

# Community Emergency Response Training

## Unit Eight: Disaster Communication



# Objectives

Describe how a disaster can interrupt the **taken-for-granted nature** of personal communication networks.

List the **four major types of communication** that can be utilized during a crisis for the benefit of survivors, responders and the community.

Display an ability to be **flexible** in your communication form in order to get across simple messages in class activities that simulate disaster situations.



# The scope of disasters

- In a time of disaster everything can be in a disastrous state:
  - Land
  - Community
  - Loved ones
  - Resources
  - Employment
  - Social services



# Communication Networks and Disasters

- Communication  
**Technology** Networks
  - Phones
  - Computer lines
  - Cell towers
- Length time to repair

- **Social  
Communication  
Networks**
  - Friends and family
  - Community groups
  - Service organizations
- Taken-for-granted nature of communication systems in everyday life.



# Impact

- A disaster destroys not only the technology that provides communication services, but displaces people's interpersonal relationships.
- This can place great stress on individuals as they attempt to understand the disaster and reconstruct the relationships of their daily lives.



# Personal Communication Skills

How you would adapt if your primary form of communication was damaged?

Consider:

- Loosing your voice (if you are a speaking person)
- Breaking your hands
  - (if you use American Sign Language)
- Being separated from your interpreter
  - (if you speak English as a second language)



# Four major systems of personal communication

- Oral Communication

is influenced by:

- Culture
- Social needs
- Physiology
- Disasters

## Tips

- Think before you speak
- Be clear and concise
- Regulate your tone and pitch
- Avoid using contractions and acronyms
- be willing and able to adapt to the needs of the receiver



# Four major systems of personal communication

- **Written Communication**

- Formal

- Reports
- Memos

- Informal

- Words
- Symbols

## Tips

- Always have workable writing implements
- Keep things short
- Use fact not opinion
- Limit acronyms
- Be willing and able to adapt to the needs of the receiver



# Four major systems of personal communication

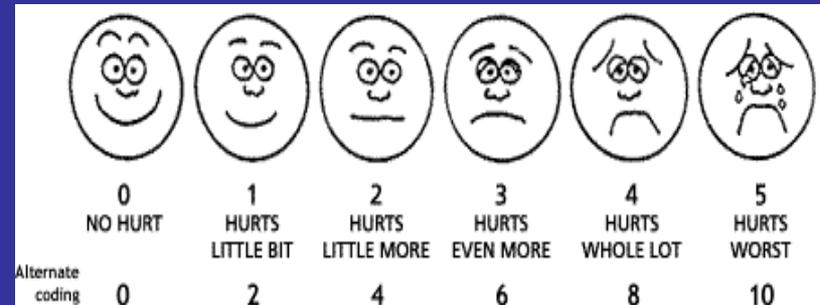
- **Non-verbal communication**
  - Sight or description dependent
  - Color, gestures, etc.
- **Visual communication**
  - Perception dependent
    - Time
    - Vocal intonation
    - Touch



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Tip: Using symbols

Wong-Baker FACES Pain rating scale



<http://www3.us.elsevierhealth.com/WOW/>

- Be willing and able to adapt to the needs of the communication relationship

# Four major systems of personal communication

## Listening involves:

- Attending
- Understanding
- Responding
- Remembering

- Tips:
  - Talk Less
  - Get rid of distractions
  - Do not judge prematurely
  - Listening takes time and effort
  - Adapt to the relationship needs



# Communication Style Flexibility Exercise

- One person role play
  - Hurt person and responder
- Communicate this to the partner without using your primary form of communication
  - Make it more complex
  - Flexibility and concentration are key
- Read the Participants Manual on page 11 for details.





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