



Teaching first aid to children in Africa



Evidence-based
by CEBaP



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Introduction

Children are never too young to learn first aid. The earlier children are trained, the more likely it is that the provision of first aid will become a normal part of their lives. Repeated training provides them with a lot of knowledge and life skills, which leads to empowerment.

From as early as 6 or 7 years old, children can learn how to seek help from an adult or medical care provider, how to ensure their own safety, how to bandage a wound and how to comfort an injured person. To this end, training tools and materials have to be adapted to their age and context.

This publication, the educational pathway on first aid, offers Red Cross National Societies, trainers and teachers a tool for setting up first aid education programmes for children in Africa.

Why teach first aid to children?

First aid training for children can make a significant impact: first aid knowledge and skills can enable children to react effectively in emergency situations and provide assistance to their peers and families in need. First aid training also helps to disseminate preventive messages and strengthens the behaviour change process aimed at making youngsters more resilient, safer and healthier.

How to teach First Aid to children?



This publication provides a ready-to-use evidence-based tool for supporting the roll-out of first aid training to children in Africa. The educational pathway on first aid can advise National Societies, Ministries of Health and Education, teachers and trainers and provide them with hands-on information to integrate first aid into the lives of children within the school curriculum or in out-of-school activities.

Offering first aid training for children contributes to the implementation of one of the resolutions of the 32nd International Conference of Red Cross and Red Crescent (2015), aiming *"to encourage States to promote regularly refreshed first aid education across the life span of their citizens, in particular, to the degree and capacity the national system allows, through mandatory training of school children and to ensure equal participation of women, girls, men and boys in first aid training"*.



The educational pathway

What is an educational pathway?

An educational pathway is an instrument that indicates how children can achieve necessary competences over a certain period of time. In an educational pathway, more and more details are introduced as learning progresses and the children become older. The focus lies on re-emphasis and repetition, because in the field of first aid repetition is required to automate actions, ensuring that learners no longer have to think about each step in stressful first aid situations.

The educational pathway on first aid gives an overview of the different learning contents linked to a specific age, from 5-6 years through to 17-18 years. It shows which objectives should be achieved at what age. The educational pathway focusses on first aid, but some topics on prevention are also included.

How has the educational pathway on first aid been developed?

This educational pathway has been developed in accordance with the principles of Evidence-Based Practice (EBP), a methodology which ensures that guidelines, activities and didactic materials are based on the latest scientific research ("evidence"), but also takes into account expert opinion/practice experience and preferences of the target group¹.

i For more information on the Centre for Evidence-Based Practice, visit www.cebap.org



¹ This educational pathway on first aid was developed in cooperation with a multidisciplinary expert panel, consisting of the following members:

Heike Geduld, Education and Training, Emergency Medicine, Western Cape EMS, Division of Emergency Medicine, University of Cape Town and Stellenbosch University, South Africa

Wenceslas Nzabalirwa, School of Education, College of Education, University of Rwanda, Rwanda

Sarah Kiguli, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

Beatrice Musindo, VVOB (Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance), Harare, Zimbabwe

Wayne Smith, Emergency Medicine Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa

Rosalie Bikorindara, Institut de pédagogie appliquée, Université du Burundi, Bujumbura, Burundi

Henriette Ramanambelina, Ecole Normale Supérieure de l'Université d'Antananarivo, Madagascar

Jeanne Mukeshimana, Rwanda Red Cross Society, Rwanda

Mael Rabemananjara, Madagascar Red Cross Society, Madagascar

Golden Mukwecheni, Zimbabwe Red Cross Society, Zimbabwe

Didier Dusabe, Burundi Red Cross Society, Burundi

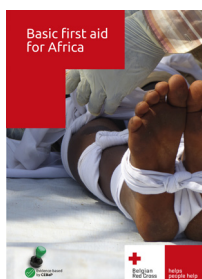
Elke Weyenbergh, Belgian Red Cross-Flanders, Belgium

How to read the educational pathway on first aid?

