



DiversityPreparedness.Org E-Newsletter

Produced by the Center for Health Equality at the Drexel University School of Public Health with support from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Office of Minority Health.

In This Issue

[Director's Desk](#)

[Topic of the Month](#)

[Events & Training](#)

[Initiatives & Publications](#)

[Voices From the Field](#)

Quick Links

[Take a Survey](#)

[Submit a Resource](#)

[Submit to Voices From the Field](#)

[DiversityPreparedness.Org Homepage](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Second Issue of the DiversityPreparedness.Org E-Newsletter. DiversityPreparedness.Org is the nation's first online resource center devoted to advancing the emergency preparedness needs of culturally diverse communities. The aim of the E-newsletter is to bring you current information on resources, research, training opportunities, and events which explicitly address emergency preparedness for diverse communities. This issue features "Use of Ethnic Media" as the Topic of the Month and includes links to promising resources which focus on the use of ethnic media in emergency preparedness and risk communication as well as excerpts from an interview with Sandy Close, Executive Editor and Director of New America Media.

Director's Desk

Thoughts from Dr. Dennis P. Andrulis, PhD, MPH, Director of the Center for Health Equality and Associate Dean for Research at the Drexel University School of Public Health.



"I watched the English channels but it was hopeless because I can hardly understand it".

This quote from a woman caught up in the California wildfires this year captures the frustration of not being able to comprehend what is happening when a disaster strikes. Its effects can be devastating, heightening fears, leading to confusion and leaving individuals and communities at a loss of reference points to turn to for help.

Communication by media invested in and knowledgeable about diverse communities is essential to effective emergency preparedness and management. For those unable to speak and/or read English, these resources may make the difference between life, disability and death. For government and private sector organizations dedicated to educating communities about disasters and providing assistance when they occur, these sources of information play a vital role in outreach to vulnerable individuals and neighborhoods.

Racial and ethnic newspapers, television and radio have made significant strides in filling in this critical gap in communication. In cities, suburbs and rural areas across the country racial and ethnic media have become virtual "places" that people turn to keep informed on what is happening during a disaster, to identify places where individuals of similar diverse background go to congregate, and to learn what to do. While individual racial/ethnic media outlets have stepped up their preparedness, response and recovery presence for their constituents, relatively new organizations such as New American

Media, founded in 1996 by the Pacific News Service, have established a home for collaboration for 2000 of these news organizations.

The National Consensus Panel's work and the National Resource Center on Advancing Emergency Preparedness for Culturally Diverse Communities have established—as a core tenet--that effective communication in languages of communities and as cultural points of trust must be central to meeting the needs of the nation before, during and after emergencies. The dimensions of communication for diverse residents extend from establishing collaboration with racial/ethnic media well before an event occurs, to ensuring they have access to essential information during an event and working with these sources in recovery. Most importantly, they represent resources from which assistance organizations, program officials and policymakers can learn from to improve education and action when needed. If we can learn from them and from what the past has to teach us about failing to communicate in disasters, we will come a long way in improving our country's—and our people's—ability to cope, recover and live healthy lives.

Topic of the Month: The Use of Ethnic Media



Identifying as well as utilizing trusted and culturally/linguistically appropriate channels of communication, such as ethnic media, is crucial to effectively meeting the needs of racially and ethnically diverse communities before, during, and after an emergency. A number of studies have examined information seeking patterns amongst racially and ethnically diverse communities and found that they often obtain information from non-mainstream media sources. Reports have also indicated that this may particularly be the case with immigrant communities who are often culturally, linguistically, and geographically isolated.

Organizations:

- **New America Media:** New America Media's directory contains over 2,000 ethnic newspapers, web-based media sources, radio stations, and television stations. The New American Media website is a great source to identify ethnic media outlets in the communities you serve.
- **Emergency & Community Health Outreach (ECHO):** ECHO Minnesota has partnered with Twin Cities Public Television to develop a series of health promotion and emergency preparedness programs in foreign languages. In the event of a statewide emergency in Minnesota ECHO TV will broadcast information in Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese. For local scheduling information [CLICK HERE](#).

Journal Articles & Reports:

- **Communicating With California's Spanish-Speaking Populations During Emergencies:** The goals of this study were to establish an informational system of Spanish-language media in California, assess the status

of existing linkages between the state and the Spanish-language media for dealing with emergencies, and recommend ways to improve the state's ability to use Latino-oriented media to communicate with Latino's regarding policy concerns.

