



Building Resiliency: Emergency Preparedness and Vulnerable Populations

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Why Prepare?



Video: A well planned escape

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DuhZI3oC9xc>

Ready New York: What's Your Plan?
@2014 NYC Emergency Management Department

Vulnerability in Emergencies

- In New Orleans, people aged 60 and older comprised 15 percent of the population prior to Hurricane Katrina, but made up 70 percent of the related deaths.
- A study released in 2008 found that of the 986 people who died as a direct result of Hurricane Katrina, nearly half were aged 75 or older
- Other significant event:
 - Hurricane Sandy
 - California fires
 - Heat Waves

Elder Vulnerabilities

- Physical or mental impairments
- Medical issues (chronic & temporary)
- Social isolation
- Difficulty self-advocating
- Dietary requirements
- Reduced transportation options
- More likely to suffer from one or more chronic illnesses, including:
 - Hypertension
 - Diabetes
 - Obesity
 - Depression
 - Mobility issues (chronic or temporary)

Growing Elder Population



- According to the 2016 U.S. Census Bureau, there are nearly **51 million** people (15.6%) in the US aged 65 and older
- The population of individuals aged 65 and older is projected to exceed **73 million** by 2030. That's an increase of 50%, and more than 20% of the total population.



Who else is vulnerable?

- Adults with access and functional needs
- People with chronic health issues
- Pregnant women
- Children
- Below or near poverty
- Non-English speakers
- People without cars
- People with pets



Social Isolation



- About 28% (14.3 million) of all non-institutionalized older persons in 2018 lived alone. The proportion living alone increases with advanced age. Among women aged 75+, almost half (44%) lived alone.

http://www.aoa.acl.gov/Aging_Statistics/index.aspx

- According to a 2012 study in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, both social isolation and loneliness are associated with a higher risk of mortality in adults aged 52 and older.

How it all started

Hurricane Irene - 2011



Brookline's Emergency Preparedness Buddies Program

- Who are we? “COACHES”
 - Trained volunteers: Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) & CERT) who work with elders to improve preparedness & resiliency on an individual level
- Who we help? “BUDDY”
 - Elders or adults with disabilities most of whom live alone

Brookline's Emergency Preparedness Buddies Program

- What do we do?
 - Assist elders to better prepare for and respond to emergency situations therefore improving resiliency
 - EP coaches provide preparedness training and supplies to Buddies via a series of one-on-one home visits
 - EP coaches assist Buddies with individual preparedness efforts (FOL, Go Bag prep, 911 Disability Indicator Form...)
 - Coaches contact Buddies before known events, and after known/unknown event

TIME COMMITMENT:

Initially 3-4 hours

Annually 2 hours



Recruitment, Referrals, & Resources

COACHES	BUDDIES
Brookline MRC/CERT members	Elders living alone/socially isolated
Known to Emergency Management Team	Referred by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookline Senior Center/Brookline Council on Aging
CORI/SORI checked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookline Housing Authority
Emergency preparedness training/experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookline Community Mental Health Center
Training focused on working with the elderly & those with access and functional needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookline Food Pantry • MA Office of Disability • Independent Living Council • Visiting Nurses Associations • Faith Based Organization

- Strong backing from Town officials
- Metropolitan Boston Homeland Security Region grants 2014-2019
- Part-time program coordinator (currently 19hrs/week)

The 1 on 1 Buddies Program



PROS

- Individualized and tailored to the specific person's need
- Modest resources necessary (start-up go bag)
- Continuity of care
- Accountability
- Coaches know their Buddie's living situation and have access to emergency contacts if needed.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Hard to recruit and match coaches and buddies
- Significant time lag between recruitment and retention
- "Buddies" connotes more than just a few visits
- Supplies must be lightweight and easy to use

The Buddy Village



PROS

- Monthly events located in community rooms
- Increases scalability
- Language translations
- Residents meet other residents – Buddy system within building

LESSONS LEARNED

- Do they actually take the necessary steps towards preparedness?
- No continuity
- No relationship with the buddies

Emergency Preparedness Buddies Programs

One-on-One

- About 40 coaches trained
- 20+ active coaches
- 18 Buddies enrolled
- 10 EP Buddy “deployments” to date

Buddy Village

- In two years – 2017-2018: 48 events, 6 locations, 425 residents
- Materials & Presentations offered in English and Mandarin Chinese

Moving Forward – Brookline and Beyond



- Faith Based Organizations
- Translations in more languages
- Community outreach
- Neighbors to Neighbors approach
- Help other communities to start similar programs

Program Achievements



- Awards
 - April 2019: National MRC Award: Community Preparedness & Resilience Award
- Presentations:
 - MRC Well Check Webinar, September 2016
 - MEMA 2019 All-Hazards Preparedness Conference June 2019
 - MHOA Emergency Preparedness Annual Conference November 2019
 - Needham Public Health workshops, Fall 2019
- Information Requests:
 - Nationwide



Presenter Contact Information

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