

# Emergency Preparedness Lesson (EPL)

## Research Snapshot

### *The Research Initiative:*

Masters of Disaster and Emergency Management students in collaboration with the Experiential Education (EE) department at York University delivered a highly interactive emergency preparedness lesson plan to grade five and six students. The lesson plan took a proactive approach to the creation of an Emergency Kit for a possible emergency. Through quantitative data analysis by a senior market research team, it was revealed that there was a very high degree of lesson plan learning amongst the students in the second phase (March 2010) of this initiative (Phase 1 was conducted in May of 2009 and it involved three schools and approximately 150 students).



*The presentation of the ELP took place in the classroom with the assistance of the teachers.*

Three indicators of learning success were: 1) the knowledge that students gained as a result of lesson participation, 2) to what degree the students enjoyed the lesson, and 3) the willingness students had to spread the knowledge acquired to family and friends.

### *The Approach:*

Consideration was taken of the fact that grade five and six students were the target audience; therefore, a survey was generated that attempted to distinguish itself from the look of a test. This was done to encourage and elicit honest responses. With this in mind, eight questions were formulated. To ascertain the knowledge gained, three key questions were asked before and after the lesson plan in order to obtain the percentage change in learning. Additional questions focused on specific elements taught regarding the preparation of an emergency kit.



*Children are seen putting together a sample of an emergency kit according to the lesson plan.*

Two other questions tested the likability of the lesson plan design. Finally, the last question addressed the third indicator of success: the willingness of students to share the key concepts they have learned.

As well, feedback from the teachers was taken into consideration to gain insights regarding how much their pupils enjoyed the lesson plan and the knowledge and

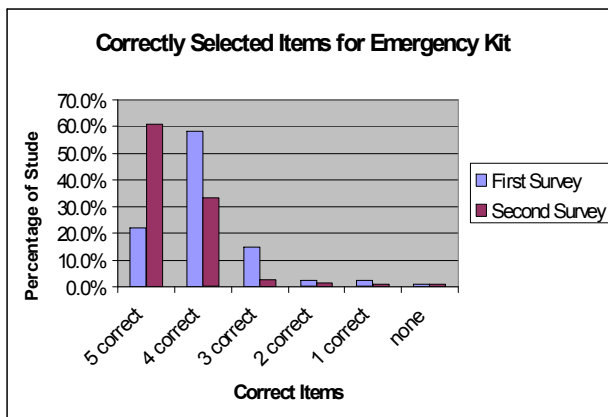
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benefit that derived by students. Teachers were asked for general suggestions regarding the improvement of the format or content of the lesson plan.

### **The Findings:**

While students' responses showed that they knew the intended use of an emergency kit, they lacked sufficient knowledge on how to create one with specific items essential for an emergency situation such as flood or sustained power outage. The number of students who correctly identified the five essential items (correct response) increased by 40.9% after the lesson plan was delivered.



98% of students understood what a hand crank radio should be used for in an emergency after the lesson was conducted. However, only 51% knew the correct answer regarding how many days the kit should last for (the correct answer being 3 days). This suggests a modification in content and delivery for future lesson plan design and delivery. It should be noted that more than 95% of student liked working in groups, admitted to highly enjoying the entire lesson plan, and felt that they learned about

handling emergencies. 60.1% were eager to communicate this information to both friends and family. Finally, the teachers' insights were overwhelmingly positive.

### **Use of Results:**

In phase one the EPL had been previously delivered without any indicators and evidences to gauge its strengths and weaknesses. With these phase two findings, the developers and instructors of the lesson plan can be confident that the lesson plan is well designed and needs only minor tweaking. In addition, school teachers and other TDSB stakeholders can be assured that their students are being presented with relevant and crucial knowledge, and that genuine learning is being achieved.

### **The Researchers:**

Angie Olortegui, Jhonatan Lopez de Leon, and Sarah Baird are senior level marketing research undergraduate students at York University.

### **Lesson design/implementation:**

Jasmina Germanski, Jonathan Birinyi, and Jonathan Karoly are Master of Arts Disaster & Emergency Management students at York University.

<http://www.yorku.ca/graddem/index.html>

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