



EMS for Children Day Celebration Ideas

This section highlights clever tactics for reaching each of EMS for Children Day's key target audiences. These special events, projects, and activities are suggestions to help get you started.

Thanking EMS and Acute Care Professionals

Inject some spirit into your workplace, boost employee morale, and surprise local providers by organizing special EMS for Children Day activities for your internal staff and volunteers (i.e., parent representatives, cultural liaisons, and advisory board members), as well as for external EMS agencies and acute care professionals who have worked with your grant to improve care in your community. It is important to let these individuals know how much you appreciate their commitment to improving the emergency health care provided to children in your community. Here are a few suggestions:

- Post a message to the bottom/top of each email message wishing your staff, volunteers, and local providers a happy EMS for Children Day and thanking them for supporting your grant.
- Send a "thank you" card or e-card to staff, volunteers, and EMS agencies thanking them for their efforts to keep kids safe. Two sample cards are included under "Appreciation Templates." Access the free online service GreetingsIsland.com to customize your own thank you card.
- Bake some cupcakes or cookies with blue and white icing for your staff or deliver the cupcakes to your local EMS agencies.
- Change your voicemail message both at work and on cell phones to wish callers a Happy EMS for Children Day.
- Honor your EMS providers with a "Certificate of Appreciation." A sample certificate is available for

download under “Appreciation Templates.”

- **Construct an in-house bulletin board profiling each employee, volunteer, or provider that has gone above and beyond to support the health care needs of children in your community. Include information about these individuals’ backgrounds in EMSC and outside hobbies, talents, and interests.**
- **Use your website and social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter) to thank your staff, volunteers, and EMS professionals for the work they do on behalf of children.**
- **Encourage your local, regional, or state government officials to issue a proclamation. When officials sign and promote a proclamation, the local news media has a photo or video opportunity upon which to build a story. Attention is drawn to your EMS for Children Day event and your EMS professionals are publicly acknowledged! It also provides a “teachable moment” for public officials and the entire community about the vital role of EMSC. A sample proclamation and letter to your state or city official is available for download under the “Proclamation” heading.**

Educating the Broader Health Care Community

Children are not small adults. They respond differently to illness and injury, have a unique set of physical, emotional, and physiological needs, and are affected by their own spectrum of diseases and injuries. Children also require specific equipment, supplies, and medications that may not always be available in emergency systems designed for adults.

The communities best prepared to handle childhood emergencies are those with properly trained emergency personnel, sufficiently equipped ambulances and emergency departments, and well-defined pediatric treatment protocols and procedures.

Thus, it is important to ensure that EMS and acute care providers are informed, educated, and trained in caring for children during health emergencies. Here are some tips on how to educate providers in your area to help improve the care they provide to ill and injured children every day.

- **Distribute fliers, table tent cards, and fact sheets. Each item should explain what EMSC is, the purpose of the federal program, and/or efforts accomplished at the local and state level to enhance pediatric emergency medical care. Ask local EMS agencies, hospitals, pediatricians, and clinics to display them in highly visible places where personnel tend to congregate. Look under “Fact Sheets & Flyers” for examples.**
- **Visit the websites of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) at <http://www.aap.org>, the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) at <http://www.acep.org>, and the EMSC Innovation and**

Improvement Center (EIIIC) at <https://emscimprovement.center>. All three organizations have posted a number of publications on how emergency medical technicians (EMTs), paramedics, firefighters, and other health professionals can help prevent and prepare for a pediatric medical emergency. Use this information to develop the fact sheets, flyers, or tent cards for local providers.

- **Establish an electronic distribution list. Consider developing an email distribution list to spotlight local EMSC efforts and to help interested community-members form collaborative relationships and supportive networks. The members of the listserv should include pertinent contacts from EMS agencies and hospitals.**

On a monthly or weekly basis, distribute messages about upcoming pediatric training events in your state, local events your grant project is hosting, accomplishments of your grant program, recently released reports or documents available through the EIIIC and the National EMSC Data Analysis Resource Network (NEDARC), and/or findings from a recently completed research project of the Pediatric Emergency Care Applied Research Network (PECARN).

