

# Keeping Children Safe

A POLICY AGENDA FOR CHILD CARE IN EMERGENCIES







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## **About NACCRRRA**

NACCRRRA, the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies, is the nation's leading voice for child care. We work with more than 800 state and local child care resource & referral agencies to ensure that families in every local community have access to high-quality, affordable child care. To achieve our mission, we lead projects that increase the quality and availability of child care, offer comprehensive training to child care professionals, undertake research, and advocate child care policies that positively impact the lives of children and families. To learn more about NACCRRRA or to order additional copies of this report, visit [www.naccrra.org](http://www.naccrra.org).



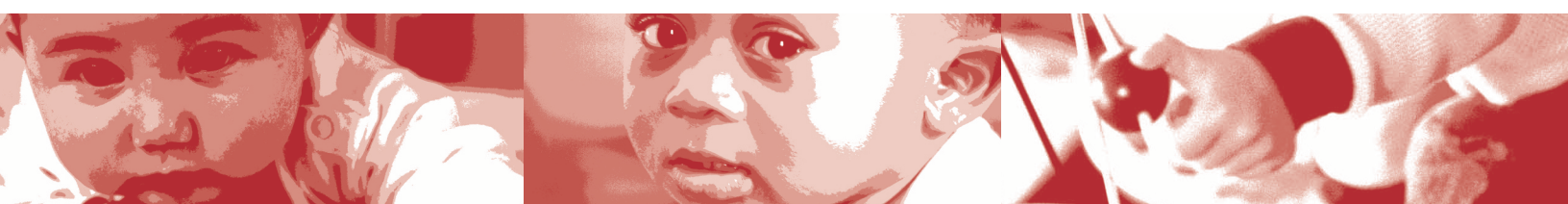
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# About the Report





In November 2007, the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) brought together 22 agencies and organizations in New Orleans, Louisiana, to plan a nationwide campaign to ensure that child care is no longer an afterthought in a time of crisis. The collective experience and knowledge of the participants made it possible to hold a hearty discussion about the current environment, what needs to be changed to ensure the safety and care of all children, and strategies to put those changes in place.

On the first day of the meeting, through presentations, discussions, and small group work, participants mapped out existing federal, state and local policies, examples of how those policies play out on the ground in a real emergency, and barriers and solutions to ensuring the safety of children and the provision of child care. This provided a base for the planning of an effective policy campaign.

The ideas were compiled so that on the second day of the meeting, participants could set priorities and offer their advice on strategies for advocacy and action. Finally, the groups united around a policy agenda and steps to take together to enact it at the local, state, and federal levels.

This report is a summary of the discussions at that meeting and the policy agenda that was developed. It is the beginning of a campaign to raise awareness, change policy, and ensure that the child care and emergency management communities can work together to protect our nation's children in times of crisis. Together, our groups will make a difference.

NACCRRA would like to thank the Peppercorn Foundation and the A.L. Mailman Foundation for making this meeting and report possible. We also thank the following organizations for their participation, enthusiasm, and commitment:

Agenda for Children, Louisiana  
American Academy of Pediatrics

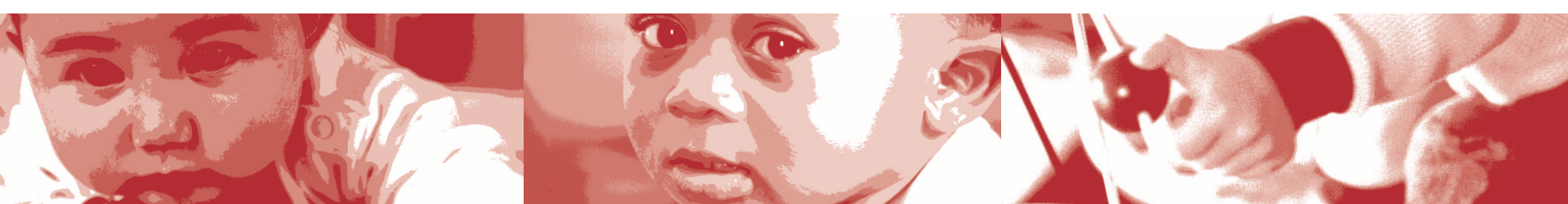
American Public Human Services Association  
American Red Cross, Southwest Service Area  
Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation's  
Office of Early Learning  
Louisiana Association of Child  
Care Resource & Referral Agencies  
Louisiana Department  
of Social Services  
Mississippi Child Care Resource  
& Referral Network  
Mississippi Office for Children and Youth  
Mississippi State University  
National Association for the  
Education of Young Children  
National Association  
for Family Child Care  
National Black Child  
Development Institute  
National Child Care Association  
Save the Children  
United States Centers for  
Disease Control and Prevention  
United States National Guard  
United Way for the Greater New Orleans Area  
Voices for America's Children  
Westover Consultants, Inc.  
YMCA Childcare Resource Service, California  
ZERO TO THREE

**Purpose:**

**To plan a campaign to ensure that child care is no longer an afterthought in a time of crisis.**



# Executive Summary





## **Keeping Children Safe: A Policy Agenda for Child Care in Emergencies**

In November 2007, the National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) brought together 22 agencies and organizations to plan a nationwide campaign to ensure that child care is no longer an afterthought in a time of crisis. This group was challenged to identify key issues, current policies and new policy proposals, and vehicles for policy change at the federal, state and local level, and to recommend strategies for an advocacy campaign.

