



# **AST First Aid and Emergency Procedures Handbook**

**2010-2011**

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## **I. Objective**

The objective of this *First Aid and Emergency Procedures Handbook* is to provide the American School parents, students, and staff with proper guidelines and procedures that will offer direction during an emergency or crisis situation.

## **II. The Crisis Response Team**

Should consist of the following school professionals:

- ▶ Head/Superintendent/Director
- ▶ Principal(s)
- ▶ Business Manager; Administrative Officer or Office Manager
- ▶ Guidance Counselor
- ▶ Health Care Professional
- ▶ Director of Transportation, Director of General School Services, etc.

### **AST Crisis Response Team**

Members:

- ▶ **Liliana Jenkins**, Superintendent
- ▶ **Hector Paz**, Business Manager
- ▶ **María F. Motz**, HS Principal
- ▶ **Ricardo Belgrave**, MS Principal
- ▶ **Elcenora Martinez**, Elementary Principal
- ▶ **Claudia Pereira**, PS Principal
- ▶ **Anahí Paredes**, Curriculum Director
- ▶ **Yolanda Avilés**, HS Counselor
- ▶ **Angela Pineda**, School Nurse
- ▶ **Oswaldo Oyuela**, General Services
- ▶ **Vicky Díaz**, Development Office



## **Responsibilities of the Crisis Response Team**

The team meets before the start of the school year to review procedures from the previous year and to prepare information which will go home to families during the first weeks of the new school year.

### **The Crisis Response Team is responsible for:**

Maintaining contact and discussing the local situation with respect to potential crises with some or all of the following individuals:

- ▶ Local police, security, health authorities (where possible)
- ▶ Officer of the U.S. Embassy
- ▶ Other security or administrative officers at cooperating embassies
- ▶ Establishing and maintaining a telephone tree and the procedures for its use
- ▶ Handling the media
- ▶ Designating the duties of administration, teachers, and support staff in an emergency
- ▶ Establishing evacuation procedures
- ▶ Providing any necessary supplies and equipment for each type of emergency
- ▶ Providing direction for student behavior
- ▶ Establishing the chain of command for the dissemination of information
- ▶ Establishing a standing agreement with local medical practitioners and ambulance services
- ▶ Ensuring the presence of on-campus first aide and CPR-trained individual(s)

### III. Types of Emergencies

- ▶ **Level 1 Emergency:** An emergency handled by school personnel without assistance from outside agencies. Examples include: temporary power outages, minor earthquake (less than 5.0 on Richter scale), and/or minor first aid cases.
  
- ▶ **Level 2 Emergency:** A moderate to severe emergency in most cases handled by school personnel with the assistance from outside agencies (e.g., fire department, police, and other emergency services). Examples include: a fire, or a moderate earthquake with injuries and/or structural damage.
  
- ▶ **Level 3 Emergency:** A major disaster that school personnel cannot handle without the assistance of outside agencies. For level 3 emergencies the response time of outside agencies may be delayed. Examples include: major earthquakes and regional civil disturbances.

## IV. Communication Channels

- ▶ Phone tree
- ▶ School directory

### Phone tree details

- ▶ One person, normally the Head of School, is assigned the position of “Official School Contact Person”.
- ▶ He or she is to determine IF and WHAT the emergency is, then begin the tree if needed, at the same time alerting their Crisis Team.
- ▶ Usually each person needs to call only 5 others.
- ▶ Phone lines are to be kept basically clear, so that everyone can call back within 20 minutes to report that they have reached all people on their list.
- ▶ In a crisis situation, it is oftentimes best to have a set script to follow so that the correct information gets passed along.
- ▶ **All contact numbers for teachers, staff, and parents need to be accurate and on hand**
- ▶ Mobile telephones may be the only way to access people if land lines are down, so these numbers must be kept up-to-date also.
- ▶ Classroom parents oftentimes complete the parental section of the phone tree.
- ▶ When you receive a call on the phone chain, WRITE DOWN the message exactly as it is given so that you can pass it on correctly.

**Avoid asking questions.** This will only slow the process of passing important information to all the parents on the list.

## **Communication Channels**

- ▶ As regards communication with the media, it is recommended that there be only one spokesperson (preferably the director/head/principal) who will speak to the press at the time of the crisis. All media inquiries should be referred to the director or other designated spokesperson.
- ▶ **No staff member should speak or comment to the media.**
- ▶ The spokesperson should attempt to be credible, honest, and accessible. Requested information could include a chronology of the incident and the school's official policy or position on the matter.

