Preparation is the key to being able to maintain stability during a crisis. As a Director, it is important in the day to day operations to always ask, "What if...". In my mind, it's the only way to have an insurance plan, because the reality of our job is always having a contingency program.

Disasters happen. We live in a world that demands that we are realistic and prepared. In order to keep in compliance with state regulations we much have a fire, tornado or natural disaster plan in place and practiced. We are negligent if we don't take the next step of "Risk Management". There are many proactive steps we can take to be ready to support and be the foundation of healing, should there be a need.

- ✔ Establish specific response and prevention protocols; review with staff
- ✔ Make sure that all the numbers addresses and cell phone lists are up-to-date. It is vital that parents know how crucial it is for the school to have any changes immediately noted on file.
- ✔ Notify all of your families that should your building disappear, that you have a predesignated place for the to pick up their child. The spot should be safe and in a central location.
- ✔ Have a voicemail and text message system set up. Even if your building is gone, your phone system can still work if you have to evacuate
- ✔ Designate a liaison for the messaging system. Make sure that person has all the information and can articulate the situation without dramatizing the situation.
- ✔ Create a flyer for the families that has the "Hotlines" and vital information on one page.
- ✔ Have an evacuation process. Make sure the teachers are trained and informed as to the expectations and goals of the program.
- ✔ Create a checklist of supplies, including the first aid kits, fire books, etc. Be sure these supplies are updated periodically
- ✔ If the entire population needs to be transported to a location, a vehicle plan and designation needs to be organized.
- ✔ Review "lock down" procedures with staff.
- ✔ Establish a "shut down of ventilation procedure; heating and air.
- ✔ Pre-arrange counselors to help with the healing after a disaster.
- ✔ Evacuation and relocation diagram
- ✔ Emergency phone number filed with state
- ✔ Child tracking system information