### **What is at Stake?**

Nearly 12 million children under the age of 5 are in child care each week. Many of the 2.3 million child care workers<sup>1</sup> are untrained for disaster other than fires. While most states' regulations for child care centers and family child care homes address emergencies, it is too often limited to fire drills and fire evacuation and this is not nearly enough. Disaster planning for child care programs is especially critical because children--many of whom are not mobile and cannot communicate even basic information to a rescuer--are particularly vulnerable in the face of danger.

In the aftermath of a disaster, all children need a place to be safe while their parents piece their lives back together. Even parents who did not previously need child care may need it temporarily in order to job hunt, clean up and repair homes, and put life back together. Child care needs after a disaster can far surpass pre-disaster demand. When parents can go back to work knowing their children are safe and cared for, local businesses can rebuild and thrive. Child care is critical to restoring the economic vitality of the community. If child care is not available after a disaster, the recovery process takes longer. Although states and localities have disaster plans, the plans don't include enough information on the unique needs of children.

### **The Current Environment**

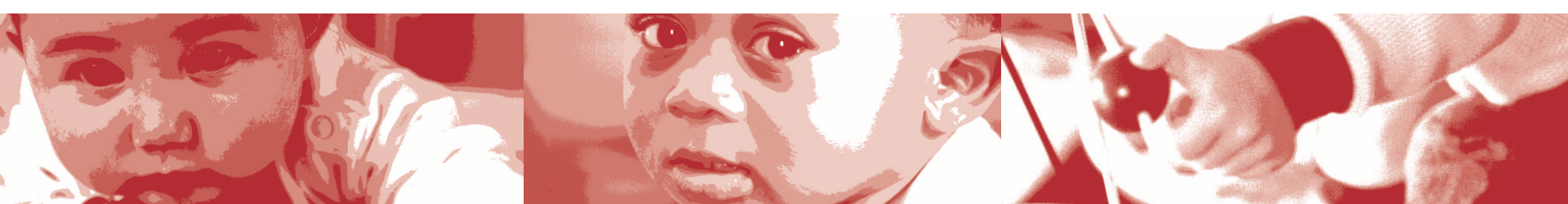
Issues addressed at the meeting included existing emergency management policies, child care's participation and inclusion in federal, state and local emergency planning and response, creation and dissemination of "best practices" models, and availability of relief funds for child care. The California wildfires, Florida's experiences with hurricanes, the continuing needs of people in Louisiana and Mississippi, the different needs of center and family child care providers, and the needs of diverse communities and cultures were also discussed in order to build a plan so that all children would be safe and cared for in the worst of times.

### **Child Care is an Essential Service**


Child care is an essential service in the regular world. Local, state and federal policy must reflect this in the event of a crisis and every day. To that end, we propose a federal, state and local policy agenda including emergency management policies and child care policies. From on-the-ground experience with disasters, it is clear what is happening and what is not, and what needs to happen. What's needed now is the political will to allow or require the coordination necessary to meet the needs of children before, during and after a disaster.



# Definitions and Explanations







**Child care:** Care provided to children (who are not related to the caretaker) on a regular basis for a fee. Child care includes care provided in a center or in a family child care home.

**Child Care Resource & Referral agency (CCR&R):** CCR&Rs serve the child care needs of families by helping parents find high-quality child care, training child care providers, and influencing local policy. There are 800 CCR&Rs nationwide.

**Emergency child care:** Care provided after an emergency, often in a shelter setting.

**Temporary child care:** Families may need to protect children from disaster-related hazards (such as live wires, floodwater, broken glass, toxic substances, and debris) while parents begin sorting and repairing property and applying for disaster assistance.<sup>2</sup> Also, jobs may be available before enough of the regular child care providers can re-open. Children need a safe place so that their parents can go to work.

**The Child Care and Development Block Grant:** The Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the primary federal funding stream for child care in the United States. The CCDBG program was created in 1990 and was reauthorized and expanded in 1996, as part of welfare reform. CCDBG was initially up for reauthorization in 2002. Since that time, legislation to reauthorize CCDBG has not yet

been approved by Congress and it has been funded through a series of extensions.

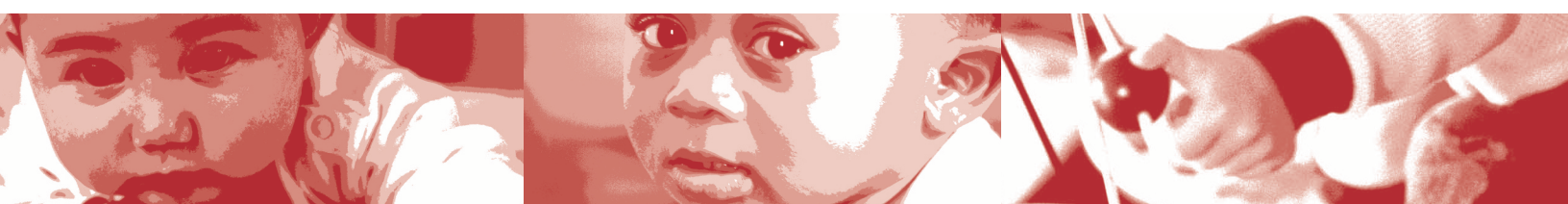
CCDBG is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and provides formula block grants to states. States primarily use the grants to subsidize child care for working families earning low incomes, for TANF recipients, and families transitioning from welfare to work. In addition, no less than 4 percent of the CCDBG funding is required to be spent on activities to improve the overall quality of child care.

