

Preparing Your Children

Children need to be prepared for an earthquake as much as adults, if not more.

For infants and toddlers, special emphasis should be placed on making their environment as safe as possible

Cribs should be placed away from windows and tall, unsecured bookcases and shelves that could slide or topple.

A minimum of a 72-hour supply of extra water, formula, bottles, food, juices, clothing, disposable diapers, baby wipes and prescribed medications should be stored where it is most likely to be accessible after an earthquake. Also keep an extra diaper bag with these items in your car.

Store strollers, wagons, blankets and cribs with appropriate wheels to evacuate infants, if necessary.

Install bumper pads in cribs or bassinets to protect babies during the shaking.

Install latches on all cupboards (not just those young children can reach) so that nothing can fall on your baby during a quake.

Preschool and School-age Children

By age three or so, children can understand what an earthquake is and how to get ready for one. Take the time to explain what causes earthquakes in terms they'll understand. Include your children in family discussions and planning for earthquake safety. Conduct drills and review safety procedures every six months

Show children the safest places to be in each room when an earthquake hits. Also show them all possible exits from each room.

Use sturdy tables to teach children to Duck, Cover & Hold.

Teach children what to do wherever they are during an earthquake (at school, in a tall building, outdoors).

Make sure children's emergency cards at school are up-to-date. Although children should not turn off any utility valves, it's important

that they know what gas smells like. Advise children to tell an adult if they smell gas after an earthquake.