Vertical

The educational pathway on first aid covers the following **first aid themes**:

- General (seeking help from an adult or medical care provider, hand-washing, wearing gloves ...)
- Four main steps in first aid
- Resuscitation (CPR)
- Choking
- Skin wounds
- Burns
- Bleeding
- Injuries to bones, muscles or joints
- Poisoning
- Stings and bites
- Fever
- Diarrhoea
- Fits
- Disaster principles



The themes correspond to those in the **African First Aid Materials**, developed by Belgian Red Cross-Flanders in 2016. They are based on the prevalence of injuries and diseases in sub-Saharan Africa, together with the possibility to address them with first aid interventions that can be taught to laypeople.

i Free download Basic First Aid for Africa
www.rodekruis.be/en/what-do-we-do/

For every theme, there is a list of objectives. These objectives are categorized under knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Knowledge	What a child should know and understand
Skills	What a child should be able to practically apply
Attitude	The child's willingness to show a particular behaviour

Horizontal

The educational pathway on first aid sets the objectives per 2-year age range (5 to 6 years, 7 to 8 years, etc.). For each objective, a certain age cluster offers room for the following: Encourage (E), Know (K), Repeat (R).

Encourage (E): the teacher encourages the children to achieve the goal. Encouraging means that the teacher actively pays attention to it.

Know/know how (K): the teacher makes explicit efforts so that all the children achieve the goals. The children should acquire certain knowledge, skills or attitude.

Repeat (R): the teacher repeats and emphasises the purpose consciously with the children. He/she repeats for the children who have already achieved the objective, and strives to reach the children who have not yet achieved the objective.

Remark: If no 'R' is mentioned after an objective has already been reached (K), no specific attention should be paid to this objective.

E = Encourage K = Know/Know How R = Repeat	5-6 yrs	7-8 yrs	9-10 yrs	11-12 yrs	13-14 yrs	15-16 yrs	17-18 yrs
GENERAL							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• why/that they must find help from an adult as quickly as possible in an emergency situation;	E	K	R	R			
• how to seek help from a medical care provider;	E	E	K	R	R	R	R
• the six principles of first aid (but not psychosocial first aid, only comforting in a simple way).			E	K	R	R	
Skills							
The children can:							
• wash their hands;	K	R	R	R	R	R	R
• put on disposable rubber gloves or plastic bags;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
• use the six principles of first aid when looking after an ill or injured person (without delivering psychosocial first aid).			E	K	R	R	R
Attitudes							
The children are prepared:							
• to help;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
• to comfort the ill or injured person;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
• to ensure their own safety;	E	E	K	R	R		
• to fetch an adult.	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
The children recognise the importance of:							
• fetching an adult;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
• seeking help from a medical care provider.	E	K	R	R			
The children recognise the importance of:							
• avoiding infection;	E	E	K	R	R	R	R
• ensuring the comfort of the ill or injured person (by covering him with a blanket, by protecting him against the sun ...).			E	K	R	R	R
FOUR MAIN STEPS IN FIRST AID							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• the four main steps in first aid;		E	E	K	R	R	R
• which wound must be treated first when providing first aid;				K	R	R	
• the importance of an open airway;			E	K	R	R	R
• when they should place a person in the recovery position;				E	K	R	R
• when someone is about to faint or has fainted;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
• what to do when someone is about to faint or has fainted.	E	K	R	R	R	R	R
Skills							
The children ensure the safety of:							
• themselves;	E	E	K	R			
• the ill or injured person and bystanders.		E	K	R	R		
The children can:							
• seek help from an adult in an emergency situation;	E	K	R	R			
• seek help from a medical care provider correctly;		E	K	R	R		
• establish whether a person is conscious or not;	E	K	R	R	R	R	R

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establish whether an unconscious person is breathing;			E	K	R	R	R
tilt the head back and lift the chin up correctly [technique];			E	K	R	R	R
place a person in the recovery position [technique];			E	K	R	R	R
provide further first aid.		E	E	E	K	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children: appreciate the importance of ensuring their own safety;	E	E	K	R	R		
appreciate that it is also important to ensure the safety of the ill or injured person and bystanders;		E	K	R	R		
recognise the importance of fetching an adult;	E	K	R	R			
recognise the importance of the correct and complete application of the four main steps in first aid;		E	E	K	R		
are ready to provide further first aid where able.		E	E	E	K	R	R
RESUSCITATION							
Knowledge							
The children know: that they should perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on an unconscious person who is not breathing normally;			E	K	R	R	
the different aspects of CPR and in which order they should be administered;			E	K	R	R	
how many chest compressions should be given;			E	K	R	R	
the correct chest compression depth;			E	K	R	R	
the frequency at which chest compressions should be given;			E	K	R	R	
how many rescue breaths should be administered;			E	K	R	R	
that they must always seek help from a medical care provider if a person is unconscious.			E	K	R	R	
Skills							
The children can: correctly perform CPR on an unconscious person who is not breathing normally;				E	K	R	R
correctly carry out chest compressions [technique];				E	K	R	R
correctly administer rescue breaths [technique].				E	K	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children: recognise the importance of performing CPR;				E	K	R	R
are prepared to perform CPR.				E	K	R	R



