

Teen CERT Academy teaches preparedness

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As summertime sets in, Tulane University opens its doors once more for the [Teen Community Emergency Response Team \(CERT\) Academy](#), a youth camp where teens can learn about safety and risk prevention. Sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, it is a national program taught by volunteers to educate students about disaster preparedness.

In the program, youngsters between 11 and 19 learn emergency response skills from local first responders. Many agencies participate in the program, including the New Orleans Police Department and the Louisiana Task Force 1 Urban Search and Rescue Team.

“We want to teach about first responders in the community, including, hopefully, recruiting the kids for future first-responder roles,” said Norris Yarbrough, [assistant vice president of emergency preparedness and response](#) for Tulane University.

His department worked closely with the Office of Homeland Security in New Orleans to put together CERT.

Some of the disaster relief training includes hurricane preparedness, fire safety, first aid, cyber safety and more. The academy tries to offer as much hands-on experience as possible, giving youngsters a chance to practice various safety skills such as using a fire extinguisher or practicing a zip-line search and rescue. They also learn

how to prepare for hurricanes.

Asked what he thinks the participants will take away from the program, Yarbrough expressed hope that the program will help them prepare their families for disasters and share this safety knowledge with their peers.

Teen CERT Academy will take place from July 11-15 in Tulane's Lavin-Bernick Center.