
CERT BASIC TRAINING
INSTRUCTOR GUIDE
TEEN CERT ANNEX

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

Table of Contents

About This Annex.....	1
Background.....	1
Teen CERT Time Line and To Do List	2
Techniques for Teaching Teenagers.....	4
Unit-by-Unit Modifications	7
Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness	7
Unit 2: Fire Safety and Utility Controls.....	8
Unit 3: Disaster Medical Operations – Part 1.....	9
Unit 4: Disaster Medical Operations – Part 2.....	9
Unit 5: Light Search and Rescue Operations	10
Unit 6: CERT Organization.....	10
Unit 7: Disaster Psychology	11
Unit 8: Terrorism and CERT	12
Unit 9: Course Review, Final Exam, and Disaster Simulation.....	13
Appendix: Other Resources for CERT Training for Teens.....	14

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About This Annex

This annex to the *CERT Basic Training* Instructor Guide is designed to help qualified CERT instructors teach the course to teenagers. The annex prepares instructors to equip today's youth with the skills needed to responsibly and safely react to an event in their school or community. An exceptional instructor can enhance the learning experience of teens and provide them with lifelong emergency preparedness and response skills.

This annex includes background information on the Teen CERT training, a time line and to do list, general guidelines for providing CERT training to teenagers, and a unit-by-unit breakdown of modifications to the original course in order to make the training more applicable to teenagers.

Background

A number of local CERT programs around the country began to include teenagers after The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) launched the national CERT Program in 1994. The first federally sponsored Teen CERT Train-the-Trainer course was developed by Eastern Michigan University (EMU) through a grant from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). EMU reports that, under the grant, they trained more than 900 instructors to teach more than 10,000 adolescents in preparedness skills.

DHS has identified schools as part of the critical infrastructure of our country, and while many schools have taken measures to provide for site security analysis and equipment, less effort has gone into training staff and students in school security and emergency response procedures.

FEMA is now working to involve youth in the country's overall emergency preparedness and response plans.

Teen CERT aims to train students in emergency preparedness and response to ensure that they have the skills needed to protect themselves, and assist others, in the event of an emergency. The training of our youth will have a tremendous impact on all aspects of emergency management. Some things to consider are:

- Schools are part of this nation's critical infrastructure.
- School populations can overwhelm a city's capability to respond effectively with the needed first responder resources.
- School faculty and staff are not adequately qualified to respond to natural or manmade disasters.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

- Students lack the proper education on how to prepare for and respond to a school emergency or disaster.
- Students will carry home the disaster preparedness information that they learn in school.

Teen CERT Time Line and To Do List

While there are many steps to starting, maintaining, and teaching Teen CERT, it is not an impossible task. The checklist below will help you keep track of all the logistics necessary to deliver the training.

Time Line	Notes/To Do	Done
<i>Prepare to Teach</i>		
CERT Basic Training course		<input type="checkbox"/>
CERT Train-the-Trainer course		<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Gain Approval</i>		
Approach administrator at local high school		<input type="checkbox"/>
CERT representative and school administrator meet with School District representative		<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Organize Training After Approval</i>		
CERT representative and school administrator develop training schedule		<input type="checkbox"/>
Select students		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schedule and plan Parents' Night		<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct Parents' Night (distribute permission forms)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange subject (e.g., medical operations, fire suppression) instructors		<input type="checkbox"/>
Arrange for First Aid, CPR, AED (if appropriate)		<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Deliver Training (CERT Curriculum)</i>		
Unit 1 (Disaster Preparedness)	Collect permission forms; give students pre-test.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 2 (Fire Suppression)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 3 (Medical Operations Part 1)		<input type="checkbox"/>

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

Unit 4 (Medical Operations Part 2)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 5 (Light Search and Rescue)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 6 (CERT Organization)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 7 (Disaster Psychology)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 8 (Terrorism)		<input type="checkbox"/>
Unit 9 (Review and Disaster Drill)	Give students post-test.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Conduct Disaster Drill</i>		
Conduct drill; provide students with performance feedback		<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Hold Graduation</i>		
Plan graduation		<input type="checkbox"/>
Conduct graduation		<input type="checkbox"/>

Techniques for Teaching Teenagers

Working with teenagers is different from working with children or adults. The following guidelines will assist you in successfully teaching adolescent participants.

