

## Connecting With Your Child

Humans cannot eliminate earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, or tsunamis, but we can take steps to reduce their impact. Meteorologists can predict areas that will be flooded and evacuate people as well as declare certain areas *floodplains*, where houses are not allowed to be built. Buildings in areas prone to earthquakes are built with new technology that helps prevent catastrophic damage. However, natural disasters still occur, and when a natural disaster arrives, it is safer to be prepared!

**Preparing for Natural Hazards**

Your child has learned that there are many types of natural hazards—volcanic eruptions, floods, earthquakes, and tsunamis. Brainstorm with your child and make a list of the natural hazards that can occur or have occurred in your area. Perform an internet search on how to prepare for these natural hazards. Discuss what things you and your family can do at home to be ready for such events. Choose a natural disaster that seems most likely to occur. Then, make a *disaster readiness plan* with your child, and be fully ready to put it into action, if necessary, in the future.

**Discuss the following questions with your child regarding the natural disaster you chose:**

- What can this natural hazard do?
- How do scientists monitor and warn us of of this natural hazard?
- How do our government, firefighters, and police officers help us during natural hazards?
- What can we do to prepare our homes and families (including pets) for this natural hazard?

Make a plan and rehearse it so every member of the family knows what to do! Plans should include the following:

- Make sure everyone knows important phone numbers—not only emergency numbers, but also numbers of family members and neighbors.
- Make a rule to text instead of talking, so you can get a clear message across; do not tie up lines that emergency workers may need to use.
- Know all the exits in your house and how to safely get out.
- Pick two family meeting spots—one in the neighborhood and one out of the neighborhood. Draw maps of each place so every family member knows how to get to each place.
- Make a list of all equipment or supplies your family will need to be safe. This can be anything from batteries to food and water, to chain ladders to escape from second-story windows. Acquire your supplies and have them ready in appropriate places.

**\*For more guidance, check out the Red Cross website,  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).**

## Questions:

1. Would your emergency plan work equally as well for a volcanic eruption, earthquake, flood, or tsunami? Why?
2. What changes would you need to make in your plan for each type of natural hazard?
3. Would the plan work for other kinds of natural hazards, such as weather-related hazards? If not, how would you need to change your plan?