## V. Map of School Grounds and Evacuation Procedures

- ▶ [School Grounds Map](#)
- ▶ [Pre-School Evacuation Map](#)

### Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an earthquake, fire, or bomb threat, drill procedures will be followed:

- ▶ **Pre-School** students will be evacuated up the hill to the garden next to the Front Parking lot
- ▶ **Elementary** students will be evacuated to the athletic field (next to the gym)
- ▶ **Middle and High School** students will be evacuated to the back parking lot (South)
- ▶ Teachers must take attendance as soon as they can and report any absences to their principal

### If the school decides students need to leave campus the following actions will take place:

- ▶ Parents will be contacted to pick up their children in the back and front parking lots.
- ▶ Students will be moved by school buses to a safe location (TBA) and will be picked up by parents at that location.
- ▶ Staff will evacuate after all students have been accounted for and properly dismissed.

## **VI. In the Case of an Earthquake**

### **If inside:**

- ▶ Students and staff should **drop to the ground and take cover** under or next to a table or desk.
- ▶ Hold on until the shaking stops. Cover your head and face with your arms.
- ▶ Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls.
- ▶ Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside.
- ▶ Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave the building.
- ▶ Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.

### **If outside:**

- ▶ Stay there. Move away from buildings and utility wires.
- ▶ Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls.
- ▶ Once the tremor or movement stops, teachers should start the evacuation procedures according to plan.

### **If in a moving vehicle:**

- ▶ Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires.
- ▶ Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

## **VII. Emergency Procedures**

- ▶ The school has set up the following emergency procedures and evacuation plans to be followed in case of a major earthquake, fire or serious bomb threat.
- ▶ Please take the time to read this information carefully. Your knowledge of and cooperation with all these points are essential to the smooth evacuation of your children in case of an emergency.

### **Before An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Teachers and Staff**

- ▶ Teachers and staff need to read and understand their pre-emergency responsibilities and be familiar with all parts of the school handbook, especially concerning school trips.
- ▶ They need to participate in teacher/staff meetings concerning emergencies.
- ▶ They need to receive adequate information from in-service presentations to deal with potential student concerns and problems specific to the region.
- ▶ As part of the school program, they need to rehearse emergency procedures with their students (drills).

## **Before An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Parents**

- ▶ Parents/guardians must ensure that the school has up-to-date contact information as well as medical history on their children. Parents should establish emergency procedures for home and outside the school; they should review and reinforce procedures with their children on a regular basis.
- ▶ Parents can consult security personnel at their respective embassies or places of employment for information and/or literature on emergency procedures.
- ▶ Open House meetings and other school-wide gatherings are important communication vehicles for parents to voice concerns they have about safety and to find out school plans for emergencies. The school administration and staff can use these venues to get a feel for the needs of the school community.

## **Before An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Students**

- ▶ Students must understand that their safety is the primary concern of their teachers, supervisors, and school administrators. They should be made aware of the local situation and any possible threats to their safety and well-being.
- ▶ Through discussion and activities, students should be familiar with school emergency procedures. Prior to any school-sponsored trip, they should participate in a parent-student-chaperone meeting to review the rules and safety policies that govern any school trip.
- ▶ Students should also have the opportunity to practice any necessary drills.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Crisis Response Team**

- ▶ The ability to verify a potential or actual emergency depends on the type of crisis.
- ▶ Other emergencies that take place off campus must be verified directly from a parent or guardian, appointed spokesperson, or school chaperone.
- ▶ School heads will use their common sense to discern which sources of information are reliable.

## **Once an emergency is underway, the Crisis Response Team will do the following:**

- ▶ Assume overall direction of school emergency procedures; issue information and directives to the teachers and staff
- ▶ Account for the presence of all students and staff
- ▶ Assume overall direction of internal and external communications
- ▶ Direct evacuation of the school, if necessary
- ▶ Oversee contact with school chaperones if an emergency has occurred on a school-sponsored field trip
- ▶ Dispel rumor
- ▶ Contact next of kin, where appropriate

**Once an emergency is underway, the Crisis Response Team will do the following: (This can occur during or after an emergency).**

- ▶ Maintain equipment (fire extinguishers, cell phones, radio, batteries, generators, etc.), facilities (secure evacuation areas), and supplies (water, food)
- ▶ Shut off utilities as necessary
- ▶ Conduct or direct rescue operations
- ▶ Follow damage control procedures
- ▶ If designated, communicate with the school community (Board members, parents via telephone tree, etc.)
- ▶ Dispel rumor
- ▶ Where necessary, the school should make every effort to inform parents as soon as possible, through appropriate channels (e.g., telephone tree), concerning what exactly has transpired, the situation of the students, what parents should do, and any other instructions from the school to parents. Calls should be brief but accurate. A **script prepared beforehand** might be helpful for staff and teachers who will activate the telephone tree.

