



What Parents Need to Know to Be 9-1-1 Ready!

It's important to think about steps you might have to take in an emergency, before you ever have an emergency. Planning ahead may make things easier if you ever need to call 9-1-1. Your preparation now can help responders help you, if and when they need to.

Prepare your home:

Post your address

Make sure your address is posted on a sign that can easily be seen from the road in both directions, and that it can be seen at night. For babysitters, post your address near your other emergency contact numbers.

Prepare your family:

Teach your kids WHAT 9-1-1 is

Explain to them that 9-1-1 is the phone number to call when they need help in an emergency.

Teach your kids WHEN to call 9-1-1

Talk to them about the difference between an emergency and a non-emergency. 9-1-1 is the number to call to save a life, stop a crime, or to report a fire. These things are emergencies. Fights with siblings, disagreements with parents, missing bicycles, and lost dogs, for example, are not emergencies. Be sure they understand that calling 9-1-1 as a prank or for a non-emergency can tie up the phone lines and may delay help for someone who seriously needs it.

Know your phones

Make certain all members of your household know how to use the different types of phones in your home. Keep in mind that the call-back and location information that is attached to your land-line phone may not be available on cell or VoIP phones. Location information may be limited on these devices. Contact your service provider for more information.

Practice, practice, practice

Help your children memorize the information that will help a 9-1-1 calltaker and emergency responders, including their name, their parents' names, their complete address and their phone number. Being able to provide this information quickly will help when seconds count.

Don't hang up!

If it is safe to speak to the calltaker, let your children know to stay on the line and listen carefully to the questions. Answer them clearly and calmly.

Old cell phones

Old cell phones may make entertaining toys for kids, but do you know that even deactivated phones with no service plan can still call 9-1-1? To avoid an unintentional call to 9-1-1, remove the battery before giving it to a child to play with. Better yet, recycle or donate your retired phone.

Texting won't work

For now, the only way to reach 9-1-1 is by phone.

Accidents happen!

If you call 9-1-1 accidentally, stay on the phone, and explain the mistake to the calltaker. You will save time and resources by simply staying on the phone.