

In Response

san francisco

card

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community
agencies
responding to
disaster

September 2007

Dear Bill,

Here is our newsletter for the month of September. Please enjoy this month's newsletter and if you have an opportunity please forward our newsletter onto your colleagues and peers. Thanks for your continued interest and support of SF CARD - have a wonderful month!

Warmest Regards,

Brian

In This Issue

The Children are
the New Focus!

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Training, & Services

THERE ARE
STILL SPOTS
AVAILABLE
FOR OUR
UPCOMING
"INFORMATION
EXCHANGE"

Our next
"information
exchange" is
taking place on
September 20,
2007. We are
asking everyone
who works within
a human service
agency that serves
people with
disabilities' to



The Children are the New Focus

In the first part of this series, we examined what the perceptions are held by residents in Hodge's community about being prepared for a disaster. Additionally discussed are the obstacles they experience to becoming prepared. With the impediments identified, the question then becomes, what actions are being taken in Hodge's community and congregation to address these obstacles.

Over the last three years there has been a push to engrain preparedness into the everyday conversation, commented Hodge. For example, "we plan on discussing personal preparedness during our health fair later this year, in addition to the importance of regular health visits," Hodge says. The idea Hodge has is you can change the community's preparedness culture, "change their values," if you make being prepared (for a disaster) as part of the same conversation as say for example, the importance of a healthy diet. Additionally, in an effort to change the preparedness culture of Bayview-Hunter's Point, Hodge and fellow church leaders have begun to share preparedness information and training materials obtained from a variety of organizations, such as SF CARD, and work together to prepare their community. Congregations are no longer working in isolation. Hodge further says, "it is important for churches and pastors to incorporate disaster preparedness' trainings and supplies in their yearly budgets and the information and trainings I receive are passed onto other congregational leaders." The hope is that collaboration will be the key to preparing residents within Hodge's community.

Upon visiting Providence First Baptist of San Francisco, the first thing one will notice is the number of children playing in gym. Each summer, Providence Baptist Church of San Francisco holds a summer camp for local kids. "We are

attend this important training. Please review the upcoming events, trainings, & services section of this month's newsletter for further details.

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Disaster Survival Recipes Will Return Next Month

We apologize but our next disaster survival recipe will be in next month's newsletter. If you have developed a disaster survival recipe, please send it to us and we may print it in an upcoming

beginning to focus our education (preparedness) efforts on the children." Like other preparedness education efforts, Hodge's community considers children a very viable and important option to educate about being prepared for a disaster.

Also Hodge conveys the importance of incorporating the children in the families' preparedness planning activities. "They are the future," says Hodge regarding his renewed focus. Should children be the primary focus of preparedness efforts for disaster planning organizations, considering that only 17 percent of Bay Area residents are prepared for the next major disaster, according to the American Red Cross? Should organizations like SF CARD focus its efforts on educating and training children how to prepare and respond to a disaster? The question is somewhat funny but it is twenty years after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake and not much seems to have changed in the communities that are considered vulnerable. For another example, less than 20% of the nonprofit agencies located in the Bay Area are prepared for the next disaster, according to the American Red Cross.

Hodge would somewhat disagree with the statement regarding the perception that not much has changed in the vulnerable areas of San Francisco. "You are the evidence; in the last three years, there has been a huge change, organizations like yourselves (SF CARD) were not talking with congregations like ours," said Hodge. More and more organizations such as SF CARD are specially reaching out into Hodge's community and providing education materials and resources. "Keeping Katrina in the focus, organizations such as yours (SF CARD) will continue to focus on the vulnerable populations," says Hodge. The question becomes evident, as Hodge says, "are we going to lose this focus?" And if Katrina is no longer a highlight on the evening news or addressed in documentaries such as "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts" (a film by Spike Lee); do areas like Bayview-Hunters Point again become undesirable areas to allocate educational resources? According to Hodge, "as long as the Katrina is in the news, organizations such as yours (SF CARD) will

continue coming to the neighborhood." The reason Hodge's comments are mentioned twice is to demonstrate the importance of keeping areas like Bayview-Hunters Point a priority in the allocation of outreach education resources.

The goal of Hodge is to train individual church leaders in "25 churches within 2 years." There are currently 150 churches just located in Hodge's community alone. So far he has educated leadership at 5 churches but Hodge is determined not to give up!

Please note that the picture in the upper left hand corner of this article is of G.L. Hodge.

Agency Emergency Plan - Step 2

Now that you have completed Step 1 and have a clearly defined Disaster Mission Statement in place, it's time to address staffing issues during an emergency. As a reminder, each staff person should have a Personal Preparedness Plan for themselves and their families. If your agency would like to document staff preparedness, please refer to the [One-Page Personal Preparedness Form](#) on the SF CARD website.

The tendency in an emergency is the desire to immediately ramp up to support the disaster mission you've outlined in your plan. But of paramount concern is the condition of your staff and their families. Staff should be given the opportunity to ensure their own families, friends, and loved ones are well and taken care of first. Staff that is on-site during a major disaster should be encouraged to check on their families first, and then report back (if at all possible). Leadership should plan for long delays in staff that was caught off-site during the emergency. It may take days for them to report.

With that in mind, page 3 of the [Agency Emergency Plan](#) (on the SF CARD website) addresses several issues you will need to plan for in regards to personnel in an emergency. Questions to consider:

- How many staff will continue working after a disaster if it strikes during work?
 - Keep in mind that in a large disaster it may be days or even weeks before the community begins to recover. Avoid the temptation to 'recall' all the staff immediately. Also be aware of the need to give them adequate time off during the response and recovery phases.

