

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOPIC: Disaster Preparedness

## **HAVE A FAMILY DISASTER PLAN**

Disasters and emergencies can happen at any time to anyone. It is important to think about how you will respond BEFORE something happens. With your family or household members, discuss how to prepare and respond to the types of emergencies that are most likely to happen where you live, learn, work and play.

Here are a few easy steps to start your emergency communication plan:

**Understand how to receive emergency alerts and warnings.** Make sure all household members are able to get alerts about an emergency from local officials. Check with your local emergency management agency to see what is available in your area.

**Discuss family/household plans for disasters that may affect your area and plan where to go.** Plan together in advance so that everyone in the household understands where to go during a different type of disaster like a hurricane, tornado, or wildfire.

**Collect information.** Create a paper copy of the contact information for your family that includes: phone numbers (cell, home, work), email address, social media info, medical facilities contacts, doctors and other service providers.

**Identify information and pick an emergency meeting place.** Decide on safe, familiar places where your family can go for protection or to reunite. Make sure these locations are accessible for household members with disabilities or access and functional needs. If you have pets or service animals, think about animal-friendly locations. Examples of meeting places may include: a mailbox at the end of the driveway, or a neighbor's house; the library, a community center, place of worship or family friend's house. Make sure everyone knows the address of the meeting place and discuss ways you would get there.

**Share information.** Make sure everyone carries a copy in his or her backpack, purse, or wallet. You should also post a copy in a central location in your home, such as your refrigerator or family bulletin board.

**Practice your plan.** Have regular household meetings to review your emergency plans, communication plans and meeting place after a disaster, and then practice, just like you would a fire drill.

On a separate note, it is important to point out that Kentucky is one of the unhealthiest states in our nation; but, a few healthy lifestyle choices could change this. First, eating normally proportioned helpings of nutritious foods including at least five fruits and vegetables a day can lower weight and reduce heart disease and diabetes. Second, exercising about 30 minutes per day can lower blood pressure. Third, avoiding the use of tobacco products can reduce several types of cancer. Finally, making sure you get your needed preventive screenings can detect diseases early and greatly increase your chances for a positive health outcomes, while receiving your recommended vaccinations can prevent acquiring disease in the first place. Visit our website at [www.LCDHD.org](http://www.LCDHD.org) and click the “52 Weeks to Health” banner to learn more about each of these areas.