

# Text 2 B Ready: A Novel Way for People with Disabilities to Create an Emergency Preparedness Plan and Go-kit

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The Text 2 B Ready pilot was designed to use text messages to help people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions prepare for emergencies.

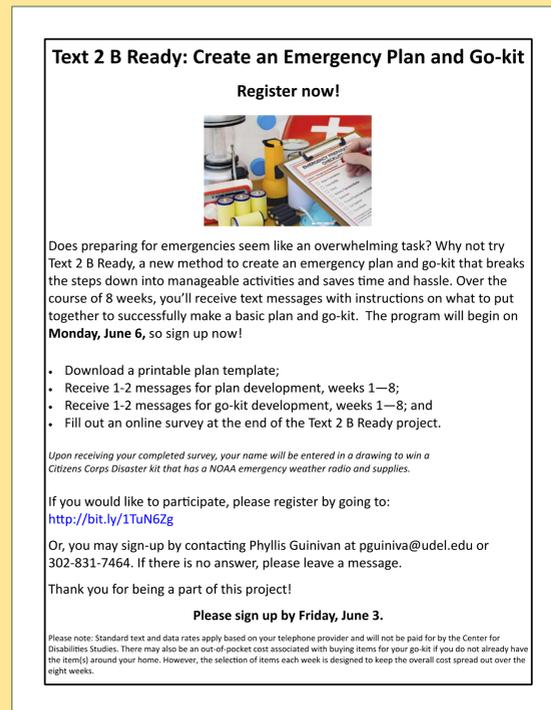
## The Problem

Emergency preparedness activities that involve assembling a plan and an evacuation kit are important tasks that too few people have tackled and fewer yet have completed. All too often people find themselves unprepared during an emergency, without the lifesaving items that are required for daily living. For individuals with disabilities, these concerns are often compounded by additional challenges that they must address on a daily basis. The process of gathering the information and items necessary for an emergency plan and go-kit that can adequately address the needs of people with disabilities can feel overwhelming. The process can be particularly daunting for those with intellectual disabilities.

## The Approach

Text 2 B Ready is designed to help people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions prepare for emergencies with the aide of text message prompts. Information about developing a personal emergency preparedness plan and go-kit is broken down into manageable segments which are shared with participants via weekly text messages. Many individuals who have started to put together a plan and a kit report in person-to-person conversations that the task is difficult and they never complete the activities, possibly leaving them vulnerable in the event of an emergency or disaster. Participants who follow the weekly Text 2 B Ready prompts will successfully complete a basic emergency preparedness plan and go-kit over an eight-week period.

## Recruitment and Methodology



**Text 2 B Ready: Create an Emergency Plan and Go-kit**  
Register now!

Does preparing for emergencies seem like an overwhelming task? Why not try Text 2 B Ready, a new method to create an emergency plan and go-kit that breaks the steps down into manageable activities and saves time and hassle. Over the course of 8 weeks, you'll receive text messages with instructions on what to put together to successfully make a basic plan and go-kit. The program will begin on **Monday, June 6**, so sign up now!

- Download a printable plan template;
- Receive 1-2 messages for plan development, weeks 1—8;
- Receive 1-2 messages for go-kit development, weeks 1—8; and
- Fill out an online survey at the end of the Text 2 B Ready project.

Upon receiving your completed survey, your name will be entered in a drawing to win a Citizens Corps Disaster kit that has a NOAA emergency weather radio and supplies.

If you would like to participate, please register by going to: <http://bit.ly/1TuN6Zg>

Or, you may sign-up by contacting Phyllis Guinivan at [pguiniva@udel.edu](mailto:pguiniva@udel.edu) or 302-831-7464. If there is no answer, please leave a message.

Thank you for being a part of this project!

**Please sign up by Friday, June 3.**

Please note: Standard text and data rates apply based on your telephone provider and will not be paid for by the Center for Disabilities Studies. There may also be an out-of-pocket cost associated with buying items for your go-kit if you do not already have the item(s) around your home. However, the selection of items each week is designed to keep the overall cost spread out over the eight weeks.

**Participant recruitment occurred via email to organizations known to the Center for Disabilities Studies. Flyers attached to the emails provided information regarding the number of text messages and number of weeks. Twenty-six participants signed up to take part in the pilot project.**

Text messages were scheduled and automatically sent via DialMyCalls.



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Approximately 2 text messages were sent each week for 8 weeks.

The first message of the week provided instructions on developing a personal readiness plan.

The second message listed one or two items to include in an evacuation go-kit.

Examples of Text Messages:

**Week 3 (plan)** Write down medical information for all household members, including diagnoses, chronic health conditions, and any supports needed for each person.

**Week 8 (plan)** Make a list of TV/radio/internet sources you would use to get information during an emergency and write these in your plan.

**Week 2 (go-kit)** This week, pack non-perishable food for your family and pets. Add food that you like to eat that is pre-sealed & won't spoil quickly. Add a can opener.

**Week 7 (go-kit)** Include the specific items that address the unique needs of household members in your kit. These were identified earlier this week for your plan.

## Feedback

A survey was sent to individuals who participated in the Text 2 B Ready pilot at the conclusion of the eight week program.

Sample Survey Question:

Did you find it helpful to receive the instructions to make the emergency plan and go-kit over an extended period of time as in this project?

Responses:

“Easier to assemble.”

“Yes, not overwhelming.”

“Fast and convenient.”

“Have time to assemble items. I liked having text to refer to if I wanted to get items.”

## Next Steps

- Embedding the project in a curriculum for young adults with intellectual disabilities.
- Expanding the pilot to a larger audience consisting of people with and without disabilities.

## Acknowledgements

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