- **Crisis Communication, Race and Natural Disasters:** This study compares differences in crisis preparation, information-seeking patterns, and media use on the basis of race in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Results indicate racial differences in crisis preparation and information seeking.
- **Crisis Preparation, Media Use, and Information Seeking Patterns Across Katrina Evacuees and Lessons Learned for Crisis Communication:** This study examines crisis preparation, information seeking patterns, and media use in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Results indicate a continued need to create messages encouraging crisis preparation, especially among at-risk subpopulations.

- **Emergency Preparedness: Knowledge and Perceptions of Latin American Immigrants:**

This paper describes the level of public emergency knowledge and perceptions of risk among Latin American immigrants and their preferred and actual sources of emergency preparedness information (including warning signals).

- **Ethnicity and Hazard Information Dissemination:** This article examines differences regarding how environmental hazard information was obtained between two ethnically diverse communities. Minority citizens that participated in the study expressed a preference for local television as a source of information in an emergency.

- **Disaster Preparedness in Urban Immigrant Communities- Lessons Learned from Recent Catastrophic Events and Their Relevance to Latino and Asian Communities in Southern California:**

Findings from this qualitative study of Latino and Asian immigrants living Southern California demonstrate how ethnic media is currently being used to disseminate emergency information.

- **Integrating Immigrant Families in Emergency Response, Relief, and Rebuilding Efforts:** This report offers a framework for how local governments can incorporate residents with limited English proficiency into the emergency planning process and provides a number of examples and recommendations of how ethnic media can be used to achieve this goal.

- **Ethnic Media Cover the Fires:** This article describes how ethnic media was used to communicate with non-English speaking Southern California residents during the 2007 wildfires.

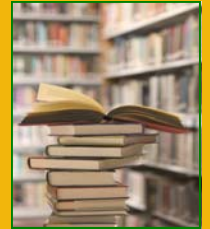
Other Forms of Media:

Ethnic Media as Emergency Responders: This audio feature consists of an interview between New America Media and representatives from ethnic media news organizations. The CEO and host of Radio Saigon Houston, discusses the station's efforts to remain on the air and reach the local Vietnamese population during Hurricane Ike. A reporter from a San Diego based Spanish language publication talks about efforts to disseminate up to the minute information to Hispanic communities during Southern California wildfires.

- **Communicating with Diverse Populations- Presentation from the 2005 Michigan Public Health Media Summit:**

This slide show discusses effective methods, including the use of ethnic media, for communicating with culturally isolated and non-English speaking populations in crisis situations.

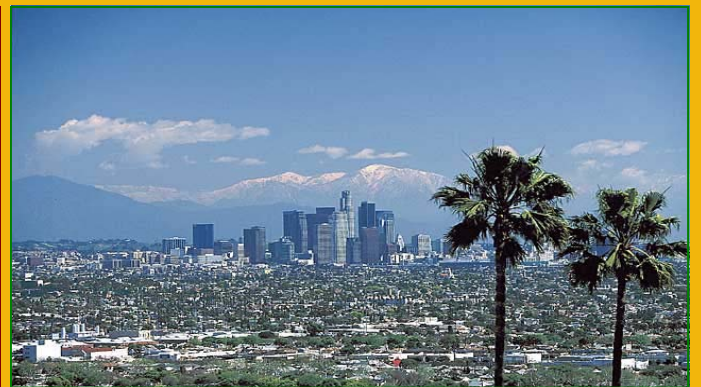
- **Case Studies in Culture and Health Literacy:** This online training module describes three local efforts to close the health literacy gap in Minnesota including the use of ethnic media.



Below are links to recent and upcoming events and training opportunities as well as recently published reports, books and articles.

Events & Training:

Second Convening: National Consensus Panel on Emergency Preparedness and Cultural Diversity



A panel of over 34 experts representing public health, health care, emergency management, risk communication, racial/ethnic communities, and cultural competence at national, state and local government, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations convened for the second time to develop specific guidance on integrating diverse communities into emergency preparedness planning and implementation. To add a community dimension to the Panel's national efforts, Day 2 of the meeting featured two California-based panel sessions focused on highlighting programs, priorities and recommendations at the state/local and community levels for advancing preparedness and response objectives for racially and ethnically diverse populations. Proceedings and findings from the Second Panel Meeting are forthcoming.