**The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006:** The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-295) “established new leadership positions and position requirements within the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), brought new missions into FEMA and restored some that had previously been removed, and enhanced the agency’s authority by directing the FEMA Administrator to undertake a broad range of activities before and after disasters occur.”<sup>3</sup>





# Background





Child care is a fact of life for most American families with young children. Nearly 12 million children under age 5 in the United States are in some type of child care arrangement every week. On average, children under age 5 of working mothers spend 36 hours a week in child care.

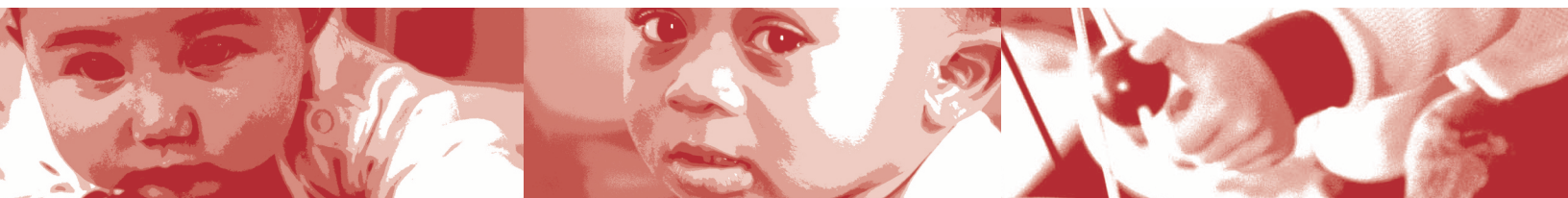
Parents depend on child care to protect the health, safety and well-being of children while they are at work. Child care allows families to earn more than one income—which is what many families need today to survive. Single parent families’ need for child care is even greater. Employers in every community across the country depend on reliable child care to allow their employees to come to work and be productive.

Brain research has shown that the first years of life are the most crucial for a child’s development. Young children need not only a safe environment but also a high-quality early learning environment where they can develop and grow. A caregiver’s education, training, and ability to provide a safe and stimulating environment have an impact on children’s cognitive and emotional development.


Child Care Quick Facts	
Percentage of mothers with children under the age of 5 who are in the workforce <sup>4</sup>	62%
Percentage of mothers with children under the age of 1 who are in the workforce <sup>5</sup>	56%
Percentage of children under age 18 living with both parents <sup>6</sup>	69%
Number of children under age 5 in some type of regular child care arrangement every week <sup>7</sup>	11.6 million
Number of hours per week pre-school age children of working mothers spend in child care <sup>8</sup>	36 hours
Number of regulated family child care homes <sup>9</sup>	237,900
Number of regulated child care centers <sup>10</sup>	110,600
Price of child care for a 4-year-old for one year <sup>11</sup>	\$3794-\$10,920
Percent of participants in child care assistance (subsidy) programs who are under age 5 <sup>12</sup>	54%
Portion of CCDBG funding that is required to be used for quality initiatives in states	4%
Average portion of CCDBG funding that is being used for quality initiatives in states	7%



# Is Child Care Ready?







Nearly 12 million children under the age of 5 are in child care each week. Many of the 2.3 million child care workers<sup>13</sup> are untrained for disaster other than fires. While most states' regulations for child care centers and family child care homes address emergencies, it is too often limited to fire drills and fire evacuation and this is not nearly enough. There were 58 disaster declarations in 2007. From 2000-2006, there was an average of 52 federal disaster declarations annually, and this number does not include state and local disaster declarations. That's too many incidents to leave children's well-being to chance.

Disaster planning for child care programs is especially critical because children--many of whom are not mobile and cannot communicate even basic information to a rescuer--are particularly vulnerable in the face of danger. Although states have disaster plans, the plans don't include enough information on the unique needs of children. In the event of an emergency, whether it is small and impacts only a few, or is very large with widespread damage, young children need the protection of a carefully crafted plan.

In the aftermath of a disaster, all children, need a place to be safe while their parents piece their lives back together. Even parents who did not previously need child care may need it temporarily in order to job hunt, clean up and repair homes, and put life back together. Therefore, child care needs after a disaster can

far surpass pre-disaster supply and demand. When parents can go back to work knowing their children are safe and cared for, local businesses can rebuild and thrive, which makes child care critical to restoring the economic vitality of the community. If child care is not available after a disaster, the recovery process will inevitably take longer.

In the two years since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, some progress has been made, but there is much more to do. Every state needs a plan of action and policies in place specifically addressing the needs of children and families to assure recovery. Many lessons have been learned from each emergency situation. Our challenge is to apply those lessons so that communities are truly prepared.

Families and child care providers need to have a plan in place for what to do when disaster strikes and those plans need to be linked to local emergency management efforts. In the aftermath, parents need to know where to turn to receive help with their children so they can focus on meeting other immediate needs of their family. For the long term, strategies for rebuilding efforts need to be in place and need to include child care facilities so that the economy can recover.

