

## **National Center for Disaster Preparedness Awarded \$1 million grant to help communities in North Carolina, Puerto Rico devastated by recent hurricanes**

*New grant comes as GSK-sponsored and NCDP-led Resilient Children/Resilient Communities initiative is honored by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation.*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

New York NY, November 18, 2018 - The National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University's Earth Institute received a new \$1 million grant from GSK to bring its Resilient Children/Resilient Communities initiative to communities affected by recent hurricanes in New Hanover County, North Carolina, and communities in and around San Juan, Puerto Rico.

This comes as the Resilient Children / Resilient Communities (RCRC) Initiative and GSK earned the prestigious 2018 Corporate Citizenship Award for "Best Disaster Preparedness and Community Resilience Program" by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

"We are deeply honored to have this initiative recognized for this prestigious award," said Dr. Irwin Redlener, Director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness. "Children are among the most vulnerable populations in the aftermath of a disaster, and this project will no doubt lead the way to efforts that will help them recover more quickly – a bellwether of community recovery."

The RCRC initiative utilizes a community-led planning process and a suite of tools to help parents, community leaders, emergency management officials, schools and child care facilities to work together to prepare for emergencies and help children quickly return to a sense of normalcy after a disaster strikes. Some 69 million children are away from their parents every day, in daycare centers, schools, camps or with neighbors, family or friends. In essence, the RCRC initiative ensures that plans are in place to help those children in the event of an emergency.

With a previous grant from GSK – and in partnership with Save the Children – NCDP created and piloted RCRC plans in two U.S. communities for two years before making those tools available for free to the public. As a result, Washington County, Arkansas, and Putnam County, New York, are now measurably more prepared to support more than 76,000 children in their care should a disaster strike.

In addition, the RCRC initiative has produced a comprehensive online toolbox of resources for communities across the U.S.

With nearly two-thirds of American households lacking adequate disaster plans, the RCRC Toolbox provides the resources that parents, community leaders, emergency management officials, schools and child care facilities need to prepare for emergencies and improve their ability to help children quickly return to a sense of normalcy. The toolbox is available online at <https://rcrctoolbox.org/>

# National Center for Disaster Preparedness

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With the additional \$1 million from GSK, NCDP will now work with community coalitions in New Hanover County, North Carolina, and in Puerto Rico to develop plans to protect and care for children in the face of disasters.

“The hurricanes of 2017 and 2018 have disrupted organizations within communities that serve children every day,” explained Jeff Schlegelmilch, Deputy Director for NCDP. “This negatively impacts the children in the community as well as the ability of the community as a whole to recover. Many child-serving organizations and community planners lack the tools and resources for meeting the increased needs of children after major disasters, but still work tirelessly to serve their communities.

“We are proud to partner with communities in North Carolina and Puerto Rico to help them expand the reach of their work to meet the current needs of children and to build even greater child-focused disaster resilience for their communities, and the nation.”

For 19 years, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation’s Corporate Citizenship Awards have honored the most accomplished social and community initiatives within the private sector. From philanthropy to shared value to corporate social responsibility—the Citizens Awards honors the partnerships and organizations that leverage their resources, expertise, and talent to make a positive impact.

## About GSK

GSK is a science-led global healthcare company with a special purpose: to help people do more, feel better, live longer. Learn more about GSK and its community partnerships: <https://us.gsk.com/en-us/about-us/us-community-partnerships/>

## About the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University’s Earth Institute

The National Center for Disaster Preparedness at the Earth Institute of Columbia University works to understand and improve the nation’s capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. NCDP focuses on the readiness of governmental and non-governmental systems; the complexities of population recovery; the power of community engagement; and the risks of human vulnerability, with a focus on children. Learn more about the RCRC initiative: <http://ncdp.columbia.edu/rcrc>.

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