

Family Preparedness – A Team Effort

Presentation by Lisa Bedford, Survival Conference, Dallas, May 28, 2011

I. INTRO:

A. Are you part of a family? Are you interested in being prepared? Isn't it a great feeling to know you're in the right place at this conference?

B. This workshop: "A team effort"

1. It's baseball season, and I'll be using baseball analogies

2. A few major points from this presentation

a. What makes a team successful?

b. Roles of each team member

c. If you're a note-taker, I'll have my outline on the screen as we go AND it will be available on my blog under the Resources tab following this conference.

d. TIP: Make To Do, To Buy, To Learn lists for this conference

4. Joplin tornadoes

a. What was most important was people.

i. No one was asking, "Where is my bowling trophy or my Employee of the Month plaque?"

ii. "Where is my wedding album?"

iii. Not even, "Where are my buckets of wheat? My gun safe?"

- iv . “Where is my son? Has anyone seen my daughter-in-law?”
- v. That’s what really counts.
- b. QUESTION: How many of you do what you do because of your family?
- c. Would you be as focused on survival if you were single? Maybe you would just stock some water, tuna, 35 guns, and 30k of ammo and call it good!
- d. I hear a LOT of people say, “I wish my wife/husband/fiancé/kids were on board.”
- e. The truth is, the preparedness journey IS a lot easier when everyone, or most everyone, is on the same team.
- f. There have been times when I’ve told my husband, “Honey, I need YOU to do this.” I don’t have the skills and knowledge to retro-fit a horse trailer with an electrical system, interior shelving, and wall to wall carpet!
- g. “It takes a Team”

II. Team consists of: IN BASEBALL

A. A Manager

1. For our purposes today, I'll usually refer to the Manager as the Dad of the family, although as you listen to the description, it may be someone else in your particular case.

B. Coach or coaches

1. Again, for our purposes this will be the mom. If your family includes other adults living with you, they may also be coaches.
2. We'll spend most of our time this afternoon talking about these two roles.
3. If you've ever played on a team or worked in a situation where there was no leadership OR everyone was trying to lead, you'll understand why these are the two most important roles.

C. Team players

1. The kids are the team players along with other members of the family and maybe even close friends.

II. A successful team:

- A. Has clear goals –Too important to not spend a couple of minutes on this.
1. Identified by manager and his/her coaching staff.
 2. Preparedness basics: focus on these first
 - a. food and water storage
 - b. financial survival
 - c. security

d. shelter

3. Put goals in writing

a. This might be more important than you think.

i. Look, we're living in TWO worlds.

a. The world in which NOTHING has changed. We still have to work, maintain routines, maintain the same life we've been living AND prepare for a future that continues to be uncertain.

b. Look ahead and plan and prepare accordingly.

c. Even those of you who are very organized will have a hard time keeping track of what you want to do, what you still need to buy, and everything you need to learn.

a. WRITE down steps to achieve each goal with deadlines

b. Schedule Family Preparedness Pow-Wows to talk about goals

c. recognition and celebration for progress and goal achievement

B. Everyone knows Team's purpose

C. Everyone knows their role and that each person is valuable and important to the success of the team.

1. If your style is to, "Do everything myself," it will communicate to your family that they aren't important and that what you're doing is only your concern, not theirs.

C. Each player is coached at their level

1. Not too easy, not too difficult

2. Moved on to more advanced skills
 3. Respected for their current level, challenged to reach higher ones
- D. In a successful team, each player has different needs and is coached differently
1. Age differences, add to learning with maturity
 2. The beauty of this...
 - a. Special needs people can contribute
 - b. Older family members
 - c. Everyone can contribute and understand their value
 - d. Attention is paid to the individual, which strengthens the team
- E. A successful team rises to meet unexpected challenges.
1. On a baseball team, it could be an injury to the starting pitcher.
 2. In family preparedness, it could be an unexpected financial crisis, a sickness or injury of the Manager or a Coach.
 3. If the team is in place, it will meet challenges more successfully.

III. The manager: most likely Dad

Let's face it: SOMEONE has to be the Manager. Have you ever been in a situation where everyone thought they were in charge and wanted to call all the shots?

A. Qualities of a successful manager

1. Isn't afraid to take charge
2. Willing and able to make decisions
3. Is flexible
 - a. Can adapt to changing circumstances
4. Recognizes importance of communication ... and then COMMUNICATES
5. problem solver
6. not afraid of hard work
7. Sees the BIG Picture
 - a. Sometimes it's easy to get sidetracked by minutiae
 - i. freeze dried vs. dehydrated
 - ii. bug out bag contents – Haven't you seen these discussions on forums? They can go on for MONTHS!
 - iii. Your family needs YOU to see the Big Picture and stay focused on what is most important.

