8. Sanitation and personal hygiene items
9. Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
10. Family and emergency contact information
11. Extra cash
12. Blankets
13. Map(s) of area
14. Medical supplies (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc.) with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, etc.)
15. Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
16. Games and activities for children
17. Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
18. Two-way radios
19. Extra set of car keys and house keys
20. Manual can opener

Contents for your Go-Bag can be region-dependent.

The West Pacific region experiences earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, wildfires, and volcanoes. Your Go-Bag could include maps, heat resistant blankets, crank, or solar phone chargers. Do not forget a spare pair of reading glasses to read those maps.

West (Mountain)

Two of the natural disasters, earthquakes and wildfires, plague this region as it does the West Pacific. The type of disaster can dictate the amount of time you can expect to be away, and if that trip might be permanent. Wildfires can destroy communities, whereas it is less likely that an earthquake will leave you homeless. Do not forget to have important phone numbers and addresses in writing; relying on your phone in times like this can be a detriment.

Midwest

Tornadoes are predominant here. When possible, move to a windowless interior space on the lowest floor. In Illinois and Missouri earthquakes are a problem. North Dakota and South Dakota experience wildfires. Earthquakes and forest fires

made the top ten worst U.S. Disasters list, while tornadoes did not. An indoor Go-Bag, left in your safe space, can be helpful when waiting out a tornado. This bag should have games, a crank radio in case of power loss, water, and snacks.

South and Southeast

Tornadoes, landslides, earthquakes, and hurricanes, depending on your location. Six of the ten deadliest disasters were hurricane events. Make sure your Go-Bag includes rainwear and is waterproof.

The Mid Atlantic and New England

Hurricanes and Winter Storms are repeating natural disasters for this region. Make sure your Go-Bag includes blankets, extra clothes, and instant heat packs, not microwave needed.

Where can I learn more?

[FEMA's Emergency Management Institute](#) offers more than 200 free courses online. IS-394.A: Protecting Your Home or Small Business from Disaster

The primary audience is small business owners, homeowners, and individual citizens. It is presented in a non-technical format and includes protective measures that can reduce the negative consequences of disasters on homes or small businesses.

Get involved with CERT

[The Community Emergency Response Team program](#) offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during a disaster situation. Search for a program, register your group, and stay connected in your neighborhood!

Ready

Launched in February 2003, [Ready](#) is a National public service campaign designed to educate and empower adults, teens, and children to prepare for, respond to and mitigate emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters.

Ready for Teens

Teenagers and other young people can help their families, schools, and communities prepare for disasters. Teens can join the teen preparedness council or start a youth preparedness program like Teen CERT.

Ready Kids!

Emergencies and disasters can be scary for adults, but even more so for children. At the [Ready Kids! webpage](#) you will find games for children. Your younger children can become a 'Disaster Master' and learn how to build an emergency kit. They can meet Pedro the Penguin, who will teach you all about staying safe.

Being prepared can be a family affair. When the family is prepared, the fear is lessened and the

chances for survival are improved. Make a Go-Bag, have one for each car, and the home. Fill it with items that are needed for your region. Have a meeting place defined and mapped, for the family to reconnect after a disaster. Extra medications or prescriptions can save lives. ❤️

First Aid Supplies

- ✓ Adhesive bandages, various sizes
- ✓ 5" x 9" sterile dressing
- ✓ Conforming roller gauze bandage
- ✓ Triangular bandages
- ✓ 3" x 3" sterile gauze pads
- ✓ 4" x 4" sterile gauze pads
- ✓ Roll 3" cohesive bandage
- ✓ Germicidal hand wipes or waterless, alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- ✓ Antiseptic wipes
- ✓ Box large medical grade, non-latex gloves
- ✓ Tongues depressor blades
- ✓ Adhesive tape 2" width
- ✓ Antibacterial ointment
- ✓ Cold pack
- ✓ 2 pairs scissors (small, personal)
- ✓ Tweezers
- ✓ Assorted sizes safety pins
- ✓ Alcohol and peroxide
- ✓ Cotton balls
- ✓ Thermometer
- ✓ Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ CPR breathing barrier
- ✓ First aid manual



Non-Prescription & Prescription Med Kit Supplies

- ✓ Aspirin and non-aspirin pain reliever
- ✓ Anti-diarrhea medication
- ✓ Antacid (for stomach upset)
- ✓ Laxative
- ✓ Vitamins
- ✓ Prescriptions
- ✓ Extra eyeglasses/contact lenses



Food & Water Supplies

- ✓ Water (3-day supply per person)
- ✓ Ready-to-eat meats, fruits, and vegetables
- ✓ Canned or boxed juices, milk, and soup
- ✓ High-energy foods
- ✓ Special foods for infants
- ✓ Cookies, hard candy
- ✓ Instant coffee
- ✓ Cereals
- ✓ Powdered milk



Earthquakes: You should practice DROP, COVER and HOLD ON with everyone in your household.



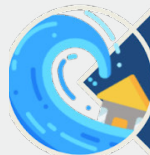
Wildfires: Make sure you are signed up for the emergency notification systems that your community uses.



Hurricanes: Keep an emergency kit on hand, and create an evacuation plan for your household, including pets.



Volcanoes: You need to have a dust mask and goggles in your GO bag.



Tsunami: Plan your routes from school, work, home, and designate a safe meeting place 2 miles inland or 100 feet above sea level.



