



10 TIPS FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN A HOME FIRE



Each year more than 2,500 people die and 12,600 are injured in home fires in the United States. Fires and burns are one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of 15. Fortunately most home fires are preventable and there are simple steps families can take to help keep children safe.

- 1 Teach children fire safety.** Teach children how to prevent and survive a fire. Explain why fire safety is important and demonstrate safe behaviors when using fire, fire tools, and other heat sources. Explain that fire is a tool, not a toy.
- 2 Install smoke alarms.** Install a smoke alarm near your kitchen, on each home level, near sleeping areas, and in each bedroom. Use the test button to check the smoke alarms every month and replace all the batteries at least once a year. Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do if they hear them.
- 3 Teach children about firefighters.** As the sight of a firefighter wearing a fire suit and mask can be scary to children, teach children what firefighters look like and sound like with their oxygen masks on. Take them to your local fire department to meet firefighters and learn about fire safety.
- 4 Keep matches and lighters out of reach.** Store matches and lighters out of children's reach and sight, preferably in a locked cabinet. Teach children not to pick up matches or lighters they may find. Instead, they should tell an adult immediately. Only use lighters with child-lock features.
- 5 Keep children away from flames and heat sources.** Never leave children unattended near operating stoves or burning candles, even for a short time.
- 6 Teach children 9-1-1 (or local emergency number).** Help children understand how and when to call 9-1-1 for help in emergencies. If there is a home fire, children should evacuate before calling 9-1-1. Children only need to call 9-1-1 if an adult is not able to do so.
- 7 Practice fire drills.** Include children in planning and practicing home fire drills. Have fire drills at least twice a year so children can practice their primary and secondary escape routes. As fires can happen at any time, plan a fire drill at night when the children are sleeping, but warn the children ahead of time so they do not panic.



10 TIPS FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE IN A HOME FIRE



- 8 Demonstrate how to escape.** Show children how they would evacuate from a room filled with smoke by crawling along the floor to the nearest exit.
- 9 Get out and stay out.** If there is a fire at home, get everybody out of the building, stay out, and call for help. Don't go back into the home to get belongings.
- 10 Stop-drop-and roll if on fire.** Teach children to stop-drop-and roll if their clothes are on fire. Stop, drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands. Then roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The tips above are just the start of knowing how to prepare for and respond to home fire. Use the following resources to help ensure your family is ready.

For adults:

- American Red Cross: Home Fire Safety. <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/home-fire>
- Department of Homeland Security: Home Fires. <http://www.ready.gov/home-fires>
- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA): Safety Information for Consumers. <http://www.nfpa.org/safety-information/for-consumers>

For children

- Department of Homeland Security. Ready Kids: Home Fires. <http://www.ready.gov/kids/know-the-facts/home-fires>
- National Fire Protection Association: Sparky. <http://www.sparky.org/>