

Natural Hazards Children's Awareness and Education Program

Introduction

The Federal Government, through the Attorney-General's Department National Emergency Management Program, has funded the development of a Natural Hazards Children's Awareness and Education program, focused on preparing children and their families for natural hazards including floods, storms, tsunami and cyclones. This has been developed in partnership with SES agencies, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) and the Ettamogah Group.

A national campaign, consisting of 10 x 30 second safety stories featuring the *Li'L Larikkins* 3D animated characters*, was launched in November 2010 and has been screened during targeted children's television programs.

An important element in this program is a school resource kit, designed for all primary school children throughout Australia. This DVD-ROM contains lesson strategies and student activity sheets based around the 10 themes of the safety commercials. The lesson strategies use the 5Es framework (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate) and align with the objectives of the Australian Curriculums, in particular, English, Science, and Geography.

Australian emergency service agencies currently deliver a range of community education, awareness and engagement programs to increase community preparedness for a variety of natural hazard events. The messages in this program have been carefully crafted to dispel common misconceptions and explain the potential threat in a way that children can relate to, leaving them with a set of actions that are within their ability to execute.

The objectives of the program are to:

- Introduce the concept of natural hazards to children aged 5 to 12 years
- Engage children and their families at a grass roots level through their home and school communities
- Encourage children and their families to learn about the risks in the Australian community and to develop skills and resources to manage them
- Provide children with age appropriate actions that they can do or discuss with parents/adults to mitigate these risks
- Encourage children and their families to become more self-reliant by proposing actions that they can take to increase preparedness for the risks in their local community.

For more information about the Li'L Larikkins Natural Hazards Children's Program and the Li'L Safety Club, visit www.afac.com.au/SES_Natural_Hazards.

*The Li'L Larikkins 3D animation series was screened on Network 10 in January 2010, produced by the Ettamogah Group in Melbourne. The characters in the series don safety jackets in the commercials to reinforce the work of the SES and other fire and emergency services.

Overview: Teaching Resource (DVD-ROM)

The Li'L Safety Club program uses visual storytelling as an easy, fun approach to introduce children to the serious topic of emergency preparation.

This DVD-ROM introduces 10 themes, each based on a 30 second safety story, presented by the Li'L Safety Club. Every safety story can be played directly within the clip player window, or downloaded for further use within the classroom.

Each theme is accompanied by lesson strategies that use the 5Es framework (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate and Evaluate). More information about the 5Es can be found in the **5Es Teaching & Learning Model** download on the home page.

The lessons are also written to align with current curriculum objectives, in particular, the teaching strategies support learning in Geography, Science and English.

The following links provide further information about the relevant Australian Curriculum:

- Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography
<http://www.acara.edu.au/curriculum/geography.html>
- The Australian Curriculum: Science
www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Science/Rationale
- The Australian Curriculum: English
www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Rationale

The **Teaching Activities Overview** download, also on the home page, provides a guide to all 30 lesson strategies, their year level applicability and where the activities sit within the 5Es framework.

The lesson strategies within this resource have been divided into three age groups:

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. Kinder/Prep to year 3 | indicative ages 4-8 |
| B. Years 3-5 | indicative ages 8-10 |
| C. Years 5-7 | indicative ages 10-12 |

All lesson strategies involve students in developing their personal and family's preparedness and responsiveness to natural hazards, including outlining a set of age appropriate actions to help build resilience.

The lessons are accompanied by student activity sheets, all of which have been provided in both PDF and Word for teachers to easily adapt into their classroom at the required student level.

Within the **Useful resources** section of each lesson, teachers will also find supporting web links to information, multimedia files and further activities relating directly to that teaching strategy.

All safety stories and lesson strategies are also supported by **Background Information Sheets**. Each document provides information for both students and teachers about the various natural hazards common to regions throughout Australia. The topics presented in the Background Information Sheets within the resource are:

- Rain, Storms and Floods
- Lightning
- Cyclones

- Tsunami

To support the activities and information provided, a range of web links have been included for those users operating within a web browser.

The **Links** page provides essential contact information for the State Emergency Service (SES) and other organisations, both government and independent, from every state and territory. There are also further teaching resources and program links for those teachers wishing to explore the topics further within their classroom.

This multimedia resource provides comprehensive support for teachers to engage their students with important information about increasing preparedness for natural hazards. It is hoped that by raising awareness and educating children about these types of events that children and their families will become better prepared and more resilient.