

Flooding emergencies: practise

These activities give children the opportunity to practise what they could do before and during a flooding emergency to ensure they are safe throughout. We recommend that before you start these activities you go through some of the activities in the 'Coping skills' module with the children, as some knowledge on these is required in the following activities.

Activities can be worked through in order. You can do all activities, or you can pick and choose. If you are short on time, you could pick the following activities:

1. That's cool
and
2. Flood preparedness interactive film
and
3. Flood preparedness role play activity **or** Flood preparedness scenario exercise.

Learning objectives

By the end of the 'Flooding emergencies: practise' activities children will be able to:

- > Practise some of the most effective ways to stay safe during a flooding emergency, and manage potential risks.

Practise activity summary

Time	Activity name	Supporting resources
5 minutes	That's cool	'Which of these actions is cool in a flood emergency?' presentation Flooding checklist
15 minutes	Flood preparedness interactive film	Flooding interactive film
20 minutes	Flood preparedness role play activity	Flood preparedness role play activity Flooding factsheet for teachers Flooding checklist
20 minutes	Flood preparedness scenario exercise	Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet Flood preparedness scenario exercise answer sheet Flooding factsheet for teachers Flooding checklist

1. That's cool

Activity type	Suggested time	Suggested group size
 Practise	 5 minutes	 Whole group
What you need 1. ‘Which of these actions is cool in a flood emergency?’ presentation 2. Flooding checklist	Introduction This activity helps consolidate the children’s knowledge of what they should or should not do during a flood. This is based on the ‘Flooding checklist’ resource. Activity description Before the activity: 1. Open the ‘Which of these actions is cool in a flood emergency?’ presentation. 2. Print out the ‘Which of these actions is cool in a flood emergency?’ presentation with notes and follow the instructions below. 3. Print out a copy of the ‘Flooding checklist’ for your reference. Explain that: > We are going to do an activity called ‘That’s cool’ to test our knowledge of what we should or should not do during a flooding emergency. > First, listen to a description of an action someone might take during a flooding emergency. Then if the action is safe, give a thumbs up and say “That’s cool!” If the action is unsafe, give a thumbs down and say “No way!” Work through each slide, calling out each action description and helping children come to the right conclusion. A thumbs up or down icon will appear on the slide to show the correct answer. You can find more details on the answers in the notes section of the presentation.	

2. Flood preparedness interactive film

Activity type	Suggested time	Suggested group size
 Practise	 15 minutes	 Whole group
What you need 1. Flooding interactive film	Introduction This activity gives children the opportunity to practise what they might do in a flooding emergency using an engaging interactive film hosted on YouTube.	
	Activity description Before the activity: 1. Have the 'Flooding interactive film' ready to play. Please note: you will not be able to access the film without the link provided in the 'What you need' side bar on the left. After each scene the children will be asked a question by a character in the film. The answer options will appear on the screen. We recommend you pause the film with the options on the screen and have a class discussion to decide which answer to click on. If an incorrect answer is selected, a screen will come up with the reason why this answer is wrong and with a suggestion of what should be done instead. The film will then continue to the next scene, where children can make another class decision and so on until the end of the film. Explain that: > We are going to watch a short film about a family affected by a thunderstorm. > After each scene you will be asked to make a class decision by choosing one of the options that appear on the screen. > If you get an incorrect answer, a screen will come up explaining why this answer is wrong. Then the film will continue to the next scene. Start the film. A short amount of time has been added after the options appear on the screen to allow for some class discussion on the options. However, if you would like to discuss the options with the class for longer than the allotted answering time, we recommend you pause the film. After children have watched the whole film, ask them how the characters were feeling and what helped them stay calm. Discuss what the children have learnt about how to prepare for and what actions to take during a flood.	