Landslide: Plan your routes from school, work, home, and designate a safe meeting place 2 miles inland or 100 feet above sea level.



Winter Storms: A GO bag should be always in your car in case you are out during a storm. When possible, avoid driving.



ABOUT TERRY OROSZI

Dr. Terry Oroszi is a Vice-Chair and Associate professor In the Pharmacology and Toxicology Department, Boonshoft School of Medicine (BSOM), part of Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. Her subject matter expertise is in Homeland Security.

As part of her role at BSOM, she serves as Director of the graduate and the Chemical Biological, Radiological, Nuclear (CBRN) Defense Programs. She started her career in the Army, transitioned to the laboratory doing molecular genetics work, and merged her military and science experiences to develop the homeland security focus for the medical school.

Dr. Oroszi has several collaborations with the military, industry, academia, and the government in CBRN, terrorism, and crisis decision-making. She is the founder and chair of [The Dayton Think Tank](#), a gathering of the top 50

crisis leaders in the region.

As a civilian, Oroszi has received training from the FBI through two programs in 2018 and 2019 and recently stepped down as president of the Dayton InfraGard chapter to be part of the [InfraGard National Members Alliance](#) Board as the new INMA secretary.

Oroszi has shared her research on American terrorists with NSA, at Quantico, and members of Congress in D.C. Her subject matter expertise in terrorism and crisis leadership has been recognized in media, including print, web, and T.V., and as an invited speaker at national conferences for military, government, and industry leaders.

Along with several journal publications, she is a co-editor and contributing author of [“Weapons of Mass Psychological Destruction and the](#)

[People that Use Them,”](#) Praeger ABC-Clio, [“The American Terrorist: Everything You Need to Know to be a Subject Matter Expert,”](#) Greylander Press, a book covering four years of dedicated research on American citizens charged with acts related to terrorism.

In her free time, Oroszi started writing a fiction series about a female FBI agent that is frankly not a very good agent. She drops cover, occasionally loses her temper, and has a few too many unsanctioned kills. [“Operation Stormfront: From Weatherman to Wall Street,”](#) book one in the series, and book two, [“Operation Deep Dive: Back into the Past,”](#) released Sept 2019, and novella book 2.5, [“Mr. Smith Goes to North Korea,”](#) released Oct. 2019.

DESIGN THINKING FOR FAMILY PREPAREDNESS

By Angi English



Design Thinking is a simple human-centered, collaborative, and optimistic process that involves the whole family in getting ready for any hard problem, including family preparedness.

A good family preparedness plan works best when everyone in the family feels like they have ownership of the plan and they have helped create it.

Design thinking uses a creative (lateral thinking) approach which is a flexible and innovative approach to solving problems that may not lend themselves to a step-by-step process.

The design process is what puts design thinking into action. It is a structured approach to generating and evolving ideas from the whole family.

Design thinking is a fun and inclusive way to gather ideas from the whole family, fostering buy-in from everyone to make it successful. The process has five nonlinear (you can go back and forth) phases; empathy, problem identification, ideate, prototype and test/implement.

What do you need?

You'll need some butcher paper or white board; post-it notes and markers. To make it even more personal, let kids choose a color of post-it note that is only for their comments.

First, define the problem or issue. Is it a family evacuation plan or shelter-in-place or some other challenge during an emergency or some other problem? Once you've defined the problem, then you want to ideate.

During the ideation (brainstorming) part, pose a question and write it on the paper or white board.

The whole family takes two minutes (or longer for younger children) without talking for everyone to think of ideas to solve or address the issue and write those on the post-it notes. After the time is up, have everyone post their notes on the paper or white board under the question. Look for patterns or themes and include dis-

cussion for any outliers (post-it notes that don't fit into a theme). Sometimes children have the best ideas on how to solve a problem that adults may not have thought of or imagined.

Keep the problem statement simple and for younger children, try to phrase it in age-appropriate language. If younger children can't write, have them draw a picture of their idea. The reason you do this without talking is that everyone has equal say.

Discuss the general themes and seek agreement together on which ones to keep and incorporate into your preparedness plan. Keep doing the iteration (brainstorming) without talking for each question you have for your family preparedness plan.

Then, incorporate your outcomes into a draft family plan. This is your family prototype (draft) plan, and it is fun to "pretend" that a real disaster has happened, and you get to try it out. Test out your pretend disaster. This can be fun!

Keep what works and reiterate what doesn't until you and everyone in the family agrees that you have a plan that is customized to your needs and has incorporated all the ideas from all the family members.

If you want to become even more sophisticated, you can parallel the phases of emergency management and create a family plan that involves prevention, mitigation (stopping a disaster before it happens), response and recovery.

Those steps could be recrafted into "How Might We" questions. How might we questions are generative, inclusive, and hopeful.

As an example, let's use a house fire disaster.

- How Might We prevent a house fire? What can we do now inside and outside of our house to make it more fire resistant?
- How Might We respond to a house fire if it happens? If a fire happens, how do each of us respond?



- How Might We recovery from a house fire if it happens? If we have a house fire, foster resilient outcomes by preparing for recovery, especially with children.

Thinking of these issues ahead of time not only helps the whole family feel prepared but can reduce the fear of children of the unknown because they know ahead of time what to expect.

The design thinking process can also be used in other family preparedness issues like going on a trip, preparing for a new baby or pet, going back to school or a planned surgery of a family member.