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CHOKING							
Knowledge							
The children know: • the difference between mild and severe choking.				K	R	R	
Skills							
The children can: • administer first aid correctly in the event of a choking incident;				K	R	R	
• correctly give blows to the back [technique];				K	R	R	
• correctly give abdominal thrusts [technique].				E	K	R	R
Attitudes							
See educational pathway General > Attitudes							
SKIN WOUND							
Knowledge							
The children: • recognise a skin wound;	E	K	R	R			
• know which equipment is needed to provide first aid for a skin wound;	E	K	R	R			
• know when the injured person should seek medical help for a skin wound;				K	R	R	R
• know the importance of tetanus vaccinations, and why tetanus is dangerous and linked with skin wounds;				K	R	R	R
• know that an injured person with a skin wound in which a foreign object is embedded should always seek medical help.				K	R	R	R
Skills							
The children can: • correctly provide first aid for a skin wound if clean water is available;	E	K	R	R	R		
• stop the bleeding of a wound that does not stop bleeding by itself;			E	K	R	R	R
• correctly provide first aid for a skin wound in which a foreign object is embedded.					K	R	R
Attitudes							
See educational pathway General > Attitudes							
The children recognise the importance of: • correctly providing first aid for a skin wound in which a foreign object is embedded.				E	K	R	R
BURNS							
Knowledge							
The children: • recognise a burn;	E	K	R	R	R		
• know how to provide first aid for a burn (regardless of the degree of the burn);	E	K	R	R	R		
• know when to seek medical help for a burn;			E	K	R	R	R
• know the difference between a superficial, intermediate and deep burn;				E	K	R	R
• know what commonly causes burns (hot water, flames, fire);	K	R	R	R			
• know what can cause a burn (heat, chemicals, radiation ...).	E	E	E	E	K	R	R

E = Encourage K = Know/Know How R = Repeat	5-6 yrs	7-8 yrs	9-10 yrs	11-12 yrs	13-14 yrs	15-16 yrs	17-18 yrs
Skills							
The children can:							
• correctly provide first aid for a burn;	E	K	R	R	R		
• seek medical help if the burn is serious.				K	R	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children recognise the importance of:							
• continuously applying water to a burn.	E	K	R	R	R		
BLEEDING							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• what they have to do in the event of a nose bleed;	E	K	R	R	R		
• when to seek medical help for a nose bleed;		E	K	R	R		
• how to correctly stop (severe) bleeding;			E	K	R	R	
• that medical help must always be sought in the event of severe bleeding.			E	K	R	R	
Skills							
The children can:							
• correctly stop a nose bleed;	E	K	R	R	R		
• apply a bandage to stop (severe) bleeding [technique].				K	R	R	
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children recognise the importance of							
• stopping a bleeding as quickly as possible.		E	K	R	R		
INJURIES TO BONES, MUSCLES OR JOINTS							
Knowledge							
The children:							
• know that they must not move a part of the body that is seriously painful;		E	K	R			
• know three possible injuries to the motor system (dislocation, fracture, muscle or joint injury);			E	K	R	R	
• recognise an injury to bones, muscles or joints;			E	K	R	R	
• know the difference between an open and closed dislocation or fracture.					K	R	R
Skills							
The children can:							
• correctly provide first aid for a minor injury to bones, muscles or joints;				E	K	R	R
• splint a broken bone;				E	K	R	R
• provide first aid to a person with an open fracture.					K	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							



