



PARENT AND FAMILY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND REUNIFICATION GUIDE

Chicago, Illinois

Oakdale Christian Academy and Child Care Center is committed to providing a safe, secure, nurturing, and Christ-centered environment for every child entrusted to our care.

Emergencies can occur with little or no warning. This guide explains what families can expect from Oakdale during an emergency and how parents and guardians can help the school protect students and reunify families safely.

OUR EMERGENCY PRIORITIES

During an emergency, Oakdale will prioritize:

1. Protecting students and staff;
 2. Contacting emergency responders when necessary;
 3. Accounting for every student;
 4. Maintaining adult supervision;
 5. Communicating verified information to families;
 6. Reuniting students with authorized caregivers; and
 7. Providing appropriate emotional and pastoral support.
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TYPES OF EMERGENCY ACTIONS

Oakdale may use several standard emergency actions.

Evacuation

Students and staff leave the building because remaining inside is unsafe.

Shelter

Students and staff move to designated protected areas inside the building.

This may occur during tornadoes, severe weather, or certain environmental emergencies.

Secure

Exterior access to the school is restricted because of a concern outside the building.

Normal indoor activities may continue or be modified.

Lockdown

Students and staff take immediate protective action because of an actual or potential violent threat.

Relocation

Students are moved to another safe location because the primary school building cannot be safely occupied.

WHAT PARENTS SHOULD DO DURING AN EMERGENCY

If you receive an Oakdale emergency notification:

- Read or listen to the entire message.
- Follow the instructions provided.
- Monitor Oakdale's official communication channels.
- Keep your telephone available for updates.
- Avoid calling the school repeatedly unless you have urgent information that school officials need.
- Do not rely on rumors or unofficial social-media reports.
- Do not come directly to the campus unless instructed to do so.

In some emergencies, the presence of additional vehicles and people near the school can interfere with police, fire, EMS, evacuation, or student accountability.

WHY YOU MAY BE ASKED NOT TO COME TO SCHOOL

Parents understandably want to reach their children immediately.

However, during an active emergency, arriving at the school without instructions may:

- Block access for emergency vehicles;
- Interfere with police or fire operations;
- Complicate student accountability;
- Create additional safety hazards; or
- Delay reunification.

Oakdale will provide instructions as soon as it is safe and appropriate to do so.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

Oakdale may communicate through:

- Text message;
- Email;
- Telephone;
- Emergency notification system;
- School website;
- Approved school communication platform; or
- Other authorized methods.

Messages may be brief during the first stages of an emergency.

The first message may simply confirm that Oakdale is responding to a situation and provide instructions.

Additional verified information will follow as it becomes available.

KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CURRENT

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that Oakdale has current:

- Telephone numbers;
- Email addresses;
- Emergency contacts;

- Authorized pickup information;
- Medical information;
- Custody information; and
- Other information necessary during an emergency.

Please notify the school promptly whenever this information changes.

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY

During an emergency, teachers and staff account for students assigned to them.

Oakdale's accountability process is designed to identify:

- Students who are present;
- Students who are absent;
- Missing students;
- Injured students;
- Students temporarily assigned to another group; and
- Students who have been released to an authorized caregiver.

Parents should not remove a child from an emergency assembly area without completing the official release process.

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

If normal dismissal cannot occur, Oakdale may activate its emergency reunification process.

Families will receive instructions concerning:

- Where reunification will occur;
- When parents or guardians may report;
- What identification may be needed;
- Traffic or access instructions; and
- Any special procedures.

The exact reunification location may change depending on the emergency.

For security reasons, Oakdale does not publicly publish all alternate emergency locations in advance.

WHO MAY PICK UP A CHILD

A student will be released only to a person authorized under Oakdale's records and procedures.

The person requesting the child may be required to:

- Present identification;
- Verify information;
- Sign or acknowledge the student's release; and
- Follow staff instructions.

A child will not be released solely because the requesting person:

- Knows the child's name;
- Claims to be a relative;
- Is recognized by the child; or
- Says that a parent gave verbal permission.

Parents should keep authorized pickup information current.

