

While Creating a Family Preparedness Plan



It is essential for every family to have a **Family Preparedness Plan** in place for emergencies. For immigrant families, it's particularly important to proactively prepare for potential immigration-related situations. We have included trauma informed tips to approaching a family preparedness plan taking into consideration additional ways for caring for you and your children's emotional needs during difficult times.

This quick guide is not legal advice. We recommend downloading and completing the **ILRC Resource Toolkit**, which offers detailed guidance on childcare options if a parent is absent, where to find trusted immigration services in your community, and how to assert your constitutional rights when interacting with an immigration officer. You can find the guide by visiting ILRC at ilrc.org/resources/step-step-family-preparedness-plan

MEDICAL

Write down instructions if your child has any medical conditions and/or takes any medications.

Make sure to write down medical conditions or allergies your child has, medications that your child takes, as well as doctor and health insurance information. Keep a copy of this information in your important documents file. Give a copy to your child's school and the adult you designate to care for your child. Let your child know where to find this information if you are not around.

Provide the designated adult¹ with your child/children's health insurance or Medi-Cal/Medicaid case number to facilitate finding care. Begin transfer of authority, if needed and able, to the designated adult's care. Important note: not all health insurance plans cover children not under their parent's care unless the child/children are officially granted custody by a judge in court. Seek legal advice to determine the best way to manage this item.

EDUCATION

- During uncertain times, maintaining some normalcy can provide comfort, even when our hearts are hurting. Attending school is an important part of that normalcy for your child.
- Make sure the person you assign to care for your child knows the details of your child's school and grade.

¹ Designated adult may not be the same as a guardian. Consult with a legal professional in your state of residence to assess the needs of your family and best option for you and your child.

- Ensure they also have access to your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 behavioral plans, if applicable.
- In stressful times, children may struggle to regulate their emotions, so it's important that both school staff and the designated adult understand how to support your child and follow the existing plans.
- If there are teachers, aides, translators, or social workers your child is close to or who have been especially helpful, provide that information. These individuals can offer valuable support to both the guardian and your child as they navigate this challenging situation.



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Note items that bring comfort to your child/ren.

In times of fear and anxiety, it is extremely important that children have access to items that comfort them and if possible, retrieve from your house or find a similar replacement. This may include a blanket, a photo of family, a teddy bear, a sweatshirt, an item that reminds them of you, or whatever brings a little comfort to their heart. In your preparedness plans, consider letting the person who has accepted designation as your child's caretaker and/or guardian know of items that bring joy and safety to your child/ren.

List people that bring safety and cariño to your kids.

Difficult times require the strength of community and clarity in who can offer support. Some family members or trusted friends may not be able to take in your children, due to their own immigration status, financial limitations, or lack of space, but they are still an important part of you and your child's life.

Identify who will take on the role of caring for your children and who can provide emotional or practical support in other ways. These supports could include lifting their spirits, checking in with them, helping with small tasks like providing for their needs, or taking them to a special event or celebrating their birthday. Separation from a parent is challenging, and it becomes even harder when other natural support systems are disrupted.

There is always space for us to offer different kinds of support to children during difficult times.

- 1 Identify a **trusted additional member** of your child/ren's team, ask them if they would be willing to be a supportive person even if you get deported.
- 2 Make sure to introduce the additional members of your support team to the person you've assigned as your **child's caretaker** and/or **guardian**. Doing so in non-emergency situations helps foster trust and builds a connection, making it easier for the caretaker and/or guardian to reach out if needed when you are unavailable.
- 3 Talk with your child about the different ways **people can help them** and ask who they think would feel safe and comforting to them.

DOCUMENTS

Make sure your children/spouse all have passports.

If your child was born in the U.S., visit travel.state.gov to apply for a passport. If your child was born outside the U.S., contact the embassy or consulate for guidance, unless your child is seeking asylum. In that case, consult a lawyer.

Inform your family how to locate you if you are detained.

If you are detained by ICE, your family can use the ICE detainee locator tool at locator.ice.gov/odls. Make sure your family has your A-Number or Alien- Number (found on your immigration documents) in case they need it and your name as indicated on those documents.

COMMUNICATION

Talk to your family about your plan.

Reassure your child/ren that they will be cared for if you can't be there, even for a short time. Let them know who will look after them while you're away. If you don't think you are able to have this conversation with your child/ren, seek assistance or guidance from a trusted individual.

Leverage technology, if possible.

The ReadyNow! app helps you prepare for unexpected encounters with ICE by organizing essential information about emergency child, elder, and pet care, as well as your legal defense. With just one click, it alerts your pre-assigned contacts, ensuring your loved ones are notified and supported immediately in the event of a detention or emergency.

Download Know Your Rights 4 Immigrants App. This app is available in 16 languages, mainly Asian languages, along with Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Russian. It can read your rights aloud to an ICE or law enforcement officer and send a message to an emergency contact. Additionally, it offers resources like the ability to look up a consulate and a sample family preparedness plan. Practice how you would use this resource. Ask a trusted friend to help you practice, if needed.

“We carry the strength of our roots in our hearts, and no matter the challenges, we continue to plant seeds of hope. In preparing today, we honor our courageous journey and protect the dreams of tomorrow.”