The key feature of design thinking is inclusion of everyone in the family. The plan fosters empathy for each other because it is a process that involves sharing feelings of the whole family and helps share the perspectives of each member, no matter the age.

A family design thinking plan also fosters optimism. The process gives the family confidence that new and better things are possible and that you can make them happen.

Once you've gone through the design thinking process, prototyped and tested your plan, then put it on paper and gather all the supplies identified during your design thinking process. Post the plan where everyone can see it and review it from time to time.

Design thinking for family preparedness is a powerful and inclusive way to ward off the fear of the unknown and foster confidence and resiliency of children in their ability to handle tough challenges or other life events that require forethought. ♥

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Angi English has an impressive career as a strategic thought leader, leading strategic initiatives in homeland security and emergency management including various risk management projects for and with state and federal task forces. In 2010, appointed by Secretary Janet Napolitano, English worked with 35 other task force members representing local, State, Tribal and Territorial governments to collaboratively take stock of national preparedness and provide recommendations to Congress. The [task force](#) worked collaboratively with all stakeholders over a full year to produce a report for Congress, "Perspectives on Preparedness: Taking Stock Since 9/11." Additionally, English

provided advisory services in the development of the [Presidential Policy Directive 8](#), the directive aimed at strengthening the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation, including acts of terrorism, cyber-attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters. Additionally, the taskforce facilitated the overhaul of the [Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment](#) (THIRA) and the [National Disaster Response Framework](#).

In her 30 years working in homeland security, emergency management, mental health, risk management and disability advocacy communities, she is a recognized award-winning leader. In 2012, she graduated from the Executive Leadership Program at the Naval Postgraduate School and in 2014, graduated "With Distinction," with a Master's Degree in Security Studies from the Naval Postgraduate School. She was named the Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security Curtis H. Butch Straub Achievement Award winner for exemplary leadership and vision. In addition to this honor, she became a Founding Scholar for Innovation at the [18-month think tank](#) called HSx, "[Advanced Thinking in Homeland Security](#)" through the Naval Postgraduate School where she created an award-winning grand challenge project, "[One Health Alert System: Complexity Oriented Model for Rapid Detection for Disease Outbreaks](#)." Less than one percent of graduates were invited to HSx, participants were chosen based on their proven efforts to lead and thrive in an environment that is unknown, complex, chaotic, and evolving exponentially. English also has a Master's Degree from Baylor University in Educational Psychology.

She is a featured writer for Homeland Security: [A Platform by the Center for Homeland Defense and Security For Radical Homeland Security Experimentation](#) with over 30 publications, many focused on navigating "sensemaking in conditions of uncertainty," and a featured author in the Wiley Publishers text "[Foundations of Homeland Security: Law and Policy, 2nd Edition](#)" with a chapter on "Metacognition and Errors in Judgment Related to Decision-Making in Homeland Security." The chapter explores how the brain and its subsequent thinking processes are influenced by the organic mechanisms of the brain, the social dynamics of groups, and the social construction of reality by people in general.

When she's not solving tough problems, she is out flying her drones as a FAA [Certified Part 107 Drone Pilot](#) behind the lens of her camera, [photographing landscapes in remote areas of the world](#). Combining her interests for drones and public safety, she was an instrumental advisor in the creation of New Mexico's Fusion Center's drone program, a half-million-dollar effort.

PREPAREDNESS *CAN ONLY HELP*

By Rachel Svites



The best thing you can do for yourself in life is prepare, whether that is in school, your career, or aspects of your personal life. I have always been someone who liked to be prepared. I used to think that being prepared just seemed fun and exciting. It was not until I was a little older that I realized it was something I craved because it kept my anxiety low.

In 2017, I was diagnosed with OCD, also known as Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. The National Institute of Mental Health defines OCD as "a common, chronic, and long-lasting disorder in which a person has uncontrollable, reoccurring thoughts (obsessions) and/or behaviors (compulsions) that he or she feels the urge to repeat over and over."

Now you might be thinking, how does OCD have anything to do with anxiety? Well, it has more to do with it than one might think. When I create an obsession in my head, I cannot get it out, no matter how hard I try. It could take years, and most of the time, produce an absurd amount of anxiety. The American Psychological Association defines anxiety as "an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts, and physical changes like increased blood pressure."

Anyone who has OCD or anxiety, or is someone who has watched their loved ones suffer from it, knows that it can hinder lives. Over the past few years, my anxiety has gotten worse, and I have helped it become that way. I feed into what my mind is telling me instead of getting up and doing something about it. I decided enough was enough and began helping myself.

There are just some things in life that you worry about more than others. For me, it can range from a tornado to someone I love getting sick. None of it could be present in my life, but that does not mean I will not get extreme anxiety thinking it could happen.

One of the things I have struggled most with is the feeling that an emergency will occur, and there is nothing I can do to help or stop it. It was never a thought looming over my head like a dark cloud, but it was always present somewhere in my mind. Situations would arise, and I would panic silently to myself, thinking that the worst would happen when nothing was wrong with anyone.

This past May, I was a student studying to earn my undergraduate degree and had the chance to take an extra class. In my final semester at Salisbury University, I decided to take a class called Emergency Wilderness Care. I was so excited to be in this class because I was finally ready to tackle this mental block I had created in my head.

This class introduced me to the principles of how to help a patient be comfortable and survive in situations when help is an hour or more out. This care can pertain to open wounds, fractures, sprains, infections, and many other life-threatening conditions. Taking this class gave me a feeling of power. I felt if someone was physically hurt, I would now have the ability to help them.

I understand that a few scenarios in my life would cause me to be in these types of situations, and because of my anxiety, I never let myself get in these situations. But now, I can live my life freely and not worry about going on an incredible trip or doing something I am afraid to do. That reduced a lot of my anxiety right away. It dawned on me at that moment that I could prepare for so many things that I had anxiety about.

It took me a little longer to realize that just because you prepare does not mean it will not happen. But it does give you the mindfulness that if an anxiety-driven event were to occur, you could do something about it. I was blessed to have parents who tried everything they could to understand what I was going through and try to help me throughout my life.

Once they learned that being prepared is a

fantastic way to relieve my anxiety, they have stepped in to learn more with me. They have taught me many things that have helped me become less anxious, and it feels good that everyone has found a way to be a part of this journey.

All the information I have described above is my situation, but I assume many people can relate to it. The best thing you can do in life is to educate yourself. I will always encourage everyone to expand their knowledge because you never know when it can save someone's life.

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About Rachel Svites

Rachel Svites is a recent Summa Cum Laude graduate from Salisbury University. She was born in Southern Maryland and has resided there her whole life. Rachel is determined to help stop the stigma of mental health. She hopes that sharing her story can help others find better ways to cope.

She is applying to a master's program in strategic communication and leadership. While she is just beginning her career, she is determined to succeed. Rachel hopes to continue spreading awareness about mental health and successful strategies anyone can use to help.

HOW TO CREATE A FAMILY TECHNOLOGY PLAN

By Erin Hang

As a working mom of two, I have been more reliant on technology than I would like to admit. We live in a time where technology dominates our lives. The pandemic has changed the way both children and adults use the internet. Most of our children have used technology to learn, be entertained, and connect with family and friends. Now that children are on their computers more often, more screen time comes with risks that all parents should be consider and monitor.

Most school-aged children have some sort of technology easily accessible to them and use online sites such as YouTube and numerous social media sites like TikTok, Instagram, and SnapChat, or popular gaming platforms such as Fortnite and Minecraft. This easy accessibility gives your child the ability to connect with others they may not know or engage in content you don't approve. Allowing access to some or all of these media platforms may or may not be something

you allow your child, but it is important to determine what you will allow and then set up some ground rules for your family usage. Setting technology guidelines may be difficult as there is much to consider. The best way to do this is by creating and implementing a "Family Technology Plan." This plan outlines how technology is used within your home. You can consider utilizing a template online. One I found helpful is from the American Academy of Pediatrics <http://www.healthychildren.org/MediaUsePlan>.

Here are some areas all parents should consider when setting up a family technology plan.

1. Technology Dangers – Determine what dangers your family should be aware of and discuss them. Watch for signs that technology may be negatively affecting your child.

• *Connecting with strangers* - Most children

don't seem to see an issue with someone they don't know requesting to be their friend on a video game or social media. The more followers you have on most media platforms, apparently, the more popular you are. It is so important no matter your child's age, to remind them of one simple rule – if you don't know the person don't "friend" them online.

• *Overuse* – Is your child experiencing issues with school, sleep, or communication? If so, consider how much computer usage they are getting and if it should be modified.

• *Cyberbullying* – This is a major issue our children face today. If your child feels they are being bullied online, they should bring it your attention or an adult they trust.

2. Limit Usage and Apps Allowed – Determine how much time your child should have online and what apps or technology you're



allowing them to use.

- **Usage limits** – What is an appropriate amount of screen time for your child's age? You may consider consulting their pediatrician or research it online. Most phones or tablets have technology or applications (apps) that can be downloaded to help with limiting use. For example, there is a setting on your child's iPad to turn off all apps after 1 hour. You should consider utilizing one of these applications if you are having a hard time limiting use.

- **Apps and downloads** – What types of apps are you allowing your child to use? You can restrict your child from downloading new apps without your permission. If a child wants to download a new game on their tablet, a request can be sent to a parent or caregiver to review for appropriateness and approval/denial. For example, if you have an iOS device (Apple) you can easily lock down downloads under the family feature for free. There are also many apps out there you can download. A couple great ones can be found in the App Store such as, Parental Control App-OurPact or Parental Control App-Famisafe.

- **Earning usage** – Consider having your child earn screen time by completing chores, exercising or completing home-



work.

3. Create Technology Free Zones and Times

Setup times and places where technology is not allowed.

- **Tech free times and places** – Consider no technology when eating at the table or in bedrooms. Setup a block or blocks of time when technology cannot be used daily.

4. Monitoring Device Activity

Set up a time to monitor the technology being used to ensure appropriateness and safety.

- **Be involved** – It's also important to discuss with your child that if technology is going to be used, you as their parent will be monitoring it. Monitoring will have a different meaning for everyone, but

it is highly suggested that text messages, email, social media and gaming discussions be reviewed. All online activity monitoring is important.

Every family is different and like everything in our lives there should be balance when it comes to your family's technology use. By creating a Family Technology plan, you can ensure everyone feels ownership of the plan and understands the importance of how and when they should be utilizing their time online. Building responsible digital citizens is an important part of parenting. 📌



ABOUT ERIN HANG

Erin Hang has worked in the security industry for nearly 20 years and is a Senior Director for Fortior Solutions, LLC where she is the company's subject matter expert in regards to identity and vetting solutions.

