

The following document is the first formal Emergency Preparedness Plan for the UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start. In no way is the Plan complete, but is a work in progress, with additions made as it is compiled.

January 4, 2011

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The following individuals contributed to the development of the Emergency Preparedness Plan for the UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start:

Community/ Head Start Representatives

Greg Thacker- Vehicle Maintenance Supervisor Van Buren Co. Schools
Lori Shelton- PA Cumberland Family Care
Monica Howard- Van Buren Co. School system
Dale Henry- Mountain View newspaper
R.C. Christian- Tennessee Highway Patrol
Michael Martin- Superintendent of Van Buren Co. School system
Stacey Hampton- Parent
Debra Rowlands- UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start
Herbert Davis- Van Buren Co. Mayor
Laura Carlile- UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start
Eddie Carter: City of Spencer Police Chief
Al Henry- Mountain View newspaper
Wendy Warner- UT TNCEP Coordinator
Rita Mayfield- UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start
Karla Hillis- Director UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start

This Plan is to be used in conjunction with and assisted by the Van Buren County School System

UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start's Emergency Preparedness Plan

The UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start can be vulnerable to disaster because large numbers of people are collected in relatively small spaces. As a result, natural disasters, accidents and intentional intrusions that involve Head Start can have devastating effects on students, staff, parents, and the community as a whole. If an emergency/disaster/crisis occurs, it is important to have contingency plans available to enact quick, effective responses to minimize the disastrous effects that calamities can bring. The Head Start program's role in a school emergency/disaster/crisis is one on intervention, management, support and to ensure continuity of services. Head Start staff will take over the management of the crisis and turn their attention to the specific needs of the students, staff and others who are directly involved. The responsibilities of all personnel are outlined in the text of this plan.

To prepare guidelines, the following definition of an emergency/disaster/crisis was used:

A sudden event or series of events that profoundly and negatively affect many, if not all, of the Head Start population by putting students and/or staff at risk of physical or psychological harm by actually causing serious injury or death.

The UCHRA Van Buren Co. Head Start's emergency preparedness plan uses best practices approach addressing multi-hazards ranging from intrusions/shootings to natural disasters to terrorist incidents. The crisis management employs our phases of process that address Mitigation/Prevention, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Emergency preparedness is an ongoing process that can always be updated. The continued professional development of staff, first responders, students, parents, and the community as a whole by which to make Head Start safer and more secure from the impacts of natural and man made disasters is the goal for our program.

In the event of an emergency, the State TA Specialist *must* be contacted via whatever means possible. The State TA Specialist will contact the Regional office in the same time frame. Contact information:

POS
Gina Bell
(404) 562-2883

FOS
David Adkins
(404) 562-2933

TAS

Name/Title	Home Number	Alternate Number
Phyllis Bennett, Executive Director	(931) 537-6065	(931) 261-6270
Karla Hillis, Head Start Director	(931) 686-8397	(931) 267-9101
Rita Mayfield, Lead Teacher	(423) 881-5338	(931) 267-4863

Our alarm system is monitored by Pioneer Communications in Cookeville, Tennessee. The repair number is 931-528-1426 and the monitoring number is 931-318-9486. The local fire department is located within close proximity of our building.

In the event of an evacuation, if time permits, parents will be allowed to pick their children up before the evacuation. If time does not permit, the contact and release information will be secured and transported with the children. Contact will be made with parents after reaching the relocation destination, since our facility is located in a remote area on the edge of the Cumberland Plateau and communication via cell phone, bus radio or wireless internet is difficult. Roll call will be conducted each and every time the children are moved from one location to another.

All staff will be trained regularly on evacuation procedures. Parents will be trained on these procedures during Phase In at the beginning of each school year and the information is also included in their Handbook (documentation of receipt of such is maintained in Head Start file).

In the event of damages to the building or contents, Head Start Director will notify the Agency's Special Projects/Facilities/Procurement Officer upon incident for a preliminary assessment of all damages. They in turn will contact the insurance provider to schedule an additional assessment. Since the building belongs to the Van Buren Co. School System, the Head Start Director will also contact the Superintendent of Schools so their insurance provider can assess the damages as well.

In the event that the building could no longer be utilized, the Head Start Director or designee will contact our State TA Specialist via whatever means possible within 2 hours of the occurrence. The State TA Specialist will notify the Regional Office within the same time frame. Temporary operations will be set up at the county government Administration Building. If buses are available, transportation will continue to be provided for children and families to this alternate facility.

