



# Severe Weather Preparation & Response

Prepared by Child Care Aware® of North Dakota

## Planning and Preparation

- Designate as safe area - basement is best. If a basement is not available and you are not able to relocate, go to a room without windows on the main level such as a bathroom or closet, or along an interior hallway.
- If your safe area is an unfinished basement or a basement not used for child care, try your best to clear and safety proof an area of the basement that could be used if necessary. Keep an extra playpen and /or a play yard gate in the basement if caring for infants.
- Practice the “tornado position.”
- Familiarize staff and children with warning system.
- Update emergency contact information regularly.
- Check flashlights regularly. Keep extra batteries on hand for flashlights and radios. Keep cell phones charged.
- Check and rotate supplies regularly for first aid and emergency kits.

## Conduct severe weather/tornado drills

- It is required to practice one drill per year before the tornado season (April-August)
- It is recommended that tornado drills be performed monthly during tornado season.
- Track drills on your Child Care Program Emergency Drill Log.

## Severe weather terms and response

### **Tornado Watch:** Tornado is possible

- Watch the sky. Listen to radio/TV or check weather app/website for more information.
- Prepare to take shelter in your home or building.
- If you are in a mobile home or a home without a basement, you should prepare to move to a safer structure if you have one available.
- Make sure all children and staff are wearing shoes in case you have to relocate, go to another area (such as a basement) or in the event that you have to walk on glass/debris if there is damage to the house or building.
- Gather needed supplies - emergency contact information, flashlight, cell phone, first aid kit, weather radio, emergency supply kit, care plans and medications for children with special needs.
- **Tornado Warning:** Tornado has been sighted and indicated by weather radar.
- Take children to designated safe area of home/building or relocate immediately.
- Take needed supplies - emergency contact information, flashlight, cell phone, first aid kit, weather radio, emergency supply kit.
- Avoid windows and glass doors. Close doors to outside rooms.
- Have children sit in “tornado position” to protect their heads. Other items that can be used for protection: bike helmets (for those over 12 months of age), blankets/sleeping bags/ large pillows, crib mattresses. Make sure that children are taken to designated safe area FIRST. If time allows, gather items for protection if items are available. If helmets are worn, children do not have to sit in the “tornado position” since their heads are protected.
- Infants should be held by an adult if possible. If infants are not able to be held by an adult, infants can be secured in their car seat carrier or placed in an evacuation crib or playpen.
- Count heads - refer to attendance sheets. Make sure all children are accounted for. Notify director if anyone is missing.
- Stay in this position/location until given the “all clear” by authorities.

### Sources:

Tornado or Severe Weather, Child Health Information and Prevention Resources (CHIPR)

Healthy Childcare Consultants, Inc, 2005

Revised 6/16