



## + EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND

When disaster strikes, it's children who often suffer the most, especially kids living in poverty. Whether it's a flood, hurricane or epidemic, Children's Health Fund is committed to both responding quickly and staying for the long haul. The ability to act swiftly is critical in emergency response, and as Hurricanes Harvey and Irma have shown us, major disasters can strike in quick succession, making the need for ready resources even more important. It is for that reason the Children's Health Fund Emergency Response Fund has been established. The CHF Emergency Response Fund will allow us to quickly deploy to the scene of a disaster to support children and families who immediately need our help, and will give us the resources necessary to address long-term recovery, an often long and arduous process.

*The Emergency Response Fund will allow Children's Health Fund to respond in a way that builds on our history of disaster response and recovery dating back to Hurricane Andrew in Florida in 1992, the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, Superstorm Sandy in 2012, and the lead crisis in Flint, Michigan.*

*In responding to the public health crisis, Children's Health Fund is working with the National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University (NCDP) and our National Network affiliates to ensure the immediate and long term needs of children are addressed.*



*Photo by Lt. Zachary West, 100th MPAD, Texas National Guard*

### Hurricane Irma Response

Twenty-five years ago, Children's Health Fund first used our mobile clinics and teams to respond to a disaster. It was 1992 and we were responding to the devastation wrought on Miami by Hurricane Andrew. What began that year as a disaster response has become a permanent fixture in South Florida, a program implemented in partnership with the University of Miami, which has served tens of thousands of children and their families over the past three decades.

Unfortunately, Florida once again finds itself suffering from the impacts of a storm, this time Hurricane Irma which battered towns and cities from Key West to Jacksonville over the past few days.

We have been in close contact with the teams in Miami, and our newer partner in Orlando. **Both report that they do not yet know the extent of the impact to our programs – that said, we are integrated with the disaster response team at our program's affiliate partner, the University of Miami. They have already sent a team out on assessment to the Florida Keys and our mobile program is standing by. Other partners in our National Network are ready to help with additional mobile medical units and staff – available to deploy if and when needed.**

Immediate response to Irma will include **direct services and provision of care** to vulnerable children in local families, and to those who may be evacuated or in need of shelter services, as needed. Services include medical care, mental health support, and even case management. The CHF teams have the flexibility of being able to deliver care directly in community or shelter sites, and also to bring in mobile clinic services when needed.

In the weeks and months following the acute response phase, we will support children, families, and communities affected by Hurricane Irma through **provision of trauma-based care, case management services, support through and for community agencies** and institutions, and other initiatives, as needed.

## Hurricane Harvey Response Update

Tens of thousands of children families are still displaced from their homes and schools in Texas as a result of Hurricane Harvey, and are months to even years away from a return to normalcy. Significant risks remain for children and families in Texas, such as contaminated water, mold exposure, mosquito-borne infections, and inadequate access to medical care and prescriptions—especially for children with chronic illnesses. Based on our experience responding to other disasters, we also anticipate a dramatic increase in psychological trauma and mental health needs in children.

Children’s Health Fund, through a lead gift from singer/songwriters Paul Simon and Edie Brickell, and other dedicated supporters, is set to scale up its Hurricane Harvey response efforts in the Houston area. Partnering with Texas Children’s Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine, we will support the **creation of the Harvey Resiliency and Recovery Program**, which will undertake outreach and clinical support to children and families who have been destabilized by the flooding and surrounding events. As part of this same program, we will also be working with local partners to support **training for child care providers, teachers, school nurses, and parents** in the care and monitoring of children after the disaster. The immediate and long-term mental health needs will be addressed for children who are struggling with the impact of trauma, which we know could predispose them to long-term mental, emotional and physical distress.

Our National Network partners in Austin and Dallas stood ready to serve children and families evacuated from hard hit areas, like Houston and Beaumont. Ultimately, fewer families than expected were ultimately transported to these shelter sites. Both teams participated in local efforts and cared for families, as needed but have now been able to return their focus to the children in shelters and schools who need their care year-round. In addition, the Dallas team continues to provide care for displaced individuals as well.



*Children’s Health Fund and the National Center for Disaster Preparedness launched Operation Assist to help families hit by Hurricane Katrina. In addition to medical care, Operation Assist provided much-needed therapy for traumatized children and professional support and training to mental health professionals.*

## Partners

**About CHF:** Children’s Health Fund ensures high quality health care to the nation’s most medically-underserved children. We do this through expanding access to care, reducing health barriers to learning, engaging in advocacy and partnerships, and activating in times of disaster to serve those most at-risk: children. Across the nation, mobile clinics and fixed-site health centers bring comprehensive care—medical, mental health, case management, nutrition services, chronic disease management and much more to low-income, at-risk families. In 2016, CHF’s national network of programs in 14 states and the District of Columbia cumulatively reached over 93,000 individuals via 289,700 health care encounters provided at 367 different locations.

**About NCDP:** The National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University works to understand and improve the nation’s capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. NCDP focuses on the readiness of governmental and non-governmental systems; the complexities of population recovery; the power of community engagement; and the risks of human vulnerability, with a particular focus on children. NCDP carries out research that helps us prepare for, respond to, and recover from large-scale disasters—including hurricanes, earthquakes, nuclear accidents, pandemic flu, and terrorist attacks. NCDP’s approach combines research, policy work, education, and high level advocacy to ensure that the best thinking—and best practices—become part of our national disaster preparedness and recovery work.