



# MRC ★ In Touch

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## Featured Article

### MRC \* B \* Ready Program Engages Children in Physical Activity and Emergency Preparedness

How do you educate children on the importance of emergency preparedness and make it fun for them? The MRC \* B \* Ready is one way to do so. This program was formed out of the premise of adventure education by stepping participants through a series of physical activities and then a follow-up de-brief discussion. It was inspired by the national MRC program office's encouragement to engage children in physical activity. In the state of Connecticut alone, more than 750 students participated in the program through summer school and summer camp programs operated by the Education Connection of Northwestern Connecticut over the past year.

Ten MRC volunteers have been trained in using the MRC \* B \* Ready program, which includes approximately eight games and related questions to facilitate conversation about the importance of preparing ahead of time. The "Shelter, Water, Food" game is a popular preparedness choice, and encourages children to assume roles and discover how they react as pieces of fruit are periodically removed throughout the course of the game. Players can engage at any intellectual, developmental, or physical level in order to create their own understanding of content.

Working with partners has enabled the MRC units to successfully engage youth in their programming efforts through the MRC \* B \* Ready program. The Torrington Health District MRC is currently working with state police cadets to deliver the program to public school after school programs in northwestern Connecticut through the end of the 2013 academic year. In the summer of 2013, the Torrington Health District MRC will again work with AmeriCorps to deliver the program to summer school and summer camp programs. The Torrington Health District MRC intends to create facilitator training videos that would make the program portable and easily replicated for use by other MRC units across the country.

## MRC/NACCHO Connections

**Enhance Your Unit's Readiness with Free Trainings and**

## Resources

NACCHO has identified free resources for MRC units to use in their local training plans. Check out [Columbia's Regional Learning Center](#) for online courses covering medical countermeasure dispensing, preparedness fundamentals, mass care, mental health, and more. Additionally, the [Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service](#) offers online courses related to emergency medical services, health sciences, leadership and management, among others.

NACCHO has also partnered with the American Medical Association (AMA) to distribute a pocket guide entitled, "Planning for Transportation after Medical Services." This guide helps to enhance public health planning and encourages community medical professionals to connect ill patients with critical transportation resources. To request printed copies of the pocket guide in English or Spanish, please visit the AMA's [website](#). Let us know if these resources are helpful to you at [mrcnewsletter@naccho.org](mailto:mrcnewsletter@naccho.org).

## Announcements



### **SAMHSA Disaster Response Toolkit**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has released a "Disaster Response Template Toolkit." This toolkit features public education materials and nearly 20 publications that MRC units can use in their disaster behavioral health response. Many of the sample materials have been used in previous disaster situations across the country and can be adapted for future use. Access the [toolkit](#); for large quantity print orders, contact your regional coordinator.

### **National Environmental Education Foundation archived "Children and Nature Initiative" Webinar**

The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) recently hosted a training webinar, "[Children and Nature Initiative: Rx for Outdoor Activity](#)." Viewers will learn about the link between childhood obesity and a sedentary lifestyle, the scientific basis for the physical and mental health benefits of nature, how to connect children and families to nature sites for outdoor activity and how to utilize NEEF's Children and Nature Initiative tools and resources.

### **MRC Factors for Success Available Online**

The [MRC Factors for Success](#) have been posted on the MRC Web site! This technical assistance tool was specifically written and designed for all MRC leaders to guide the development of their units, and to assess that development. With the use of these additional resources and the additional

in-depth guidance, you can enhance the capabilities of your MRC unit and further demonstrate the impact of this phenomenal MRC network.

### **Meeting the Needs of Latino Communities in Emergency Preparedness**

FEMA's Individual and Community Preparedness Division's [webinar](#) provides information on how to build inclusive emergency programs and foster an ongoing dialogue, interest and participation in disaster preparedness with Latino communities. A [toolkit](#) from the National Council of La Raza provides additional information to emergency managers working in Latino communities.

### **DCVMRC 'Out and About'**

Deborah Artman from St. Louis County MRC gave a presentation on behalf of the DCVMRC at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing "Hot Issues" conference in St Louis on April 12. About half the audience was not familiar with the MRC, and she provided general information about the MRC and how volunteering can support online nursing education. Additionally, Deborah shared how a number of nursing colleges are partnering with their local unit or forming their own to provide a service to the community and to give nursing students valuable experience beyond the classroom.

To submit information for either MRC: In Touch or MRC: In Focus, please contact Alyson Jordan at [ajordan@naccho.org](mailto:ajordan@naccho.org) or (202) 783-5528.



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