



REDDIE KIDS IS THE FINNISH RED CROSS CLUB FOR CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 7-12.

# I can be a helper too!

Produced by the Red Cross, this animation features Reddie the dog, mascot of the Red Cross children's group Reddie Kids, and his friend Crossie the cat. When they see a television news item about an earthquake far away, they get busy organising help for those in need.

The animation lets children see that, by becoming a donor or collector, anyone can get involved in helping people in need, whether they live close by or far away. Below you will find questions and snippets of information to help you get children talking about what they can do. Please go through section 1 with them before watching the animation video and move on to section 2 after watching it.

## 1. Keeping safe! How does disaster impact on people's lives?

• **When a natural disaster strikes or war breaks out**, many people are suddenly forced to flee from their home. Often, families can only take with them what they can carry. Some may be able to go and stay with relatives, but many others end up in the crowded conditions of a refugee camp or perhaps have to build themselves a makeshift shelter from whatever materials they can find.

• **When disaster strikes**, there is often a shortage of food and medicine. If you can't get clean water from a tap or a well and there are no toilets, it is difficult to keep yourself and your things clean. And in dirty conditions, diseases spread quickly.

• **When a disaster comes to an end**, people have to rebuild their lives by building new homes and schools, getting new livestock, and clearing fields for cultivation.

.....  
**THINK ABOUT THIS:**

- What kind of things do people need in the midst of a disaster?
- What would you take with you if you could only take what you can carry?

**Answers:**  
- In the midst of disaster, people need all the essentials: food, clean water, healthcare and a safe place for shelter.

Often family members lose touch with one another when they have to flee. This means many people need information about where and how are the people they love. People are likely to be in shock during and after a disaster and need somebody who can listen to them and offer them support.

## 2. Join the chain of aid!

- Almost every country in the world has a Red Cross or Red Crescent Society like the Finnish Red Cross. When disaster strikes, they are quick to offer emergency aid. After a disaster, they help people return to normal life.
- The Finnish Red Cross collects money in advance for its Disaster Relief Fund so that it is always ready to help quickly when a disaster occurs, whether that is in Finland or elsewhere. The money pays for providing the help that is most needed in a disaster situation, such as sending hospital supplies or water-purifying tablets.
- You can begin a chain of aid from us to the wider world or to our closest neighbours. The most efficient way of helping is to become a Red Cross collector during the Hunger Day Campaign or whenever there is a disaster collection. Even one hour of your time is valuable help. You don't need any special skills to help, just a desire to help people in need. It feels really good to know you have been able to help.
- Be bold, get in touch with your nearest local Red Cross branch and tell them you want to be a collector. The Red Cross branch will give you a collection tin, a Red Cross vest and an identity (ID) card. You will need to bring a photo ID to pick up the collection tin. Pre-teenage children can be collectors if accompanied by an adult. Teenagers under 18 can collect in pairs.

.....  
**THINK ABOUT THIS:**

- In the film, how did Reddie and Crossie begin to help people in need?
- Why should you not send your own stuff to the victims of a disaster? Why is it better to become a Red Cross collector or donate money?
- Why does the Red Cross collect money into its Disaster Relief Fund all the time, even though we might not have any information about the next disaster?

**Answers:**

- Reddie and Crossie search their own home for disaster-relief supplies to send to the disaster area.
- The Red Cross gets information about what kind of aid is most needed in a disaster area. Being a global organisation, it can get large amounts of aid supplies at once and efficiently ship them to the stricken area. Using its own network, it can even get supplies to places that are hard to reach. The Red Cross adjusts its aid to fit the local conditions. For instance, they ensure that food sent to a disaster area conforms to any local customs, and that clothes are suitable for the climate.
- To buy relief supplies, the Red Cross needs money. That is why donations and collecting are such important ways of helping.
- The Red Cross works to prevent disasters in various parts of the world. For instance, they teach people first aid and advise them on how to protect themselves against natural disasters. Since it is impossible to prevent accidents and natural disasters, it always helps to be prepared beforehand. When something happens, help – perhaps in the form of medicines and blankets – is often needed immediately. That is why money is collected in advance for the Disaster Relief Fund so relief supplies can be bought and made ready to ship quickly.

### **WHEN ARE THERE COLLECTIONS?**

- The most important collection organised annually by the Finnish Red Cross is Operation Hunger Day. During the Hunger Day campaign, money is collected for the Disaster Relief Fund. Read more about Hunger Day at: <http://www.hungerdlay.fi/>
- When necessary, the Red Cross organises a separate disaster-relief collection to help the victims of a specific disaster. Whenever that happens, we post information about the collection on our website at: <http://www.redcross.fi/>
- Read more about the Disaster Relief Fund at: [www.punainenristi.fi/lahjoita/katastrofirahasto](http://www.punainenristi.fi/lahjoita/katastrofirahasto).