Emergency Preparedness Information for Certified Families

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the federal government is requiring state child welfare agencies to plan for disasters and major emergencies for the purpose of continuing vital services and ensuring that children placed in the custody of the state are adequately cared for and protected. Therefore, in the event of a major emergency or disaster, the Child Welfare Program is asking certified families to do the following:

- **Within 24 hours of the event, call the toll-free Child Welfare Emergency Contact Number at 1-866-610-2581 and report your family’s status and well being.** This number is specifically dedicated to emergency communication and will only be activated in the event of a major emergency or disaster.

- If you are forced to evacuate your home, ensure you have the following in your possession:
  1. The Child Welfare Emergency Contact Number
  2. Each foster child’s medical card and placement letter
  3. Each foster child’s prescribed medication and supplies

As a certified family, you must also ensure that the Emergency Contact Information you provide at the time of your initial certification and/or 2-year recertification is kept current. Contact your Certifier if you need to update this information.

There is a great deal of web-based information and resources to assist families in preparing for a major emergency or disaster. Because of where you live, you may be especially vulnerable to specific disasters (flooding, tsunamis, wild fires or chemical events). For information on emergency preparedness you may reference the following websites: [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) (Red Cross) [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) (Department of Homeland Security).