

Teen Community Emergency Response Team

The Center for Regional and National Security (CeRNS) at Eastern Michigan University initiated a grant funded pilot project from Michigan Citizen Corp to develop, validate and initiate an education program targeting high school students teaching Disaster Preparedness and Response. The Teen Community Emergency Response Team (Teen CERT) Program educates students about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, Teen CERT members can assist others in their schools, neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Teen CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

This 20 hour program focused on the following topics with hands on learning.

Topics include:

- Disaster Preparedness
- Fire Safety
- Disaster Medical Assistance Part 1
- Disaster Medical Assistance Part 2
- Light Search and Rescue Operations
- Disaster Psychology
- Terrorism
- Course Review and Disaster Simulation

The core Teen CERT program has three main goals. First, it will seek to provide students with a knowledge base on the effects of natural and man-made disasters and their emotional, social, and economic impacts. Secondly, it will aim to build decision-making and problem solving skills and strategies to help students make informed decisions regarding readiness, response & recovery and mitigation efforts to reduce loss of life and property. Lastly, an integral part of the Teen CERT program will be to provide students with hands-on training using reality-driven drills and exercises.

Training in disaster response should not be a one-time event. Awareness, commitment, and skills must be reinforced through follow-up training and repeated practice to maintain the edge necessary for effective response in the face of a disaster. To maintain your skill level and continually improve performance, you and your classmates should participate in continuing supplemental training when offered in your area. Working through practice disaster scenarios with other citizens will provide opportunities not only for extended practice, but for valuable networking with citizens in the local area.

The curriculum is not meant to replace those of previously established initiatives, rather it incorporates them in their entirety and focus on increasing knowledge and skill development in seven areas as they relate to disasters: 1) cognitive information, 2) recognizing hazards, 3) planning skills, 4) consequential thinking and risk taking, 5) team-building and communication skills, 6) decision making, 7) individual responsibilities within the community. Some of these lessons will focus on raising awareness in skill areas, while others emphasize their practical application.

Teen CERT works and should your school want to participate please contact us for further information.

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