

PREParation for Emergencies and Recovery for Individuals with Special Needs and their Families (PREP)

Program Description

People with special health care needs are particularly vulnerable when emergencies occur due to their need for special medical treatment and need for additional services, supports during emergency situations. Most have not planned and are not prepared. We know that preparedness can be a proactive mechanism that helps families and individuals recover and rebuild their lives. Becoming educated about concrete steps families should take and how to focus on their strengths is the logical next step after experiencing damage resulting from a disaster. Being prepared is also likely to lead to better outcomes next time a disaster strikes. (Training is customizable to geographic location and local hazards).

PREParation for Emergencies and Recovery Workshop educates individuals and families about what can be done to better prepare, respond, and recover from emergency situations and engages participants in the PREP planning process. **The workshop addresses these key topics:**

- 1) The Unique Needs of Individuals with Special Health Care Needs
- 2) The Importance of Individualized Planning
- 3) The PREP Planning Process
- 4) Emergency Response Issues
- 5) The Recovery Process

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this workshop:

1. Individuals with special needs demonstrate an awareness of their own need for emergency preparedness;
2. Individuals with special needs and their families demonstrate knowledge on how to prepare for emergency situations and develop individualized PREP plans;
3. Service system providers demonstrate an awareness of the needs of individuals with special needs;
4. Service system providers demonstrate the knowledge of how to prepare and support individuals with special needs and their families in the event of an emergency.

Target Audience

Families with children who have special needs, self- advocates, service providers, community response teams, emergency responders

Contact Hours

1.5 hours; 3-6 hours

Program Agenda

Welcome & Introductions

Emergency Preparedness for Individuals with Special Health Care Need

Role of Emergency Responders

BREAK

The PREP Planning Process
The Recovery Process
Wrap Up & Evaluations

Faculty

Tamara Norris, MSSW, MPA is Clinical Associate Professor and Director of the Family Support Program and the Family Support Network™ University Office at the UNC School of Social Work. Ms. Norris has over 25 years of experience developing innovative approaches to improving outcomes for families and children and promoting family support services for families with children who have special healthcare needs. Her passion is building the capacity of communities, organizations, and families to enable children who have disabilities to grow to live the lives they envision. She has administered family support initiatives with state and federal funding in the areas of family navigation; child maltreatment prevention; family support for military families; and emergency preparedness for individuals who have disabilities and their families. Ms. Norris has Master of Science in Social Work and Master of Public Administration degrees from Columbia University.

Barbara Leach is a Family Support Specialist and Special Projects Coordinator. She joined the Family Support Program at UNC, School of Social Work in 2005. She has over 30 years of experience as a child and family advocate for families with children who have mental illnesses, developmental disabilities, and other special needs. In addition to providing information and referral for families and providers, Ms. Leach serves as a family advisor on multiple state and national committees that work collaboratively to transform systems so that they better meet the needs of children with disabilities and their families. She presents extensively on topics relating to supporting families, family advocacy, family engagement, family/provider partnership, cultural competence, and systems change. Ms. Leach is passionate about lifting the voices of diverse families and to promoting families as partners to co-create and develop services and systems that improve outcomes so that individuals with disabilities can live their best lives – healthy, independent, and self-determined.