Chapter 5 Frequently Asked Questions

What types of indicators should a teacher look for when determining whether an emergency exists?

The three major factors to assess in an emergency are breathing, blood, and poison. If someone is not breathing easily but is struggling for breath, then an emergency exists. If someone is bleeding profusely, then this is an emergency situation that needs to be addressed. If someone has ingested or had direct contact with poison through the skin or has inhaled it, emergency procedures should be begun immediately. Other indicators such as high fever, breaking glass, and so on, trigger the senses of sight, hearing, smell, and touch to alert the teacher that an emergency exists.

How should a teacher organize for an emergency?

First, the teacher should have basic training in first aid for children, including how to offer help to a choking victim. The teacher should be familiar with procedures to be followed for rescue breathing. The teacher should have copies of all emergency information forms and health records readily available. These include the parental release form to treat a child in case of an emergency. Emergency numbers should be posted along with a list of questions that might be needed to be answered when making an emergency call. There should be an emergency backup available, and there should be a specific disaster plan. If it is a family child care, there should be a rescue registration form at the local fire department.

What are some of the symptoms of a serious head injury?

Symptoms of a serious head injury include loss of consciousness, shock, vomiting, and unevenly dilated pupils. It can also include confused behavior; change in breathing and/or pulse rate; and cold, clammy skin.

What is the difference between evacuation procedures and shelter-in-place procedures?

Most disasters can be classified in two ways. The first is a disaster that requires immediate evacuation, such as fires, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes like the serious one in New Orleans in 2005. These procedures are basic with how to exit, location of first aid kits, records, and so on that can be taken with the teacher and children. In case of shelter-in-place procedures, everyone may be told to remain in the early childhood education environment. This might occur in a blizzard or an earthquake or a terrorist situation. Emergency survival supplies for several days are vital to have on hand including food, diapers, diaper wipes, and the like. It is very important that the teacher do whatever possible to protect health during this time. Having a clean supply of water is essential. Enough
bottled water should be available for drinking. To stop the spread of disease, frequent hand washing is critically important.

**How would a teacher help with a child’s recovery after he had been in a emergency situation such as a disaster?**

Children often have emotional consequences as a result of being in an emergency situation. Children are often afraid and may not be able to verbalize it. This may be especially true in natural disasters such as earthquakes where aftershocks occur, or hurricanes, when wind and rain occur. It is important to listen to what they say about their fears and how they feel. They may express how they think about what happened, and sharing this with others can get a discussion going where children may realize they are not alone in these types of thoughts. It is important to try to establish as much of a routine as is possible. Children feel a sense of comfort and some predictability when a routine is maintained.