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POISONING							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• the signs of poisoning;				E	K	R	R
• some of the causes of poisoning (alcohol, drugs, toxic substances ...) and how poisoning can be prevented;				E	K	R	R
• the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning;				E	K	R	R
• some of the causes of CO poisoning and how it can be prevented;				E	K	R	R
• that urgent transportation to medical care is necessary;				E	K	R	R
• toxic substances that are poisonous when swallowed.	E	E	K	R	R		
Skills							
The children can:							
• gather information on the nature and severity of the poisoning incident;				E	K	R	R
• seek medical help in case of poisoning.				E	K	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children are aware of:							
• the importance of assessing their own safety, that of the ill person and bystanders in the case of CO poisoning.				E	K	R	R
STINGS AND BITES							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• that a bee or wasp sting can be life-threatening because of allergic reactions;				E	K	R	R
• when to seek medical help in case of bee or wasp stings;				E	K	R	R
• know that they must always seek help from a medical care provider in the case of a snake bite;		E	K	R	R	R	R
• that many snakes are poisonous, and that some types of snake venom can cause death;				E	K	R	R
• that it is not safe to touch or catch the snake;		E	K	R	R	R	R
• that sucking or cutting the venom out will not help and may harm the person even more.				E	K	R	R
Skills							
The children can:							
• remove a bee or wasp stinger;				E	K	R	R
• provide further first aid in case of a bee or wasp sting;				E	K	R	R
• splint a leg in case of a snake bite in the leg;				E	K	R	R
• provide further first aid in case of a snake bite.				E	K	R	R
Attitudes							
<i>See educational pathway General > Attitudes</i>							
The children recognise the importance of:							
• correctly providing first aid in case of a bee or wasp sting;				E	K	R	R
• correctly providing first aid in case of a snake bite.				E	K	R	R

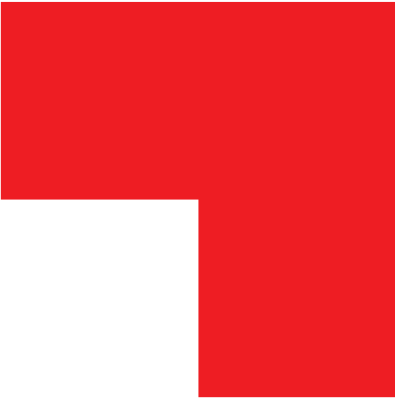
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FEVER							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• that fever can be a sign of serious illness;			K	R	R	R	R
• that a person with fever needs medical attention to determine the cause of the fever;			K	R	R	R	R
• that fever can be very dangerous and lead to death if left untreated;			K	R	R	R	R
• that a person with fever needs to rest and drink lots of fluids.			K	R	R	R	R
DIARRHOEA							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• that diarrhoea is usually caused by an infection;			K	R	R	R	R
• that poor hygiene (not washing hands, touching stools, eating unsafe food, drinking unsafe water) can lead to diarrhoea;			K	R	R	R	R
• that diarrhoea causes dehydration;			K	R	R	R	R
• that diarrhoea can be very dangerous and lead to death if left untreated;			K	R	R	R	R
• when to seek medical help in case of diarrhoea;				K	R	R	R
• that someone with diarrhoea needs to drink lots of fluids.			K	R	R	R	R
FITS							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• that fits are not caused by demons or bad spirits, but are the result of physical illnesses or injuries;		E	K	R	R	R	R
• that someone having fits is not contagious;		E	K	R	R	R	R
• that fits can be accompanied by other symptoms such as loss of consciousness, discoloration of nails and lips, eyes turning away ...;				K	R	R	R
• they should not hold the fitting person down or put objects into his mouth;			K	R	R	R	R
• how to provide first aid in case of fits;			E	K	R	R	R
• when to seek medical help in case of fits.				K	R	R	R
DISASTER PRINCIPLES							
Knowledge							
The children know:							
• the concept of risk awareness;				E	K	R	R
• the concept of which disaster victims are more likely to survive and different categories of victims to treat (triage).				E	K	R	R



Editor: Philippe Vandekerckhove, Motstraat 40, 2800 Mechelen

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Teaching first aid to children in Africa

How to use the educational pathway on first aid?

- The educational pathway on first aid can be used by first aid teachers to help them decide which content to teach to children of certain age ranges.
- In the process of developing curricula for primary and secondary education with the Ministry of Health/Ministry of Education, the tool can be useful for advocating the importance of first aid in health education.
- Belgian Red Cross-Flanders is currently developing first aid training materials for youth in sub-Saharan Africa, based on the information in the educational pathway. These materials will be piloted in a number of African countries at the end of 2018.

 African First Aid materials, developed by Belgian Red Cross-Flanders, is available at www.rodekruis.be/afam

Belgian Red Cross-Flanders

Motstraat 40
B-2800 Mechelen
Belgium
afam@rodekruis.be