

Be Emergency Ready

The Safety Sabbath® Teacher's Guide



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How to Protect Your Sabbath School Class During an Emergency

There is an emergency. The fire alarm is blaring. You hear shots being fired. An urgent text alert sounds on your phone with the message that a dangerous situation is taking place. These are some examples of emergencies you may experience. Your job as the Sabbath School teacher is to protect your class. What do you do?

Emergencies place both children and adults in danger. Planning ahead and practicing will make you more effective in protecting your class when an emergency happens.

Before Emergencies

Talk to Parents

Share with parents how your class will respond to emergencies. Encourage parents to talk about emergency situations with their children. Share the parent handouts included in this guide with parents. Explain what they can do in a church emergency to help protect their children. Plan how you will share emergency information with visitors and where visiting parents can pick up their children in an emergency.

Prevent Emotional Stress

Children may be scared or upset by emergency situations. When helping your class get emergency-ready, discuss what an emergency is, what types of emergencies your class may experience, and how your class will practice what to do when a real emergency happens. Remind the children that if they must leave their classroom, they shouldn't take anything with them. This can slow them down when they must hurry. Make time for children to ask questions and answer them honestly. Be aware of which children express concerns and work with them to lessen those concerns. Pray with your class for safety for your church and all churches around the world.

Prepare for Medical Emergencies

Be aware of children who may have medical conditions. An emergency may trigger a negative response in children, and they may require medical attention. Work with your church emergency response team to plan how you will respond to children needing care.



Plan for Disabilities

Be aware of children in your class who have disabilities or handicaps. Children in wheelchairs or using crutches will require additional assistance. Work with your church emergency response team to plan and practice how you will protect and assist children who have disabilities.

During Emergencies

Listen to the Teacher

Engage your class's attention and tell them there is an emergency. **Say:** *I need you to be quiet immediately and to listen to my instructions that will help keep you safe.*

Follow the Plan

Follow the designated plan for the type of emergency you are facing. A response plan can include evacuation, lockdown, or to shelter-in-place. Follow your Sabbath School emergency response plan, directions from your church emergency response team, and emergency personnel. Assess the situation and modify your actions as needed to protect the children under your care.

Create your emergency response plan with your church safety committee. Determine ahead of time what your class should do in case of emergency. Share your emergency response plan with parents, so they know where to find their children following an emergency.

Call 9-1-1

If you are able, call 9-1-1 to report the emergency and the status of your classroom/group. Is someone injured and in need of medical attention? Is everyone safe? How many people are in your group? Memorize your church's address so you can give this information to the 9-1-1 operator when reporting the emergency.

After the Emergency

Once you have protected your class through the emergency, stay with your class and return to the building or until you have checked out each child to their guardian. Report to a member of your church emergency response team. Let them know that everyone in your classroom returned to their guardian. Record any relevant information that can improve your emergency response safety plan to better prepare your class for the next emergency. Share this information with the church Safety Committee.



Emergency Preparation Key Terms



DROP

COVER

HOLD ON



EVACUATE means to remove yourself and those under your care from a dangerous situation. To evacuate, you should leave the building with your class and go to a previously designated evacuation spot.



LOCKDOWN is a state of isolation or restricted access instituted as a security measure. If your church is on lockdown, no one should enter or leave your classroom. Lock and barricade your door if necessary.



SHELTER-IN-PLACE means to find shelter within a building and wait until the emergency has passed. If told to shelter-in-place, find a safe location for your class to stay in your classroom and wait for the all-clear signal.



RUN. HIDE. FIGHT. is the recommended response sequence to an active shooter situation for adults. **RUN** means evacuate to a safe area. If you cannot evacuate, lockdown your room and **HIDE** by turning off lights, covering windows, and silencing all cell phones. If an active shooter breaks into your room, *the last recommended course of action for adults* is to **FIGHT**.



LOCK OUT, GET OUT, TAKE OUT is the recommended response sequence to an active shooter situation for K-12 environments.

- **Lock Out** — In an active shooter situation, shut the door and lock it. Hide children where they will remain unseen and where bullets cannot reach them if shot through the door.

Barricade the door with any furniture available. Turn off lights, cover windows, silence all cell phones, and instruct children to remain silent. Do not allow any indication of your presence to alert the shooter to your classroom. Do not open the door until the situation has been resolved. Some churches may elect to use a code word to alert staff when the situation is resolved and it is safe to come out.

