



THEME 8

What to do in an emergency

Theme introduction

Background

An emergency is any situation that poses an immediate risk to health or life.

An emergency situation can happen any time anywhere; on our roads, in our homes, when we are out and about, in our schools and workplaces. Examples of emergency situations would include a sudden illness, injury or accident.

Most emergencies need someone to act straight away to stop the situation from getting worse. People can often feel hesitant about getting involved in an emergency situation; it's not that they don't want to help, but more that they don't feel confident that they know what is the right thing to do.

Although it is in our nature to avoid thinking about emergencies until they happen, being prepared is the key to being confident enough to help in an emergency situation.

Taking time to learn what to do when someone falls ill suddenly, or has an accident or an injury can help enormously in an emergency situation and maybe even save a life.

Knowing what to do in an emergency can also help you feel more confident in dealing with minor illnesses and accidents, an essential skill for parents of young children.

Organisations like the British Red Cross and the St John Ambulance Association provide specialist, targeted training programmes which teach First Aid to individuals and communities to help them become better equipped at knowing what to do in an emergency.

National targets/policies

- The British Red Cross is calling for the Department for Transport to make a practical first aid test mandatory in order to acquire a driving licence in the UK.
- There are many defibrillators available in public places such as train stations, shopping centres, airports and leisure centres. These are public access defibrillators (PAD) as anyone can use them in an emergency.
- There is an ongoing debate as to whether First Aid skills should be part of the curriculum in schools.

¹ The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents <https://www.rospa.com/road-safety/>

This theme

The topics in this theme use a range of learning techniques designed to assist people to learn what to do in an emergency. They will help learners to identify up-to-date and accurate sources of information and to learn key skills in following instructions, both verbal and written. The themes will help learners to develop confidence in their abilities and may serve as a stepping stone to more advanced learning about First Aid and dealing with emergency situations. The themes in this topic are:

- Saving lives
- Use the Internet to find information
- Follow written instructions
- Watch first aid demonstrations
- Follow emergency instructions

This theme links very closely with Theme 1, Topics 10 and 11 'Emergency Services' and 'Emergency Calls'.

Further information and suggestions

- British Red Cross: www.redcross.org.uk/firstaid – gives information about first aid, local courses and a variety of resources for learning first aid.
- St John Ambulance Association: www.sja.org.uk – information on first aid courses
- St Andrews Ambulance Association: www.firstaid.org.uk – information about first aid in Scotland.
- British Heart Foundation: Short film about how a defibrillator works <https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators/how-to-use-a-defibrillator>

Mapping to Functional Skills/Core Curriculum

Topic	Functional Skills		Core Curriculum	
	English	Maths	Literacy/Language (L)	Numeracy (N)
1 Saving lives	E3.9 E3.1 E3.7 L1.7 L1.2		Rt/E3.3 Sllr/E3.3 Sllr/E3.5 Sllr/L1.2 Sllr/L1.3	
2 Use the Internet to find information	L1.14 L1.14 E3.8 E3.17		Rt/L1.4 Rt/L1.5 Rw/E3.1 Ww/E3.1	
3 Follow written instructions	E3.12 E3.12 E3.12 E3.8 E3.3		Rt/E3.3 Rt/E3.5 Rt/E3.9 Rw/E3.1 Slc/E3.3	
4 Watch first aid demonstrations	E3.12 L1.7 L1.2 L1.23		Rt/E3.9 Sllr/L1.2 Sllr/L1.3 Wt/L1.2	
5 Follow emergency instructions	E3.1 L1.7 L1.2		Sllr/E3.2 Sllr/L1.2 Sllr/L1.3	