

Post-Disaster Reunification of Children

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AGENDA

Reunification Overview

What is Reunification

Challenges, Planning Factors, and Considerations

BREAK

Resources for Planning

Small Group Discussion

Next Steps

REUNIFICATION OVERVIEW

REUNIFICATION END STATE

- Individuals requiring reunification assistance have access to resources to reunify with household members
- Agencies responsible for identifying parents/guardians of unaccompanied minors and missing children receive targeted levels of assistance to support reunification
- Relatives and concerned individuals receive assistance locating household members displaced by a disaster or emergency

REUNIFICATION SERVICES

- Survivor access to communications including telephone, cellular phones, and/or internet to connect with email, social media, and reunification systems
- Timely and consistent public messaging to survivors and the public outside the disaster area on available reunification

REUNIFICATION SERVICES

- Seamless coordination and the ability to share information among agencies and organizations with reunification responsibilities for evacuees, children, displaced adults and missing persons (including college students and foreign nationals/visitors), emergency welfare inquiries, medical patients (to include those in facilities and those evacuated), fatalities, and household pets and service animals

REUNIFICATION OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- Disaster reunification is not often a priority in emergency planning or response
- Assumptions made as to “how to” and “who” manages reunification
- Many families do not have or practice a family emergency plans
 - Schools/Child care
 - Foster care/Congregate care programs
 - Hospitals/Medical facilities
 - Nursing homes/Assisted living facilities

REUNIFICATION OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- Schools and hospitals often become overtaxed as community caretakers in disasters
 - Injured & Uninjured
 - Missing vs Unaccompanied
 - Custodial rights
 - HIPAA & Privacy issues
- No immediate messaging for worried individuals on where to go/who to call to report/find loved ones
- No identified clearinghouse to intake reports, tips/leads = inflated missing persons lists.

REUNIFICATION OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

- Large-scale scenarios would add serious complications to reunification
- Gaining access into impacted areas would be very difficult
- Search and Rescue/medical personnel have other prioritized responsibilities
- Vulnerable populations (AFN, elderly, children) may not have the proper resources to manage any immediate needs
- National media attention may increase the number of reunification requests from loved ones all over the world
- Difficulties “ground-truthing” information esp. from social media, inaccurate reports

REUNIFICATION PLANNING FACTORS

- Evacuations: spontaneous, government assisted, medical
- Limited or no access to communications
- No notice incident
- Schools in session
- Large shelter populations
- Fatalities and injuries

REUNIFICATION PLANNING FACTORS

- Population percentage with a disability, older residents or cultural/language differences
- Special events occurring
- Peak seasonal population
- Media coverage

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Reach out to state and national reunification partners as soon as possible to determine level of assistance that can be provided
- Monitoring of social media for disaster needs should also include those looking to be reunified with loved ones
- PIOs should have speaking points regarding reunification and should reiterate message as often as possible

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Identify and integrate ways for general population to reunify themselves
 - Include power outlets/strips, phone car chargers, phone banks, disposable phones, laptops with internet access, roving Cell On Wheels (COWs)/Cell On Light Towers (COLTs) at as many locations and as quickly as possible
 - Make part of standard bulk supply orders and stockpiles
 - Identify and develop contracts with private sector partners that can be part of solution

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Establish Reunification & Information Centers around designated areas/evacuation routes
 - Either stand-alone or co-located to reach majority of population
 - Publicize location(s) as soon as possible and in a variety of ways to direct people with reunification needs there
 - Ensure that disaster workers are made aware of reunification procedures

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- Activate a call center/hotline to manage reunification-related calls
 - Minimize call volume to emergency phone systems and other critical areas
 - Define intake criteria to support identification of individuals who cannot self-identify so that it matches information given by those who are potentially seeking them
 - Publicize information as soon as possible and in all relevant languages