Note that EMSC has developed comprehensive online toolboxes addressing topics such as pediatric equipment guidelines, interfacility transfers, and pediatric patient safety. These can aid in the fact sheet development process and are available at <https://emscimprovement.center/resources>.

- **Create a bulletin board or informational booth. Consider working with local EMS agencies and hospitals to construct an EMSC bulletin board in the staff lounge or common area. The bulletin boards can feature information on upcoming pediatric educational or training opportunities, a copy of reports or journal articles that address pediatric emergency care issues, information about local efforts to improve pediatric care, etc. Consider hanging up fact sheets. The display should only include items of interest to the group targeted.**
- **Offer free pediatric training, such as PALS, PEPP, and APLS. Work with members of the community, your advisory board, and/or your EMSC family representative to raise money to pay for local health care professionals to attend pediatric emergency care training courses. If funding is not available for one of these fee-for-service trainings, consider providing your own training.**
- **Promote online training. Encourage EMS personnel and hospital personnel to complete any or all of the EMSC online training courses currently available through the EMSC Innovation and Improvement Center and EMSC Program grantees. Most of the training is available free of charge or for a nominal fee to cover the cost of continuing education credits. To see what training is available, visit the EIIIC website at <https://emscimprovement.center/resources/online-training/>.**
- **Jump on the social media bandwagon. Social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are**

paving the way for a new generation of working professionals to stay connected and informed about key topics affecting their line of work. Why not create your own Facebook page or Twitter account in an effort to interface with EMS providers?

Garnering Support from Parents and Caregivers

Parents and caregivers are the most valuable resources and sources of support for the EMSC community. As consumers of the EMS system, parents and caregivers can make positive contributions in such areas as: helping to raise funds; increasing public awareness; and educating policy makers, business officials, or other community leaders. By virtue of their responsibility as caregivers, parents are a vital instrument of communication, oftentimes, a child's only source of information on injury and illness prevention.

Following are a few tips to help your organization recruit parent participation in EMSC events and activities:

- **Take advantage of social media tie-ins.** Social media tools, such as Twitter and Facebook, may prove useful in bolstering information-exchange and grassroots support for EMSC initiatives. A local EMSC program, for instance, might periodically scan the Facebook pages of their local mom's clubs, Parent Teacher Associations, Safe Kids, and General Federation of Women's Clubs. Determine if a post or comment about EMSC, a local EMSC event, or an available EMSC resource would be valuable to the page's fan base.
- **Raise Awareness.** With so much going on in the daily lives of a typical mom or dad, it's not always easy to generate interest in a program or activity. People are pulled in different directions and most are already involved in "pet" projects. To capture the interest – and future participation – of parents in your EMSC program, consider the following, which can be used in combination with any event already planned:
 - create a demo table with "look-a-like products" (e.g. orange juice vs. household cleaner);
 - provide an "in-person" perspective from a parent that lost a child due to lack of resources or insufficient training in the EMS system;
 - display statistics comparing the local EMS system's preparedness for adult care and transport vs pediatric transport (the type of equipment and medication available on ambulances, etc).
- **Offer yourself as a guest/expert speaker.** In many communities throughout the country, parent clubs have popped-up. These clubs exist for various reasons. For example the MOMS (Moms Offering

Moms Support) Club is a national organization that provides support to young stay-at-home mothers. Other clubs exist for dads, for working moms, and for parents of a specific race or nationality. Many of these clubs are required, as written in their chapter bylaws, to support an activity that will directly benefit their children. In Burtonsville, MD, the MOMS Club held a yard sale and silent auction. All proceeds from the event were donated to the local fire department to purchase pediatric equipment for their ambulances.

Look in the Calendar section of your community's newspaper to determine what clubs are in your area and where and when they meet. Contact the club's president and offer your services as a featured speaker. Once in the door, strategize ways in which you can work together.