Empower Teens. Your duty as the instructor is to tap into student needs and abilities and ensure students get the most out of the training. You should strive to meet the specific needs of each student by acknowledging him or her as an individual. To do this, make expectations detailed and clear so the teen wants to learn and participate. Encourage ownership and involvement in class activities and provide opportunities for decision-making. Ultimately, Teen CERT should empower teens to make smart decisions for the good of themselves, their teammates, and their school.

Help adolescents develop as independent learners. You have the opportunity to encourage students to take ownership of their learning and to grow intellectually. You can provide guidance to students as they work through this developmental process and move from dependent to independent learners. Teen CERT provides a forum for student growth and independence by teaching life skills. But you still play an important role in their learning. You should be available to answer any questions about the curriculum, provide tips and advice on skills, and clear up misconceptions about assignments and homework. You will encourage students to search for answers on their own, but still be available to guide them. For example, you can help students make study contracts and study plans. This includes advising students to take notes using alternating ink colors for each class, reviewing notes after each class and filling in any gaps, developing color-coded flashcards for main points, and reviewing previous notes and flashcards.

Utilize the three “R’s.” Almost every exceptional learning experience can be broken down to three areas: relationship, relevance, and rigor. You should integrate these into your instructional methodology.

Relationship. It is imperative that you establish a good relationship with your students. An outstanding teacher serves as a role model and a coach. You should be aware of the school’s social structure, such as names of sports teams and upcoming events. Talk to the students about their hobbies and likes and dislikes, and share yours as well.

Being upfront with students and letting them know what to expect also develops relationships, as does using student names and employing good listening skills.

You should praise the students sincerely for their accomplishments and share your pride with others. Strive to provide for basic human needs such as power, belonging, and meaning.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

Relevance. You should always aim to demonstrate the relevance of the training to adolescents. Stress how Teen CERT will be useful in their lives, to their personal safety, and in developing their teamwork skills.

Explain the reasoning for specific topics and activities and why they are important to learn. Relevance is further emphasized by not giving busy work, but assigning homework that has a real purpose and strengthens them as students and CERT members.

You can also reinforce the relevance of the training by letting students know how CERTs fit into the high school's emergency operations plan. If the school incorporates students into their emergency operations, then students will perceive the CERT training as important preparation. You can also highlight the relevance of the training by posing "What if..." questions to encourage students to visualize how the training can be used in real emergencies at school, in their neighborhood, or at home.

Finally, if the school has selected CERT training participants based on a particularly relevant career path such as public safety or health care, you should reinforce how various CERT skills relate to the training for those careers.

Rigor. You should make work appropriately challenging for students, considering course material, pace, and application. You can monitor student progress carefully but never underestimate the students' abilities.

Engage students with different learning styles. Many education professionals consider active learning the best way to improve retention and involve students in the learning process. The three primary learning styles are visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. You should incorporate a variety of content delivery methods addressing these styles in your presentation; however, it will be important to keep in mind that most young learners are auditory learners. The following auditory instructional strategies are good for teaching teens:

- Speak clearly and vary the volume.
- Give specific step-by-step directions.
- Read aloud.
- Give verbal outlines.
- Repeat important ideas.
- Use rhyme and rhythm.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

Use a variety of teaching activities. The Teen CERT curriculum lends itself well to interactive activities and student participation. Active learning, or learning by doing, improves retention and involves students in the learning process more than passive lecturing. You can supplement learning with a variety of teaching activities that engage the class and sustain interest.

Demonstrations give you the opportunity to model proper technique. You can demonstrate the skill and coach on proper technique as the students practice.

Puzzles and worksheets are useful for teaching vocabulary and terminology and reinforcing lesson content.

Question and answer activities reinforce learning material. You should prepare questions in advance and call on students to answer. This is good for use as a review of each unit. The *CERT Basic Training* Instructor Guide includes review questions for each of the units.

Group inquiry allows students to gain an in-depth understanding of course concepts. You will present basics of a topic in lecture form and then divide the class into groups. Each group decides on three or four questions to ask you on topics they want to learn more about. The class comes together again as a group and you answer their questions. Unit 8, on terrorism, is good for group inquiry as it provides opportunities for lots of questions and discussion.

Group discussion is a good technique to use when a subject is controversial or of a sensitive nature. Talking as a group can help students apply concepts to real-life situations. Divide the class into groups and have them discuss a topic; then reconvene the class and have each group present. Potential topics include how students were affected by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, or by Hurricane Katrina.

Information search helps students take ownership of their learning. Divide the class into groups and give each group a set of questions for which they must find the answers in reading material provided.