### **Our Effort**

In 2006, NACCRRA, Save the Children, the Child Care Bureau (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), Mississippi State University, and many representatives from Child Care Resource & Referral agencies that have lived through a variety of disasters and served all kinds of families, gathered to discuss child care emergency preparedness.<sup>14</sup> As a result, NACCRRA launched a disaster preparedness initiative specifically for child care providers, including a manual for CCR&Rs, and instructions for CCR&Rs to deliver trainings nationwide. *Is Child Care Ready?*<sup>15</sup> provides the tools for training and preparing all child care providers and CCR&Rs to safeguard children and families, with the hope of protecting children nationwide. NACCRRA is currently working with Save the Children and others to further develop and offer this training.

In 2007, NACCRRA convened another group to address the policies behind state, local and federal preparedness and relief efforts—and how child care should be included. This group was challenged to identify key issues, current policies and new policy proposals, and vehicles for policy change, and to recommend strategies for an advocacy campaign. Its work is the topic of this report.

Issues addressed by the group included existing emergency management policies, child care's participation and inclusion in federal, state and local emergency planning and response, and the creation and dissemination of "best practices" models. The group discussed experiences with the availability of relief funds for emergency child care and the rebuilding of child care. State policies under the Child Care and Development Block Grant were also discussed, as well as the need for coordination between state emergency planning agencies and state child care administrators. The California wildfires, Florida's experiences with hurricanes, the continuing needs of people in Louisiana and Mississippi, the different needs of center and family child care providers, and the needs of diverse communities and cultures to build a plan so that all children would be safe and cared for in the worst of times, were discussed at length.

Child care is a complex issue even on the best day. After a disaster, there are even more layers to consider. To ensure that children are safe and to maintain child care as part of a community revitalization effort, there needs to be a nationwide campaign to raise awareness and educate policymakers so that child care is no longer an after-thought in a time of crisis.

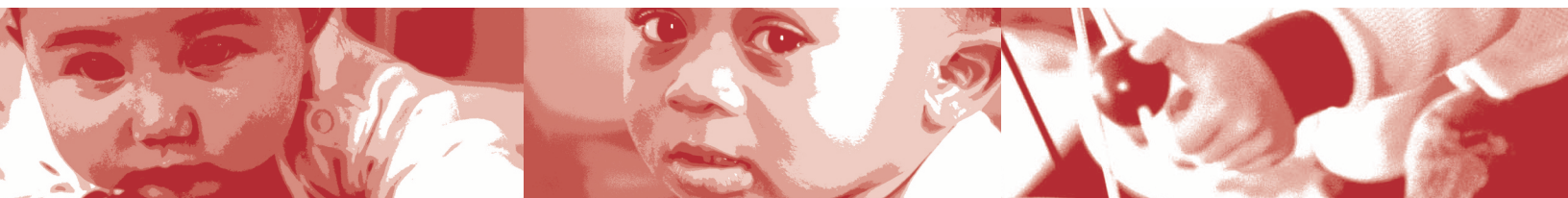
To appropriately address actions that must be taken on the federal, state and local levels, two types of policy must be explored: Emergency Management Policy and Child Care Policy.







# Emergency Management Policy





After a disaster, children in shelters are often counted simply as “meals needed”—but children are not just smaller adults. Their needs are completely different. A sandwich and a cot won’t work for an infant, and certainly not an infant who has been separated from his mother during an evacuation. Children should not have to wait in long lines with their parents to fill out forms, or be exposed to hazardous materials. Because children are left out of emergency planning, this is what typically happens.

Decision-makers must step back and take a broad look at the needs of children in disasters, address the roots of the issues, and recommend solutions that can be used nationwide. Congress passed legislation to create a Commission on Children and Disasters in December 2007. We applaud the creation of this group and will be working to ensure that high-quality appointments are made expeditiously (including someone with expertise in child care issues), that the necessary funds for the Commission are set aside, and the Commission’s management is of the utmost quality.

### **FEMA and Children**

The Stafford Act (originally passed by Congress in 1988, with amendments since that time) determines when and how the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) gets involved. FEMA only enters the scene when local and state resources fall short of the need and the President issues a declaration.

Many members of the group have experienced first-hand the challenges of working with FEMA. Under current law, FEMA has no responsibility or statutory direction to provide child care assistance and as a result it has received no attention. This sets the wrong tone for state emergency management. FEMA has generally lumped children into a larger pool of “special needs” (which includes the elderly and individuals with disabilities), instead of recognizing that children are their own category.

The Stafford Act does not currently include child care on the list of “essential services” to be restored and so child care is all too often left out of federal relief efforts. Hurricane Katrina taught countless coastal communities that in the overall recovery of the community, child care is an essential service. This “essential service” must





be acknowledged as such in federal and state emergency management policy to ensure that emergency child care services can be provided in shelters and other settings, and to ensure that funding and support for rebuilding efforts come through.

### **FEMA and Business Recovery Efforts**

Currently, if a child care business is damaged in a disaster, its owners have limited to zero access to federal funding for recovery efforts. In general, businesses affected by disaster are referred to the Small Business Administration's disaster loan program. But, sometimes, businesses don't survive long enough to wait for that loan. Often, child care businesses have been brushed aside and not considered for these loans. The application process is cumbersome. Some applications require first the rejection of another kind of application, a process that takes months.