She has worked with a number of federal organizations, primarily the U.S. military to help create and enhance government vetting and vendors, contractors and visitors accessing secure facilities.

Erin is a wife and mother to two boys, ages 10 and 13. She is often found on the sidelines supporting her boys in their various sports. She enjoys spending her personal time with friends and family and working out.



PREPAREDNESS WITH PETS

By Dr. Susan Skyler

A Little History

The coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) that is causing the pandemic Covid-19 is actually just one of many corona viruses globally, the first being found in the 1960's. These corona viruses are carried in reservoir hosts. There are 4 main sub-groups of corona viruses, and seven of them can cause human disease including influenza (flu) and colds. Corona viruses have probably been in existence for about 10,000 years. Of the seven known corona viruses that infect humans, five of these viruses have bats as their reservoir and two have rodents as their reservoir. There then may be possible intermediate hosts that help transmit the diseases. (1)

Most emerging pathogens (organisms that cause disease by jumping to new species or involve a more significant number of existing hosts often due to environmental crowding) come from countries along the equator, as did Covid-19. This observation brings to the forefront the concept of ONE HEALTH. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has an extensive definition. (2) It basically means that WE need to be looking at the interactions between HUMANS, ANIMALS, PLANTS, and their SHARED ENVIRONMENTS.

WHAT YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT NOW, YOU AND YOUR PETS!

The most current information is that dogs, multiple species of cats, including tigers, leopards, and lions, ferrets and mink, can catch Covid-19 from humans. Only in laboratory settings can hamsters, fruit bats, and tree shrews become infected as well and transmit the virus to their own species. As of Sept. 2020, "12 dogs and 10 cats in the US have been confirmed with SARS-CoV-2." (3) Cats may show respiratory symptoms like sneezing, mucous, runny eyes and can transmit Covid-19 to other cats in close contact. The Cornell Feline Health Center is an excellent resource for cat owners. (4)

Unlike cats, dogs do not support viral replication and transmission to other dogs and usually have not presented with respiratory symptoms. Ferrets can become infected but do not seem to transmit the virus, except in a laboratory setting. (5) Cats and dogs have not been shown to transmit Covid-19 to humans. Mink become ill, die, and are the only animal that are known to transmit this virus back to humans in close contact.

Continued on next page.

UNLIKE CATS,

it is recommended that if a human in your household has been infected or exposed to Covid-19, they should maintain separation from household animals as they would with other household members, and avoid direct contact with pets, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, sleeping in the same location, and sharing food or bedding.

If possible, a household member should be designated to care for pets in the home and should follow standard handwashing practices before and after interacting with the household animal. If a person with Covid-19 must care for pets or other animals, they should ensure they wash their hands before and after caring for them. (6)



TESTING FOR ANIMALS IS VERY PROBLEMATIC

If you suspect that your pet (especially cats) has Covid-19, your veterinarian must eliminate all other possible problems or causes before the State Veterinarian (in your State) may then approve testing.

continued on next page



Virus isolation is the most accurate but uncommon test when the actual virus itself is grown.

- PCR is a polymerase chain reaction which is done by a machine that multiplies an essential and important piece of the genetic material (RNA) from this virus. This amplification makes it easier to identify. It is the second most accurate test. It does not detect the live virus, only identifiable pieces of the Covid-19 virus. This is an antigen test (a test for the same part of the actual virus).
- Rapid tests that are done on-site look for specific protein fragments from the virus. This is also an antigen test.
- Antibody tests are blood tests that can only tell if you have been infected in the past. It takes a variable amount of time for antibodies to develop.
- Genetic testing occurs when researchers are trying to ascertain that two individuals have the exact same strain as the virus, so the viral RNA is directly compared.
- All of these tests vary in sensitivity (ability to detect even small amounts of viral proteins or genetic material) and specificity how often the test results are correctly negative or positive.

CLEANING CAN POISON YOUR PETS (AND YOU) SO BE CAREFUL!

The Pet Poison Hotline reports a doubling in calls about possible toxicity starting in March, 2020, regarding cleaning and disinfecting products. The ASPCA (America Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) Poison Control Center saw a 65% increase as well regarding household cleaning products.

Most of these were accidental exposures including “pets may drink out of mop buckets, lick their paws after placing them on cleaner-covered countertops, eat food-coated wipes out of trash, or drink from water bowls that were disinfected but not rinsed. “...some calls were about pets exposed to alcohol-based hand sanitizers, occasionally used directly on pets.” Also occurring were calls about “alcohol, marijuana, paint and bread dough and yeast...symptoms included stomach upset to severe corrosive injury to a pet’s mouth, esophagus and stomach.” (7) ■

WHAT THE HECK ARE THESE TESTS?

(MORE THAN YOU WANTED TO KNOW)



A good video for safe cleaning recommendations by Dr. Brutlag at the Pet Poison Helpline is available at [CLICK HERE](#)

If you would enjoy further information, there is an excellent YouTube video by Dr. Jenifer Chatfield, DVM, titled "What you need to know about COVID-19." [CLICK HERE](#)

ABOUT DR. SKYLER



Dr. Susan Skyler is currently retired after 37 years of working as a veterinarian in a busy small animal practice in Austin, Texas. However, retired is a relative term, as she still does relief work as needed and for the past six years has been the primary volunteer veterinarian for Austin Wildlife Rescue, a non-profit that takes in about 8,000 native Texas animals yearly.