In the event of an intruder alert, office staff will alert classroom teachers via hand held radios.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TEAM

The Multi -Services Advisory Committee will be required to assemble, react, respond and give leadership in the event of an emergency/disaster/crisis. The team shall be called into service by Director or his/her designee. Each team member, if possible, shall suggest an alternate member to participate in any activities required of the team in the event that the primary member is unavailable.

The Director/designated staff (lead teacher and /or Health and Disability Specialist) shall assume the lead. The responsibilities include:

1. Convening the team as necessary.
2. Establishing a command post.
3. Directing the team in its efforts.
4. Assuming the responsibility for any action that requires decisions that may have budgetary implications.
5. Keeping abreast of all federal, state and local requirements as to drills, exercises, etc.
6. Ensuring that every available means of communication is being used, including land and mobile phone lines, radio transmissions, computers, local cable television, hand delivered messages and personal participation.
7. Coordinating with all outside agencies and communicate with teachers/staff/students.
8. Conduct a mock emergency to test the emergency preparedness plan.

The Director, in coordination with the public school superintendent (as stated in the memorandum of understanding) shall convene the entire team at any time or may convene selected members or representatives to respond to a specific event. After any event, the chairperson may convene any/all members to debrief, discuss, and review the actions or responses of the team in order to ensure that the plan that was followed is fast and effective. Areas of improvement and /or changes to the response plan should be implemented.

If the team must be convened, they shall be notified of the location for the team's meeting. If other response agencies, such as police, fire and/or civil defense, establish a command post, Head Start shall establish a command post in conjunction with that post or shall have a Head Start representative assigned to that post to coordinate information, messages, and responses.

In the event of a widespread event, such as earthquake or tornado, Head Start will convene at the Van Buren Co. school system or Fall Creek Falls State Park Inn. Should the Head Start building be unusable, all communication equipment shall be transported to this location. If the identified locations are inaccessible, and remaining at Head Start is not an option, Fall Creek Falls Community Center will be the designated relocation point.

In the event of a major catastrophe, it shall be the responsibility of each team member to monitor commercial TV and radio channels. All sources of communication shall be considered and used: i.e. hand held radios, cell phones etc.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLES OF UCHRA VAN BUREN CO. HEAD START STAFF

DIRECTOR

- Direct all operations of the program in the management of the crisis.
- Assess the crisis situation and assign tasks based on the overall needs for managing the crisis.
- Stay in contact with the leaders of the emergency service agencies and the law enforcement agencies working with the crisis.
- Authorize the release of information to the public and identify the spokesperson for the program.
- Arrange for the payment of monies needed to respond to crisis situations; authorize purchases and payments for resources.
- Make recommendations regarding the restarting of the program.
- Report to the local hospital if students or adults are being sent to that hospital for treatment.
- Report to area hospitals to which students or adults have been admitted for treatment. If more than one hospital is admitting students or adults, assign and direct other district staff to assist in those hospitals.
- Coordinate communication among the hospitals and district central office.
- Meet and talk with the parents of students and spouses and/or family members of adults who have been sent to the hospitals.

HEALTH/DISABILITY SERVICES SPECIALIST

- Will direct all activities of the Head Start staff.
- Prepare and maintain an emergency kit that contains floor plans, telephone locations, computer locations and other communications equipment.
- Establish and maintain a clearinghouse for the community, parents, media, etc., and refer these for the appropriate person or place.
- Communicate with the Van Buren Co. school system/EMA during the crisis period.
- Serve as a liaison between the crisis location site and the emergency support teams that may be needed.
- Coordinate and direct communication between the crisis location site and county and state agencies.
- Coordinate and direct the acquisition of water and food supplies when there is a disruption of water if remaining at the Head Start program.
- Supervise the collection of information about those involved in the crisis.
- Check student and staff records for all injured to determine special medical needs that may be on file.
- Assist in the notification of parents of students and spouses of staff involved in the crisis.

LEAD TEACHER

- In conjunction with the Health/Disability Services Specialist and direct persons with predefined assignments.
- Establish and implement plans for crisis care.
- Develop letters/information sheets in conjunction with the Family/Community Partnership Specialist parents, teachers and others; information will include topics such as the availability of crisis-care, how to talk to students, signs of depression related to crisis stress, etc.
- Assist with planning post-crisis activities.
- Coordinate briefings with staff.
- Develop a schedule for activities for the first day of school following the crisis.
- Assist the Director with monthly staff meetings following a crisis.

RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES REQUIRING 911 (INTRUSION/GUN THREAT)

- A. Call 911
- B. Stay on the phone until all needed services has been requested. The caller should stay on the phone until released.
- C. The called should have as much information as possible.
 - 1. Self identification
 - 2. Program name
 - 3. What happened
 - 4. Location of the injured
 - 5. Type of injury
 - 6. Number of victims
 - 7. Type of weapon, if applicable
 - 8. Name, description and location of intruder/person involved
 - 9. Description and license number of any vehicle involved and the direction of travel
- D. The Director must be notified as soon as possible after any calls are made to police, fire and/or ambulance service.**
- E. Direct or assist emergency personnel responding to any given situation.
- F. Enact any emergency evacuation procedures that are appropriate for the situation.

DIRECTOR OR DESIGNEE'S RESPONSIBILITES

The Director is responsible for the safety and security of all persons (students, faculty, staff) under her/his jurisdiction. All reasonable efforts within the discretional powers of the office shall be made to ensure the safety issues are addressed and that steps are taken

to protect the assets of the program. In the event that the Director is absent from the Program, the Director's designee will assume the responsibility for safety and security (Lead Teacher or H/DSS). The Director/designee is responsible for assuring that each person within her/his administration unit can be accounted for and that aid is being given to those requiring medical attention. If necessary, the designee shall take steps to organize the orderly release of students to authorized persons (police, fire, ambulance, parents, family, etc.). If practical, every effort will be made to contact the parent, guardian, or family member of each person, student or staff member who is injured or requiring aid. Until outside assistance arrives, the Director /designee shall take reasonable steps to preserve and protect the life and safety of those under her/his administration.

Also:

1. Develop emergency/crisis/disaster procedures as a part of the over all program safety committee's crisis management plan; evacuation plans should also be included.
2. Appoint a designee who will be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the site's plans and strategies as it relates to emergency/disaster/crisis procedures.
3. Ensure all evacuations and disaster drills are performed as required by state law, local ordinances or board policy. Records of such activity should be maintained.
4. Identify resources to assist the site in the event of an emergency/disaster/crisis.

FAMILY/COMMUNITY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

- Report to the Director
- Complete tasks as assigned by Director/Lead Teacher/HDSS

LITERACY ASSISTANT

- Develop plans and scenarios in which district technological resources can be dispersed effectively to emergency sites.
- Report to Supervisor of safe Schools at the district central office.
- Supervise the use of the school computer system for communication with the district office and the electronic bulletin board system.
- Provide technical support to the school and district.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Execute the Plan as Practiced

- Take charge immediately
- Summon help
- Identify the injured

- Provide first aid and support victims
- Verify absent children

Manage the Media

- Media command post
- Structured news conferences
- Be truthful
- Control access to students and staff

Implement Transportation Plan

Control the Crowd

Provide Information/Support to Families

RESPONDING TO UNEXPECTED CRISIS

- Have plans to address and manage human needs and the media.
- Return a “normal” school atmosphere as much as possible.
- Maintain to a “normal” school atmosphere as much as possible.
- Control the message given to the public by cooperating with the media.
- Provide leadership to communicate and implement the plans.

HANDLING AN EMERGENCY/DISASTER/CRISIS

An emergency/disaster/crisis is a sudden event or series of events that profoundly and negatively affect many, if not all, of the Center’s population by putting students and/or staff at risk of physical or psychological harm by causing serious injury or death. The procedure following the first 30 minutes of a crisis is crucial in establishing how many people perceive the crisis and their attitudes about how it was handled. Here is a checklist to help you work through the first 30 minutes and the 24-48 hours that follow.

Day One

1. Notify the Head Start Director.
2. Assign the appropriate person to handle the situation. The Director/designee should take charge of implementing the crisis management plan. Convene the Center’s crisis management team.
3. Define the problem. Consider all the options. Act decisively to ensure the safety and well-being of students and staff.
4. Inform Center personnel that a media contact person is in place and that no one should speak to the media while on Center grounds.