### **FEMA and Family Support**

After a disaster, the division of Individual Assistance at FEMA handles priorities like housing and crisis counseling for people in need. The Post-Katrina Emergency Reform Act added another priority to the Individual Assistance services: reuniting children and parents. The agency is working under the notion that parents can meet all the needs of the children after basic housing is located and a brush with counseling service occurs. We know from experience, and

from common sense, that in times of crisis, parents' resources will be stretched to the limit and beyond, and in such situations everyone needs some help. Support for families can not stop with reunification. Reunification is really just the beginning.

### **FEMA's Structures for Improvement**

The principles of emergency management are mapped out in FEMA's National Response Framework, presented in draft for public comment in the fall of 2007 and will become effective in March 2008. The Framework "provides structures for implementing national-level policy and operational coordination for domestic incident response... [because] an effective, unified national response requires layered, mutually supporting capabilities, with States having the primary responsibility for the public health and welfare of their citizens."<sup>16</sup> Several participants at the meeting submitted comments after noticing that there was no mention of care for children in the event of an emergency.

The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 created a National Advisory Council. The role of the Council is to advise the FEMA Administrator on emergency management, providing state, local and tribal input. There was initially only one slot for "special needs"-- all types of special needs, including individuals with disabilities, the elderly, and a wide variety of populations with challenges and the need for assistance. When members of the Council were announced in the summer of 2007<sup>17</sup>, no one with expertise in child development was on the Council. Several participants submitted letters calling for an expert on children's issues to be appointed. Efforts by Save the Children paid off in December 2007 when they learned that one of their staff had been added to the Council, thanks to Senator Tom Coburn (R-Oklahoma). This is a great beginning for work on federal emergency management policy and practice.



All federal agencies have a role to play in an emergency to ensure continuity of programs, funding, and services. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is a leader in addressing needs after a disaster through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). Their primary task, though, is public health emergencies. Since HHS, through the Administration for Children and Families, oversees child care funding and services, this agency should also offer guidance and support to the states for the needs of child care before, during and after a disaster.

### **State and Local Coordination**

The federal government has a significant role to play in many emergency situations. However, local and state leaders and resources are the first point of action in an emergency. State and local planners can not use a “cookie-cutter” approach to problem-solving and incorporating the needs of children and families into their planning. But by bringing people together and knowing who to call, local government can respond when a need arises. And, when the federal managers understand the actual needs on the ground, that support can be arranged. Resources are available from Save the Children and others to guide the operations process for meeting the needs of children.<sup>18</sup> Child Care Resource & Referral networks are an important part of the coalition of emergency response teams and have resources as well.

The American Red Cross Southwest Service Area participated in the meeting and explained that their expertise is in “mass care” but they are dependent on the skills and expertise of local organizations for the other components of recovery. Shelter organizers are doing the best they can and acknowledge the need for local partners when they arrive—but have to know who those partners are in advance. Information such as the identities of local partners and child care providers can be communicated in advance through the planning process of each state.

### **Finding Qualified Caregivers**

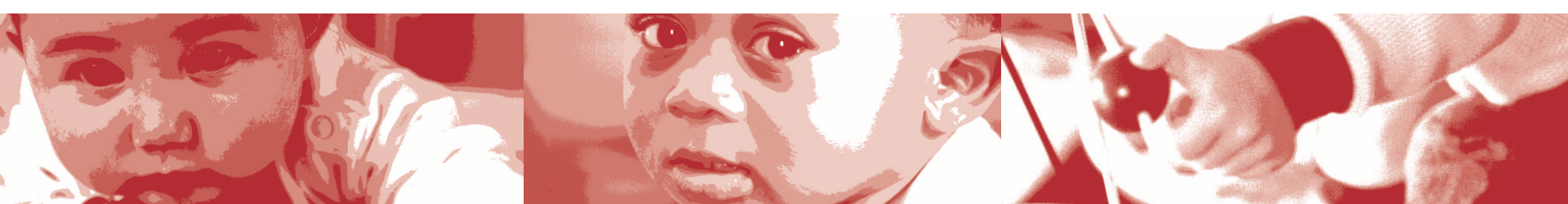
We can not expect those who are personally affected by an emergency situation to serve in the immediate relief effort. Concerned with their own safety and that of their families, qualified caregivers in the affected region are most likely not to be capable of assisting in emergency situations. For this reason, trained caregivers from outside the immediate area should be called in to help during the first hours and days of the recovery process. This country needs a system to certify individuals trained to work with children, and trained for emergency situations, who can be “deployed” in the event of a disaster. Until such a system exists, people who are trained and qualified do not have access to the children in shelters, because shelter-administrators have no way to check their credentials. Background checks (such as criminal and sex offender registries) and qualifications need to be verified. The technology exists; it must be incorporated for this use in a national plan.

### **Engaging Child Care and Emergency Management**


The need for emergency responders to access and share accurate data about children and child care came up repeatedly at the meeting. The child care community and emergency management community are not engaging as well as they could be. Representatives from Florida, who lived through four hurricanes in one season, stated that communications and relationships truly matter. Representatives from Louisiana emphasized the critical need for advanced planning on building those relationships. In Tulsa, Oklahoma, child care leaders are working on a preparedness program. They are integrating the child care plan with the broader community’s plan so that all parties know what will happen. Upon completion, the lessons learned from this effort can be shared with other communities across the country.