CUSTODY AND RESTRICTIONS

Oakdale will follow custody orders and restrictions that have been properly provided to and maintained by the school.

Parents or guardians should promptly provide the school with updated legal documentation when custody arrangements change.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

If a student experiences a serious medical emergency, Oakdale personnel may:

- Call 911;
- Provide first aid;
- Begin CPR;
- Use an AED;
- Administer authorized emergency medication; and
- Provide relevant medical information to emergency responders.

Emergency treatment will not be delayed when immediate care is necessary to protect the child's life or health.

Parents or guardians will be contacted as soon as practical.

MEDICATION AND HEALTH INFORMATION

Parents should provide accurate and current information regarding:

- Allergies;
- Asthma;
- Seizure disorders;
- Diabetes;
- Cardiac conditions;
- Medications;
- Mobility needs; and
- Other conditions that may affect emergency care.

Required emergency medications should be supplied and maintained according to Oakdale procedures.

YOUNG CHILDREN

Oakdale recognizes that child care, Pre-K, Kindergarten, and younger elementary students may respond differently to emergencies.

Emergency planning for younger children includes additional attention to:

- Close adult supervision;
 - Age-appropriate instructions;
 - Head counts and accountability;
 - Mobility assistance;
 - Toileting and hygiene;
 - Food and water;
 - Comfort and reassurance; and
 - Controlled reunification.
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STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

Oakdale plans for students who may need additional support because of:

- Physical disability;
- Mobility limitations;
- Hearing or visual impairment;
- Communication needs;
- Developmental needs;
- Medical conditions;
- Sensory needs; or
- Other circumstances.

Parents should communicate relevant needs to the school so appropriate emergency assistance can be planned.

SCHOOL SAFETY DRILLS

Oakdale conducts emergency drills consistent with applicable Illinois requirements.

Drills may include:

- Fire evacuation;
- Severe-weather sheltering;
- Lockdown;
- Evacuation;
- Reunification; and
- Other emergency scenarios.

Drills involving young children are conducted in an age-appropriate manner.

Oakdale will provide required advance parent notification regarding applicable lockdown drills and will follow Illinois requirements regarding participation exemptions.

TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT EMERGENCIES

Parents can help children prepare by using calm, age-appropriate language.

Helpful messages include:

- Teachers and staff have plans to keep students safe.
- Students should listen carefully to adults during an emergency.
- Drills are practice.
- Parents and school staff will work together to reunite families.
- Children should never leave their assigned group without permission.

Avoid frightening children with unnecessary graphic details or speculation.

SOCIAL MEDIA AND RUMORS

During an emergency, unofficial information can spread quickly.

Families should avoid:

- Sharing unverified reports;
- Posting student names;
- Posting information about injuries before official confirmation;
- Sharing security procedures;
- Posting photographs that could compromise emergency operations; or
- Reposting rumors.

Please rely on Oakdale and appropriate public-safety authorities for verified information.

PASTORAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

As a Christian school, Oakdale recognizes that emergencies can affect students and families spiritually and emotionally.

Under the pastoral leadership of **Rev. Dr. D. Darrell Griffin**, Oakdale may provide:

- Prayer;
- Pastoral counseling;
- Scripture-based encouragement;
- Grief support;
- Family support;
- Referral to qualified counselors; and
- Coordination with appropriate church and community resources.

Pastoral care complements, but does not replace, emergency medical, law-enforcement, or mental-health services.

FAMILY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Parents and guardians should:

- ☐ Keep telephone numbers and email addresses current.
 - ☐ Keep emergency contacts current.
 - ☐ Review authorized pickup information.
 - ☐ Provide updated custody documentation when applicable.
 - ☐ Provide current medical and allergy information.
 - ☐ Maintain required student emergency medications.
 - ☐ Discuss school emergency expectations with your child in an age-appropriate way.
 - ☐ Know how Oakdale sends emergency messages.
 - ☐ Follow official instructions during an emergency.
 - ☐ Bring identification to an emergency reunification site if instructed.
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FAMILY ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that I have received or been provided access to the Oakdale Christian Academy and Child Care Center Parent and Family Emergency Preparedness and Reunification Guide.

Student Name: _____

Grade/Class: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____