

# August - Special Needs Planning

12-Months-To-Preparedness

*"Preparedness is important for all Americans. People with disabilities and senior citizens must be included in these efforts if we are truly going to be prepared and better able to handle catastrophic disasters"*

-Governor Tom Ridge, N.O.D. Chairman of the Board and the first secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Cognitive and developmental disabilities are disabilities that last a lifetime and include but are not limited to disabilities such as autism, cerebral palsy, neurological conditions, and Down Syndrome. The disability results in a substantial functional limitation in major life activities and can impact a person's ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, do math, or follow instructions. While many persons with disabilities live independently, others, particularly those with significant brain injury or severe developmental disabilities may need assistance with nearly every aspect of daily living

For more information on developmental disabilities, call The Arc of Racine, 634-6303

Three steps individuals should take in order to be more prepared are:

## 1) Assessment:

Learn about hazards that may impact our community (blizzards, tornados, extreme heat/cold, floods, hazardous material spills etc.) and ways to prepare.

## 2) Personal Support Network:

Create a network of at least three trusted individuals, such as family, friends, co-workers, personal attendants, etc. who can assist during an emergency.

## 3) Make a Plan:

Make a plan to have available in case of an emergency. The plan should be simple and keep in various locations so it can be found easily. The plan should include information about the disability, a list of medications needed, family members to contact, and medical insurance or assistance members.

In addition,

Your plan should be practiced many times so it is remembered.

## **General Disaster Kit Items:**

### 1) A compass

### 2) State and local maps.

Why? If you are relocated or displaced because of a disaster, you will need to know where you are and how to get around to obtain items for your basic needs and find appropriate shelter.

## **Disaster Kit Items For Individuals With Cognitive Disabilities:**

*The needs of the individual should be considered when putting the emergency kit together*

### 1) Alternate power source or spare batteries for communication device(s)

### 2) Paper and writing materials

### 3) A favorite item, such as a small videogame or book, to help you relax while waiting in lines.