Learning tournaments are a good activity for developing teamwork and for reviewing large amounts of material, especially if material is dull. Divide the class into teams and explain what material should be studied. Then ask questions of the class. The first group to respond with the correct answer gets a point. The group with the most points at the end wins.

Unit-by-Unit Modifications

There are several activities not found in the *CERT Basic Training* Instructor Guide that can be added to each of the units. These activities should make the training more applicable to teens. As an instructor for the Teen CERT course, you should be prepared to include these activities in your delivery of the basic training unit. (Page numbers refer to the *CERT Basic Training* Instructor Guide.)

Unit 1: Disaster Preparedness

In this unit, emphasize the importance of teamwork and the crucial role that teamwork will play in the remainder of the course, and as CERT members. You should also spend time researching the threats and needs of your area and incorporating those into the training.

- 1-9 When teaching students about teamwork, spend time emphasizing the importance of functioning effectively as a team. This point will be reiterated throughout the training. It is especially important to stress teamwork and emphasize the importance of being comfortable with one's teammates when in a school environment with teenagers. A hurdle will be for them to work with people they do not know from different social groups. You should reinforce the concept of teamwork with teambuilding exercises such as developing a phone chain or building a tower. Students could also work in teams to discuss additional items to include in a disaster supply kit, with items specific to a disaster hitting their school.
- 1-16 Personalize the training by updating the unit slides to make it more relevant to the students. Include photos and disaster threats specific to their school, community, and city.
- 1-37 Some students may not have the economic resources needed to purchase kit supplies. Show students how to put together a kit on a budget. Consider soliciting local merchants for assistance.
- 1-62 Provide detailed explanations and expectations for homework and any preparation necessary for the next unit. As this is the first unit, students may not know what to expect in terms of homework and preparation.

Unit 2: Fire Safety and Utility Controls

In this unit, you need to coordinate with the school on how to present the fire suppression exercise. Consider involving local fire officials or using instructional videos to present the content. Emphasize safety at all times during this unit.

- 2-10 To reinforce the importance of teamwork, and to encourage students in the class to stop thinking of each other just as classmates, but also as teammates, you can conduct a group exercise with safety equipment. This begins with dividing the class into groups and having each student put on his or her safety equipment. Each group will check another group's equipment to be certain all students are properly equipped. You should then debrief the class and emphasize the importance of checking each group member's safety equipment. You should stress that regardless of the student's social circle or role in the school, helping each other as members of a team is vital to being a Teen CERT member.
- 2-27 You can conduct a size-up exercise so students can determine how to respond to potential fire situations in the school. Begin by organizing the class into groups of 4 or 5 and posing a different fire situation for each group, such as a trash can on fire in a bathroom. Scenarios should be located throughout the school, in conditions that could actually occur. Each group then reports back on the challenge of the exercise. You should then debrief and ask the class as a whole if they have any suggestions for addressing any of the situations. You may follow this up with a group discussion of fire hazards in students' homes and how they would react to those.
- 2-28 Schools with sprinkler systems may not have fire extinguishers in the building. This should be discussed with the students, and they should plan what to do in the event of a fire. It is also important that they still know how to extinguish fires to be prepared for an emergency outside the school. You should ask students if they have a fire extinguisher in their home and where it is located.
- 2-54 An important piece of this unit is learning to use a fire extinguisher. However, not all school locations will allow fire demonstrations. You should check with school administrators ahead of time, and if a demonstration is not possible, consider presenting the material in a different way. One option is to have a local fire department teach this unit; be prepared to present that to the school as an alternative. (A safety officer should always be present when conducting the demonstration.) If the school will not allow the demonstration, you should seek alternatives, such as instructional videos. If you are able to hold the demonstration, remember to include the cost of refilling extinguishers when budgeting.

Unit 3: Disaster Medical Operations – Part 1

This unit is one of the more technical units in the training, so consider how to present the material in a way that the teenagers will understand and remember. Active learning exercises supplement the lesson well.

- 3-12 To teach the medical words and definitions you may create a crossword puzzle. For further active learning you can use a group inquiry exercise. Divide the class into groups and have each group develop three questions to pose to you. The questions could come before you present the topic, and cover general medical questions they have and hope to have addressed, or the questions could come after you present the topic, and cover any material they want to know more about.
- 3-19 This unit requires many demonstrations; if you do not feel qualified to perform them, you should have a guest instructor deliver the unit. Some of the demonstrations require physical contact. If teens are nervous about touching each other, you can begin with a blanket exercise as an ice breaker. In the exercise, several students stand on a blanket and work together to move the blanket.

