

# STEP 5

## emergency

Teach your children what to do in an emergency

### Why?

An injury or emergency can happen when families are just playing or working around the house, or when your children are on their own.

If your children know what to do in an emergency and WHEN and HOW to use a First Aid kit, they are less likely to panic and more likely to act safely when required. This can help them make a stressful situation better, rather than worse.

As you work through this Step's activities reassure your children that most of these things may never happen, but it's important to know what to do ... just in case.

what territory kids say...

"I did a First Aid course and it helped me with my Nanna." (girl aged 12)

"An emergency is when someone breaks in, there's a fire, or when someone has a heart attack." (boy aged 10)

"I was six years old and home alone with my mum. She's diabetic and went weird. I had to ring an ambulance." (girl aged 11)



### teach your children what an "emergency" is

Children need to know what makes something an emergency, so they have an idea of how to react. An "emergency" is when someone is in real or possible danger. Examples are fire, being attacked or being badly injured. The Family Activity: "Is this an Emergency?" will help your children with this.

### teach your children what to *do* in an emergency

In an emergency there are FOUR things to remember:

1. Stay calm.  
Take deep breaths. This will help you think clearly.
2. Get away from any danger.
3. Give First Aid to yourself or others if it is safe to do so.
4. Call 000 or get help.  
You can always call out "Help!" to get someone's attention.

# teach your children how to ring 000 to get Police, Fire or Ambulance

If there's an emergency, one of your children might need to ring 000 or get someone else to help.  
Here's how it works:

- **You can dial 000 from fixed or mobile phones.**

If your child is using a digital (GSM) mobile phone in a remote area, they may need to dial **112** if **000** does not work. If your child has a speech or hearing impairment, they can call **106** using their TTY (if connected) or computer modem.

- **000 is free from any phone.**

No money is needed for a public phone and the call will work even if your home phone has been disconnected or your mobile phone has no credit (but you need to have the battery charged).

- When you call **000** the call is answered by an operator who asks:  
**"Emergency: Police, Fire or Ambulance?"**

- When your child tells them the type of emergency, the operator will then transfer the call to the nearest Police, Fire or Ambulance station in the Northern Territory.

- The NT emergency services operator will then ask your child their name and:  
**"What has happened?"**

- Your child must not hang up until the operator tells them to.

## Fixed phone

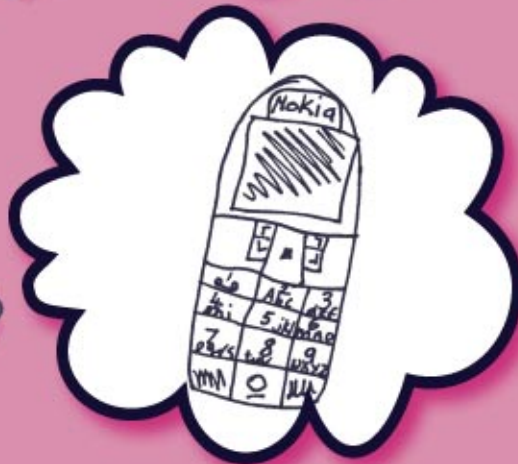
- If your child rings from a **FIXED** or **CORDLESS** phone (a landline), the operator will already know the address they are calling from.

## Mobile phone

- If your child rings from a **MOBILE** phone, the operator will **NOT** know the exact location your child is calling from.

- The operator will then ask: **"What state and town is the emergency in?"**

- Your child will need to be able to say clearly they are in the **Northern Territory**, and their town or community, so they can be connected to the right place.







1. Teach your children their name and address.
  - You can teach young children their name and address by putting them into a simple song.
  - If English is a second language for your children, help them to learn to say their name and full address as clearly as possible in English.
2. Help young children to learn their own parents' or carers' names, in case they need to be contacted in an emergency. Put them on your "Emergency Contacts" list. (See *Family Activity*: "Make an 'Emergency Contacts' List".)
3. Make sure the number of your house, unit or block is easy to see from the road. DO IT NOW so it's easier for an ambulance, fire engine or police car to find your place.
4. Keep cordless phones charged up and easy to find (not easy with teenagers!).
5. Check if there are any places in your house or yard where cordless phones or mobiles don't work – make sure everyone in your family knows about them.



## teach your children how to get help if you don't have a phone

If you don't have a phone at your place, or it's too dangerous to stay, decide what you would want your children to do. Some ideas are:

- Go and get help from a neighbour, friend, shop, clinic or some other place that is close, safe and where someone will help (see *Family Activity*: "Make an 'Emergency Contacts' list").

- Go to a nearby public phone and dial **000** (no money needed).

