



Personal Support Networks

There are many roles individuals can play that provide support to an individual. When developing a support network you want to include a variety of types of individuals with a variety of skills.

- Identify the resources you need help cope during a disaster.
- Establish a personal support network so that you can help one another during an emergency.

- Organize a network for your home, school, workplace, volunteer site, and any other place you spend a lot of time.
 - They should be people you trust and who could check to see if you need assistance.
 - They should know your capabilities and needs, and offer help within minutes.
- Do not depend on only one person.
 - Include a minimum of three people in your network for each location.
- Think about what your needs would be during a disaster and discuss these with each of your networks
 - This can help identify network members for specific tasks.
 - This can help network members learn the best ways to assist you and offer additional ideas.
- Give network members copies of your emergency contact information with key phone numbers of relatives; medical professionals and information including medications, doses and locations where items can be found; disability related supplies and special equipment list,



evacuation plans, relevant emergency documents and personal disaster plan.

- Arrange with networks to check on you immediately if an evacuation order is given or disaster occurs.
 - Ask your networks to also notify you of an emergency you may not know about.
 - Ask them to give you any other disaster-related information that is not already in writing, such as radio information or location of shelters.
 - Demonstrate how to help you evacuate a building if you have special needs or concerns around your mobility.
- Develop a system on how you and your network will contact each other during an emergency and let them know you are safe.
 - Don't count on telephones working.
 - Choose a signal for help that you both understand
- Give the members of your network all the necessary keys they may need to get into your home, car, etc.
- Label all equipment and attach instruction cards on how to use and move each item.
 - Laminate the instruction cards for added durability
 - Have them practice with your special equipment.
- Make sure your service animal knows the people in your network.
- Explain to your network any assistance for personal care that you may need.
 - Give them written instructions on how best to assist you and your animals.
- Inform your network about any areas on your body when you have reduced feeling.
 - Have them check these areas for injuries after a disaster if you cannot check them yourself.
- Practice your plan



Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND COMPUTING

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

- Have members of your network practice how to help you, and familiarize them with any adaptive equipment you may need.
- Choose an emergency meeting place you are familiar with where you and other and reunite after exiting a building.
 - Select a meeting place for each area where you spend a lot of time.
- Give your network your travel dates if you will be traveling.
- Review and revise your personal assessment and disaster plan regularly, or as your condition changes.
 - Your networks should help in the review.
- Learn about members of your network's needs and how to assist each other during an emergency.
 - You may be able to assist the member s of your network in different ways so take the time to see how you can prepare together.

For more information contact:

Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)

1201 5th St, Suite 240

Denver, CO 80204

303.315.1280 office

CIDE@ucdenver.edu

www1.ucdenver.edu/centers/cide

This publication may be reproduced without the written permission of Assistive Technology Partners provided that the source is appropriately credited.

Also available in: Braille, large print, audio tape, disk and Spanish formats

Fast Facts made possible by NIDRR Grant #H224A40014



Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

© 2017 The Regents of the University of Colorado, a body corporate. All rights reserved. Created by Assistive Technology Partners