5. Conduct a personnel meeting as soon as possible to give them accurate information and instructions.
 - Schedule an early morning or after school meeting to discuss the facts about the crisis and the implications for the students.
 - Give teacher handouts on how to respond and discuss in the classroom.
 - Distribute worksheets for the identification of high risk students and request that they be turned in by lunch time.
6. Notify support staff in the school of what happened and let them know where students in distress are to be sent. Also, let them know who to contact if they think a student is in difficulty.
7. Set up a screening area for outside mental health consultants to do screenings.
 - Have a list of referral sources available.
 - If a referral to an outside agency is necessary, notify the parent/guardian and inform the person of the seriousness of the situation and ask the parent/guardian to come to the Center.
8. Discuss with the student what has happened. Give them the facts, clarify information and listen carefully. This should be done in individual classrooms rather than a large group setting.
9. Inform parents by a letter sent home with students at the end of the day explaining the circumstances and the procedure used to school to communicate with students. If a crisis management team is involved, include information about the team's role and any potential follow up.
10. Teachers should:
 - Allow discussion and expression of feelings (within appropriate limits).
 - Plan a concrete activity to help students deal with feelings. (i.e. write notes, send cards, etc.)
 - Allow for stress reactions in children. Plan less intense structured activities for a few days.
 - Send any excessively upset children to the counseling area. **TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY THE FEELINGS AND EXPRESSIONS OF STUDENTS.**

DAY TWO

1. Director/designee will meet in the morning with outside mental health consultants to review the identified high- risk students and cross check that all have been seen.
2. Check absentees and call parents of students who are not in school.
3. Begin planning an evening information meeting with parents.
4. Continue screening high risk students and facilitating small groups as needed.
5. Hold a staff meeting or arrange consultation time for any staff who request assistance in dealing with grief issues in the classroom.
6. As soon as the information is available, announce in the classrooms the times and location of the funeral(s).

DAY THREE

1. Director/designee will meet in the morning with mental health consultants to review identified high risk students.
2. Discuss and problems/concerns with media coverage.
3. Finalize plans for parents' meeting.
4. Check absentees for unexcused absences.
5. Allow excused absences for students to attend the funeral.
6. Follow up with parents for students' well being.

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY/DISASTER/CRISIS

The Director or designee should follow these procedures:

- A. Take immediate action and necessary procedures to protect the health and safety of students and staff. Be prepared to move students and faculty to an alternate site if necessary.
- B. Notify the appropriate response agency, such as the police, fire, and ambulance. These Persons will also be contacted within 24 hours:
 1. Phyllis Bennett, UCHRA Director: 931-537-6065 (home) 931-261-6270 (cell)
 2. Gina Bell, POS: 404-562-2883
 3. David Adkins, FOS: 404-562-2933
 4. Phara Fondern, TAS: 615-838-5615
- C. Provide aid to the injured.
- D. Activate the Crisis Management Plan.
- E. Notify a family member of each injured individual.
- F. **Have all reporters and photographers directed to a media command center. No one should be allowed to roam the Center.**
- G. Establish a script for the switchboard operator at the Central Office and for the designated individual answering the phone at the Center. If numerous calls are anticipated, establish a phone center where all calls are received by individuals who are equipped with scripts.
- H. If students and/or staff are taken to the hospital, request that the hospital not release names to the media until parents or family members have been notified.
- I. Maintain precise records of affected students and staff.
- J. In the event that the emergency/disaster/crisis eliminates the use of telephone lines, the Director or designee should monitor television and/or radio stations for the information and instructions.
- K. **In the event that the Center must be evacuated, student medications which are dispensed through the office should be removed from the building by a designated individual. Teachers should take roll books.**

ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

The whereabouts of every student, staff member and visitor must be determined as quickly as possible when a crisis occurs.

1. Staff members should account for other staff members in their areas as well as requesting that visitors go to the nearest classroom.
2. Teachers must take roll and prepare a list of missing and extra students, staff and visitors.
3. When safe to do, appropriate person will collect the missing/extra persons list.
4. Command Post Duties for Accountability:
 - a) When safe to do so, Director/designee will activate the Accountability System.
 - b) Request staff members who are not assigned to students to help as needed. Appropriate person should collect missing/extra persons lists, watch for students not under the control of an adult, and watch for outsiders.
 - c) Have appropriate staff note staff members that they may see in a different room than usual.
 - d) Once lists have been returned to Command Post, verify student attendance (Office personnel should have all emergency data with them). Check to see if missing students were at school, checked out, or are with another teacher on the “extras” list.
 - e) Verify the status of missing staff by referring to the substitute log.
 - f) Request that all visitors report to the Command Post and verify that all visitors have been located.
 - g) Send adults to escort students who are not where they belong back to the correct class.
 - h) Be prepared to begin the Orderly Check-Out System.