Born and raised in Albuquerque, New Mexico with a father who would pick up black widow spiders barehanded to show them the hourglass on their abdomen, raising tadpoles to frogs, pet dogs and cats, showing quarter-horses and blue jean pockets with the occasional snake for her mother the stage was set for a future with animals.

After receiving a BS in Biology from the University of New Mexico, a MA in Biochemical Endocrinology from the University of Texas at Austin and finally a DVM from Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine she continues to live in Austin, Texas.

While in small animal practice and volunteering at Austin Wildlife Rescue one of her major goals was to empower the staff and pet owners with the knowledge and insight to understand and meet the needs of the animals and when they needed to reach out for help. The transition to wildlife medicine was a jump into the great unknown to gather the knowledge needed for the handling and care of many different species. There was the occasional turtle bite, owl or hawk talon through the glove or elsewhere, skunk spray and porcupine quills.

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In addition to veterinary medicine Dr. Skyler enjoys road bicycling with friends including bicycle trips to Europe, Canada and many states across the United States. She enjoys reading and has treasured being with the same book group for over 25 years. She has been fortunate to share 21 years with a gentle and loving partner and for many years she cared for her beautiful son who was severely disabled and who deeply enriched her life. He taught her many lessons including how to be a more understanding and caring veterinarian.



EXPERIENCE CAN BE *THE BEST TEACHER*

By Heather Issvoran

You have no idea what or who influences your children throughout the day. One day, my always curious and somewhat mischievous then 12-year-old daughter, Lauren, looked up at me and said, "Mom, did you know Cheeto's can be used as a match in an emergency?" I asked, "Where did you learn that from?" Lauren replied, "Wendy taught us that in case of emergency, we should make sure we have Cheetos at all times!" My daughter whipped out a Cheeto and proceeded to light it from the gas burner on the stove. To my surprise, it lit up like a torch and stayed lit with a flame before burning out. I have never looked at a Cheeto the same way again. Thanks, Wendy! Wendy Walsh, a prominent homeland security educator, watched my kids for one hour and influenced them for the rest of their lives with a survival tool I hope they never have to use. My daughter is now 25 years old and has referred to that and many other lessons she learned from my first responder friends over the years.



In another instance, my son, Alex, and I were home together when the dryer caught on fire. Seriously, there were visible flames! At ten years old, he fetched the fire extinguisher from under the kitchen sink and discharged it throughout the house until he got to the dryer and then, in a big finish, dumped the rest of it to put out the fire. OK, he learned that one from watching television. The foam was everywhere, dripping down the walls in the

hallway and pooling on the floors. It sure was a giant mess, but Alex was the hero of the day! After the adrenaline subsided a bit, we both hugged and laughed about it. It was a tragedy for the burned-out dryer but it was an irreplaceable bonding experience for us.

As a parent, I always wanted to be the one to teach my children the incredible lessons they needed to learn to excel in life. The reality is that I raised three kids while working in a warp-speed environment and often was too busy to be the great teacher I had hoped to be. I traveled frequently and missed out on the occasional birthdays, open houses, and some Oscar worthy school performances. I know that parents teach by example, through words, and deeds, as well as work ethic. I know many women colleagues who work full-time while raising children often feel the same personal tension of failing to be present in their children's life all the time.

I also know that resilience and adaptability are natural to our children, and while I missed out on being a homeroom mother, my children remember the

"My daughter whipped out a Cheeto and proceeded to light it from the gas burner on the stove."





adventure of having truly memorable babysitters like Wendy. The lesson here is that children are naturally resilient and will gravitate to new experiences and learning even if parents worry about how the changes will impact them. There is no "right" way to do it; just try to give them as many interesting and creative experiences as possible, without providing all the answers.

Parenting is not for the weak of heart or of mind. Everyone is just doing the best that they can. Today's complex world is sometimes scary for all of us, especially our children. A friend who has to make life and death choices in his job once told me, "Seeing challenges as opportunities give me a much better perspective on life and keep me off blood pressure medicine." I try to remember AND practice that every day.

So let's take advantage of those opportunities to practice, to teach, and to influence. Let's call it living the preparedness lifestyle. One activity that was fun for us at Christmas time was to go to the dollar store as a family and assemble car preparedness kits as gifts for neighbors and friends. My kids absolutely loved the idea of building gifts and we had so many interesting conversations about flashlights, emergency flares, and band-aids that I find myself smiling every single time I recall the memory.

For more ideas, check out FEMA's Ready.GOV website for activities to make it fun and easy. [CLICK HERE](#) 📌

"I also know that resilience and adaptability are natural to our children."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For two decades, Heather Issvoran has been the bridge between federal, state, local, and tribal homeland security practitioners and officials with global thought leaders on resilience, homeland security, and emergency management. As the Director, Strategic Communications, Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School, Ms. Issvoran scours the country, ensuring the Center enrolls the very best candidates for its executive and graduate programs. Her responsibilities include contract support for strategic communications, agency outreach, student and alumni relations, recruitment, and public affairs. She supervises and coordinates Center communications on the national level for print, broadcast, and web-based media, working closely with both the Naval Postgraduate School and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security leadership on these endeavors.

