

Child-Friendly Spaces

Child-Friendly Spaces is Save the Children's signature emergency response program in the United States and around the world, meeting a Common Standard of Mass Care in Domestic Disaster Response that helps ensure children are safe and protected in shelters and other locations where families congregate during disasters.

THE NEED

Emergency evacuation shelters usually place children and their families together with strangers in cramped quarters that lack learning materials, toys, safe places to play and activities for children. Child-Friendly Spaces are a critical component in providing support to children and families in temporary locations following a disaster. The program's structured, supervised activities offer needed comfort to children who are used to daily routines, they strengthen children's resilience, and they help them begin to cope. These spaces also provide a forum for sharing valuable child safety and recovery information with families when they need it most.

AN INNOVATIVE SOLUTION

Save the Children's Child-Friendly Spaces program:

- Gives children a sense of normalcy and community when their lives are disrupted by disasters
- Provides children with a safe, designated area where they can play, socialize and express themselves under the supervision of caring, trained adults
- Helps children interact with peers, build self-esteem and begin the recovery process by working through their emotions and building on their natural resilience
- Enables parents to have time to register for emergency assistance and start to re-establish their lives.

PHOTO: SARAH THOMPSON



In partnership with the American Red Cross, Save the Children has prepositioned Child-Friendly Spaces kits in high-risk areas across the U.S. to support our Child-Friendly Spaces program. Kit materials include age-appropriate, fun, activities items, such as jump ropes, books, toys, arts and craft supplies and board games.

Save the Children offers Child-Friendly Spaces training that supports emergency leaders, organizations and communities in meeting the needs of children in disasters. The training includes best practices on site selection, organization and set-up of the spaces, gives guidance for addressing children's unique needs, and promotes child safety and well-being while in temporary locations. The Child-Friendly Spaces program, also referred to as temporary respite care for children, helps communities meet the Common Standards of Mass Care in Domestic Emergency Response.

When crisis strikes, we do whatever it takes to keep children safe, so they can cope with their losses, recover and get back to being kids again.

OUR COMMITMENT

Since Hurricane Katrina, Save the Children has served more than 1 million children affected by U.S. emergencies.

With nearly 100 years of emergency response experience, we are committed to ensuring the unique needs

of children are met before, during and after disasters. Through advocacy, partnerships and the Get Ready Get Safe initiative, Save the Children helps U.S. communities better protect and support children in times of disaster.

 Save the Children.

899 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20002

800-Save the Children
SaveTheChildren.org/USA