3. Flood preparedness role play activity

Activity type	Suggested time	Suggested group size
 Practise	 20 minutes	 Pairs
What you need Flood preparedness role play activity Flooding checklist Flooding factsheet for teachers	Introduction This activity gives children the opportunity to practise what they might do in a flooding emergency situation using role play scenario cards. Activity description Before the activity: - Print and cut out several copies of the two scenario cards from the 'Flood preparedness role play activity'. You will need a copy of one of the scenario cards for each pair of pupils. - Print out a copy of the 'Flooding checklist' and the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers' for your reference. Divide the children into pairs and give each pair one of the scenario cards. Explain that: > An important part of being prepared for an emergency is to practise what you could do in an emergency situation. > In your pairs use the scenario card to create a short role play about how you could respond to the situation. Think about what you have learnt about the ways to stay safe during floods in the other activities. > Before you start creating your role plays, let's read through both scenarios together. Read through both scenarios with the class. If children need some ideas, you could refer to the 'Flooding checklist' and the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers'. If time permits, ask some pairs to perform their scenes to the rest of the group. Then lead a whole group discussion to decide on the best way to handle the two different scenarios.	

4. Flood preparedness scenario exercise

Activity type	Suggested time	Suggested group size
 Practise	 20 minutes	 Small groups
What you need Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet Flood preparedness scenario exercise answer sheet Flooding checklist Flooding factsheet for teachers	Introduction This scenario-based exercise helps children explore how they might respond to a developing flooding emergency. Activity description Before the activity: - Print out copies of the 'Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet' (cut out the boxes on this sheet) and the 'Flood preparedness scenario exercise answer sheet'. You will need one copy for each group. - Print out a copy of the 'Flooding checklist' and the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers' for your own reference. You may also wish to give copies of the factsheet to the children so they can refer to it throughout this activity. Ask the children to get into small groups and give each group a 'Flood preparedness scenario exercise answer sheet'. Explain that: > An important part of being prepared for an emergency is to practise what you would do in an emergency situation. > In a moment each group will be given a scenario. We will read it through together and then in your groups, you will discuss and write down any actions you might take to respond safely to the situation. Read the initial scenario through with the children. > You have three minutes to note down on the answer sheet all the things you might need to do right now to make sure you and your family are safe. When you hear "Stop", we are going to stop discussing the scenario as groups and share some of the actions you might take with the whole class. If the children need suggestions, refer them to the 'Flooding checklist' or the 'Flooding factsheet for teachers'. Call out "Stop" when three minutes is up and ask each group to share some actions. Use the suggested answers in the 'Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet' to help children develop their answers. Continue the activity by handing each group a 'Scenario development one' cut-out and read this through with them. Then explain that:	

- > You have another three minutes to note down on the answer sheet all the things you might need to do right now to make sure you and your family are safe. Once again, when you hear “Stop”, we are going to stop discussing the scenario as groups and share some of the actions you might take with the whole class.

Call out “Stop” when three minutes is up and ask each group to share some actions. Use the suggested answers in the ‘Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet’ to help develop children’s answers.

Continue the activity by handing out the next two scenario developments to each group, giving the children three minutes to discuss each development, and then opening up the discussion with the class.

Summarise their preparedness learning at the end of the activity.

Flooding factsheet for teachers

Why and where does flooding happen?

- > Floods occur when there is too much water on land that is normally dry, any time of the year, anywhere in the UK, and can last several days or weeks. River floods can last weeks or even longer.
- > Most floods happen when heavy rain or melting ice and snow cause rivers and streams to overflow, spilling water onto normally dry land. Floods can also happen with thunderstorms and snowstorms.
- > The rain, ice and snow (or a combination of these) that cause the flood can be miles away from where the flooding actually occurs.
- > Flooding has become more severe as more of the landscape has been covered by tarmac, concrete for roads, car parks, etc. When there were more natural landscapes, rainwater was absorbed into the soil. Now it flows into rivers and streams as 'run-off', adding to the volume of water that can cause floods. In addition, when flood waters spread over paved areas, they can become fast-flowing channels and long-standing pools.
- > People who live in low spots near rivers and streams are most likely to experience flooding, but floods can affect everyone. Floods can wash away roads and bridges, knock down buildings and in some cases they can cut out power supplies.
- > Flash floods can happen almost without warning. They occur when a river or stream fills up with water so fast that it overflows quickly. Flash floods can also be caused by a sudden, heavy rainstorm that is miles away. When there are storms anywhere in the area, be on alert for a flash flood.