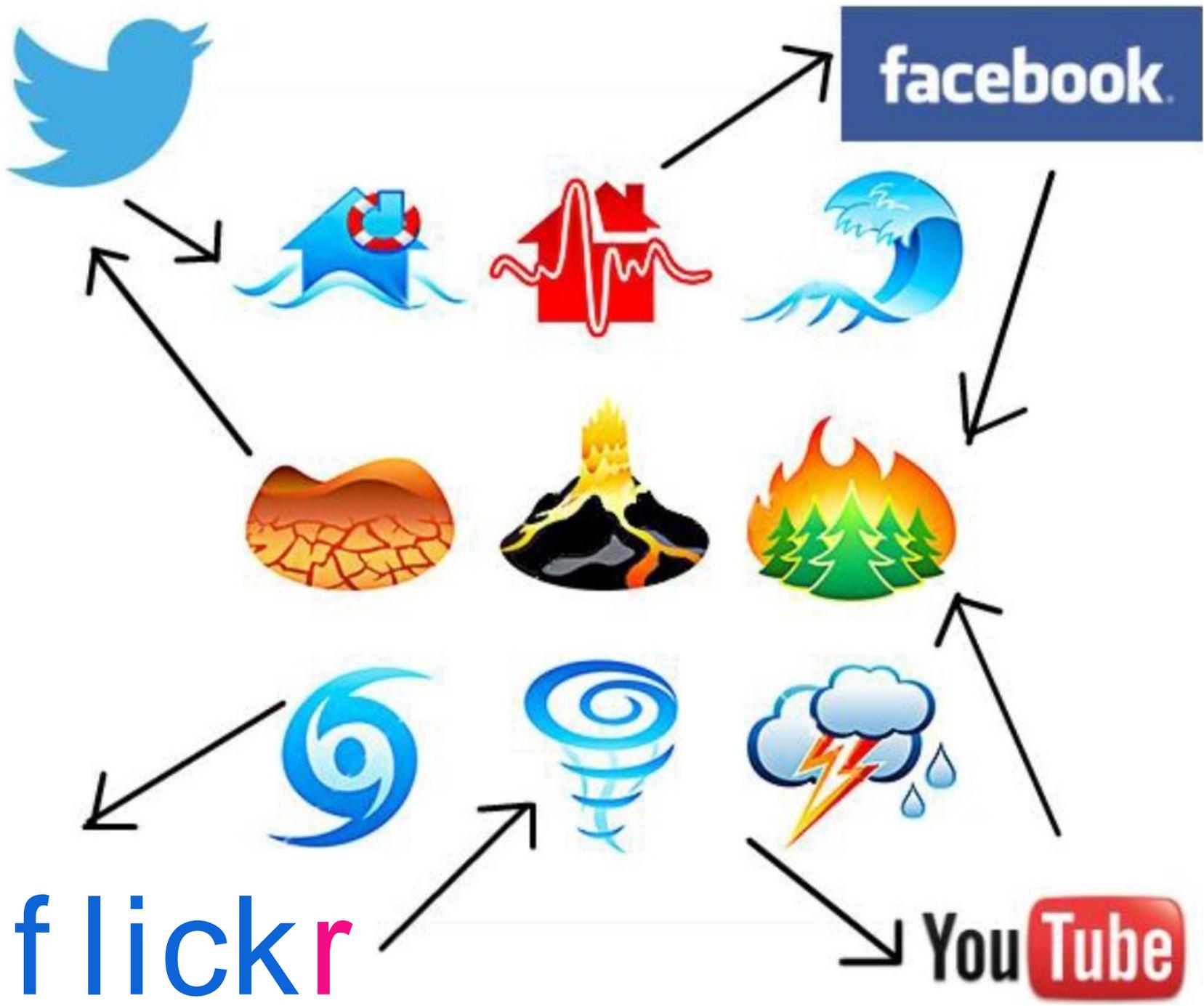
PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- No connectivity = no problem!
 - Use paper and pen to initiate reunification requests when there are connectivity issues
 - Define intake criteria such as name, DOB, address, etc. to have something to match against information given by those being sought

REUNIFICATION RESOURCES

SOCIAL MEDIA

- The public will use social media apps that are familiar and comfortable for them
- Promote family communication plans that include reunification
- Social media can be used by disaster responders to identify disaster needs in the community



Google Person Finder helps people reconnect with friends and loved ones in the aftermath of natural and humanitarian disasters.