**During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Teachers and Staff**

- ▶ Teachers are responsible for the **supervision** of students in their charge. Teachers who do not have a class at the onset of an emergency should report to the Crisis Response Team for instructions or use their common sense in making themselves useful.

### **During an emergency, teachers will do the following:**

- ▶ Give clear, calm instructions to their students during the emergency
- ▶ Contact the school, in the event that the emergency occurs during a field trip or other off-campus school-sponsored activity
- ▶ Remain with the students until released by the Crisis Response Team
- ▶ Direct the evacuation of students under their supervision to designated areas according to signals, warnings, written notifications, or common sense
- ▶ Take roll as soon as conditions allow
- ▶ Report missing students to the Crisis Response Team and wait for instructions
- ▶ Assess physical condition of students. Any students requiring first aid should receive it as soon as conditions allow
- ▶ Keep order
- ▶ Dispel rumor

### **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Parents**

Parents must understand that foremost in the minds of school administrators and staff is the safety of the children. It is important for parents and guardians to be patient, alert observers until the school has communicated information and possible directives to them. (For small schools especially, the rumor mill will sometimes block the too-small switchboard and perhaps jeopardize emergency procedures.) If, however, parents have accurate and useful information that could help, they should make every effort to contact the school.

## **During An Emergency: Responsibilities of the Students**

- ▶ The safety of children is the prime consideration in any emergency. Student cooperation is therefore crucial.
- ▶ Students will follow the directives given by their teachers or supervisors. They will work to dispel rumors, to share ideas, and to cooperate with their peers.
- ▶ Failure to comply with school directives during an emergency will be considered a serious infraction subject to disciplinary action.

## **During An Emergency: Others in the Community**

Rumors tend to spread rapidly in the school community and can create chaos, especially if the community is small. Friends of the school can safeguard against this tendency by dispelling rumors and awaiting accurate information from the school. Anyone with useful information that might help the school during the emergency should contact the school directly.

## **After an Emergency**

- ▶ A post-emergency debriefing and an opportunity for the school community to share experiences and offer feedback is an important part of the healing process after an emergency. Just as important, this feedback and exchange will provide important lessons for future emergencies.
- ▶ When the crisis is over, it will be important for the Crisis Response Team to meet with the school staff and discuss exactly what happened and the consequences involved.

- ▶ Once the staff, teachers, and administration have met and reviewed the emergency in its entirety and discussed follow-up procedure, it will then be necessary to meet with the students.
- ▶ In the event of school closure, a written announcement stating the fact, along with contact telephone numbers must be made available as soon as possible to all stakeholders.

## **Emergency Procedures Information**

### ▶ **EMERGENCY CONSENT FORM**

All parents must fill out an *Emergency Consent Form* when they register their child. Please enter the names of any person(s) whom you would trust to pick up your child in case of an emergency. The designated alternates will be allowed to pick up your child only if they properly identify themselves to the teacher in charge.

### ▶ **AMBULANCE SERVICE**

All AST students and staff are covered by the ambulance service **Rescate Médico Móvil** while on the school campus and on school-sponsored field trips.

## **Emergency Phone Numbers**

- ▶ Rescate Médico Movil: 221-4444 / 225-4006
- ▶ Fire Dpt. 198
- ▶ Police 199
- ▶ Red Cross 767 (Tigo) / 195 (Claro)

## VIII. Basic First Aid Instructions

- ▶ Stay Calm
- ▶ Take a good look at the place and the victim.
- ▶ Call: School Nurse **Ext. 719 or 9985-4067** and notify principal.  
(Principal notifies Superintendent)
- ▶ Aid the victim – Always attend those injuries that seem critical first.
- ▶ Do not leave victim unattended. Stay with victim and send a staff member or responsible student to notify nurse.
- ▶ A student with injuries to the neck or spine **should not be moved.**
- ▶ A **tooth or eye injury** should always be escorted by a teacher or assistant. If this is not possible, the entire class should be moved with the injured child.
- ▶ **Collect the tooth in the event it is lost.**

### First Aid Information

- ▶ [Guia de Primeros Auxilios](#)
- ▶ [First Aid Guide -Translation](#)
- ▶ **First Aid Kit** - There is always one kit available at the nurse's office and in every division office.



## **IX. Templates / Forms**

- ▶ **Emergency Consent form**
- ▶ **[Field Trip Permission and Waiver form](#)**

## **X. Acknowledgements**

Information for this handbook was obtained from:

- ▶ The Emergency Procedures Manual for American-Sponsored Overseas Schools, Overseas Schools Advisory Council, Department of State, Washington, D.C., December, 2008.
- ▶ CEESA, retrieved from <http://www.ceesa.org/eph.html>
- ▶ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), retrieved from [http://www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/eq\\_during.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/earthquake/eq_during.shtm)