[Agenda](#) [Day 1 Presentation](#) [Day 2 Presentation](#)

Fourth Annual Public Health Emergency Preparedness Summit

February 18-20, 2009
San Diego, California

The mission of the 2009 Public Health Preparedness Summit is to improve the ability of participants to plan, prepare for, respond to, and recover from public health emergencies. Sessions will focus on identifying key elements for public health preparedness at the local, state, and national levels, proposing strategies for measuring preparedness, and describing evidence-based approaches to addressing challenges in public health emergency response. For additional information [CLICK HERE](#).

The Third National Leadership Summit on Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health

February 25- 27, 2009
Washington, DC



As part of the Office of Minority Health's broad initiative to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities, the 2009 Summit will focus on four tasks: 1) to build a renewed sense of leadership and partnerships across communities; 2) to share success stories and methods; 3) to demonstrate how model programs can be replicated or tailored for greater impact; and 4) to create methods, tactics, and ideas that support more effective and efficient action. The Summit will achieve these goals by providing workshops, and plenary sessions centered around increasing awareness of health disparities, strengthening leadership, enhancing patient-provider communication, improving cultural competency in delivering health services, and coordinating and utilizing research and outcome evolutions. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

The National Emergency Management Summit

March 4-6, 2009
Washington, D.C.

The National Emergency Management Summit seeks to assess risks surrounding natural disasters, epidemics and terrorism in the United States and articulate practical approaches to strategies for planning, response and recovery. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).



New Online Toolkit: Emergency Preparedness Planning Toolkit for Diverse Populations

This online toolkit produced by the Yale Center for Public Health Preparedness provides resources to public health planners and individuals from other sectors involved in preparedness efforts targeting diverse populations including those with limited English proficiency. These resources aim to improve outcomes for diverse populations during a public health emergency by focusing on planning considerations. In addition to planning resources, the toolkit features natural disaster-based HSEEP compliant tabletop exercises that users can customize to meet their needs. To download the toolkit or access the materials online [CLICK HERE](#).

Initiatives & Publications:

University of Washington Researchers to Lead Two Projects Exploring Communications with Vulnerable Populations in Emergencies

The Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center at the Northwest Center for Public Health Preparedness was recently awarded two grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to examine the most effective way to communicate with vulnerable populations in an emergency. One study will focus on improving 911 and public health center interactions with non-English speaking callers while another will work towards improving emergency health alerts between public health and health care providers. For more information about the projects [CLICK HERE](#).

Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 301: Interim Emergency Management Training Guide for Special Needs Populations

This interim guide, jointly developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, outlines how involving special needs populations in planning enables emergency managers to address the function-based needs of individuals. The guide explicitly addresses the needs of culturally diverse, non-English speaking, and limited English proficient populations and strategies to integrate them into emergency communication, evacuation, and recovery plans. CPG-301 will remain an interim document while feedback on field experience with this guide is sought from emergency managers in 2008. This will include a series of forums that will be held and an open comment period conducted prior to finalizing the document. Follow these links to the [PRESS RELEASE](#) or the [FULL INTERIM GUIDE](#).



Emergency Preparedness in Public Hospitals: Complete Findings of the 2006-2007 Emergency Preparedness Study

This monograph presents findings from a series of surveys conducted by the National Health and Hospital

Institute to determine the role of public hospitals during an emergency and identify concerns as well as activities. Findings indicate that public hospitals provide a disproportionate amount of emergency services compared to their non-public counterparts, their ability to respond to an emergency is dependent on internal readiness, they play a vital role in community preparedness, and they provide care to the most vulnerable populations despite limited resources for preparedness planning. The monograph also cites that public hospitals serve a high proportion of minority patients, many of whom have limited English proficiency. To view the full report [CLICK HERE](#).

Health Disparities: Barriers to a Culture of Preparedness

This commentary piece, which appears in the November supplement of the *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, describes how an individual's ability to survive and recover from a disaster is proportional to his/her social and physical well-being prior to the event. The piece is by LTG Russel L. Honore (retired) who was the Commander of the Hurricane Katrina Joint Task force. To read the commentary in its entirety [CLICK HERE](#).

San Diego Firestorm 2007 Report: Fire Impact on Farmworkers & Migrant Communities in North County



This report, prepared by the National Latino Research

Center at California State University, San Marcos, documents fire impacts on farmworkers and migrants in North San Diego County resulting from the firestorms of October 2007. Research findings suggest that during and immediately following the firestorms, farmworkers and migrants in North San Diego County were negatively impacted by the fires and in some cases encountered structural and institutional barriers in accessing information and relief efforts. To view the full report [CLICK HERE](#).