# Child Care Policy







The federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) law provides funding and broad guidance for state child care policies. The states are responsible for setting specific regulations. CCDBG includes funding for initiatives to strengthen the quality of child care, and also funding for subsidies for families to be able to pay for child care. These programs and funding streams have complex rules, made further complex at the state level. After a disaster the magnitude of Hurricane Katrina for instance, these rules just do not work.

### **Regulations and Emergencies**

Child care regulations that function for everyday practice of a program or licensing process may need to be waived temporarily during an emergency and during the recovery process. States need to articulate the minimum standards for health and safety that will permit a child care provider to open for business and help with the larger recovery effort of the city or region by ensuring people can go back to work knowing their children are safe. Temporary flexibility with minimum standards can ensure that states and communities can efficiently, yet effectively, offer child care solutions.

### **Subsidy Policy**

States also set the rules for subsidy programs, including the eligibility requirements, payment rates, and amounts of parent fees. Subsidy policy in most states works as a voucher/reimbursement process—the child care provider lets the state know who came for “services” and the state sends

the provider a check. Some states do have subsidy waiver policies in place for what child care providers should do in the event of an emergency. But these policies don’t always make sense.

If everyone in the neighborhood is evacuated to prepare for an oncoming storm or fire, children don’t come to child care. In many states, providers do not get paid if a child does not attend. No money means no funds to pay staff, replenish supplies, and make any repairs that might be needed following a storm or emergency. Policies also need to be made clear for providers. Policies in California for instance, made it difficult for providers to know what to do during the firestorms of 2003 and 2007, while their businesses income, and safety were at stake. (Child care providers earn an average of \$9.04 per hour<sup>19</sup>.)

**For more information about state standards for child care, please see [www.naccrra.org/policy/state\\_licensing](http://www.naccrra.org/policy/state_licensing)**

To reopen for business, child care providers need money, but funds can take months to arrive, if they ever do. Appropriate waivers to subsidy policy that would allow for payments to programs temporarily closed by disasters could make all the difference for the survival of the business of child care.

### **Insurance Issues**

Many child care providers are underinsured, but even with adequate insurance policies, child care providers and communities can not afford to wait for what may be months for money to come through. FEMA's expectation is that insurance is in place. In Louisiana and Mississippi, insurance rates went up as much as 400 percent post-Katrina. No small business or individual can afford such an increase.

### **Need/Damage Assessment**

Knowing which child care programs can open, which are closed, and the detailed extent of the damage sustained can help relief and recovery efforts. Time is of the essence in the assessment of the child care infrastructure after a disaster. The need for a national data repository where updated information on all types of care of children can be accessed in a timely and useful way is a critical element in early identification of damage and in developing mitigation strategies. Making accurate information about the status of child care programs available helps parents and employers, and aids in fundraising efforts.

### **Funding Streams**

State child care administrators need funding, support, waiver options, and a way to coordinate with state emergency managers. States need to ensure funding streams for child care after a disaster. Currently, the money they can access for relief and recovery comes from the funding for quality initiatives pending Congressional approval and in some cases Social Service Block Grant (SSBG) funding dedicated to hurricane recovery efforts. This is too limited for the need, often too slow in coming to states, and takes away from critical efforts to ensure safe early learning environments for children in the state, which should not be sacrificed. "Gap grants"- funds available immediately from the local government and private partners- would make it possible for child care businesses to reopen immediately. Funds for long-term recovery might take too long. In some cases, small amounts of funds available fast can bring back staff, make small repairs, and make child care providers available to serve local families.

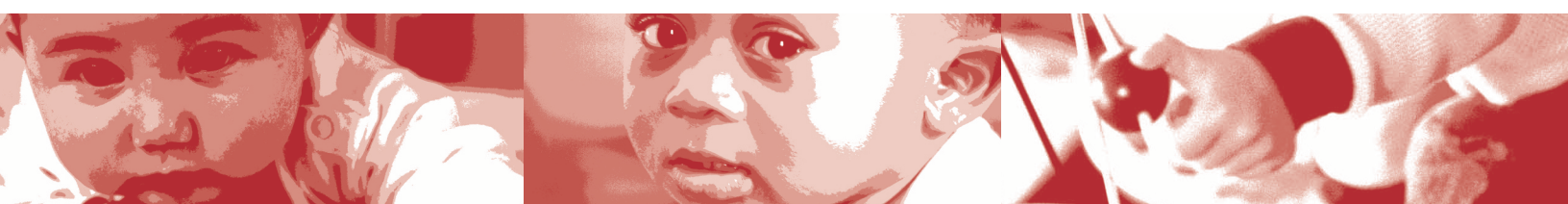









# Mental Health Care





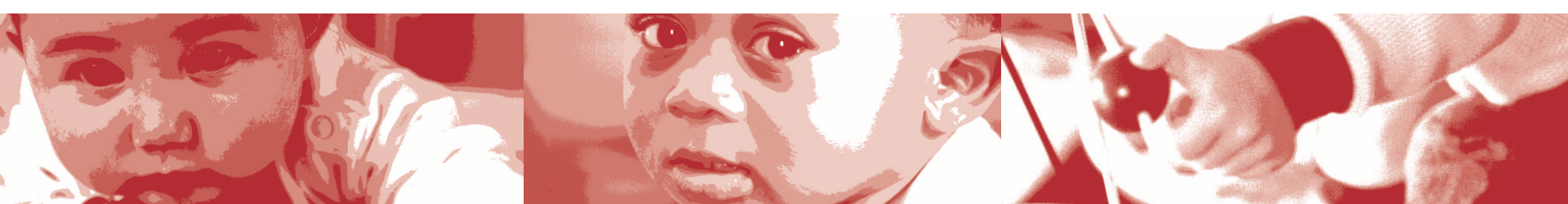


The mental health impact of disasters on children can be enormous. “Along with the hardships of life after the disaster, child survivors may experience injuries and be exposed to distressing events around them. Children may be particularly affected by the loss of their familiar environment (home, school, playmates) because children usually feel safer and more secure when they have consistent predictable routines. Parents

