### 3. WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS

#### Our Local Hazard
- Show students the Hazards Map poster. Explain that it shows where different types of emergencies are most likely to happen in the United States.
- Page 14 of Workbook: Show the “Mapping Emergencies” activity and tell students they can learn about all these different kinds of emergencies with the activities in their Workbook.
- Point out the four types of emergency that can happen almost anywhere: flooding, thunderstorms and lightning, home fires, and severe winter storms.
- Explain that, in your area, people need to be especially prepared for winter storms, so today you will be talking about winter storms and teaching students how to stay safe when a winter storm happens.

#### LEARN: Winter Storm Preparedness

Mandatory facts about winter storms

- Winter storms can take different forms:
  - Freezing Rain: When rain freezes on contact with the ground.
  - Sleet: When rain freezes in the air and falls as ice pellets.
  - Snow: When rain falls slowly through cold air and freezes into ice crystals.
  - Blizzard: Snow that is accompanied by winds 35 mph or greater and low visibility due to blowing or falling snow.
- It is best to stay inside whenever it is cold and during a winter storm, but if you do go outside, dress to keep your body heat from escaping into the cold air. Wear a hat that covers your ears, a scarf to cover your mouth and nose, mittens, water-resistant boots, and a wind-and-water-resistant coat, and dress in layers because the air captured between layers of clothing provides insulation.
- Be alert to the signs of frostbite and hypothermia when you are outside in the cold:
  - Frostbite occurs when a part of your body freezes. It’s most likely to happen to a part of your body that is exposed to the cold, like the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, and toes. The signs of frostbite are pain, then numbness or loss of feeling, and loss of skin color. Go inside where it’s warm immediately if you have signs of frostbite.
  - Hypothermia occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce it. Hypothermia lowers your body temperature, which can affect the brain, making it difficult to move normally or think clearly. Shivering is one of the first signs of hypothermia; other signs include confusion, drowsiness, and slurred speech. Go inside where it’s warm immediately if you have signs of hypothermia.
### WATCH vs. WARNING

- **WATCH:** A winter storm may occur within the next 12-48 hours.
- **WARNING:** A winter storm has already started or is expected to start in the next 12-24 hours.

### Protective Actions

- **During a winter storm WATCH:**
  - Listen to the news for weather updates.
  - Review your emergency plans, update home and car emergency supplies kits, and gather additional supplies you may need to stay indoors for several days.
- **During a winter storm WARNING:**
  - Remain indoors until the storm ends. Avoid travel and trips outside.
  - If your home loses power, use flashlights instead of candles for light. Remember that food in the refrigerator and freezer can spoil quickly: When in doubt, throw it out!
  - To prevent pipes from freezing, keep a trickle of water running at all faucets and open sink cabinet doors to let in warm air from the room.
  - Adults who must travel during a winter storm and get stuck on the road should remain in the vehicle and wait for help. It is dangerous to go looking for help.

### PRACTICE: Winter Storm Preparedness

Engage students in one of the Practice Activities listed below. Full descriptions of these activities can be downloaded at the Program Website.

- Practice Dash
- Winter Storm Charades
- That’s Cool!

### SHARE: Winter Storm Preparedness

Use the following story to set up your transition to the Coping Skills part of the presentation. Read the story aloud and ask for ideas on what Sophia could teach Emily to help her handle her worries about what might happen during a winter storm. If necessary, use the Coping Skills poster to generate ideas. Then continue on to the Coping Skills part of the presentation by using the poster to define “coping skills.”

**Worried about Winter**

Sofia and her family live in a town where there are big snow storms almost every winter. But this winter, her cousin Emily was coming to stay with Sofia for a few weeks, and Emily had only seen winter storms on TV. Sofia knew that Emily would be worried about what might happen if a blizzard came along. She was already asking Sofia how they stayed warm when the power went out. Luckily, Sofia had learned a lot about winter storm preparedness from The Pillowcase Project. “We even talked about feeling worried,” she told Emily. “Lots of people feel worried or scared when they think about what might happen in an emergency, even grownups. But there are ways to handle those feelings — they’re called coping skills — and you can figure out good coping skills BEFORE an emergency happens!”

What could Sophia teach Emily to help her cope with her thoughts and feelings about what might happen during a winter storm?

Note: Full directions for this activity, suggested answers, and a reproducible worksheet can be found in the Local Hazard Resource for winter storms, which is available at the Program Website. This Local Hazard Resource also includes an alternative Sharing Activity, “Winter Dress-Up,” that engages students in problem-solving.

**Program Website:** [www.ymiclassroom.com/the-pillowcase-project](http://www.ymiclassroom.com/the-pillowcase-project)