- Mobilize a coalition of organized groups to help your cause. Work with the groups mentioned above, as well as others, to meet on a regular basis to develop strategies for improving pediatric emergency care in your community, to help out with an event, or to promote your program's goals and objectives to others in the community.
- Work with state and local chapters of national parent-based organizations. Use EMS for Children Day as the launch date for your new partnership development plan. Begin by contacting parent-based organizations in your area, such as Family Voices, Safe Kids, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, MADD, and others. As a starting point, see if they will be willing to include information about EMSC in their newsletters; on their websites; in their listserv messages, blogs, or other social media sites. Be sure to end your message with a "call to action," asking parents who are interested in learning more about EMSC to contact the grant's program manager. You may be surprised at just how much support you will receive from these organizations.
- Keep abreast of smartphone applications/technologies. Smartphones, such as the iPhone, Blackberry, and Android, and the applications available on each have become the latest trend in fostering engagement, expanding educational reach, and increasing access to credible, science-based health messages. People can now download and learn how to recognize a concussion, perform infant and child CPR, and provide first aid while waiting for their son or daughter to finish a soccer practice or piano lesson. People can also use their phones to watch a podcast while waiting in line at the grocery store. It is important to learn how companies are using smartphone technology to enhance their communication and education outreach. Many of the podcasts and smartphone applications are free.

Educating the General Public

The key to successful consumer education during EMS for Children Day is capturing community interest. By organizing a series of events and activities that cater to the special concerns of our nation's youngest and most

innocent, you can motivate community members to learn more about and to help support improvements in the emergency medical care for children. The following are some celebration ideas specifically targeting the general public as a whole.

- **Work with local libraries to feature books and other educational materials that teach children and families how to prevent injuries, access the local emergency system, and prepare the family for a disaster situation.**
- **Here's a fun idea from Charles County, MD! For several years the Charles County (MD) Department of Emergency Services, EMS Division, and the county's Association of EMS have hosted an especially innovative way to celebrate the day — a "Teddy Bear Clinic." Children are invited to bring their sick or injured teddy bears to meet and be evaluated by EMS team members. The team helps educate the kids on safety and health issues and then fix their favorite furry friend with special care! This event is a big hit in the community and a fun way to educate children and families.**
- **Hold a resource fair to educate the community about EMSC, its national goals and your program's local achievements, and ways in which friends and neighbors can help improve care at the local and state levels. To fuel additional interest in the fair, consider hosting workshops throughout the day. Bystander care, basic first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and family-disaster readiness are areas of high interest among the general public. A resource fair is another opportunity to promote any activities or community outreach programs that your state has developed or adopted.**
- **Develop camera-ready public service announcements (PSA) to educate key target publics about the importance of having an emergency care system that is prepared to handle pediatric patients. If your organization is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) charitable organization, contact the community, public service, or public affairs departments of your local print media. Ask them to feature the ad(s) free of charge.**
- **Create your own infographic (using Infogr.am, Piktochart and Easel.ly) or use one that already exists and is available free of charge. Infographics are an ideal way to present information, data, or knowledge quickly and clearly utilizing graphics to enhance the human visual system's ability to see patterns and trends. Most infographics are created by companies who are more than willing to share the graphic free of charge.**
- **Partner with local businesses and organizations, such as stores, pediatricians, hospitals, clinics, pharmacies, places of worship, and other local merchants, to display information relevant to pediatric emergency care. Consider asking for space on their bulletin boards, at their reception desks, or on their counters.**

- **Take on a public role by speaking and distributing materials at town hall meetings, school events, county fairs, homeowner’s association meetings, neighborhood gatherings, and Parent-Teacher Association Meetings.**
- **Engage the kids. The EMSC program has created several activity sheets located under “Child Activity Sheets” to help parents, caregivers, school personnel, and others teach children about safety, injury prevention, disaster preparedness, and EMSC.**



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