- How will you staff if a disaster strikes on a weekday, but before work begins?
- How will you staff if a disaster strikes on a weekend?
 - Both questions address the issue of a minimum staff being on site during an event. Issues will be how to get staff back to the agency, who should report, when they should report, and how to contact them. A plan to address these issues will help staff know what's expected of them if communications are down.
- Which staff should automatically report to work in the event of a disaster?
 - Defining this in advance will minimize confusion and distress if leadership and staff know their roles and responsibilities in advance.
- Develop a [contact / call list](#) for your staff
 - A contact list along with a skills assessment list for your staff will help set your priorities on who should report, when, and how best to contact them. Be sure to update the list at least twice a year.
- How will you use volunteers in support of your staff?
 - Most large emergencies will generate a cadre of volunteers that may spontaneously report to assist you. List the functions they can do to help support your efforts. Knowing activities that require minimum training and supervision in advance will maximize their help and minimize the difficulty in placing them.

Avoid the tendency to plan in a vacuum. Addressing these issues should be done at a meeting where as many people as possible participate. You will be surprised at the amount of input you will receive in a group planning exercise. And an active, supervised discussion of issues will generate ideas and suggestions that will prove valuable. Additionally, you will find that a group discussion of staff skills will generate a lot more listed skills than simply passing around the sheet to staff individually. Finally, the group dynamic may provide the impetus for reluctant staff members to finally put a Personal Preparedness Plan in place.

- Idea: encourage staff to come to the meeting with important documents from home and have a group copy day. Copies of the documents should be stored at a place other than their homes.

Call SF CARD to help plan or conduct this portion of your plan through a group meeting. Next month: A more in-depth look at volunteers.

Bust a Myth Section

MYTH - Whether people comply with evacuation plans, isolation and quarantine, or other public health and safety orders is strictly a matter of "personal choice."

FACT - The problem of "non-compliance" has less to do with "personal choice" than with rectifying life circumstances that interfere with an ability to act. For example, "University of New Orleans researchers who surveyed the city's residents about their personal hurricane evacuation plans in 2004 estimated that at least 100,000 New Orleans residents had no means to evacuate: no car, not enough money for airfare or a bus ticket, no friends or family to help them leave town."

The information was taken from Ms. Monica Schoch-Spana's journal article: Public Responses to Extreme Events - Top 5 Disaster Myths. The article was retrieved on August 28, 2007 from <http://www.rff.org/rff/Events/loader.cfm?url=/commonspot/security/getfile.cfm&PageID=20180>

Upcoming Events, Training, & Services

SF CARD

September 20 - Information Exchange - The Incident Command System - A Communication Structure to Use During Post-Disaster Operations for Nonprofit Leaders Who Serve People with Disabilities

The Incident Command System (ICS) is the nationally accepted, standardized method of responding to all manner of harms. It is used by fire, police and emergency responders of every kind all over the U.S. and even abroad. You will be learning a non-governmental version of ICS which will help your organization address and plan for the needs of your clients.

ICS IS INTENDED TO:

1. Contain panic and confusion;
2. Reduce loss of life and property;
3. Protect responders from additional injury; and
4. Preserve your agency's defenses (from lawsuits or loss of reputation).

If you are interested in attending this free workshop, please RSVP by September 15th, 2007 via email at info@sfcad.org. Snacks and beverages will be provided.

This event will be held from 10 AM to Noon at The Lighthouse for the blind and visually impaired at 214 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco - 94102.

NERT

September 8: Neighborhood Empowerment Summit: Bill Graham Civic Auditorium, 99 Grove Street, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. NERT will have a booth, conduct demonstrations, and participate in break-out sessions. Visit www.empowersf.org for more information and to register. **Please RSVP by 9/1/07** to Lt. Erica Arteseros at sffdnext@sfgov.org with your chosen time slot (8:30 - 11:30, 11:30 - 2:30, 2:30 - 5:30).

September 12: "Last Chance" Drill Planning Forum : Your last chance to ask questions about and connect with your fellow EDCC coordinators to work on planning for the October Drill! *Please RSVP by 9/5/07* to Lt. Erica Arteseros at sffdnet@sfgov.org.

Department of Emergency Management

No events listed.

Red Cross Bay Area

For more information on the classes and which dates and locations these classes are offered please visit <http://www.redcrossbayarea.org/training/register.htm> .

DMATCA (web address is <http://www.dmatca6.org/>)

September 11 - UCSF/Stanford Journal Club. Join us for dinner and an evening at our Op Center

reviewing emergency and disaster medicine articles with UCSF and Stanford ER residents. Approx. 1800 - 2100.

September 28 - October 1 - Urban Shield medical coverage. See below for details.

Urban Shield

We've been asked to provide medical coverage at a national urban SWAT competition being held in the San Francisco Bay Area, 28 Sep to 01 Oct, with venues all around the Bay Area.

SWAT teams from around the country will compete in this non-stop, action-packed, around-the-clock competition.

We've been asked to help provide medical support for this exercise: medical screening of participants prior to the start, mid-exercise screening to increase exercise safety, and of course patching up participants in between competition rounds.

Check out the exercise site, www.urbanshield.org, and stay tuned for more info. Sounds like a fun event!