EXERCISE: Test your Manager skills

Imagine you and your family have just survived an E5 tornado. You're all alive, no one is injured, but absolutely everything you owned is gone. Quick, list the Top Five things you will do next....

Now show you list to your wife/girlfriend and ask her if you did it right!

I know that's funny, but it also demonstrates the role between the Manager and Coach. It's important to work together. We'll get into that a bit more in just a few minutes.

Now, it's not all fun and games being the Manager of your team...

B. Responsibilities – It's not just the Big Paycheck!

1. Assess team skills, maturity levels
 - a. Manager doesn't want to put a rookie or an unskilled player in during a critical point
 - b. What skills does the family need?

2. Provide direction and guidance.
 - a. A team without a captain or with a weak captain never wins. Players are unmotivated, confused, unable to work as a team to accomplish anything.
 - b. communication is important
THINK ABOUT A TIME... when you couldn't get in touch with a loved one. How did you feel?
 - Panicky
 - Scared to death
 - Confused

None of us can make good decisions or think clearly when we're consumed with fear.

Judgment is clouded with uncertainty.

Communication is extremely important – not just giving direction but giving encouragement, expressing appreciation and love.

3. Stay informed – from micro to macro
 - a. study team members
 - b. know family's status, strengths and weaknesses
 - c. local, national, international news – it WILL impact you

4. Security of the team
 - a. Even Billy Martin didn't pack heat but Survival Dads/Managers are, as a general rule, highly concerned about the safety of their homes and family members.

 - b. This is the arena for dads but of course moms and women can learn and excel just as much

 - c. a very basic consideration
 - i. doesn't matter what you have if it's not secure
 - ii. take common sense, low key precautions
 - iii. start be teaching and practicing OpSec
 - iv. better to look like a sheep, just one of the flock

C. Challenges a Manager faces

1. Doubts
 - a. about his/her ability to lead
 - b. will we succeed? Will we survive?

2. Feelings of overwhelmedness

- a. too much on their plate, especially if they are running a business or holding a job
 - b. If goals are clear and written down, it's easier to prioritize and delegate – both IMPORTANT to avoid overwhelmedness
3. Emotional
- a. depression
 - 1. the economy
 - 2. job loss, financial difficulties
 - 3. direction of the country
 - 4. national security
 - 5. other doomsday scenarios

TIP: Rate the likelihood of your greatest fears. You may be surprised that you have less to fear than you think.

4. His/her own fears
- a. they'll be communicated to your team.
 - b. Share your courage but keep your fears to yourself.
5. How does the Captain stay on track and stay upbeat?
- a. Know thyself – and Moms, this goes for you, too!
 - 1. Backtrack: what did you do when you were younger that... This has helped me.
Kept you in shape?
Kept you healthy?
Made you smile and happy?
 - 2. Where do your needs come in the family priorities?
Just right after the dog's?

IV. Coach: Mom -- the heart of the team

A. Qualities of a good coach

1. Trusts her instincts.
2. Is born with super powers
 - a. Observes.
 - b. nuances
 - c. has a sixth sense when something is wrong, someone is lying
3. Works with Manager to determine goals of team.
 - a. It's okay to discuss, ARGUE. The overall goal (SURVIVAL) is the same. A common goal. Everything else has to further that objective.
 - b. With Manager, determines the practical steps in meeting goals.
3. In baseball the coach will relay the manager's decisions to the players.
4. Works most closely with players
 - a. Knows their strengths and when they're ready for what
 - b. Is usually most observant.
5. KEY: Communication
 - a. In baseball, it's the coach who communicates with the players what the manager wants.
 - b. when family members are getting overstressed
 - c. when kids are feeling insecure
 - d. when Manager is losing focus
 - e. when a family member is confused

- e. Communication doesn't have to be the Manager's greatest strength if he has a Coach who is a good communicator

E. Responsibilities of the Coach

1. Primary: THE HOME

- a. Comfort of the family
- b. Routines of the household
- c. Orderliness of the home
- d. Day to day sustenance
 - i. food and water storage
 - ii. store other supplies
 - iii. just in case you haven't started this, begin by planning and preparing for a two week emergency, no electricity, and no outside help.
- e. Sanitation – SORRY MOMS!
 - i. laundry
 - ii. bathing/showering
 - iii. emergency toilet
- f. Sanity

2. Involve kids/other team members as much as possible.

- a. delegation makes your job easier
- b. important skills are taught along the way
- c.. important survival attitudes are communicated

3. Again, we live in two worlds, so the coach has to maintain sanity in the regular, everyday world AND take steps to prepare her family.

QUOTE: "Keep your fears to yourself, but share your courage with others."