## practise what to do in an emergency

This will help your children feel more confident to call **000** in a **REAL** emergency when they might be scared.

1. Think of an emergency you could have at your place (e.g. a fire or accident).
2. Pretend you are an emergency services operator.
3. Get each child to **pretend** to ring **000** (unplug the phone first!).
4. Ask them the questions they would be asked:
  - "Emergency – Police, Fire or Ambulance?"
  - "What state and town is the emergency in?"
  - "What has happened?"
5. Remind them not to hang up until you say it's OK.
6. Think of different emergencies and take it in turns to be the operator and the person calling.



**family activity**



# practise going for help

This will help your children feel more confident to get help in a REAL emergency when they might be scared.

- Practise going to the public phone with your children.
- Pretend to be the operator and follow the steps from the *Family Activity*: "Practise What to Do in an Emergency".
- Ask a neighbour, friend or nearby clinic or shop if your children could get help from them in an emergency and can practise doing this with them. Then help your children to practise getting there and telling someone: "I need help". Make sure they practise saying WHERE and WHAT the emergency is.

## first aid

First Aid is what you do straight away if there is an accident or someone gets sick. You can do First Aid on yourself or on someone else.

### parent tips

1. Enrol your children in a First Aid course. Many organisations, such as St John Ambulance and Australian Red Cross, run courses.

St John Ambulance conducts "Junior First Aid", "Remote Area First Aid" and "Caring for Kids" programs. Phone **1300 360 455** or email [training@stjohn.asn.au](mailto:training@stjohn.asn.au). Australian Red Cross also runs Junior First Aid programs. Phone **1300 367 428** or email [ntfirstaid@redcross.org.au](mailto:ntfirstaid@redcross.org.au)

2. Buy a First Aid kit.

- St John Ambulance sells a range of kits, so look for one that suits your family.
- Get the family together and look through what's in your kit. Talk about what each thing does and how to use it.
- Decide where to keep your kit. Make sure it's away from small children, but where others can reach it quickly.





# is this an emergency?

Get together with each child. Read each story carefully, talk about it and choose what you think is the best answer. Check it against the recommended answers at the end.

family  
activity

Going through all these situations at once might be a bit much for some children. You can do them over a period of time or make up your own. It's important that you go over the correct answers with each child, so they remember the RIGHT response in a REAL emergency.

1. You are watching TV. You smell smoke and see the stove is on fire.

Is this an emergency?	YES	NO
Do you need First Aid?	YES	NO

What do you do?

- a) Try to put the fire out with water or a towel.
- b) Get out of the house. Call **000** from a safe place and ask for "Fire".
- c) Keep watching TV.



2. A glass bowl falls and smashes on the floor.

Is this an emergency?	YES	NO
Do you need First Aid?	YES	NO

What do you do?

- a) Try to pick up the glass with your fingers.
- b) Ring **000** and ask for "Police".
- c) Sweep up the glass with a brush and pan, and put it in the bin.

3. You are using scissors and cut your finger. It starts to bleed a bit.

Is this an emergency?	YES	NO
Do you need First Aid?	YES	NO

What do you do?

- a) Rinse the cut and put on a bandaid. Get help if the bleeding doesn't stop.
- b) Ring **000** and ask for "Ambulance".
- c) Scream and shake your hand around.





4. You find your mum or dad lying on the floor. You yell at them but they won't wake up.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Laugh at them for playing games with you.
- b) Get help fast. Ring **000** (or go to a neighbour's) and ask for "Ambulance".
- c) Try to get them up.

5. When you're washing the dishes some hot water splashes on your arm. Your skin turns red and hurts a bit.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Jump up and down and scream for help.
- b) Put some butter on the burn.
- c) Rinse your arm under cool running water for at least 10 minutes or until the pain stops.



6. You're on your own and you see a snake in the bathroom.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Stay away from the snake and get help from an adult.
- b) Get a stick and try to kill the snake.
- c) Try to catch the snake for a pet.

7. Your little sister's favourite doll has just broken. She feels sad and is crying a lot.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Throw the doll in the bin.
- b) Ring **000** and ask for "Ambulance".
- c) Give your sister a cuddle and tell her mum or dad will try to fix it.





8. You're on your own and see someone trying to get in the kitchen window.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Go and ask them what they want.
- b) Hide in the bedroom.
- c) If it's safe, ring **000** (or go to a neighbour's) and ask for "Police".



9. Your younger brother is asthmatic. He's breathing funny and his face is turning blue.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Ring **000** (or go to a neighbour's) and ask for "Ambulance".
- b) Put a bandage around his chest.
- c) Laugh at him for pulling funny faces.

