

# **CRISIS POLICIES & PROCEDURES PLAN Heights Preschool**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Natural disasters, such as tornadoes and floods, and man-made disasters, which can result from chemical accidents, fires, etc., are potential hazards for which we must be prepared. We must also prepare for a man-made crisis, which can come in the form of weapons and bomb threats.

The objective of the Heights Preschool Crisis Policies and Procedures Plan is to provide the maximum practicable protection for students and school personnel in the event of crisis.

To meet this objective, we will instruct and prepare staff and students in the appropriate and safe procedures to follow in the event of a campus crisis through staff in-service and student drills. The occurrence of a crisis will require prompt response from all personnel as they perform their specific assignments from this plan.

Since no two emergencies will be the same in nature, scope or magnitude, it is necessary for the school's plans to be basic, flexible, and subject to the modification as the need arises. Modification will be at the discretion of the Director or civil authority. However, in any emergency, the following priorities shall apply:

1. Protection of life
2. Protection of injury
3. Protection of property
4. Preparation of the campus for extended stay or evacuation

## **DECLARATION OF A CAMPUS EMERGENCY**

The following persons may only declare campus emergencies:

- **Civil Authorities** - The police, fire officials, or other local, state or federal government agencies may declare an emergency, which would involve the campus. Notification of such conditions would be in person or via Emergency Alert System broadcasts.
- **Director** – The Director is primarily responsible for declaring a campus emergency. In the absence of the Director, the Assistant Director will act in behalf of the Director.
- **All Faculty and Staff** – All faculty and staff are responsible to sound the appropriate alarm or notification upon discovering a critical situation. In any critical situation use your personal phone or tell your neighboring teacher to notify the administration. Obviously, common sense will indicate that in some situations you should immediately proceed with either a Room Evacuation or Lock Down for your own classroom or the students around you. A critical situation will usually require calling 911. Any employee may call 911 in a critical situation.

## ALARMS – NOTIFICATION OF EMERGENCY

Emergency Task	Alarm
Room Evacuation	Alarm sounds in room
Campus Evacuation	Alarm sounds in room or Director orders an evacuation.
Lock Down	Director orders a lockdown
Monitor local news for emergency message	KHOU

All staff should be familiar with the operation of the fire alarm.

## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION TO ANY DECLARED CRISIS

- It is important during an emergency that all school personnel conduct themselves in a professional manner and demonstrate through their actions that degree of expertise, which promotes confidence.
- What you do within the first few minutes will make a major difference in reducing the panic of you students. Above all else, remain calm.
- The student information folder should be easily accessible at all times.
- You must keep a count of students at all times and recount when changing locations.
- Staff members are to remain with their students at all times during an emergency until relieved by administration.
- Do not release students until authorized to do so by administration.
- Faculty and staff are first responsible for the students under their care. As difficult as it is, personnel should not abandon their post to go check on their own children. Remember that another adult has responsibility for your children and they are doing their job.

## EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- Upon hearing the alarm system, teachers will have students leave the room in an orderly fashion.
- The last teacher to exit should insure that all students are out and take the class roll and student information folder.
- Go with the class to the assigned area and quickly take a head count to see if any children are missing.
- Report missing children to the administrative staff.
- Remain with students and await further instructions.

## **EVACUATION LOCATION**

Depending on the emergency situation, evacuation of the building will be as listed below. Refer to attached maps.

1. Bomb, gas leak, or fire – by the tree in the front of the house on the gravel. Then proceed to Hamilton Middle School
2. Flood – Hamilton Middle School
3. Tornado – In bathrooms
4. Lock Down or Shelter-In-Place - Classrooms

## **GENERAL BUILDING SECURITY**

Staff should:

- Keep all exterior doors locked during the day when in or out of the classroom, unless discussed with administration.
- Secure playground door in the evenings
- All employees are to challenge any person in the building that does not appear to belong. Staff should contact the administration if help is needed. All unwelcome visitors need to be escorted to the door.
- Make sure that you look through the door window before opening the door. If you are unsure if the person has business at the school keep the door locked and call the director.

## **FIRE**

- When evacuating for a fire, the last staff to leave the room needs to make sure doors and windows are closed and lights are turned out.
- Staff should be aware of the location of fire extinguishers and how to operate them. The fire extinguisher is located on the wall in the toddler room closest to the kitchen. The fire extinguisher is located on the East wall of the multipurpose room.
- If a fire is small, staff may use a fire extinguisher to stop the fire. Do not risk personal injury or the safety of the students to fight a fire.
- The building may not be reentered until the fire officials give permission.
- Fire drills will be held monthly and will be of obstructed or unobstructed nature. Drills should be treated as an actual fire.