-- Robert Louis Stevenson

F. Challenges

1. Same as those of the manager
 - a. fears, doubts, overwhelmedness
2. Her instincts and natural talents can work against her
 - a. become TOO worried
 - b. Overwhelmed by home, kids, job, and everything else. Everyday life is demanding enough without adding an extra layer.
 - c. Not taking care of her own needs
 - i. It's okay to ask for help
 - ii. It's okay to HIRE help, if you can.
 - iii. It's okay to have a regular time or day off.

V. COMMON responsibilities

1. Some areas overlap and should be discussed together. : Example
 - A. Finances
 - i. Getting out of debt
 - ii. Earning more

iii. Spending more

SLIDE: Teamwork Troubles

VI. "Should" thinking

1. one of my friends commented that it was HER HUSBAND'S job to earn more money. Not hers.

She worked fulltime, but he had a job with hours until 8 and 9 p.m. every night.

Survival and preparedness is a joint effort. Let go of SHOULD thinking and focus on what will benefit your family and who is in the best position to do it.

2. In my family, I do the majority of everyday preparedness because my husband runs a business. BUT, there are things that I don't have the knowledge and skills to do and he does.

V. What if Mom and Dad aren't on the same team?

- A. One is on The Piranha Preppers and the other plays for the the Oblivious Otters or the Disaster Deniers!

- B. This isn't optimal but neither is it the end of the world.

1. Still a lot that one person can do.

2. Focus first on what you know the most about, are most comfortable with, and have the time and means to do.
 3. Encourage skills of self-reliance in your kids. Keep it fun and casual.
- C. Any team functions best when both the manager and coach are in agreement, have complimentary styles, and have the same goals.
- D. Reaching this point is a process if you're not there at the moment.

Now, what about those pesky players?

The ones that spit in the dugout and are constantly adjusting their underwear in public. You probably have a few of these around your house!

QUOTE: When you teach your son, you teach your son's son.

~ The Talmud

VI. Team players: Kids, MAYBE close family members

- A. They MUST know:
1. WHO – Who is going to do what? Who has which responsibility?
Be very clear.
 - a. less fighting over responsibilities

2. WHAT – What is the plan?
3. WHY – VERY IMPORTANT! Why are we doing this?
 - a. With younger kids use examples in nature
 - i. the ant, the squirrel, Aesop's Fables
 - ii. Story of Joseph and Noah in the Bible
 - iii. Children's literature about self reliant families
 - b. Older kids
 - i. Examples in the news
 - a. droughts
 - b. flooding, natural disasters
 - c. This teaches them to be observant, reinforces the importance of staying informed
 - c. This allays fears.
3. HOW
 - a. casual, everyday approach
 - b. The attitude of the coach/manager will send important message to players. You can't panic or convey fear.
 - c. Players/kids need to know how to do things, step by step.
 - i. Make lists and then post them.
 - ii. They need to feel competent and confident
 - iii. Practice sessions will help with this.
 - iv. Example: an evacuation, preparing food without electricity,
 - b. Top characteristics to nurture and teach.
 - i. Not just skills but attitudes

- ii. THINK or LIST attitudes you want your kids to have or, if they already have them, to nurture and encourage

B. Skill development is key from an early age, appropriate skills

1. Keep an eye out for natural talent and interests
 - a. capitalize on them
 - b. My daughter – shooting, sewing, quilting
2. Keep it fun – camping, cooking outside, learning to sew, cook from scratch, shooting

C. Top skills to teach

1. You'll notice these are all practical, life-long, and fun.
 - Camping
 - Hiking & orienteering
 - Cooking
 - Sewing
 - Food preservation
 - Gardening
 - Weather reading
 - Fishing
 - Animal husbandry
 - Shooting sports

- D. Not everyone needs to have mastered every skill, but make sure that at least one other family member is either learning or could take your place. That's your back-up to your back-up.

- E. Each team will have/need a different skill set depending on family circumstances, location, etc.

Think about what you do on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis and determine what skills your family needs to learn. Prioritize.

V. Your Booster Club/Cheerleaders: Other preppers – forums, podcast and radio shows, blogs

A. You might be surprised by who else you know...

1. Find these people in casual conversations, you don't have to give out more information than you want.

Gardening, 4-H, homeschooling, hunting clubs, etc.

2. Bloggers and websites

2. Conference speakers

3. Books and You Tube videos, etc.

VI. Conclusion SLIDE

The safety and well-being of our families is the primary reason we prepare and give survival more than just a passing thought.

The tornadoes in Joplin and Oklahoma this week remind us how precarious our lives really are and how important our loved ones are.

Survival Isn't a fad or a new TV show to watch.

Prepare on THIS side of a crisis.

If not YOU, then who?