- **Get Out** — If there is a safe exit, evacuate your class to a safe location. Remember, if there is a reason for the children to run, the group should run in a zigzag fashion, rather than a straight line. The side-to-side movement creates a more difficult target.
- **Take Out** — *This is for adults only.* A teacher's duty is to stay with their class. Other adults may choose to take out the intruder, but teacher and students should remain hidden until safe.



DROP. COVER. HOLD ON. At the first sign of an earthquake shaking a building, **DROP** to the ground. After you are on your knees **COVER** your head and neck with your arms and hands. If you can take cover under a table or other piece of stable furniture, **HOLD ON** until the shaking stops.



BE READY

Emergency Safety Guide *for Parents*

As parents, your first thought in an emergency is to secure the safety of your child. When your child isn't with you, you must trust the trained leadership of others to keep your child safe. Here is how to protect your child during a church emergency.

1. Bring Yourself to Safety First

In an emergency, you should follow church emergency procedure and bring yourself to safety first. Going immediately to your child may be the most dangerous thing you could do. It could put both yourself and your child in more danger. Your church has a system in place to protect everyone in the building. Bring yourself to safety first.

2. Follow the Plan

Follow the designated emergency plan for the current crisis. The method can include evacuation, lockdown, or to shelter-in-place. Follow directions from your church emergency response team, emergency personnel, and your personal emergency response plan of what you will do in an urgent situation. Just like you, your child will be following the emergency plan along with their Sabbath School teacher and class.

3. After the Emergency, Find Your Child

After the crisis is resolved, and emergency personnel have announced it is safe to resume normal activity, locate your child at the designated checkpoint and check them out of Sabbath School into your custody. Affirm your child for following directions and staying safe.

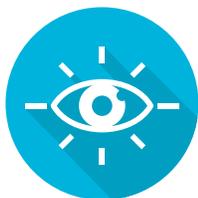
Talk to Your Child About Emergency Situations

Knowing what to do in an emergency situation is the number one thing that can keep your child safe. Speak to your child about possible emergency situations and teach them what to do to stay safe. The three most important lessons your child can learn in any emergency situation are:



Listen to the Teacher

Say: *If there is an emergency, listen quietly to your teacher and do what he/she says immediately. You might be afraid, but try not to cry or yell. Your teacher and the other people in the church have prepared to keep you safe.*



Stay Alert

Say: *Always pay attention to what is happening around you. If you hear, see, or feel like something is wrong, tell your teacher or another adult you trust. If you must leave the building, look and listen for danger and quickly move to someplace safe. If you must run, make sure you run from side-to-side (zigzag). (Demonstrate to your child what this looks like.) Running this way will keep you safer.*



Know Where Exits Are

Ask: *Do you know two ways out of your Sabbath School classroom? If there is an emergency and one exit is blocked, do you know another way to get out of the room?*

By preparing your children ahead of time for emergency situations, you will be confident that they will not panic and will be more aware of their safety and how to keep others safe from harm until you are safely reunited.

STAY INFORMED

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Be Ready for an Earthquake

DRILL RESOURCES FOR SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHERS



Earthquake Drill Guide for Sabbath School Teachers

Before the Drill

Holding safety drills can create risks for your class. Plan with your church Safety Committee and Safety Officer what your class should do if the training is conducted during Sabbath School.

Prepare Parents

Tell parents to anticipate a drill and explain why it is important. Use the Parent Handout: *How to Talk to Your Child About Tornado Drills* included in this packet to share with parents what material you plan to go over with their children.

Encourage parents to use the handout at home before the drill to discuss with their children what a tornado situation is and practice how to respond. On the Sabbath before the drill give parents the *Emergency Safety Guide for Parents* handout when they check their child in for Sabbath School.

Prepare Your Class

Children may be scared or upset by a safety drill. Say: *We hold safety drills to help us be ready if a real emergency happens and everyone can stay safe.*

Review what the children can expect during the training, so they feel prepared to participate.

Use the *Be Ready for a Tornado* Sabbath School activity guide to explain a tornado situation and plan with them how they should respond including the "Shelter-in-Place" procedure. Make time for children to ask questions and answer them.

During the Drill

1. At the appointed time, tell your class that a tornado drill is in progress. Tell them you need them to be silent and to listen to you at all times as you tell them what to do to keep them safe.
2. Tell your class that, just like you planned earlier, it is time to practice moving away from the windows, and to a place of safety. Once they have moved to the designated spot, have the children practice covering their heads and necks.
3. Once your classroom is kneeling on the floor with their heads and necks protected, explain what would happen in a real emergency.
4. Once the all-clear signal sounds for the drill, have your class return to their seats, or return the classroom to order. Explain that in a real emergency, the class would take precautions to evacuate the building, and avoid breathing in dust and staying clear of fallen power lines or debris.