Unit 4: Disaster Medical Operations – Part 2

This unit is also quite technical, so consider how to present the material in a way that the students will understand and remember. Active learning exercises supplement the lesson well.

- 4-23 You can use flashcards with symptoms on half the cards and injuries on the other half. Students will match the symptom with the appropriate injury. Students can do this exercise in groups to build teamwork skills.
- 4-32 This unit contains several demonstrations that you should practice beforehand. It is recommended that instead of having students practice the head-to-toe assessment on each other, you should explain the steps and demonstrate on one person.
- 4-33 You may use an information search to present some of the more detailed content. You will pose 10 medical questions to students that they must look up in the Participant Manual. If the questions are complicated or detailed, students can work in groups.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

- 4-55 The unit also requires medical supplies for the students to practice with. It is your job to ensure that there is an adequate supply for the class, including non-latex exam gloves to avoid allergic reactions. You may need to ask local merchants to supply equipment, if necessary.

Unit 5: Light Search and Rescue Operations

This unit will require a great deal of teamwork and realistic assessments of each person's skills and abilities. Make sure that students try everything they can safely do and that you foster discussions on how a CERT member could best perform the activities in the unit in real life.

- 5-7 A safety officer is required for this unit. You should emphasize personal safety at all times and students should understand that it is ok to stand by and call for additional help.
- 5-43 An additional exercise is on triangulation. You should divide the class into groups of 3, with 2 searchers and 1 victim. Using a darkened room with obstacles to hide behind, such as an auditorium, victims hide while rescuers are out of the room. Rescuers of each group will then use a triangulation technique to find their victim one group at a time. (A blindfold can be used if necessary.) If there is enough space, the class can observe how other teams work. This should be conducted at the school, perhaps in more than one location, so students will be prepared if something happens.
- 5-66 Instead of demonstrating proper lifting techniques with each other, you will call on several students to demonstrate the proper lifting technique when lifting and carrying you on a tarp.

Unit 6: CERT Organization

This unit contains a lot of terminology that you can present with active learning techniques. There are also a number of supplemental exercises that can be taught to further emphasize and encourage successful teamwork.

- 6-9 As this unit contains a lot of CERT terminology, you can use puzzles or worksheets to reinforce key points.
- 6-15 The unit also lends itself well to additional exercises. First is an Incident Command (IC) role play. You play the role of the Incident Commander. You should have a school-related disaster scenario prepared. The class is divided into operational groups, e.g., search and rescue, fire suppression, etc. You will

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

brief each group on their roles and responsibilities. Groups discuss how they would respond based on their roles and the type of disaster. You will then debrief the entire class.

- 6-17 The emphasis should be on decision-making and safety. When appropriate, you can show students how their Teen CERT fits into the school's emergency operations plan. (This should be done especially if Teen CERT members will be incorporated into the school's emergency operations plan.)
- 6-26 An additional activity is a decision-making exercise. Divide the class into groups and give each group a scenario already prepared. Make the scenario specific to the school or community. Each group will discuss how they should respond, keeping decision-making rules in mind. Each group reports their findings and then you debrief the class.

Unit 7: Disaster Psychology

This unit may be difficult for some students to discuss. If you think your group needs help discussing some of the sensitive topics, consider bringing in a professional to assist. Be sure to foster an open and supportive environment so the teenagers will not only feel comfortable discussing the issues with each other and you, but also with potential victims.

- 7-4 As this can be a sensitive subject and may be difficult for teens to discuss, you may want to include a mental health professional as a guest speaker. The biggest issue most rescuers face is being instructed to rest. You should stress to students that they should not take this personally and that resting is for their own good as well as the good of the team. You will also want to stress confidentiality. Gossip tends to permeate high schools, and you will want to be sure students understand the importance of not disclosing personal information and feelings they learn about others at an incident.
- 7-6 Teens need practice discussing stressful situations and their feelings about them. You will lead a discussion of a stressful event. You can assign partners or allow students to choose someone they are comfortable talking to. Each person will then share a stressful event in his or her life. When discussing the event, the student will identify the symptoms of stress he or she experienced and describe how the stress was reduced. The discussion should then move to how they would react to a stressful situation during an incident. Each partner will identify the type of directive to accept from team members if a break was needed during an incident.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

- 7-9 You may conduct a group well-being activity. Divide the class into 4 groups. The first member comes up with 5 to 8 physical signs of stress. Another member then comes up with 5 to 8 psychological signs of stress. A third member describes 5 to 8 ways to reduce stress. You will act as team leader and talk to the group as if they are preparing to respond to a disaster situation. You should emphasize the importance of good leadership for the team’s well-being. All team members must be able to recognize stress and techniques for relieving it.
- 7-22 You may pose some “What would you do if...” questions to ensure that students understand the concepts of this section. Examples: What would you do if you were attempting to rescue a victim and the victim became hysterical? What would you do if someone you know was injured?

