OBJECTIVES:

- Complete needs assessment related to disaster preparedness recommendations for families of children with special health care needs (CSHCN) and/or children with special nutrition needs (CSNN)
- Identify “gaps” in current disaster preparedness recommendations through literature review and key stakeholder interviews
- Develop disaster preparedness recommendations for families of CSNN
- Develop education materials to communicate recommendations for disaster preparedness to families of CSNN and health care providers

BACKGROUND:

- CSHCN require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required generally by children
- CSNN may have special nutrition needs and require specialized formula and medical equipment to provide adequate nutrition
- Families of CSHCN and/or CSNN will have to take additional steps to adequately prepare for a disaster
- No recommendations exist to provide appropriate preparedness recommendations for families of CSNN
- Providing recommendations is essential in ensuring families of CSNN have appropriate information available to attain an adequate level of preparedness

RESULTS

For Children with Special Nutrition Needs

You must know how to take care of your children's special nutrition needs. Here are some important guidelines to help you prepare for a disaster:

1. Identify your child's special needs and gather a list of necessary items.
2. Create a plan for each scenario, such as a fire or natural disaster.
3. Keep emergency contact information easily accessible.
4. Prepare a bag with essential items and have it ready to go.
5. Practice emergency drills with your family.

Additional Resources:

- Disaster Preparedness Resources:
  - www.ready.gov
  - www.safety.gov

- Emergency Preparedness Tips for Children with Special Needs:
  - www.childwelfare.gov
  - www.samaritandis.org

- Additional Preparedness Resources for Families of Children with Special Needs:
  - www.cdc.gov
  - www.disasterready.org

METHODS:

- Needs assessment:
  - Literature review of preparedness recommendations put forth by various organizations and agencies
  - Key stakeholder interviews with professionals having a background in providing services for CSHCN and/or working in the field of disaster preparedness, planning, and management
  - Identification of “gaps” in current recommendations, causes for gaps, and opportunities to identify and address solutions

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

- Materials developed will be posted on the Washington State CSHCN of the WA state DOH website following evaluation of proposed recommendations
- Recommendations and web links to resources will be provided to families and professionals providing care to CSHCN

FUTURE RESEARCH & RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Pilot project to evaluate family perception and interpretation of preparedness recommendations for CSNN
- Evaluation (pre & post-tests) to determine effectiveness of proposed recommendations
- Consultation with health care providers to assist in skill building techniques and completion of proposed preparedness tasks
- Interdisciplinary approach to raising awareness of the need for disaster preparedness among families of CSNN