

Dr. Caroline McDonald-Harker, PhD

**Sociologist and professor in the Department of Sociology & Anthropology, and Faculty Affiliate with the Centre for Community Disaster Research
Mount Royal University**



Title of Talk:

Vulnerable Populations during the 2013 Alberta Flood and 2016 Wildfire: Considerations for Children, Families, and Communities in Disaster Response, Recovery and Preparedness

Summary of Talk:

Based on studies she conducted following two recent major disasters in Alberta - the 2013 flood and the 2016 wildfire - Caroline discusses the unique experiences, challenges, and needs of children and families during critical stages of disaster response, recovery and preparedness. She discusses evidence-based recommendations that can help bridge the gap between the needs of vulnerable populations and emergency management plans and practices, thus contributing to increased resiliency both pre- and post-disaster.

Bio:

Dr. Caroline McDonald-Harker is a Sociologist and professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and a Faculty Affiliate with the Centre for Community Disaster Research at Mount Royal University. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in Sociology from Queen's University, her Master of Arts Honours Degree in Sociology from McGill University, and her PhD in Sociology from the University of Alberta. Her areas of research and expertise include disasters; family; parenting/parenthood; children & youth; trauma and resilience; and social equality/justice. Her work has appeared in a variety of scholarly outlets including *The International Journal of Social, Political and Community Agendas in the Arts; Social Currents; and Demeter Press*. She is also regularly interviewed by both national and local news and media.

She is currently conducting three major community-based research studies in collaboration with 32 non-profit community partners, all of which examine the impacts of disasters on children, families, and communities. These studies include: 1) "The Effects of Environmental Disasters on the Family: Communicating, Coping, and Caring among Families Impacted by the 2013 High River Alberta Floods", funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) Partnership Development Grant, along with Dr. Timothy Haney; 2) "Alberta Resilient Communities Research Project: Engaging Children and Youth in Community Resilience Post-flood in Southern Alberta", funded by an Alberta Innovates – Health Solutions (AIHS) grant, along with Dr. Julie Drolet and Dr. Robin Cox); and 3) "The Health Effects of the Alberta Wildfire and Evacuation: Pediatric Resiliency", funded by a Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) grant, along with Dr. Peter Sivlerstone, Dr. Vincent Agyapong, Dr. Serdar Dursun, and Dr. Julie Drolet.