10. Your Dad just fell off a ladder in the backyard. He's yelling and his leg looks crooked.

Is this an emergency? YES NO

Do you need First Aid? YES NO

What do you do?

- a) Try to help him stand up.
- b) Ring **000** (or go to a neighbour's) and ask for "Ambulance".
- c) Put a bandage around his leg.



## Recommended answers

- 1. Emergency. No First Aid needed. Answer (b)
- 2. No emergency. No First Aid needed. Answer (c)
- 3. No emergency unless bleeding doesn't stop. First Aid needed. Answer (a)
- 4. Emergency. Answer (b). Trying to get them up could make things worse.
- 5. No emergency. First Aid needed. Answer (c)
- 6. Need adult help. No First Aid unless bitten. Answer (a)
- 7. No emergency or First Aid. Answer (c)
- 8. Emergency. No First Aid needed. Answer (c)
- 9. Emergency. Answer (a)
- 10. Emergency. Answer (b)



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# Sources

**7 Steps to Safety** was developed in consultation with Northern Territory parents, children and service providers and from current Australian and overseas literature. Kit developed by Meron Looney, Project Worker, "Family Safety Plan Kit". Editorial assistance by Ros Moye. For further information contact Office of Children and Families, Northern Territory Department of Health and Community Services, Australia on 1800 005 485 or email [families@nt.gov.au](mailto:families@nt.gov.au)

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**7 Steps to Safety** aims to promote the safety and wellbeing of children. Material contained in the kit is intended for information purposes and cannot be taken as legal or medical advice.

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# make an "emergency contacts" list

The first thing your children will need to do in an emergency (if someone is in *real or possible danger*) is to ring 000 and get help.

If they are scared or worried but it's not a *real* emergency, they still might want to contact a friend or trusted person to work out what to do. Help your children to make a list of people who could help them. You can use one of our examples (for younger kids and older kids), or your children could design a special list or poster just for your family. We have included the phone number for Kids Help Line (1800 55 1800), which is a free, confidential telephone and online counselling service for children aged five to 18.

If you haven't already, take a look at **Step 4: What's Special about Our Family?**, to help you decide WHO might be good to include on YOUR list.

Then follow the steps below.

1. Fill in each child's name and address (even adults can forget where they live in an emergency!). Write down parents' /carers' names if necessary.

2. Help your children fill in the other contact numbers or details. When putting other people's phone numbers and contact details on the list, remember to:

- Check it's OK with them.
- Choose a range of people who can be contacted at different times.
- Check they can be contacted easily. If they can't answer the phone at work, or they're away a lot, or their phone is often disconnected, you might need to choose someone else.
- Check they would be able to help if needed. Could they leave work and get to your place if necessary?
- Try to choose neighbours, friends or shops/clinics who have a phone to call **000**.

3. Encourage younger children to draw pictures or stick photos of people on their list so they will remember who each number belongs to.

4. Put your list up in a place where everyone can see it (near the phone if you have one).

5. Remember to:

- **Check your list regularly** to see if the Emergency Contacts are still right. Your kids might help you to remember if you make it "every school holidays".
- **Practise what to do** regularly with your family so that EVERYONE will remember what to do in an emergency.

family activity



1. Keep cordless and mobile phones charged up and easy to find.

2. Check for places in your house where phones don't work. Make sure everyone knows about them.

3. Even if your family *does* have a phone, arrange for someone your children can go to for help if needed. Make sure each child is involved in choosing their "Emergency Contacts" so they'll use them.



parent tips

If someone is hurt or in danger

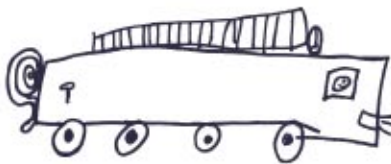


000

ask for



OR



OR



police

fire

ambulance

say

name

.....  
.....

me

where I live

.....  
.....

my place

what's happening ? ? ? ?

other people I can call are

mum: .....



..... my mum

dad: .....



..... my dad

Kids Help Line



1800 55 1800



.....



# emergency contacts

for older kids

If there is an emergency  
I will call **000** and say if I need



OR



OR



**police**

**fire brigade**

**ambulance**

The emergency services operator will need to know:

my name:

my address in the Northern Territory:

what has happened:



Don't hang up! The operator  
will tell me what to do.

If I can't use a phone, I will yell  
out or go to:

OR

If I don't need police, fire or ambulance  
I can contact:

mum at work: .....

dad at work: .....

mum's mobile: .....

dad's mobile: .....

doctor: .....

poison info: **13 11 26**

Kids Help Line: **1800 55 1800**