Ms. Issvoran leads a strategic communications operation and department that shares, shapes, and demonstrates the impact and success stories of CHDS students, faculty, staff, and alumni and reaches out to a national audience of academics and practitioners. In her previous position in contract support for the Center as the Director of Program Operations, Ms. Issvoran enhanced and streamlined program operations while working with government partners to accommodate additional programmatic goals. Ms. Issvoran provided logistical planning, coordination, and execution of the Center's master's degree programs, executive leaders programs, conferences, and workshops. Ms. Issvoran has a background in the fields of education and marketing, in addition to her operations experience. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies from Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. Specialties: Marketing, operations, public relations, advertising, human resources, public speaking, business development, team-building, service training, alumni relations, strategic communications, executive recruitment (public and private sectors), and event planning.



Teaching Children

TO USE THEIR SUPERHERO SKILLS



BY BATTALION CHIEF/PARAMEDIC STACY GERLICH, LAFD

So, I have been thinking! As a professional Firefighter/Paramedic, I have witnessed all too many times how children react during traumatic situations. Growing up, most children think that being a firefighter would be nothing but fun. Who wouldn't want to dress up in those cool turnouts, climb a 100' extension ladder into the sky, and rescue someone from a burning building?

Teaching children and adults about the inherent dangers of firefighting can save their life one day. There is a great deal of discussion about fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, and emergency drills in the home (EDITH.) Taking the time to sit down as a family and draw your exit plan on paper has many advantages:

- It reinforces in everyone's mind how to get out of the house should it catch fire
- It clearly defines where the family would meet outside the home in a safe area
- Gives children a feeling of inclusion and safety by including them in the discussion
- It takes the fear out of not knowing what to do >>>

Continued

All of the things mentioned are valid and proven to save lives, but it isn't a one-time exercise. Like with most skills acquired by all of us, practice makes perfect. Scheduling annual drills with the family is as important as changing the clocks for daylight savings. It also reinforces the idea that security sense is common sense, and EVERYBODY has a role and responsibility.

For those parents who grew up during the times of getting under their school desk during the air raid siren test or taking cover under a solid object during an earthquake drill, it is our responsibility to teach our children why those acts are important. Depending on where we live, there are different types of disasters that require different safety actions:

- HURRICANES
- TORNADOES
- WILDFIRE
- EARTHQUAKE
- TERRORISM
- CYBER ATTACKS

Imagine how confusing this can be to children, let alone adults. Should we Stop, Drop, and Roll; Duck, Cover, and Hold On; Pull, Aim, Squeeze, Sweep; run to the basement and wait out the storm? Through the pandemic, when do we wear a mask, how do we social distance, and how long do we need to do that? Explaining these actions to our children helps them understand the reasons why we take these actions, and it builds muscle memory towards preparedness, which will become a lifelong skill.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we have a great opportunity to practice many of the aforementioned skills and exercises. Engaging the entire family in your preparedness plan is essential to ensuring that everyone has the needed information to survive a catastrophic situation. Make plans to gather around the table and discuss these major points;

- MAKE A PLAN
- BUILD A KIT
- STAY INFORMED
- DISCUSS WITH FAMILY REGULARLY

You do not need to spend a lot of money to build a "Go Bag." >>>

CONSIDER

building a bag for each member of the family. Some of the items to include for Adults might be:

- Flashlight
- Whistle
- Batteries
- Glasses
- Medication
- Hearing aid batteries
- Small denominations of cash (\$30-\$50)
- First Aid supplies
- Extra clothes, shoes, jacket, etc.
- Phone charger
- Important documents (deeds, passports, etc.)



Similar items work great for our children with the addition of toys, books, games, etc., and don't forget about the pets! They need food, water, medications, toys, leash, collar, carrier and blankets.

Following the 6 "P's" of preparedness can quite possibly make the difference between Life and Death!!

Proper preparedness planning prevents poor performance.

Captain Battalion Chief Select Paramedic
Stacy Gerlich, LAFD



About Stacy

Stacy is a 35-year veteran of the Los Angeles City Fire Department and currently assigned as the Operations Valley Bureau, EMS/Resilience Officer. Chief Gerlich was part of a 23-member team that responded to the World Trade Center Attack on 9/11/2001. Chief Gerlich is most known for her position as the Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) Commander. During her time in that position, she was instrumental in the delivery of the CERT program to over 40,000 community members. Chief Gerlich is also a FEMA certified CERT Instructor and Program Manager Instructor. Stacy earned two Master's degrees; Organizational Management and her most recent Master's from the Naval Post Graduate School in Homeland Security Studies. In 2013, Chief Gerlich received the White

House Champion of Change Award for her work in preparedness and education. Stacy is a professional woman who is driven by a holistic approach to increasing resiliency and awareness as it relates to disaster preparedness. She enjoys interacting with people from all walks of life and all professions. As a career emergency responder, she is most thankful for the opportunities of serving the public.

On her days off, Stacy enjoys spending time with family at her mountain home as well as creating projects in her woodshop.

PLAY TO PREPARE

By Mark Toorock



We've all watched kittens play, and naturally understood that this play is a tool for learning about the world around them. Through play, kittens learn vital skills that would be used as an adult in the wild, from hunting to marking their territory to communicating to others that the food they just gained belongs to them and will be defended. Through play, they learn "how much" defense is necessary with siblings, and with others.

Most animals have similar patterns of behavior. [Gorillas play fight*](#) and also play "tag" just like human children. "Such games likely help the apes — and humans — learn how to deal with real conflict by testing what is acceptable with a safe crowd of peers and even parents." Davila Ross said.

