
PUTNAM COUNTY COMPOSITE SQUADRON

Paladin Center, 39 Seminary Hill Road
Carmel, New York 10512

Major Peter Milano, Public Affairs
(845) 656-1452/pjmilano@comcast.net



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCTOBER 6, 2017

**Putnam County Composite Squadron Leads Charge to Protect Children
Partners with Save the Children to Help Families Prepare for Disasters**

CARMEL, New York – September 16, 2017 – Putnam County Composite Squadron is taking a stand for children in Putnam County, NY to help ensure that when the next disaster strikes, families will be ready and children will be safe.

During the Children’s Expo & Public Safety Day, held on September 16, 2017 at the Putnam County Bureau of Emergency Services in Carmel, NY, squadron members, in cooperation with Save the Children and the Community Resilience Coalition in Putnam County, set up an information booth and hosted a Get Ready Get Safe Prep Rally to help build community awareness and educate children and families about simple steps they can take to prepare for disasters.

“We know children are particularly vulnerable during disasters,” said Squadron Commander, Captain Elena MacDermant. “By teaching them about emergency preparedness, we can build their resiliency so they can feel safe and effectively cope with crises.”

Each day, 69 million children are in school or child care away from their parents. Yet less than half of American families have an emergency plan and may not know how to reunite during or following an emergency. These startling statistics reveal a huge gap in our nation’s ability to protect children during disasters. That’s why Putnam County Composite Squadron, the only Civil Air Patrol squadron in the country to take part in the program, has stepped up to make preparedness a priority.

Cadets spoke with children and parents about emergency preparedness throughout the day, handed out family disaster checklists, disaster supplies checklists and helped families complete the Preparedness Pledge. Cadets also handed out Save the Children backpacks containing familiar items that may contribute to a child’s comfort during a disaster, such as teddy bears, flashlights, notebooks and pens, tissues, coloring books and crayons.

MacDermant directed the *Get Ready Get Safe Prep Rally*, emphasizing the importance of recognizing risks, planning ahead and gathering appropriate supplies before a disaster. Practical discussions were paired with fun and engaging activities such as the *Do the Prep Step!* dance video and select the wise supplies challenge. The children seemed to have the most fun with this activity, choosing between necessary and unnecessary items they would place in their packs in the event of a disaster.

“The Prep Rally program makes disasters less scary by giving children the tools they need to prepare and be ready,” said MacDermant. “Through fun activities and discussions, it helps children feel less afraid and more empowered to take actions that can help protect themselves and their families.”

PUTNAM COUNTY COMPOSITE SQUADRON

Paladin Center, 39 Seminary Hill Road
Carmel, New York 10512

Major Peter Milano, Public Affairs
(845) 656-1452/pjmilano@comcast.net



MacDermant added “By teaching kids about emergencies now, we have the opportunity to raise a generation of prepared citizens in Putnam County. This is a commitment that will last and shape the future of our county. We’ve taken a stand for kids and we hope that others will too. By protecting our children, we’re protecting our future.”

Get Ready Get Safe is a pioneering Save the Children initiative designed to help U.S. communities prepare to protect and care for the most vulnerable among us in times of crisis—our children. Save the Children helps generate child-focused emergency plans, provide emergency training and ensure emergency resources are in place before crisis strikes. Learn more at www.savethechildren.org/GetReady.

The Resilient Children/Resilient Communities Initiative—a research project at Columbia University’s National Center for Disaster Preparedness that receives funding through a \$2 million grant from GlaxoSmithKline in partnership with Save the Children—selected the [Community Resilience Coalition](#) (CRC) in Putnam County, NY, as one of two sites in the U.S. to identify the best practices for keeping children safe in emergencies, increasing awareness of the unique needs of children, and strengthening the capabilities of the community to meet those needs. For additional information contact Barbara Garbarino, Project Liaison, Resilient Children Resilient Communities – Putnam at (914) 649-8875 or email barbara.garbarino2@gmail.com.

Civil Air Patrol, the longtime all-volunteer U.S. Air Force auxiliary, is the newest member of the Air Force’s Total Force. In this role, CAP operates a fleet of 560 aircraft, performs about 90 percent of continental U.S. inland search and rescue missions as tasked by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center and is credited by the AFRCC with saving an average of 80 lives annually. CAP’s 57,000 members also perform homeland security, disaster relief and drug interdiction missions at the request of federal, state and local agencies. CAP also plays a leading role in aerospace/STEM education, and its members serve as mentors to 24,000 young people participating in CAP’s Cadet Programs. Visit www.gocivilairpatrol.com for more information.

#####

Contact: Major Peter Milano, Civil Air Patrol
Putnam County Composite Squadron Public Affairs Officer
U.S. Air Force Auxiliary
(845) 656-1452
pjmilano@comcast.net