

# fact sheet

## RESILIENT CHILDREN / RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

### Background

Emergency response plans often fail to address the specific needs of children and their families before, during, and after disasters. Children's institutions such as childcare centers and schools are left out of the equation, and may not have the resources and capacity to provide safe, non-traumatic sheltering and displacement management services which include family re-unification planning. Studies show that barriers which prevent children from returning to school quickly after a disaster can delay the return to normalcy that kids need, and the long-term impact can be devastating. Quickly returning to a routine can improve a child's recovery and simultaneously allow the family unit to address other issues of recovery.

The Resilient Children/Resilient Communities Initiative, sponsored by GSK, will replicate successes and best practices for preparing the institutions that serve children in disasters. This partnership with GSK and Save the Children will bring new perspectives and resources into the area of preparedness and community-based resilience building.

### Relevant Statistics<sup>1</sup>

- More than half of US families have been affected by a disaster.
- 69 million children are separated from their parents each work day as they go to school or child care.
- 42% of parents do not know where to meet their children if they've been evacuated. It took almost 7 months to reunite the last displaced child with her family after Katrina.
- Of every \$10 spent in Federal Agency Preparedness Grants, less than one penny goes to activities targeting children's safety.

### Project Overview/Goals

*The three-year Resilient Children/Resilient Communities Initiative (RCRC) will develop a replicable model of child-focused community resilience planning that can be brought to national scale. This will be accomplished by developing two pilot programs – one in Washington County, Arkansas, and one in Putnam County, New York. In partnership with leaders in these communities, this initiative will analyze, recommend and implement procedures, training, and guidance to help communities protect children after disasters. Initiative impact will be measured using the Community Preparedness Index (CPI), an evidence-based measure of community preparedness previously developed by Save the Children in collaboration with NCDP. To illuminate current trends in preparedness attitudes and behaviors, with particular regard to children and disasters, NCDP will also conduct a national random digit dial survey with an oversampling of the two pilot communities.*

Additionally, a National Children's Resilience Board (NCRB) will be established, composed of public officials, thought leaders, and innovators from the public and private sectors. This group will provide linkages and visibility to the work of increasing the resilience of children at the community level, and the policies that guide and facilitate this work nationally. **For more information, please visit <http://ncdp.columbia.edu/rcrc>**