



NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND DISASTERS

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New National Commission on Children and Disasters Gets to Work

Washington, DC (October 16) -- Save the Children's Mark Shriver this week convened the first meeting of the National Commission on Children and Disasters, a bi-partisan panel appointed by the President and Congressional leaders.

Shriver, Vice President and Managing Director of Save the Children's U.S. Programs, chairs the ten-member Commission, established by federal legislation to independently examine and assess the needs of children as they relate to preparation for, response to, and recovery from all emergencies, hazards and disasters.

Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn) swore in members of the commission on Tuesday prior to its first meeting.

Following its 24 month investigation, the Commission will issue a final report, complete with findings and recommendations, to the President and Congress, but Shriver vowed to speed up the timeline.

“With the number of Presidential disaster declarations rising over the past two decades, and continued accounts and images of children in need of physical and mental health services, functioning child care centers, continuity of schooling and safe, sanitary living conditions, this Commission simply cannot take two years to develop recommendations,” said Shriver. “I’d like to get practical and innovative proposals to the next President and Congress in the next six to eight months.”

Commission members were chosen from a broad range of public and private sector expertise in the care of children affected by disasters:

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- Chairperson: Mark K. Shriver – Vice President and Managing Director of Save the Children's U.S. Programs
- Vice Chairperson: Dr. Michael Anderson – Assistant Professor, Case Western Reserve University; Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital
- Ernie Allen – Co-Founder, President & CEO, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Merry Carlson – Emergency Management Specialist, State of Alaska, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Hon. Sheila Leslie – Member, Nevada General Assembly; Specialty Courts Coordinator, 2nd Judicial District Court
- Bruce Lockwood – Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator, Bristol-Burlington Health District
- Graydon "Gregg" Lord – Sr. Policy Analyst, Homeland Security Policy Institute, George Washington University
- Dr. Irwin Redlener – Professor of Clinical Public Health and Pediatrics, Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health; Director, National Center for Disaster Preparedness
- Dr. David Schonfeld – Director, Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; Director, National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement
- Lawrence Tan – Chief, Emergency Medical Services Division, New Castle County Department of Public Safety

“I’m fully confident that with the dedication, passion and expertise around this table and in the field, we will cut through red tape and turf battles. Our goal is to get the government, plus the non-profit and private sectors, to work more effectively, more efficiently and in a more coordinated manner, on behalf of children when disasters and emergencies strike. Every American should want to see this Commission succeed and we will,” Shriver said.

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