

Administration for Children and Families
Support for Children and Youth Task Forces in Disasters and Public Health Emergencies

The HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) promotes and can provide support and assistance to States, Tribes, or Territories to convene and launch a Children and Youth Task Force in disasters and public health emergencies.

The Children and Youth Task Force model is a promising and successful practice based on lessons learned using the model in disasters, such as the 2011 Joplin MO tornado, Hurricane Isaac in Louisiana, Superstorm Sandy in New Jersey and New York, and the SR530 slides disaster in Washington state. Children and Youth Task Forces are State/Tribe/Territory-led coalitions that bring together into a single forum, Whole Community partners serving children and youth.

ACF has expertise and capacity to assist the State/Tribe/Territory to convene a Task Force. ACF's Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response (OHSEPR), the ACF Regional Administrator (RA) and Regional Emergency Management Specialist (REMS) for the affected region, can provide experience and assistance with setting up a Task Force, bringing together a coalition of subject matter experts and partners to address the needs of children, youth, and families affected by a disaster or public health emergency.

ACF has produced a ***Children and Youth Task Forces in Disaster: Guidelines for Development*** document, available on the web at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohsepr/resource/children-and-youth-task-force-in-disasters>. ACF also produced the ***New York Children's Issues Task Force Report: Lessons Learned from Response and Recovery in Superstorm Sandy*** document which is available on the web at <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohsepr/resource/new-york-task-force>.

The **Children and Youth Task Force in Disasters: Guidelines for Development** document is designed to introduce Whole Community partners to the Children and Youth Task Force in Disasters concept. The Guidelines provide recommendations to states, Tribes, territories and to local communities interested in launching their own Children and Youth Task Force, and outlines the expertise and support HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is able to provide. The purpose of the document is to help guide emergency management, human services, and public health professionals in a coordinated, integrated, and effective approach to supporting children's needs in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery. These guidelines are distilled from the vital lessons-learned in meeting the needs of children and youth in recent disasters, including Superstorm Sandy, Hurricane Isaac, and the Joplin tornado.

This **NY Children's Issues Task Force Lessons Learned** document addresses the *Background, Task Force Formation, Meetings Logistics, Challenges and Issues Tackled, Outcomes, and six take-home messages* that can be applied when establishing a similar task force pre- or post-disaster.

For more information on this and other ACF human services capabilities to support States, Tribes, and Territories in preparedness, response, and recovery, contact OHSEPR by emailing the ACF Watch Desk at hswatchofficer@acf.hhs.gov