## **SHELTER-IN-PLACE**

The Shelter-In-Place procedure will be used in a situation in which toxic chemicals or other hazardous materials have been released into the immediate area. In this situation, it will be important for everyone in the affected area to go indoors immediately and remain there. Students will be kept indoors, inside school facilities, until we are given permission to release them by the Houston Office of Emergency Management or other local officials.

- Once closed, children may not be released to their parents until we have been released from the situation. This is to insure minimum contamination to the shelter and those in it, and to prevent contact with the hazard for the child whom parents wish to release.
- Office staff will change the phone message to state that we are sheltering in and will update when sheltering is no longer necessary.
- Staff will be aware of where supplies are stored in their room and update freshness when necessary.
- Staff will secure all windows and doors.
- Staff with air conditioning controls in their rooms will turn them off.

## **EARLY SCHOOL CLOSING**

Heights Preschool will have early school closings when Houston Independent School District announces through the media that they are closing early.

- Office staff will change phone message to reflect this new closing information and will check messages as often as possible.
- Staff will see to the rapid and orderly release of children.
- Staff will have an accurate written record of who picked up child and time released.
- Staff will only release child to parents or persons listed on registration form.

## **LOCK DOWN**

- Administration or any staff will alert a lock down status.
- Secure your door and all windows. Shut blinds and turn out lights.
- Try to keep children as quiet as possible and make room appear to be empty.
- Scan outside area for children and staff left outside and alert administration.
- Call 911 if you have vital information and cannot reach administration
- Do not respond to knocks or voices at the door unless directed by administration. Do not evacuate to any alarms.

## **SEVERE STORMS**

Severe weather watches, warnings and/or evacuation orders are issued through the local media, and must be closely monitored and heeded. Severe storms with high wind velocity and heavy rainfall or snowfall are a threat and can be devastating. Area damage, loss of electrical power, communications, access and other vital services or supplies could result.

Early preparations must be made when a severe storm has developed and when a WATCH OR WARNING is first issued.

- The Director will monitor the radio and TV for situation status and updates.
- Alert all staff to approaching storm.
- If necessary, assist all children to a safe area away from doors and windows to the designated central hallways.
- Close all windows and blinds. Move potential flying objects to safe place.
- Remain calm.
- Evacuate the building following the Evacuation Plan under the direction of the Fire Department or Emergency Preparedness Personnel.

## **TORNADO WATCH POLICY**

A tornado can strike without warning, but as a rule several hours can elapse between the time a TORNADO WATCH is called by the National Weather Service and the time the storm reaches our area. During this time:

- Keep the local radio station turned on the air.
- Check inside and outside for any objects that might become dangerous if blown about in a high wind. Place all glass objects and sharp objects in a safe place.
- Close all windows, blinds, and drapes to prevent injury from flying objects.

## **TORNADO WARNING**

A Tornado Warning means **THERE IS A TORNADO IN THE AREA NOW!!!**

All staff must:

- Assist children to the designated WINDOWLESS area, central hallways, corridor or basement.
- REMAIN CALM
- Monitor the radio and TV for situation status and updates.

In the event the building sustains damage, loss of power or other utility services, Director shall:

- Notify the Emergency Preparedness Agency immediately.
- Assess damages to the building.
- Determine if immediate evacuation of the building is required.
- Immediately contact appropriate medical and emergency personnel for further assistance.
- If damage to the building is sustained, it may be necessary/advisable to cut off main power, and close main gas valve.

## **FLOOD**

When a FLOOD WARNING is received, the staff will:

- Monitor the media for situation status and updates.
- Notify the staff of the situation and to remain calm.

- If evacuation becomes necessary, follow the direction of the Fire Department or Emergency Preparedness Personnel and the evacuation plan.

## **BOMB THREAT PLAN**

There is no way of knowing whether an actual bomb exists, all reasonable precautions must be taken when a call is received.

When a TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT is received, the following procedure shall be followed:

- Remain calm and try to keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Listen to the tone of voice, for any background noises.
- Call 911 immediately, or motion to someone near by to call 911 while you are on the phone with the caller. The 911 dispatcher will notify the proper authorities.
- Ask the caller the following questions, if time permits:  
Where is the bomb located?  
When will the bomb explode?  
What does the bomb look like?  
What will cause the bomb to explode?  
What kind of bomb is it?
- Promptly notify the director.
- Evacuation of the building will commence immediately

## **WRITTEN BOMB THREATS**

- A written bomb threat warning received by mail should be evaluated as carefully as one received by telephone.
- Care should be taken to avoid excessive handling of the threat in order to preserve fingerprints, handwriting, postmarks, typewriting, and other markings which the police and FBI will want to examine.
- Evacuate the building immediately!

