

RESPONSE: CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES



Save the Children.

Get Ready. Get Safe.

Child-Friendly Spaces is Save the Children's signature emergency response program in the United States and around the world, meeting a Common Standard of Mass Care in Domestic Disaster Response that helps ensure children are safe and protected in shelters and other locations where families congregate during disasters.

The Need

Emergency evacuation shelters usually place children and their families in cramped quarters with strangers and lack learning materials, toys, safe places to play and activities for children. Caregivers, who must stand in long lines to apply for emergency assistance, often have no choice but to bring their kids with them.

Child-Friendly Spaces are a critical component in providing support to children and families in temporary locations following a disaster. The program's structured, supervised activities offer needed comfort to children who are used to daily routines, strengthen children's resilience, and help them begin to cope. These Spaces also provide a forum for sharing valuable child safety and recovery information with families when they need it most.



The Child-Friendly Spaces Program:

- Gives children a sense of normalcy and community when their lives are disrupted by disasters.
- Provides children with a safe, designated area where they can play, socialize, and express themselves under the supervision of caring, trained adults.
- Helps children interact with peers, build self-esteem, and begin the recovery process by working through their emotions and building upon their natural resilience.
- Enables parents to have time to register for emergency assistance and start to re-establish their lives.

Child-Friendly Kits

In partnership with the American Red Cross, Save the Children has pre-positioned Child-Friendly Spaces kits in high-risk areas across the United States to support the Child-Friendly Spaces program. Kit materials include age-appropriate, fun activities items such as jump ropes, books, toys, arts and craft supplies and board games.

Training

Save the Children offers Child-Friendly Spaces training that supports emergency leaders, organizations and communities in meeting the needs of children in disasters. The training includes best practices on site selection, organization and set-up of the space, gives guidance for addressing children's unique needs, and promotes child safety and well-being while in temporary locations. The Child-Friendly Spaces program, also referred to as temporary respite care for children, helps communities meet the Common Standards of Mass Care in Domestic Emergency Response.

Since Hurricane Katrina, we've served more than 500,000 children affected by U.S. emergencies.

With more than 90 years of emergency response experience, Save the Children is committed to ensuring the unique needs of children are met before, during and after disasters. Through advocacy, partnerships and the Get Ready Get Safe initiative, Save the Children helps U.S. communities to better protect and support children in times of disaster.

Learn more at www.savethechildren.org/GetReadyGetSafe.