A crisis strikes and people get separated.



They let the world know they are looking for someone.



Individuals and organizations provide information.



People find information about their friends and family.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN



NCMEC DISASTER RESOURCES

- ❖ 24-hour, toll-free hotline: 1-800-THE-LOST
- ❖ www.missingkids.org/Disasters
- ❖ Exploited Children Division, Case Analysis Division, Family Advocacy Division
- ❖ Missing Children Division
 - Team Adam
 - Project ALERT
 - Transportation Support
 - Photo and poster distribution
 - National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC)
 - Unaccompanied Minors Registry

ENDANGERED/MISSING	
	
<small>Most Current Picture</small>	<small>Earlier Picture</small>
<small>was last seen on</small> 2009.	<small>DOB:</small> 2001
<small>She may still be in the local area.</small>	<small>Missing:</small> 2009
<small>was last seen wearing a pink 'Hello Kitty' shirt and a striped dress.</small>	<small>Height:</small> 4' 0" (122 cm)
<small>Missing From:</small> USA	<small>Eyes:</small> Brown
	<small>Race:</small>
	<small>Age Now:</small> 8
	<small>Sex:</small> Female
	<small>Weight:</small> 45 lbs (20 kg)
	<small>Hair:</small> Light Brown or Brown
<small>MISSING & EXPLOITED</small>	<small>ANYONE HAVING INFORMATION SHOULD CONTACT</small>
<small>NATIONAL CENTER FOR MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN</small>	<small>National Center for Missing & Exploited Children</small>
<small>1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST)</small>	<small>1-800-843-5678 (1-800-THE-LOST)</small>
<small>www.missingkids.org</small>	<small>Police Department</small>



No cost share to state as long as state or FEMA makes request to NCMEC.

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS REGISTRY (UMR)

- The UMR is the first national data collection tool used to:
 - Facilitate the tracking and reunification of unaccompanied minors as a result of a disaster
 - Expedite the reunification of unaccompanied minors with their families, guardians, and caregivers when separated by a disaster
 - Provide reports back to law enforcement and reunification staff
- Can report a single child or multiple children at the same time

<http://umr.missingkids.org>

DONATE



UNACCOMPANIED MINORS REGISTRY

CONTACT US

Welcome to the Unaccompanied Minors Registry

If you locate an unaccompanied minor, **please call your local law enforcement agency immediately**. Then complete the following.

The Unaccompanied Minors Registry supports the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) by allowing the public to report information related to children who have been separated from their parents or legal guardians as a result of a disaster. This tool will enable NCMEC to provide assistance to local law enforcement and assist in the reunification of displaced children with their parents or legal guardians. If you experience any trouble reporting online, please contact NCMEC 24-hours a day, at 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678).

An unaccompanied minor is a child who has been separated from parents, legal guardians, and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

This site is a secured site. UMR uses Secure Socket Layer (SSL) technology to encrypt information on this application over the internet.



Start Reporting

Contact Us

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This Web site is funded, in part, through a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Neither the U.S. Department of Justice nor any of its components operate, control, are responsible for, or necessarily endorse, this Web site (including, without limitation, its content, technical infrastructure, and policies, and any services or tools provided).

This website uses MaxMind's GeoIP JavaScript Service

How to Plan in Case of a Disaster

Safety tips for families

1



School Evacuation

Some schools and day cares have emergency plans for a variety of scenarios, but recent studies indicate many do not. If your child's school or day care does not have a reunification plan, encourage them to reach out to their school district or local emergency management agency to discuss developing one.

2



Emergency Calling

Develop and regularly practice emergency plans at home with children and pets in case your family is separated. Designate an out-of-state relative or close friend to become "communications central" for the family. Because local phone lines may be down or inundated in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, someone out-of-state will be best positioned to receive calls.

