Children in Emergencies
... A Journey of Hope

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2016 Child Aware Approaches Conference, Brisbane
Presenter: Peta Nichol
331 Natural Disasters in Australia between 2006-2016

- 64 Severe Storms
- 92 Bushfires
- 112 Floods
- 38 Other Extreme Weather Events
- 25 Cyclones
A uniquely Australian view
I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror
The wide brown land for me!

- Dorothea McKeller (1904)
Three key messages

1. Children’s unique needs must be included in disaster planning processes.

2. Evacuation and recovery centres must be safe places for children.

3. Disaster risk reduction and resilience education must be child-focused.
1. Children’s needs must be included in disaster planning.

Local emergency plans should include:

- Code of conduct
- Child Protection expertise
- Consultation with children
- Consideration of specific vulnerabilities
- Child Friendly Spaces
- Child focused risk assessments to consider children’s unique needs

97% of the plans we reviewed included specific references to caring for animals in emergencies!
2. Evacuation Centres must be safe for children
Child Friendly Spaces
“The Child Friendly Spaces gave the parents one less thing to worry about!”
Emerald Shire Council..

“The Child Friendly Spaces allowed parents some quiet time.
The staff were a God-send for parents.”
“Both parents and children could see each other. This helped both ... It was brilliant, outstanding...”
Australian Red Cross ..

“The spaces were a happy diversion from a traumatic event.”
3. Disaster risk reduction and education must be child-focused

“Journey of Hope” - 8x 1 hour sessions, covering:
• Creating Safety
• Fear: Understanding and Coping
• Anxiety: Understanding and Coping
• Sadness: Understanding and Coping
• Anger and Aggression: Understanding and coping
• Bullying: Understanding and Coping
• Self Esteem and Taking Action: I believe I can
• Me, My Emotions and My Community
Thank you!

For more information, please contact:

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