and regular caregivers may not be able to give them the care and support they had before, which can result in anxiety, fear, and a sense of insecurity.”<sup>20</sup> The need for a partner to lead the critical issue of mental health was discussed at the meeting. The group had no mental health experts, but would lend support to such a partner.



# Policy Recommendations





Child care is an essential service in the regular world. Local, state and federal policy must reflect this in the event of a crisis and every day. To that end, we propose the following policies and action steps.

### Local Policy Agenda

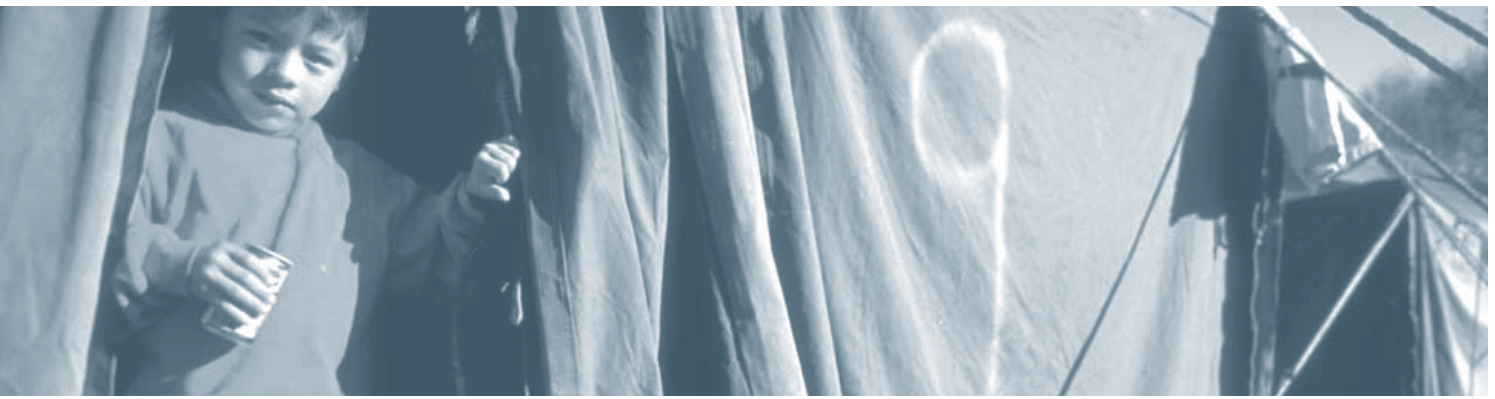
**NACCRRA and our partners urge  
Local Government Leaders to:**

- ✓ Mandate, facilitate and fund child care emergency plans for each county/locality.
- ✓ Require the immediate assessment of the child care infrastructure.
- ✓ Establish gap grants to ensure that child care providers can re-open and provide services as quickly as possible after a disaster.

**Take Action! NACCRRA and our partners will:**

- ▶ Train child care providers to make a plan and be prepared.
- ▶ Reach out to local emergency managers, build relationships, and raise awareness.
- ▶ Work with local government entities to help establish public-private partnerships to ensure funding and support for child care in an emergency.





## State Policy Agenda

### **NACCRRA and our partners urge Governors, Legislatures, and State Child Care Administrators to:**

- ✓ Institute Child Care Regulation Waivers in emergencies to ensure that the needs of children, families, the child care workforce, and the community as a whole are met and create a process for putting these policies in place.
- ✓ Create agreements in each state to ensure that child care licensing offices share information and expertise with emergency management offices.
- ✓ Create and provide training on child care issues for emergency managers.

- ✓ Require, facilitate and fund comprehensive emergency preparedness plans, including materials to “shelter in place” and procedures for evacuation for child care providers.
- ✓ Allocate funds for child care for first responders, shelter occupants, and families impacted by disasters.

### **Take Action! NACCRRA and our partners will:**

- ▶ Develop model language for minimum standards for child care to be implemented in an emergency.
- ▶ Work with key legislators, child care administrators, and emergency management agencies to improve preparedness efforts, and the inclusion of early childhood experts in state emergency planning and response.

## Federal Policy Agenda

### **NACCRRA and our partners urge Congress and the Administration to:**

- ✓ Pass and sign in to law the Emergency Child Care Act of 2007 (introduced in the House of Representatives by Rep. Bennie Thompson). The bill would allow federal relief funds to be used for technical assistance for emergency child care services, including training, supervision, recreation, and other services provided for children by a private nonprofit facility licensed by a state.
- ✓ Fund the Commission on Children and Disasters (passed by Congress in December 2007) and work swiftly to appoint the ten

members, including someone with expertise in child care, so that the work can begin to make specific recommendations on the needs of children after a disaster.

