THE #FKLM FAMILY BLUEPRINT

A One-Page Household Emergency Plan

Caregiver Wellness & Support · Household Stability

Who picks the child up, who holds the documents, who gets called — written down before it is needed.

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A free guide from My Fairy GodParents — for youth impacted by parental incarceration, justice-impacted youth, and the caregivers and families who support them.
myfairygodparents.org/resources/family-blueprint

Print, write on it, and share it with the people helping your family.

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> *Who picks the child up, who holds the documents, who gets called — written down before it is needed.*

THE DIFFERENCE THIS MAKES

Families affected by incarceration have already experienced one sudden removal of an adult from a household. That experience is worth converting into preparation: if something happened to you tomorrow — a hospital stay, an accident, an emergency out of state — who would pick up the child, who would know the routine, who holds the documents?

Most caregivers carry all of that in their head. It works right up until the moment it is needed, which is exactly the moment they cannot be reached to explain it.

A one-page plan is not morbid and it is not overthinking. It is thirty minutes that means a child is met by a familiar adult rather than waiting at a school office while people make phone calls.

WHAT BELONGS ON THE PAGE

Who picks the child up. Two names, with phone numbers, and confirmation that both people have said yes. Make sure both are listed on the school's emergency contact form — a plan the school does not know about is not a plan.

Who holds the documents. Where the birth certificate, Social Security card, insurance card, immunization records, and any court or authorization paperwork live, and who else can get to them.

Medical basics. The child's doctor, insurance information, allergies, medications and dosages, and any diagnosis a stand-in adult would need to know within the first hour.

The routine. School start and end times, bus number, afterschool arrangements, bedtime, and anything a child depends on to feel steady — a specific blanket, a nightly call, a Sunday ritual.

The contact plan. How the child stays in touch with their incarcerated parent, including any phone account details, so that connection does not simply stop because the person who managed it is unavailable.

CHOOSING THE PEOPLE

Pick two, not one. The first name is often unavailable precisely because they are close to the family and may be dealing with the same emergency.

Ask them plainly, and be specific about what you are asking. "Would you be my emergency backup?" is vague. "If I'm ever in the hospital, would you pick the kids up from school and keep them until someone else can?" can actually be answered.

Tell the child who these people are, in a calm and matter-of-fact way. Children who know that a plan exists worry less than children who sense that adults are being careful about something and will not say what.

+ MAKING THE PLAN USABLE

Keep it to one page. A binder does not get read in an emergency; a single sheet on the refrigerator does.

Put copies in three places: the refrigerator or another obvious spot at home, a photo on your phone, and with each backup person.

Give the school a copy of the parts that concern them and confirm your backup contacts are on file. Ask what identification your backup person will need to be handed a child — schools have rules about this and they are stricter than people expect.

+ REVIEWING IT

Review every few months and any time something changes: a new phone number, a new school, a new medication, a change in who is available, a change in the incarcerated parent's facility or contact rules.

A stale plan is worse than none, because people trust it. Put a review date on the page itself so anyone reading it knows how current it is.

+ THE TUESDAY NOBODY PLANNED FOR

A caregiver went to urgent care on a Tuesday afternoon expecting to be home in an hour, and was admitted overnight. Her grandson's school could not reach her. He sat in the front office for two hours while staff worked through an emergency contact list with a disconnected number on it.

The next week she wrote a one-page plan. Two names, both confirmed with the school, both given photos of the sheet. Documents in one labeled envelope her neighbor knew about. Medication and doctor listed. The phone account details for calls with his dad, so those would not stop.

Four months later she had a car accident. The plan was used for one afternoon. Her grandson was picked up by an adult he knew, at the normal time, and went to a house where the routine was already written down.

+ WORDS YOU CAN USE

Asking someone to be an emergency backup

Be specific about what you are asking for.

"I'm writing an emergency plan for the kids and I'd like to name you. What it means practically: if I'm ever in the hospital or unreachable, the school would call you to pick them up and you'd keep them until someone else could. It would be rare. Are you willing to be on that list?"

Adding backup contacts at the school

Email to the school office.

"Hello — I'd like to update the emergency contacts for [child's name] in [grade]. Please add [name, relationship, phone] and [name, relationship, phone] as adults authorized to pick up my child. Could you confirm they're on file and let me know what identification they'll need to show? Thank you."

Telling a child the plan exists

Say it calmly, as ordinary information.

"I want you to know something, and it's not because anything is wrong. If I'm ever sick or can't get to you, [name] or [name] will come get you and you'll stay with them until I'm back. They already know. You'll always be picked up by somebody who knows you."

+ YOUR ONE-PAGE EMERGENCY PLAN

- [ ] Name two backup adults and get a yes from each.
- [ ] Add both to the school's authorized pickup list and confirm in writing.
- [ ] Write down where documents are kept and who can access them.
- [ ] List doctor, insurance, allergies, medications, and dosages.
- [ ] Write out the weekday routine, bus number, and afterschool plan.
- [ ] Include how the child stays in contact with their incarcerated parent.
- [ ] Keep it to one page and date it.
- [ ] Post a copy at home, photograph it on your phone, give a copy to each backup.
- [ ] Tell the child who the backup adults are.
- [ ] Set a review reminder for three months out.

+ REFLECT AND WRITE

If I were unreachable tomorrow, who would actually get the call?

Who has said yes, and who have I only assumed would say yes?

Where do our documents live, and who else knows?

What would my child need in the first hour to feel steady?

+ YOUR NEXT STEP

Fill out the page and give a copy to one person you trust.

+ WHERE THIS COMES FROM

Written by My Fairy GodParents — reviewed August 2026.
Official reference: Childcare.gov — linked for the official rules and forms, which MFGP does not set.
https://www.childcare.gov/
This is general information and practice guidance — not legal advice, mental-health treatment, or a statement of any court, agency, or facility's rules. Policies differ by state, county, facility, school, and program, so always confirm details with the office involved.
For decisions with legal, medical, financial, or clinical consequences, work with a licensed professional or the organizations listed with each resource.

You do not have to do this alone.

More free guides, scripts, and checklists:
myfairygodparents.org/resources/family-blueprint