

**Preparedness for People  
with Intellectual Disabilities:  
The Prepare To Prosper Approach**

Presented by:

**Richard Ruge, DP4VP**  
Disaster Preparedness for Vulnerable Populations

**Ana-Marie Jones, CARD**  
Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters

**Carmen Ynostroza, Becoming Independent (Retired)**

# People are People!

- **People have a wide range of skills and abilities.**
- **People who are considered by others as intellectually challenged also have a wide range of skills and abilities.**
- **All people can be trained if we break down the steps of preparedness and reinforce that training through repetition.**
- **A key is TEAM WORK: the training of the individual and their support staff.**
- **Another key is Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy-Redundancy.**

# CARD – The History

- 24/7 Media Coverage: 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake pre-empted the World Series.
- Despite great effort -- government, Red Cross and traditional response organizations could not address immediate, short-term or long-term needs for the most vulnerable residents. **This has always been true.**
- CARD was created BY local community agencies, FOR local community agencies, and works WITH community agencies and committed partners to fulfill on a vision of a prepared, inclusive, resilient, humane society.

**Lessons Learned:** Using fear and threat, prioritizing tomorrow's traditional disasters over today's community needs is entirely counter to the missions and mindsets of nonprofits, faith agencies, and service providers.

CARD's philosophy – **Prepare to Prosper!**

# You Must Go Fear-Free

- Fear of the disasters
- Fear of failure
- Fear of the overwhelm

Fear blocks our ability to be our best.

Fear clouds our judgment.

Fear becomes the insurmountable obstacle.

**We are where we are as a nation, because we have long used the fear frame for preparedness.**

# Normalize/Socialize Safety Behaviors

## *Everyday Brilliance BUILDS Disaster Resilience*

<b>Encourage Creativity and Innovation</b>	<b>Adopt ICS as Everyday Language</b>	<b>Employee Training &amp; Orientation</b>	<b>Art/Design: Make Safety Beautiful</b>	<b>Keep Choosing Safety</b>
<b>Customer Service</b>	<b>Empowered Technology</b>	<b>Honor Diversity</b>	<b>Couch Potato Preparedness</b>	<b>Fun! Joyful Engagement</b>
<b>Divergent vs Convergent Thinking</b>	<b>Heap Recognition and Praise</b>	<b>Team Building Community Cohesion</b>	<b>Ingrained Values and Habits</b>	<b>Mobilizing Your Assets Framework</b>
<b>Signage and Directions</b>	<b>Plus/Delta Debrief</b>	<b>Presentation Skills</b>	<b>Leadership Training</b>	<b>Optimism Hopefulness</b>

# Collaboration: Make it REALLY Work

- **Be honest** – be *brutally* honest. No honesty, no trust.
- **Celebrate/leverage your differences** – it's a competitive advantage
- **Stay focused on COMMON goals, values, needs** – do not deviate!
- **Protect your collaborators from your bureaucracy/oddities** – do unto others, keep your weird relations/habits/shortfalls to yourself.
- **Create micro successes** – string many small wins together.
- **Embrace Technology** – make technology your empowering partner.
- **Work the Journey!** – Make the process valuable, and a genuine bonding experience for all the partners.

# Choose a Great “Why”

## Why Should Your Business Embrace Fear-Free Readiness?

### Traditional Message:

- Prepare for disasters
- Take classes/trainings
- Get kits, store supplies
- Do exercises and drills
- **Because disasters happen!**

### Empowered Service Provider Message:

- Transform the lives of your clients
- Have readiness and resilience as a competitive advantage
- Be a more valued partner with local businesses/government
- Make your agency more fundable for related grants/donations

# The Becoming Independent Disaster Preparedness Committee

- **Has been in place for eight years.**
- **Meets quarterly**
- **Represents all programs in the agency**
- **Creates and updates staff trainings**
- **Coordinates outside trainings**



# The Becoming Independent Disaster Preparedness Committee

- **Creates and maintains Emergency Plans and supplies**
- **Creates and maintains the 'buddies list'**
- **Works with local partners**
- **Maintains contact with local businesses, churches and groups to use as resources in the event of a disaster**

# It is Important to Get Everyone on Board the Preparedness Bandwagon

- **Drills**
- **Outside trainers**
- **All new employees are given disaster preparedness orientation and tested**
- **All staff, Supported Living Services and Day Service participants are trained, tested, participate in drills**
- **Preparedness has become part of the Becoming Independent Culture**

# Agency Emergency Plan

- **CARD format- [cardcanhelp.org](http://cardcanhelp.org)**
- **Supplies on site**
- **Neighborhood connections for all sites**
- **Incident Command System roles**
- **Agency go-kits**
  
- **Keep Calm and follow the Emergency Plan**

# The Becoming Independent Earthquake Response Story

- **6.1 Napa Quake**
- **Contacted everyone within 30 minutes**
- **Got to each person's home to assist with clean up, assessment, determining needs.**
- **The training, testing and re-training paid off in many ways.**
- **Everyone was ready!**

# Lessons Learned

- **Regardless of the fact that all the training paid off, trainings and drills continue as part of our culture**
- **We found that our disaster kits needed a few more items. (Small dust pans, some trash bags)**
- **We keep the 'buddies' and community partners lists updated and current.**

# Thank You!

**For further information go to:**

**THE JOY OF PREPAREDNESS:**

**[HTTP://WWW.THEJOYOFPREPAREDNESS.COM/](http://www.thejoyofpreparedness.com/)**

**BECOMING INDEPENDENT (BI):**

**[HTTP://WWW.BECOMINGINDEPENDENT.ORG/](http://www.becomingindependent.org/)**

**CARD - COLLABORATING AGENCIES RESPONDING TO DISASTERS:**

**[HTTP://CARDCANHELP.ORG](http://cardcanhelp.org)**