Unit 8: Terrorism and CERT

This unit may also be difficult or scary for the class to discuss. Stress the importance of discussing the topic factually and with an open mind.

- 8-19 You can show the *Seven Signs of Terrorism* video. This is a 7-minute video produced by the Michigan State Police with information on recognizing signs of terrorism. The video is posted on YouTube or, for a copy, contact Bruce Payne, EMHSD-Citizencorps@michigan.gov, 517-241-2944. (The video does not include the eighth sign of terrorism discussed in the *Basic Training* course, funding. Be sure to point this out to students and discuss.) You should discuss the video with the class and stress cultural diversity — terrorists do not come from one country or one ethnic group. Teaching cultural diversity and tolerance and cautioning students against stereotyping is an important part of this unit. You should deliver fact-based rather than fear-based material. This is especially important as the audience may be culturally diverse.
- 8-19 This may be a good time to discuss with students the difference between “snitching” and being proactive. “Snitching” is a slang term referring to those who report suspicious or criminal activities to the authorities. It has a negative connotation and has prevented many people from coming forward with possible crime-related information for fear of ostracism or retribution. Thus, it is important that you make clear to teens the importance of being proactive if they witness a crime or hear about a potential crime. It is not snitching if they report someone who is a danger to themselves or others. They could prevent great harm from coming to their school by telling someone in a position of power what they know. You may lead a group discussion on what types of things students should report and how they can do so tactfully and without putting themselves in danger.

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
BASIC TRAINING INSTRUCTOR GUIDE ANNEX – TEEN CERT

- 8-22 You can lead a group discussion regarding warning signs of incidents in the school. Students should create a list of events that could happen in their school and propose solutions for minimizing the effects.
- 8-32 Add an additional scenario or adapt an existing scenario to involve a terrorist attack at the school.

Unit 9: Course Review, Final Exam, and Disaster Simulation

As with Unit 5, this unit will require a great deal of teamwork and realistic assessments of each person's skills and abilities. Emphasize safety at all times and remind students that they can stop the exercise if they feel uncomfortable.

- 9-27 You should take the time to carefully explain the exercise and answer any student questions. You should provide the students with an escape word that will indicate to you that the student is becoming stressed or overwhelmed with the situation. Students should be encouraged to treat the exercise as if it were a real disaster. After the simulation, you should point out mistakes made during the exercise as safety issues. You will lead a discussion about the lessons learned and the difficulties encountered during the exercise, making sure the discussion stays constructive and does not become too critical.
- 9-27 It is your duty to make the simulation as real as possible, involve local professional responders, and incorporate school-related disaster scenarios with local trainings. Some obstacles you can include in the scenario are: all responders working out of one backpack; all victims deafened by the explosion that caused the incident; bystanders who are constantly following the rescuers around, asking to let them help; hysterical bystanders; and blocked doorways.

Finally, at the conclusion of the Basic Training Course, the students who complete the training should be recognized for their achievement. A "graduation" event officiated by the principal or vice-principal and an official from the fire department or other local emergency services agency that co-sponsors the Teen CERT training will formalize the students' accomplishments and reinforce their sense of teamwork. Such events will also help keep the CERT training visible to decision-makers.

Appendix: Other Resources for CERT Training for Teens

The following resources may be useful to programs working to begin, maintain, or strengthen CERT training for teens. Please visit the national CERT website at www.citizencorps.gov/cert and click on Teen CERT for links to the following:

- **Teen CERT: Launching and Maintaining the Training Guide** *for program managers*
- **Teen CERT Annex to CERT Train-the-Trainer Instructor Guide and Participant Manual** *for Train-the-Trainer course instructors and participants*
- **Frequently Asked Questions about Teen CERT** *for teens interested in taking the training and separately for adults interested in starting the training*
- **Making a Difference with Teen CERT brochure** *for individuals and organizations promoting local training deliveries*
- **Teen CERT PSAs English and Spanish downloads** *for individuals and organizations promoting local training deliveries*
- **Links to other Teen CERT videos** *for individuals and organizations interested in seeing how various communities are involved in Teen CERT*