After the Drill

Have a question and answer session with your class.

Ask: *How do you think the drill went? What can you do in a real emergency to stay safe? Pray with your class for safety for your church and all churches around the world.*





Be Ready for a Tornado Situation— A SABBATH SCHOOL ACTIVITY GUIDE

Use this guide to plan appropriate activities for the age range of your class.

1. Have children share what the words “safety” and “danger” mean.
 - a. **Safety**—protected from or not exposed to danger or risk; not likely to be harmed or lost.
 - b. **Danger**—the possibility of suffering harm or injury.
2. Describe a tornado. **Say:** *Has anyone ever been in a tornado? Tornadoes are storms that have very heavy wind. They can make trees fall over and damage buildings. It's important to be in a safe place during a tornado and away from windows.*
3. **Ask:** *Can you describe a safety drill? Why do you think our church holds safety drills?*
Answer: *When an emergency happens, everyone will know what to do and hopefully can prevent bad things from happening like some of the dangers we talked about before.*
4. Share with children how your class will respond to a tornado situation and the “Shelter-in-Place” procedures.

Suggested Dialogue: *If a tornado is in the area, we will be in danger. Right now, we are going to make a plan of what we will do to stay safe. If the alarm sounds, we will move away from windows and to a safe place.*

You will cover your head and neck with your arms. If you can crawl under a table, you should do that. Stay at either end of the table, but not in the middle.

I want to keep you safe. Once the tornado is over, we will go outside if it is safe. We will find your parents and then you can stay with them.

5. Have children line up and be ready to move to the designated area. If your classroom is where you are assigned to stay during a tornado, have the children practice moving towards the inside wall and away from any windows.
6. Give children the Safety Sabbath activity sheet to complete (see next page).

Tornado Safety—Fill in the Blanks

When a tornado occurs, it is important to know what to do to stay safe. Can you fill in the blanks to these tornado safety facts?

1. A tornado can happen fast. Signs of a tornado are _____, _____, big pieces of hail, flying tree limbs, and a _____.
2. If a tornado is coming, I need to _____ the instructions my _____ gives our class.
3. When a tornado occurs, I need to move away from windows and _____.
4. If I am indoors, I should move _____ from windows.
5. I need to cover my _____ and _____ during a tornado.
6. After my teacher says it is safe, we will go _____ and find my _____.

Answer Key: 1) dark clouds, roaring noise; 2) follow, teacher; 3) shelter-in-place; 4) away; 5) head, neck; 6) outdoors, parents

*Information taken from Ready.gov.





How to Talk to Your Child About Tornado Drills—A Guide for Parents

Shelter-in-place is the recommended response sequence to a tornado situation for age K–12 environments. This includes moving to an interior location and away from windows. Your church will be using this plan to protect your child during a tornado. Here are the steps you can review with your child before.

Tell your child:

Soon during Sabbath School, our church will have a tornado drill. A tornado is a storm with strong winds that can make trees fall over and damage the building. During the training, we need to act quickly to stay safe. Here is what you should do.

LISTEN—During the drill always listen to your teacher and do what they say immediately. Your teacher has the plan to keep you safe. Listening carefully and obeying what your teacher says will help keep you safe.

MOVE—In a tornado your teacher will tell you to move away from the windows and near an inside wall. The most important thing you can do is to drop to your knees and put your arms over your head and neck. If you can find something to crawl under, you should do that. Do not stand up until your teacher or emergency personnel like a police officer or a firefighter tells you it is safe. Remember that you should listen to what your teacher says and do it quickly.

Ask: *Where are some good places in your classroom where you can take cover during a tornado?*

COVER—Ask your child to show you how they will protect their head and neck with their arms. Make sure they are bowing their head and placing their arms over head and neck properly. Have them practice moving to a safe location, while continuing to protect head and neck.

STAY IN PLACE—Ask your child why they think it is important to stay in a safe and secure place during the tornado.

NOTE TO PARENTS

Children may be scared or upset by an emergency drill. Remind them not to panic.

Say: *Safety drills help you learn how to stay safe when a real emergency happens. Pray with your child for safety for your church and all churches and that if anything bad happens, they will be ready and know what to do to stay safe.*

Please be prepared to participate in our church's upcoming safety drill and keep our church family and visitors safe!

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