

# Be Prepared

When you have no control over a stressful situation, you still have control over how you understand and respond to it.

Having a plan can help you stay calm and feel more in control. This can help you make better choices during a disaster or emergency.

Tips:

- **Make an emergency kit.** Your emergency kit should have enough supplies to last up to 72 hours. Include items like: canned foods, water, flashlight, radio, batteries, important documents, emergency contact list, cash, games, supplies for pets, and medications.

For more information about building your emergency kit, go to:  
[www.alberta.ca/build-an-emergency-kit.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/build-an-emergency-kit.aspx)

- **Have an emergency plan.** When you're under stress, you might not remember where to meet, emergency phone numbers, or addresses. Having a plan written down will help you manage your stress and reduce anxiety.

For more information about making your emergency plan, go to:  
[www.alberta.ca/make-an-emergency-plan.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/make-an-emergency-plan.aspx)

- **Share your plan.** In a crisis, it's important to share any specific needs that you or family members have (e.g., medical conditions, medications, supplies). Write this information down and keep a copy with your emergency kit.

Let your children and teens help with planning. Make sure everyone understands the plan and what they need to do to be safe.



1-877-303-2642

Mental Health Help Line  
 Mental Health Support 24/7

To order this resource go to:  
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# Preparing Emotionally for a Disaster or Emergency





## Being emotionally prepared for a disaster or emergency can help reduce your stress and anxiety.

### Build Emotional Wellness

Learning about and using healthy coping skills can help you deal with daily challenges and maintain good mental health. These same skills will help you cope better during a disaster or emergency.

Tips:

- Develop a positive mindset. Spend time with positive people, remember positive things, and be kind to yourself. Everyone makes mistakes. Learn from them and move forward.
- Make time for yourself (e.g., read, listen to music).
- Decrease or stop unhealthy coping behaviours (e.g., smoking, drinking alcohol, eating too much, not eating enough).
- Manage your stress. If stress lasts a long time it can become chronic and lead to health problems.

To help manage stress:

- get enough sleep
- set priorities (e.g., decide what has to be done and what can wait, say no if you feel it's too much)
- try relaxation methods (e.g., mindfulness, meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, walking in nature)
- be physically active every day
- make time for friends
- seek professional help if you're having trouble coping, having suicidal thoughts, or using substances to cope

### Build Social Connections With Others

Strong social connections are especially important during emergencies and disasters. Take time to build and maintain strong support networks in your life.

Tips:

- Spend time with supportive family and friends.
- Get to know your neighbours. In an emergency or disaster, your neighbours are often the first to respond. Knowing who you can turn to in times of need is important. It's also good to know who might need your help in an emergency. One way to get to know your neighbours and your neighbourhood is to volunteer or join your local community association.
- Take part in your local celebrations and ceremonies.
- Ask for help when you need it and help others when they need it. Giving and accepting help builds a strong social support network.



### Build Healthy Habits

Taking good care of yourself physically can help you cope well emotionally.

Tips:

- Eat well. Food is just as important for your physical health as it is for your emotional health. Making healthy food choices can help balance your mood, stay focused, and give you more energy.
- Get quality sleep. To do this: go to bed and wake up the same time every day, sleep in a quiet, dark, comfortable environment, dim lights and turn off electronic screens 2 hours before bed, take a warm bath or shower, and avoid alcohol before bed. For adults, 7-9 hours of sleep per night is recommended.
- Make physical activity part of your daily routine. Adults should do at least 20 minutes per day of moderate-to-vigorous intensity aerobic activity (e.g., running, cycling, swimming). Moderate-to-vigorous intensity means that your heart rate increases, you breathe deeper, and you sweat. In addition to doing aerobic activities, try to do muscle and bone strengthening activities (e.g., push-ups, lifting weights, yard work) at least 3 days a week.
- Manage chronic health condition (e.g., diabetes, heart condition, anxiety). If you need help, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider.