



# FAMILY STEPS TO SURVIVAL

## Focus on Children



For additional information go to [www.westcovina.org](http://www.westcovina.org)  
Or call 626-939-8824

### WHY?

#### Preparation will reduce stress!

Disasters and emergencies can rattle the nerves of adults and children, alike. You can't do anything to prevent disasters such as earthquakes, or emergencies like rolling blackouts, but you and your children can work together to be prepared.

Encourage your children to participate in the activities outlined on the reverse side of this Focus Sheet. The recommendations have been extracted and adapted from a curriculum developed by Lissa Pederson Samuel, an instructor at Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, and from "What To Expect After A Disaster: Typical Children's Reactions," jointly developed by the National Institute of Mental Health and the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

Also encourage them to draw themselves and their emergency supplies in the space provided.

*These are only suggestions for preparing your family. Use discretion and common sense in your preparations.*

# STEP 9

[www.espfocus.org](http://www.espfocus.org)

**Learn what earthquakes are and what causes them.**

Explain why the ground and buildings shake. Go to a museum, a theme park or an expo that has an earthquake simulator so everyone can experience the shaking sensation. Remind everyone that the shaking will stop. Read stories or sing songs and let your children ask questions. Learn the difference between fact and fiction.

**Discuss aftershocks.** Talk about the possibility that aftershocks as strong as the earthquake itself might occur and continue for some time. Make sure everyone understands that aftershocks are normal.

**Assemble children's emergency kits.** Help your children to assemble their own emergency kits. Include a note from parents, a special toy, family photograph and treat, as well as water, food and other emergency supplies. Kits should meet their needs and likes. Remember, no supplies are "wrong."

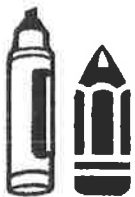
**Accustom everyone to living without electricity.** Go through an entire evening without using electricity to prepare everyone—especially children—for the possibility of having to live without it. Conduct a "flashlight" walk around the block; hold a candlelight or "flashlight" dinner; tell stories instead of watching television.

**After a disaster or major emergency, monitor family members**—particularly children—for behavioral changes, including withdrawal from family and friends, overeating or loss of appetite, disobedience and antisocial behavior. Parents and teachers can respond to such problems by encouraging interaction with family members and friends, by providing additional attention and physical comfort and by providing structured but undemanding responsibilities. Contact your local mental health agency for more information.

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## Coloring Page

### "I'm disaster prepared!"

Draw a picture of you with your emergency supplies.