ORDERLY CHECK-OUT SYSTEM

Even in a small emergency, many parents/family members will come to the school very quickly to pick up students. An orderly check-out system eases parent tension and allows the school to account for all students.

Check-Out Stations

- A. If students/staff are in the building, the Check-Out Station will probably be located in the front office.
- B. If students/staff have relocated, the Check-Out Station should be at that site.

Off Campus Site(s) for Relocation PROCEDURES

1. Students are only to be released to adults listed on their Release list.
2. Parents report to Check-Out Station. In a major crisis, split student list into three or four sections by last name. Parents line up in correct lines.
3. Parent signs out student, notes where they will be headed, and the time recorded.

4. Appropriate person is sent to get the student.
5. Teacher notes time on roll sheet.

VIOLENT INCIDENT POSTVENTION PROCEDURES

1. If the situation warrants total staff involvement, utilize a chain of notification and communication for staff.
2. Support services to help staff and/or students will be notified by the Director. Example: mental health, etc). Appropriate central office personnel will assist Director as needed.
3. Refer to the communications guidelines: “Communicating with the Media”.
Remember: students should be protected from the media. No names of students should be released to the media without parental consent.
4. Assign faculty to identify students directly exposed to the trauma.
5. Take students through the crisis. Provide opportunities for discussion of the facts, as well as concerns, in small groups whenever possible.
6. Contact the Mental Health Center for ongoing support services, referrals and consultation.
7. Offer counseling to students, families, teachers and staff.
8. Re-open the Center as soon as possible.
9. If appropriate, hold an Open House for parents and students.
10. Encourage parents to return their children to school as soon as the situation is considered safe.
11. Check attendance carefully for related absences; encourage attendance and provide reassurance.
12. Have a memorial service if appropriate, **but not for a suicide.**
13. Have a follow-up meeting with the staff to process events and evaluate the effectiveness of the post-vention plan.

INFORMATION CONTROL

- A. Staff will restrict all parents and others until police permit movement in or out of the building.
- B. Emergency staff only may enter the building. No parent(s), regardless of how impassioned the plea, may enter the building.
- C. The Director/designee will work with the police or other emergency/other applicable personnel to coordinate reports to parents and to the media.

NO OTHER PERSON OTHER THAN POLICE AND EMERGENCY STAFF MAY ENTER THE BUILDING REGARDLESS OF HOW IMPASSIONED THE PLEA.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE MEDIA

In any crisis situation, the media will likely contact the school first rather than the Central Agency.

A. Procedures

1. When the Director or designee is notified, they will arrive at the scene immediately to assist the Center with the media.
2. The Director will designate an official spokesperson.
3. Set up a location for the media center, outside of the Center building.
4. Because the Center needs the help of the news media to keep the community and parents informed of events as they happen, do not alienate them by being abrupt of saying “No comment”. Rather than “no comment”, you might say “I cannot share that information with you at this time”. Another possibility to keep the media content is to tell them that you will let them know as soon as possible or specify a time for a news conference.

B. IF YOU MUST ANSWER QUESTIONS, REMEMBER:

1. **Be prepared.** Prepare basic facts truthfully, clearly and concisely in writing for your own use when presenting information to the media. Give factual information, not opinion.
2. **Anticipate questions.**
3. **Before the interview.** Stop, check your appearance, reread your notes take a deep breath.
4. **Be in control of the interview.** Use short direct answers.
5. **Do not identify students and/or staff by names or give out names if victims until family members have been notified.** Facts should include who, what, when why and how.

Example:

Two of our students were assaulted by three unknown assailants on the south parking lot about 9:30am. Their condition is unknown at this time. Students were transported to the hospital by ambulance. Parents have been notified. The incident is under investigation by local law enforcement officials. The next information will originate from the law enforcement officials.

6. **Stay calm no matter what happens.** Remain cool and courteous. You know more about the situation than the media does and you have the “home court” advantage.
7. **Listen carefully.** Listen to the question that the reporter is asking and specifically answer that question only.
8. **If irrelevant questions are asked.** You may feel comfortable in responding that the questions are not pertinent to the issue and move on to the next question.
9. **Do not “parrot” a reporter’s question.**

EXAMPLE: “How are you handling this terrible shock?”

DON’T RESPOND: “We are handling this terrible shock by...”

Respond in your own words, “The students are on their regular schedules.”

10. Always be honest. If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. However, offer to let the person know as soon as possible. Then do so.