

KTRH Houston Interview with Dr. Michael Anderson  
Friday July 10, 2009

**Interviewer #1:** The National Commission on Children and Disasters recently voted on an initial set of recommendations for its interim report to President Obama and congress. The report due in October will reflect an assessment of persistent gaps in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for children and include recommendations to fill the gaps. Dr. Michael Anderson, Vice President, or Vice Chairperson that is, of the National Commission on Children and Disasters joins us live now to talk more about this. You know, it occurs to me this is a topic that really hasn't been talked about very much Dr. Anderson.

**Dr. Michael Anderson:** It really hasn't and that's why I think our commission could do some, some really good work. We want to prepare for disasters and certainly, in a post 9/11 world, disaster preparedness and response is on everyone's mind, but children represent 22% of our population. Their needs in disasters really have not been adequately addressed or assessed.

**Interviewer #2:** What kinds of suggestions are in place or do you recommend for filling these gaps?

**Anderson:** Well, we have a broad scope of recommendations. Obviously, when a disaster strikes, an area of children can be affected in a number of ways. I'm a pediatrician, so I think about the medical needs of children. Do we have emergency medical systems set up for the very unique physiologic needs so kids can be addressed? However, we also need to look at schools. Do all schools have a preparedness plan? We looked into juvenile justice. God forbid, you have to evacuate a juvenile justice facility. Are the unique needs of teenagers taken into affect? And then, we also have a number of faith based groups across the nation that provides wonderful shelters. But are they really set up for children? Do they have the unique needs of children addressed even before they open their shelters?

Interviewer #1: Thanks very much for talking with us. That's Dr. Michael Anderson, Vice Chair, on the Commission for Children and Disasters.