Below are the definitions of the flood alert/warnings (to find out more about them go [here](#)):

- > **FLOOD ALERT:** Flooding is possible. Be prepared.
- > **FLOOD WARNING:** Flooding is expected. Immediate action required.
- > **SEVERE FLOOD WARNING:** Severe flooding. Danger to life.

Staying safe

During a FLOOD ALERT:

- > Develop a plan with your family for moving furniture and objects that could be damaged by flood waters to a safe place.
- > Listen to the news for updates on the chance of flooding.
- > Gather emergency supplies and check on the evacuation route for your neighbourhood in case you need to leave home and go somewhere safe that will not be affected by flooding.

During a FLOOD WARNING:

- > Head somewhere safe that will not flood with the whole family immediately if local officials tell you to evacuate.
- > Ask your parents to turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if it is safe to do so.
- > Help your family put flood protection equipment in place, such as sandbags.
- > Avoid flood waters. Flood water that is just six inches deep can knock you off your feet, and flood water just two feet deep can sweep a car off the road. Flood waters can also carry harmful waste and chemicals.
- > When you come to flood waters, remember the safety rule: **Turn around, don't drown!**

During a SEVERE FLOOD WARNING:

- > If you are still in your house, stay in a safe place with a means to escape.
- > If you have not been able to evacuate, be ready should you need to.
- > Call 999 if you are in immediate danger.

Flooding checklist

If you live in an area that can flood, you might want to put this checklist somewhere accessible so you can refer to it in the case of a flooding emergency. Share this checklist with your parents/guardians so they can work through what to do during a flooding emergency.

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During a FLOOD ALERT:

- ☐ Develop a plan with your family for moving furniture and objects that could be damaged by flood waters to a safe place.
- ☐ Listen to the news for updates on the chance of flooding.
- ☐ Gather emergency supplies and check on the evacuation route for your neighbourhood in case you need to leave home and go somewhere safe that will not be affected by flooding.



FLOOD ALERT

During a FLOOD WARNING:

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- ☐ Ask your parents to turn off gas, electricity and water supplies if it is safe to do so.
- ☐ Help your family put flood protection equipment in place, such as sandbags.
- ☐ Avoid flood waters. Flood water that is just six inches deep can knock you off your feet, and flood water just two feet deep can sweep a car off the road. Flood waters can also carry harmful waste and chemicals.
- ☐ When you come to flood waters, remember the safety rule:
Turn around, don't drown!



FLOOD WARNING

During a SEVERE FLOOD WARNING:

- ☐ If you are still in your house, stay in a safe place with a means to escape.
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SEVERE FLOOD WARNING

Flood alert/warning icons source: Environment Agency

Flood preparedness role play activity

Scenario A: Water warnings

You are at home on a very rainy day with your family. The newsreader on TV has just announced that there is a flood warning in your area and that the rain is expected to continue for another couple of hours. Your house is next to a river which has flooded before and your younger brother/sister has become very worried. What is the safest thing to do? What information can you share with those around you about how to stay safe in a flood?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after the role play performances, if not already covered):

- > Teach your brother/sister some coping skills to help him/her stay calm.
- > Ask your parents/guardians to turn off the gas, electricity and water supplies if it is safe to do so.
- > As a family, head for higher ground as soon as you can – perhaps you can stay with friends or relatives.
- > If possible, plan a route in advance to avoid travelling through areas that are prone to flooding.
- > If you unexpectedly come across flood waters, turn around and take a different route.

Scenario B: Worried about water

Alex lives near a river that sometimes floods in the winter. As soon as it starts raining heavily or there is a storm, Alex's family start listening for flood warnings so they can head to higher ground if a flood happens. This spring, Alex's cousin Sam is staying for a few weeks. Sam has only seen floods on TV and is worried about what might happen if the river floods while she is visiting. Sam even asked Alex if they might have to climb onto the roof to get away from the water. Luckily, Alex learnt a lot about flood preparedness from the Pillowcase Project.

