



## Kingman County Health Department

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Michael McNulty of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment demonstrates how to give first aid to his dog, Fred, while talking to Kingman Elementary School students about emergency preparedness.

### **Fred the Preparedness Dog visits local students**

How do you get the attention of grade school students to teach them about emergency preparedness? Michael McNulty does it by bringing along his best friend, Fred the Preparedness Dog.

McNulty, who is director of Homeland Security Operations for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, discovered that Fred, his 5-year-old German Shepherd, makes a pretty good partner to share information about this important topic.

The two recently visited Kingman County schools, where Fred was an instant hit with students. Fred's visit was sponsored by the Kingman County Health Department.

Every tip he shared had two versions: a human one and a dog one. For example, McNulty explained that it's always a good idea to have a first aid kit on hand but noted you can't really put a Band-Aid on a

dog. So he reached into Fred's saddle bag of supplies and pulled out a rolled bandage, which he wrapped around Fred's head and chin, much to the delight of the children.

The pair also discussed that a disaster kit should include food and water, flashlights and batteries, a weather radio and toys (for you and your furry friends). Children also learned more about Fred, including his keen sense of smell. Upon request to see a trick, McNulty placed a treat on Fred's paw and students watched it along with Fred, until McNulty gave him permission to eat it.

McNulty said the idea of a preparedness dog grew out of a simple incident one summer day at his home, when Fred crawled into the cool empty bathtub. He shared a photo of the dog and noted that even Fred knows where to go in the house in case of severe weather. He began training Fred to be comfortable with crowds. Then the Centers for Disease Control heard what he was doing and offered funding and support. That was in 2013 and now the pair has shared their preparedness message with 20,000 people. Until just a few months ago, Fred was the only preparedness dog in the nation.

The CDC encouraged McNulty to create resources, so Fred also has his own coloring book, stickers and temporary tattoos. The coloring book includes games and puzzles about what to do in floods and tornadoes, the importance of checking smoke detectors and the "F.R.E.D." pledge: Families Ready for Every Disaster.

You can read more about Fred by visiting his Facebook page at:  
<https://www.facebook.com/FredThePreparednessDogKdhe>.

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