The HHS Administration for Children and Families (ACF) can deploy a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in post-disaster needs of children and youth, and in the human services and early childhood programs that support children, youth, and families. Deployable SMEs can support Federal, State, Tribal, Territorial, and local interagency efforts to include the needs of children and youth into response and recovery planning and operations.

The Children and Youth SMEs are typically ACF Regional Emergency Management Specialists (REMS), ACF’s Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response (OHSEPR) staff, or disaster-trained program specialists from ACF specific programs serving children.

Within the role and scope of ACF, Children & Youth SMEs provide expertise in:
- Child care, including recovery of child care provider services in affected communities
- Head Start
- Child welfare and child protective services
- Post-disaster reunification of children (can have limitations within the scope of ACF programs)
- Runaway and Homeless Youth programs
- Foster care and Transitioning Foster Youth

The Post-Disaster Child Care Needs and Resources matrix document is designed to identify needs, challenges & gaps that can adversely affect families & providers post disaster. The Post-Disaster Child Care Needs and Resources matrix is online at https://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohsepr/resources. The matrixcatalogues governmental and non-governmental resources for families in need of child care, and for child care providers (centers, in-home, and family child care providers) and communities.

Implemented pre-disaster for planning at State level
- Identify the resources within a State that address child care needs of families and providers (centers, in-home, and family child care providers)

Implemented post-disaster response & recovery:
- Resource types available to support families, States, child care providers, and communities
- Policy & guidance provided
- Triggered in presidentially-declared disaster or public health emergency


For more information on this and other ACF human services capabilities to support States, Tribes, and Territories in preparedness, response, and recovery, contact OHSEPR by emailing the ACF Watch Desk at hswatchofficer@acf.hhs.gov