## **LETTER AND PACKAGE BOMBS**

- The person receiving the suspicious letter or package shall IMMEDIATELY notify the director.
- Director will call 911.
- Do not attempt to open it.
- Isolate the letter, package and evacuate everyone from the vicinity.
- Close any door to the area of suspicious letter or package.
- Evacuate immediately!

## LOSS OF ELECTRICITY

In the event there is a temporary power outage, the emergency lighting system will provide ample lighting to critical areas (hallways, exits, etc.). In the event of a POWER OUTAGE, the director will:

- Determine if the power outage is within the building only, or if there appears to be a general area outage.
- Call the emergency number for Reliant, notify them of the outage and that it is a child care center.
- If the telephone is not working, utilize cell phone or the nearest neighbor or store.

## NATURAL GAS LEAK

Leakage of natural gas can result in a serious explosion and may disrupt the building's ability to provide heat, etc. The director will:

- Call 911.
- Notify Centerpoint.
- Turn off main gas valve.
- Be prepared to evacuate the children if necessary.
- The Fire Department will make the determination if evacuation of the building is necessary.

(ALL CALLS SHOULD BE MADE FROM OUTSIDE THE BUILDING. ELECTRICAL SPARKS CAUSED BY THE PHONE OR LIGHT SWITCH COULD CAUSE A FIRE OR EXPLOSION).

## EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

The following suggested supplies for emergency are **recommended**. Review monthly that they are complete and in good condition.

Office staff will be responsible for:

- First Aid Kit
- Battery operated radio and fresh batteries
- Cell phone
- Cash (currency and coins)
- Stationery supplies (pens/paper)

Classroom teachers will be responsible for:

- Blankets
- Diapers, etc.
- Disposable gloves
- Class copy of children's records and sign-in sheet
- Flashlight(s) and fresh batteries taped to flashlight
- Supply of food and water to be replaced yearly or upon expiration date
- Baby Wipes

- Paper towels
- Toilet tissue
- Plastic bags (Assortment including various zipper types and trash)
- Pocket knife or scissors
- Bucket
- Plastic eating utensils
- Drinking cups
- Bleach
- Toys, games, books, etc. to distract children

## **POISON CONTROL**

In the event of any accidental exposure or ingestion of a hazardous or poisonous substance the Director or staff will:

- Immediately call the Poison Control Center
- If possible the staff person will identify the substance in question and save all containers and labels that describe the suspected poisoning agent. Any vomit should also be saved. If the container has poison control instructions, these should be followed immediately.
- The director will then contact the child's parent/guardian to advise him/her what has occurred, the steps that have been taken and to receive further instructions.
- The Director must document in the child's records:
  1. Any orders and follow-up from the Poison Control Center
  2. Notification of the attending physician and his/her orders
  3. The child's condition vital signs, etc.
  4. Notification of the child's parent/guardian
  5. All policies and procedures must be followed with regards to documentation and notification.

## **AIR POLLUTION**

Air pollution is a very important health problem in most cities. The two most common problems are smog and particulate matter, such as pollen, dust and soot. Children inhale more pollution into their lungs than adults do because they breathe more rapidly. When they have colds, children usually breathe through their mouths, taking in more pollutants. Because their lungs are still developing, breathing polluted air may cause permanent lung injury.

You can protect children in your care from air pollutants by refraining from outdoor activities on days when air quality in your area is 100 or above. The following is a guideline for air quality:

- Green (0-50) Good-No symptoms expected for anyone
- Yellow ( 51-100) A Moderate health risk
- Orange (101-150) Unhealthy for individuals at risk
- Red (151-200) Unhealthy for everyone
- Purple (201-300) Very unhealthy for everyone
- Maroon (301+) Hazardous for everyone

On smoggy days, schedule your outdoor activity for the early morning. The peak sunlight hours between 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. are not good for conducting outdoor activities.

## **EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS**

American Red Cross	713 526-8300
Night & Weekend	713 526-0636
Centerpoint	
Gas	713 659-2111
Electric	713 207-2222
Emergency Management, City of Houston	713 881-3045
FBI	713 693-5000
Fire Department	713 247-5000
Harris County Emergency Management	713 881-3100
National Weather Service	281 337-5074
Poison Control Center	1-800-764-7661
Police Department	713 222-3131
Public Works & Engineering	713 754-0600
Texas Department of Public Safety	713 957-6192

**In case of an emergency, it is always appropriate to dial 911**  
**EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS**