

Raising Awareness in Your Community

Be a Reporter!

One way you can tell your community about natural disasters is by being a reporter for community events. You can do reports or interviews for radio, tv, newspapers, magazines, books or even report "live" at a community event.

Good reporting is about telling a story. For example, you can tell how your class made a community risk and resource map, places you visited, people you interviewed, what you learned, and if people then took action.

Contact journalists or event organizers as soon as you start to plan your reporting project, so they can include your results and give you ideas on how to get started.

Remember that the success of a reporting project depends very much on your *timing*. Plan with your teacher to do reporting for the anniversary of a major disaster, for the UN International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction (second Wednesday of October each year), or for a special day, week or month dedicated to protection against natural disasters in your country.

Use Books, Magazines or Newspapers

One way of reporting is to write about a local event. For example, the city of Yokohama, Japan invited 11 and 12 year olds in the city to attend part of a United Nations conference about reducing the effects of natural disasters. The mayor included their impressions in the official book that the city published about the conference. Here is an excerpt:

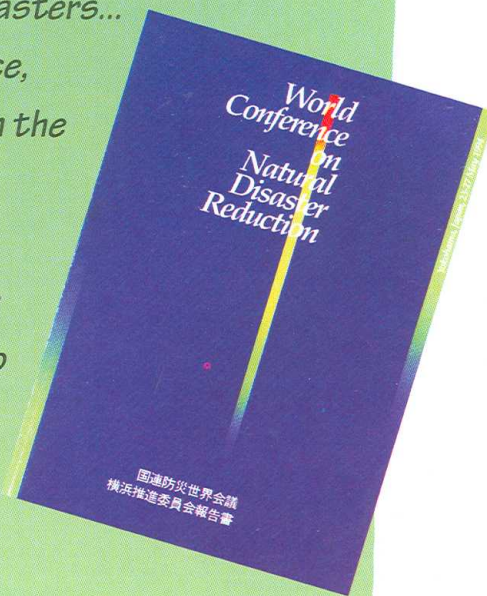
A United World

"I learned that damage from natural disasters is increasing, and I found it very strange - because I thought that through scientific progress, humans had actually reduced the damages from disasters...

According to explanations I heard at the conference, people cut forests and the water cannot be kept in the ground. Then we have more and more floods and landslides...

But in order to live more happily, this conference discussed what can be done and what we should do to make happier lives for people all over the world."

Yuki Hiraga, 12 years old
Yokohama, Japan, 1994



Using Radio

Radio is a good way to reach many people. Why not try...

... **Songs.** In Ecuador in 1993, children recently recorded a song about preparing for earthquakes and it was played on the radio. The song, based on salsa melodies and traditional Andean music, was also performed at community outdoor events.



...**Talk Shows.** For example, during the monthly children's programme on Radio Slovenia, "Dobro jutro" (Good Morning), children discussed questions such as:

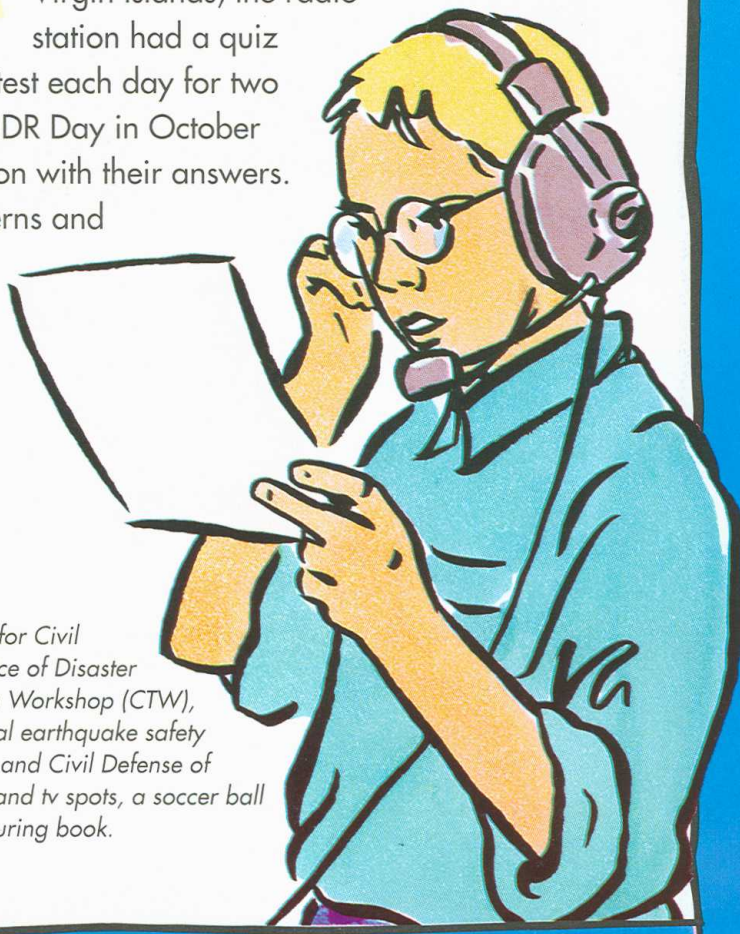
- ▶ What would you do if you were alone at home and the floor started to shake?
- ▶ What would you do if someone dropped a burning match on the floor?
- ▶ There has been a disaster and you have to go to a shelter. What kind of food do you take with you?

... **Quiz Contests.** In the British Virgin Islands, the radio station had a quiz

contest each day for two

weeks to celebrate IDNDR Day in October

1995. Children telephoned the radio station with their answers. Prizes included sleeping bags, radios, lanterns and first aid kits.



Adapted from materials provided by the Administration for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Republic of Slovenia; Office of Disaster Preparedness, British Virgin Islands; Children's Television Workshop (CTW), USA. The CTW activities were part of its first international earthquake safety program, conducted through the Ministries of Education and Civil Defense of Ecuador, and which included radio programmes, radio and tv spots, a soccer ball with safety messages, a cassette with stories, and a colouring book.