

YOUTH PREPAREDNESS: A NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Emergencies and disasters can happen at any time and often without any warning. Considering that children comprise approximately 25 percent of our population, disaster planning, response, and recovery efforts must take into account the unique needs that children have. Children also bring many unique strengths to emergency preparedness:

- **Children are positive influencers.** Educators and social researchers agree that children can effectively bring the message of preparedness home to their families.
- **Children can become leaders.** By participating in youth preparedness programs, children are empowered to become leaders at home and in their schools and communities.
- **Children who are prepared are more confident during emergencies and disasters.** Social science research and anecdotal evidence support the idea that children who have learned about emergency preparedness experience less anxiety during an actual emergency or disaster.