

In it together | Step it forward activity

GRADES 5 AND UP | 10-20 MINUTES | NO COST, MINIMAL RESOURCES REQUIRED
FOR INDOOR OR OUTDOOR SETTINGS

Purpose and learning outcomes

This activity helps students understand that emergency preparedness is about people and connections, not just supplies. Through movement and reflection, students recognize the community supports they already have and how those connections help before, during and after an emergency.

By participating, students will:

- Develop an introductory understanding of emergency preparedness, including what it is and why it matters in everyday life.
- Identify trusted people, places and supports in their school, home and community that contribute to preparedness.
- Understand emergency preparedness as a shared responsibility, including recognizing age-appropriate ways they can contribute before, during and after an emergency.

What is emergency preparedness?

Emergency preparedness means being ready for disruptions that can happen in our communities, such as severe weather, power outages, floods, wildfires and other situations that change normal routines. Being prepared helps people stay safer, make informed decisions and recover more quickly.

Preparedness includes:

- knowing what to do
- knowing who can help
- knowing how to help others
- working together as a community

This activity focuses on making connections as a key part of preparedness.



For more information and resources to support your classroom discussion on emergency preparedness, visit alberta.ca/beprepared

Alberta

Activity set up

1. Before starting, read the definition of emergency preparedness for youth out loud to the students.
2. Once done, have students stand shoulder-to-shoulder in a single line.
3. Explain: "If a statement applies to you, take one step forward. If not, stay where you are."
4. Remind students:
 - Stepping forward is optional.
 - No talking during prompts.
 - Each step represents a connection, not a skill level.

Activity prompts

Start each question with "Step forward if ..."

OPTIONAL: As students move forward, pause occasionally and invite volunteers to share examples related to the prompt. This can help students hear different perspectives, build understanding and strengthen connections between the prompts and real-life preparedness.

- ... you have ever experienced severe weather (e.g., thunderstorm, heavy rainfall, extreme heat/cold, etc.) or a disruption (e.g., power outage, water shortage) in your community.
- ... someone in your household has talked with you about how to stay safe during situations like that.
- ... you know where important items are kept at home (e.g., flashlight, phone, first aid supplies).
- ... you know what to do during a school drill.
- ... you know who to listen to or follow if routines change at school.
- ... you know one way you can help others, like staying calm, sharing information or getting an adult.
- ... you know how following directions helps everyone.
- ... you know a safe place in your community where people can go for help.
- ... you have helped someone who needed support.
- ... you believe communities are stronger when people look out for each other.

Activity reflection

This discussion reinforces that preparedness is about people and connections, not just supplies. Through reflection, students recognize the trusted people, places and supports they already have, and understand preparedness as a shared responsibility.

Reflection questions (select 1 or, if time permits, work through all of them):

- What did you notice about how many people had experienced changes or disruptions in their community?
- Why do you think talking about these experiences helps us learn and prepare?
- What are some ways families and schools help us feel more prepared?
- How do routines like drills or knowing where things are help us feel more confident?
- What are some places in our community where people can go for support?
- What are some safe ways kids can help others?
- How do connections make it easier to handle challenges?
- Why are communities stronger when people look out for each other?
- What is one connection you already have that helps you feel more prepared?

About the Be Prepared program

This activity was developed by the Government of Alberta's Be Prepared program. Be Prepared supports individuals, households and communities across Alberta in preparing before, during and after an emergency. The program is expanding its programming to better support youth and those who work with youth to increase risk literacy and build confidence.

Educators are invited to share feedback on this activity and ideas for how emergency preparedness can support youth learning environments by emailing BePrepared@gov.ab.ca.

Visit Alberta.ca/BePrepared to learn more and access preparedness resources. Resources are available in multiple languages and include fact sheets, infographics, checklists and short videos.