3



Location for Meeting Up

Designate a location where your family could gather in the event of separation. This could be a playground, park or a local landmark that's easy for children to get to if they need to on their own.

4



Important Documents

Make copies of any legal paperwork if you are your child's court designated primary caregiver in a custodial separation or divorce. Share them with any relatives or close friends in other states, or carry the paperwork with you in an emergency kit.

5



School Evacuation

This should include a recent color photo of the child's face, descriptive information, fingerprints, medical and dental records or bite impressions, and a DNA sample. This sample could be taken from any number of your child's grooming items such as a hairbrush or toothbrush.

To learn more about preparing for a disaster go to our website.

<http://www.missingkids.org/Disasters>

"Children Displaced by Disaster" DVD



**FEDERAL EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT AGENCY
(FEMA)**

NATIONAL EMERGENCY FAMILY REGISTRY AND LOCATOR SYSTEM (NEFRLS)

NEFRLS is a web-based system which enables FEMA to provide a voluntary nationally accessible system to facilitate the reunification of families separated / displaced by an emergency or major disaster.

Activates following a disaster declaration and operates on a 24/7 basis at the request of a state



FEMA

Español | Register/Search by Phone

National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS)

[FEMA Homepage](#)

[Red Cross Safe & Well](#)

[Report a Missing Child](#)

[About NEFRLS](#)

Welcome to the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS)

"Bringing families together"

I Am Displaced

I have been displaced due to a disaster and want to register myself and/or my family

Search For A Displaced Person

I am searching for a friend or family member who has been displaced due to a disaster

Report/Search For A Missing Child

I am reporting or searching for a missing child

I Want to Register/Search by Telephone



Register/Search:
1-800-588-9822

Report/Search For
A Missing Child:
1-866-908-9570

[I Am Displaced](#)

[Search for a Displaced Person](#)

[Report/Search For A Missing Child](#)

[Register/Search by Phone](#)

Returning users with Username and Password:

[Log in here](#)

The National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System will not ask about anyone's citizenship status or forward any information, unless requested by name, to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency.

Have you registered to determine your eligibility for federal disaster assistance? If not, go to <http://www.disasterassistance.gov>

Note: Registering in NEFRLS is voluntary and does not register you for any type of local, state, or federal assistance.

NEFRLS OVERVIEW

- Enables family members and friends to search the database for a record created by a displaced individual
- Displaced people are able to leave a message and/or current contact information for selected family and friends
- The registrant chooses who can view their information – up to seven people
- The registrant can list family members that are traveling with them
- Provides data reports for reunification operations

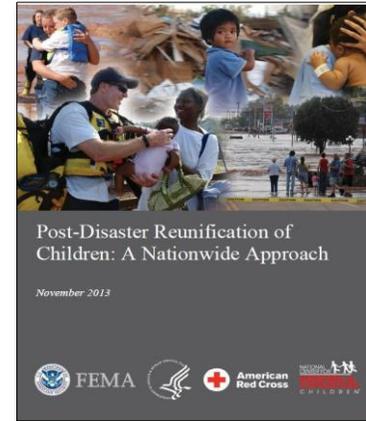
NATIONAL MASS EVACUATION TRACKING SYSTEM (NMETS)

- Evacuation tracking tool to assist jurisdictions in tracking the movement of evacuees, their household pets or service animals, and essential belongings during government assisted evacuations
- Barcoded wristbands are provided to evacuees which links all household members and possessions electronically in the system
- Elements of the UMR have been incorporated into the newest version of NMETS released in December 2014
- Produces a manifest to include information collected on unaccompanied minors – can be shared with appropriate officials to support the expeditious reunification of children

NATIONAL REUNIFICATION RESOURCES

Post Disaster Reunification of Children

- Provides a framework for reunification planning
- Lists nationwide reunification resources available to support



Multi-Agency Reunification Services Plan Template

- Provides a template to create a general state reunification services plan
- Lists all available reunification resources available to support



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

NEXT STEPS

Thank you for coming!

Questions?