

## Fact Sheets for Kids - Earthquakes

Fact Sheets for Kids help children understand related community issues. For more fact sheets, go to [www.HandsOnNetwork.org/FamilyVolunteering/ServiceLearning](http://www.HandsOnNetwork.org/FamilyVolunteering/ServiceLearning).

### What is an Earthquake?

An earthquake is a natural disaster that causes the ground to quake or shake. Some earthquakes are so small that no one can feel them. Some earthquakes are strong enough to destroy buildings.

### How are Earthquakes Measured?

The intensity or magnitude of earthquakes is measured on the **Richter scale**, which is determined from a **seismogram** – a recording of earthquake waves. Values on the scale fall between 0 and 9. The 2010 earthquake in Haiti measured 7.0. Scientists also use the **Mercalli Intensity Scale** to learn more about earthquakes.

### What causes an Earthquake?

An earthquake is caused when blocks of earth -- huge slabs of the earth's crust -- known as **tectonic plates**, slip past one another. When these blocks slip, the earth quakes.



Created by Children for Children and Kids Care Clubs, Youth HandsOn Network.

### Where do Earthquakes Occur?

Earthquakes can occur anywhere, but most often occur where the tectonic plates move the most.

The meeting points of tectonic plates are called **fault lines**. Fault lines are everywhere on earth including under the ocean. Many fault lines are located on the west coast of the United States. Smaller fault lines are located throughout the rest of the United States.

The location where the earthquake starts is known as the **hypocenter**. The location directly above is called the **epicenter**. **Aftershocks** are small tremors that follow major earthquakes.



### Can you prepare for an Earthquake?

Scientists study earthquakes and monitor fault lines in an effort to predict them, but earthquakes can't be prevented. Wise planning can reduce the devastation. Teaching people what to do if an earthquake occurs can save lives.

### What to do if an Earthquake occurs:

If you are **indoors**, stay there. The safest place to take cover to protect yourself from falling objects is under a strong desk, table, doorway, or by an interior wall. Do not take cover near windows, large mirrors, hanging objects, heavy furniture, heavy appliances or fireplaces.

If you are **outdoors**, go to an open area where falling objects cannot to hit you. Move away from buildings, power lines and trees. If you are driving, bring your car to a slow stop away from bridges.

### How Can you Help?

In times of disaster the quickest way to help is to donate money to organizations that are already working in the country. Food, shelter and medical supplies are too expensive to ship.

Your club can raise funds through:

**Kids Care Change Collections**

**Kids Care Clubs Read-a-thon**

**Kids Care Clubs PLAYATHON.**