Ethnocultural Perspectives on Disaster and Trauma: Foundations, Issues, and Applications This new book, edited by Dr. Anthony J. Marsella and colleagues, incorporates a range of perspectives and strategies for providing mental health services to diverse populations following a disaster. Drawing from major historical events, this book examines core values, communication styles, and cultural-specific disorders associated with post-disaster trauma. The authors additionally provide recommendations for improving service delivery to racially and ethnically diverse populations. For more information [CLICK HERE](#).

Voices from the Field:

Sandy Close: New America Media



Cultural and linguistic isolation have repeatedly proven to be major barriers to reaching racially and ethnically diverse communities before, during and after emergencies. Despite a growing recognition of the need to embrace culturally and linguistically appropriate methods of communication that are delivered by trusted sources, enduring partnerships between emergency management/public health agencies and ethnic media outlets are few and far between. We spoke with Sandy Close, Executive Director and Editor of New America Media, to discuss the potentially powerful role of ethnic media in the risk communication process and promising initiatives being coordinated by New America Media.

Founded in 1996, New American Media is a collaborative of over 2,500 ethnic news organizations, the first of its kind and largest in the nation. As Ms. Close explained, ethnic media outlets often serve as the primary, if not exclusive, source of current information for diverse populations and serve as a cohesive community voice, a notion which differs from function of larger mainstream media outlets. A 2005 multilingual poll conducted by New America Media indicated that one in four adults access ethnic media, a proportion which is likely to increase as the U.S. Census Bureau projects that less than 50 percent of the U.S. will identify as non-Hispanic white by 2042. In spite of their wide use, ethnic media outlets are often overlooked as legitimate journalistic institutions by public health officials, creating a situation which can endanger the larger population in public health emergencies. Ms. Close provided a striking example of such a scenario in pointing to the E. coli spinach outbreak of 2006. Warnings regarding the potential dangers of serving spinach never reached Korean restaurant owners and chiefs whose primary source of information was the ethnic media. Thus they continued to serve spinach which was possibly tainted and unknowingly compromised population health.

In reaction to the shortcomings of existing risk communication strategies in reaching ethnically diverse communities, and in recognition of the potential for ethnic media to bridge existing gaps, New America Media has developed a plan to link the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with ethnic media. As Ms. Close explained, the proposed plan serves to enhance communication between ethnic media outlets and the CDC by creating a "directory of front line messengers in the event of emergencies." In the event of a public health emergency the CDC would contact New America Media with information, New America Media would then function as a conduit in delivering the message to approximately 700 ethnic media outlets who have agreed to dispense the message, these media outlets would then send confirmation of the message's delivery to the New America Media who would then in turn send confirmation to the CDC. An online directory of participating ethnic media outlets will also be made available to allow local, county and state public health and emergency management officials to develop a similar relationship with ethnic media outlets in their geographic locale. If all goes according to plan the website and communications grid should be fully functional by June of 2009.

Ms. Close went up to explain how the proposed plan will valorize the credibility of ethnic media outlets by "positioning the ethnic media as a valid and unique part of communication infrastructure and journalism... and position the leaders of ethnic media as people with the trust, credibility and knowledge necessary to communicate effectively in these situations." Check out [New America Media's website](#) to stay abreast of the initiative's progress and learn more about the possible uses of ethnic media.

The National Resource Center is continually growing and updating its collection of resources and Information. We welcome individuals and organizations to submit stories from the field and resources including publications, information on current initiatives, training curriculum and educational exercises, measurement and evaluation tools, research activities, policies and services focusing on preparedness for culturally diverse communities. To submit a resource click on the submission links in the Quick Links box at the top of the e-newsletter's left navigation column.

We encourage you to share the National Resource Center with your peers and colleagues and welcome you to link to the website. Please also feel free to e-mail your comments and any feedback to our team. We look forward to working with you to making this site a resourceful and useful tool in advancing the preparedness of our nation's diverse communities.

Sincerely,

*Dennis Andrulis, Nadia Siddiqui and Jonathan Purtle
National Resource Center Team
Center for Health Equality
Drexel University School of Public Health
E-mail: diversitypreparedness@drexel.edu*