What can Alex share with Sam about how they can stay safe and be prepared during a flood? What facts does Alex know about flooding? What could Alex teach Sam to help her stay calm and cope with thoughts and feelings about what might happen during a flood?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after the role play performances, if not already covered):

- > Telling Sam some facts about flooding to help with knowing what to look out for.
- > Taking slow breaths to calm down when you feel worried or scared.
- > Sticking with a friend or family member so you don't feel alone.
- > Doing a coping skill learnt during the Pillowcase Project.
- > Singing a favourite song or picturing a favourite story could make you feel better.
- > Reminding yourself of what you have done to get through tough situations in the past.
- > Picturing your shield of strength to remind yourself that you have the confidence to cope.
- > Remembering that Alex's family is prepared for floods and will show Sam how to stay safe by heading for higher ground if one happens.

Flood preparedness scenario exercise instruction sheet

Initial scenario

It is Sunday afternoon. You are at home playing with your brother/sister. Your parents are watching the news on TV. It has been raining a lot for most of the day. You live in an area that has flooded in the past. You hear the newsreader saying that there is a flood alert for your area.

What do you and your family do now?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after each group has listed the actions they would do, if not already mentioned):

- > Develop a family plan for moving things that could be damaged by flood waters.
- > Listen to the news for updates on the chance of flooding.
- > Gather emergency supplies as a family, including your pillowcase emergency grab bag.
- > In case you need to leave your home later and get to higher ground or stay with family/friends, plan a route to avoid travelling through areas that are prone to flooding.
- > Teach your brother/sister or other family members some coping skills to help them stay calm if they are worried.

Scenario development one

It is Sunday evening. It is still raining. You have been watching the news on TV with your parents to hear if there are any updates on the chance of flooding in your area. You hear the newsreader saying that there is now a flood warning for your area. The newsreader has also said that officials advise people living in your area to evacuate to higher ground.

What do you and your family do now?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after each group has listed the actions they would do, if not already mentioned):

- > As a family, head to higher ground as soon as possible – perhaps to stay with some friends or other family.
- > Before evacuating, ask your parents to turn off the gas, electricity and water supplies if it is safe to do so.
- > Make sure you bring your pillowcase emergency grab bag with you.
- > Your family make sure they have planned your evacuation route so that you avoid any areas that usually flood more easily.
- > While evacuating, if you come across flood waters, your family turn around and take a different route.
- > If you or your brother/sister feel a bit worried, do some of the coping skills exercises you learnt in the Pillowcase Project.

Scenario development two

It has been a few hours after you saw the flood warning on TV. It is dark and it is still raining. You are in the car with your family going to your uncle's house, which is in a safe place. Your brother/sister is feeling scared. Suddenly, your parents stop the car as the road in front is flooded. The flood water is moving quickly and looks deep.

What do you and your family do now?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after each group has listed the actions they would do, if not already mentioned):

- > Your parents turn around as a car can be swept off the road by as little as two feet of flood water.
- > Do some of the coping skills exercises you learnt in the Pillowcase Project together with your brother/sister to calm him/her down:
 - Practise 'Bubble breathing' together and make sure you are taking slow, deep breaths.
 - 'Breathing with colour' and 'Shield of strength' will make you feel less scared.
 - Help your brother/sister think of their favourite place with their eyes closed.
 - Ask them to close their eyes and read through the 'Guided imagery' story.

Scenario development three

You have been staying with your uncle for a number of days and it has finally stopped raining. Your local area was flooded, but not all houses were affected. Luckily, your house was not flooded. You have heard on the news that there is no longer a flood warning for your area, so you will be going home.

What do you and your family do now?

Suggested answers (you can use these as part of the discussion after each group has listed the actions they would do, if not already mentioned):

- > Make sure you are prepared for the next flood: refill your grab bag with anything you may have used during this evacuation.
- > If there are still areas that are flooded, even if it looks safe, do not walk through the flood water as it may be polluted or dangerous.
- > Your parents check with your water supplier to make sure the water is safe to drink.
- > Your parents call the gas and electricity companies to check it is safe to turn the supplies back on as they may have got damaged in the flood.

Flood preparedness scenario exercise answer sheet

Initial scenario

It is Sunday afternoon. You are at home playing with your brother/sister. Your parents are watching the news on TV. It has been raining a lot for most of the day. You live in an area that has flooded in the past. You hear the newsreader saying that there is a flood alert for your area.

What do you and your family do now?

Scenario development one

Scenario development two

Scenario development three

Well done for knowing what to do to stay safe!