- ✓ Amend the Stafford Act to include child care as an “essential service”, ensuring funding and support for recovery of the child care infrastructure. The amendment should require FEMA’s response to be coordinated with state child development offices and State CCR&R Networks, to expand assistance to all licensed child care settings if needed in the aftermath of a disaster, and to allow FEMA funds to be used for temporary child care facilities in federally declared disaster areas.



- ✓ Reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant and include an amendment to require state child care plans to clearly demonstrate how the state will address child care needs before, during and after a disaster, and authorize a funding mechanism so that quality set-aside dollars aren't the only funding stream that can be used in an emergency.
- ✓ Define a role for the US Department of Health and Human Services for child care in emergencies, including working with the state child care administrators and State CCR&R Networks.

**Take Action! NACRRRA and our partners will:**

- ▶ Share the “essential services” message with decision-makers and the public.
- ▶ Participate in strategic meetings with Members of Congress to ensure passage of the Emergency Child Care Services Act and other issues.
- ▶ Develop talking points and materials to ensure a consistent message from all partner organizations.
- ▶ Host briefings to share information and resources.

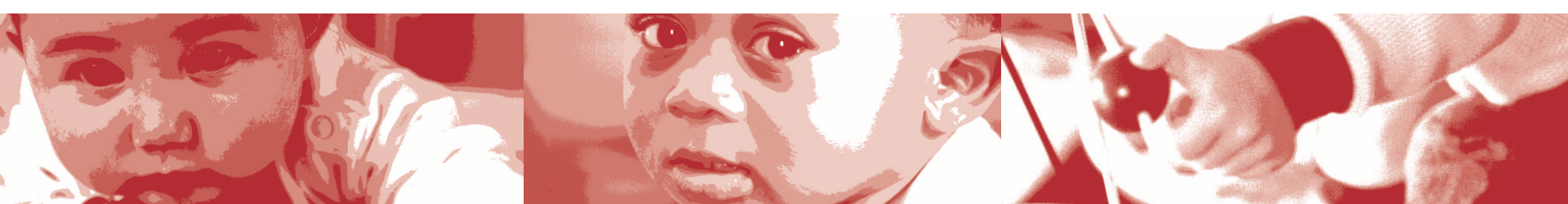
**Other action steps for impact at all levels:**

- ▶ Work with partner organizations and existing preparedness and response efforts.
- ▶ Educate parents about these issues and what they can do to help through public service announcements, local child care resource and referral agencies and other local partners.
- ▶ Promote coordinated and strategic “take action” campaigns from all partner organizations including letters, calls, and constituent meetings.
- ▶ Take advantage of public speaking opportunities across the country.
- ▶ Distribute press releases and conduct outreach to all relevant media outlets including print, radio and television, in Spanish where appropriate.
- ▶ Coordinate follow-up efforts among partner organizations including letters to editors.
- ▶ Create media tools for the partners/affiliates for work with all relevant media.





# Next Steps





At the conclusion of the meeting, work groups were established to take the lead on particular issue areas:

1. The federal legislation regarding emergency child care services.
2. The task of creating “model language” for states to use for child care standards in the event of an emergency.

The objective of the work groups is to take the lead on action steps, strategies, and to communicate to other participants in the larger campaign when help is needed to ensure that goals are achieved.

In addition, NACCRRRA is following the lead of Save the Children in the work on the Commission on Children and Disasters.

**From on-the-ground experience with disasters, it is clear what is happening, what is not, and further, what needs to happen. What's needed now is the political will to allow or require the coordination necessary to meet the needs of children before, during and after a disaster.**



# References

<sup>1</sup> United States Census Bureau. Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002. October 2005.

<sup>2</sup> NACCRRA. Is Child Care Ready: A Disaster Planning Guide for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> Congressional Research Service. Federal Emergency Management Policy Changes After Hurricane Katrina: A Summary of Statutory Provisions. December 2006.

<sup>4</sup> US Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics. Women in the Labor Force: A Databook. May 2005.

<sup>5</sup> US Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey: Fertility: Women age 16 to 50 years.

<sup>6</sup> US Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey: Children Characteristics.

<sup>7</sup> US Census Bureau. Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002. October 2005.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Estimate based on data provided by Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies in January 2007.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> NACCRRA. Parents and the High Price of Child Care: 2007 Update, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services

<sup>13</sup> United States Census Bureau. Who's Minding the Kids? Child Care Arrangements: Winter 2002. October 2005.

<sup>14</sup> NACCRRA is currently working with Save the Children to further evolve this training.

<sup>15</sup> NACCRRA. "Disaster Planning," [www.naccrra.org/disaster](http://www.naccrra.org/disaster)

<sup>16</sup> FEMA. What's New In the Draft National Response Framework. January 2008.

<sup>17</sup> For more information about the National Advisory Council, including current membership, please go to <http://www.fema.gov/about/nac/>

<sup>18</sup> Save the Children. The Unique Needs of Children in Emergencies: A Guide for the Inclusion of Children in Emergency Operations Plans. September 2007.

<sup>19</sup> US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. 2006 Occupational Employment Statistics Survey

<sup>20</sup> NACCRRA. Is Child Care Ready: A Disaster Planning Guide for Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, 2006.





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