In my own personal experience owning a CrossFit and Parkour gym in the heart of Washington, DC for over 15 years, I have seen the effects of play firsthand. Children who engage in physical play lead generally happier lives. There is an element to play (physical play, not just board games or video

games) that not only releases chemicals that make you temporarily feel happier but also trains the human system to more readily be able to release hormones and reward ourselves with a good feeling for having moved.

Teaching children the joy of movement at a young age is vital to develop habits and a love for movement that will last a lifetime. Finding an activity they enjoy is a critical part of this, whether that's a team sport, individual or action sport, or hiking, climbing, and other physical activities.

Children who play physically not only maintain better physical health, they also keep a sense of curiosity, a pliability to adapt to the "now" and the ability to make quick decisions and actions based on what is happening around them. Essentially, most forms of play make good practice for scenarios when ourselves or others might be in actual danger. By working these same systems, both physical and mental, we are much better prepared to handle real-world scenarios when they arrive. We're able to be more clear-headed and act without panic.

Kids who have done martial arts are better

prepared, but also less likely, to fight - "Central to this was that martial arts reduced the rate of externalizing behaviors in participants. Externalizing behaviors included, but were not limited to, physical aggression, verbal and physical bullying, theft and vandalism. Through the teaching and practices of martial arts, participants were better able to gain a sense of control over both the situations and themselves, leading to less negative emotional responses and violent behaviors."**

This emotional control doesn't stop at threats of violence; from my own experience, it extends as a reflection of the deep calm often sought through meditation, which can be summed up externally as "self-confidence". Self confidence, in essence, is "the assuredness brought about by belief in yourself". The only true way to gain this belief in yourself is through testing and practice - hence "Play".

I taught martial arts to kids for several years. Then, when I found parkour, I saw that it is a perfect mix of what kids need.

In parkour, kids gain the self-confidence of testing their physical abilities, but through movement challenges instead of “kata” or fighting forms. The main reason I prefer parkour for kids is autonomous creativity. All too often now, our kids are told exactly what to do and how to do it. There is a right and wrong answer, and testing to homogenize everyone. While this works for some forms of education, it is not an optimal preparation for the real world where we must each find and use our strengths and acknowledge and find ways to avoid or complement our weaknesses.

Parkour allows children the creativity to “find their own path” through a challenge or obstacle course, which uses a part of the brain rarely relied on in their other activities - the part that allows them to come up with solutions on their own instead of being given a set of “correct” answers. I have found that this skill transfers to many other areas of their life where they need to make a decision on their own.

My personal mission is to help extend play into everyone's lives. As kids, we're often told “Get down from there, you'll get hurt.” when often quite the opposite is true! By allowing our children to climb - albeit safely, at reasonable heights, and at developmentally appropriate challenge increments - they will actually be safer. They will learn their capabilities, they will have opportunities to face their fears, and they will learn about failure, and ultimately, success.

Inevitably, we give in to societal pressures to stop playing and to teach kids to stop playing. “You're too old for that”, “Girls don't do that”, “That's not how you do that” are reasons we hear for not playing, especially in public spaces. These ideologies rob us of the vital life skills we learn when exploring our environment in a creative, playful way. Why not keep climbing, hang from the swingset, dig through a pile of stones or peel back some tree bark?

I believe that as our society progressed, we deemed that the need for play stopped because our needs to practice moving, defending, and hunting for survival went away - but did they?



These are the activities that, in my experience, do the most to develop kids into capable leaders through self-confidence and decision-making:

Parkour
Rock Climbing
Martial Arts
Bushcraft / Camping / Exploring Nature

You can start at home by allowing your children the opportunities for playful exploration. While hopefully the ground will never turn into actual lava, practicing as if it were increases our balance and agility. Presenting them opportunities for physical challenges, whether it's a simple game of hopscotch, or installing a set of monkey bars, will help develop new skills for a lifetime. 🐼

Resources

1. * Choi, Charles “Gorillas Play Tag Like Humans” Live Science 13 JUL 2010. <https://www.livescience.com/10718-gorillas-play-tag-humans.html>
2. ** Harwood-Gross, Anna, Lavidor, Michael and Rassovsky, Yuri “Reducing aggression with martial arts: A meta-analysis of child and youth studies” ResearchGate Mar 2017. <https://www.researchgate.net/>



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Toorock is the founder and CEO of American Parkour. His programs are now taught in every Washington, DC middle school, where over 22,000 kids have done parkour as part of their physical education classes. Currently, they are expanding into Virginia and Maryland as well as at summer camps and gymnastic gyms. American Parkour also makes parkour equipment for home use.

Mark has had over 40 jobs, from professional concert lighting to technology management for an investment bank. He has held certifications in Martial Arts, CrossFit, MovNat, Mobility, and Parkour. Mark has produced two parkour-based television shows and done public speaking for both corporate and technology events. He currently serves as the “Ready Man” for World Chase Tag.

A photograph of three people—two women and one man—collaborating in a professional setting. They are gathered around a table, looking at a laptop. The woman on the left is Black with her hair in a high ponytail, wearing a light-colored blazer. The woman in the center is white with blonde hair, wearing a tan blazer over a black top. The man on the right is white with a beard, wearing a blue button-down shirt. In the background, there are white shelves with various books and documents. The overall tone is professional and collaborative.

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a Difference

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