



Department of Commerce

Division of State Fire Marshal

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Fire Safety for Children

The Division of State Fire Marshal urges parents and guardians to take precautionary measures to avoid unnecessary fire fatalities, particularly related to children age five and under. Last year in Ohio, 20 of the 26 children who lost their lives in fires were under the age of five.

In the event of a fire, children age five and below are almost entirely dependent on outside help in order to survive. Since many fatal fires occur at night while families are asleep, parents and guardians must be prepared by establishing a home fire escape plan and teaching their young ones what to do if a fire should occur.

Children and Fire: By the Numbers

- Children age 14 and under make up 10-15% of all fire deaths.
- More than half of all child fire deaths happen to children under the age of 5.
- Fire injuries happen most often to those under age 4. The 10 to 14 age group also experience a significant number of fire injuries.
- Boys are at a higher risk of death from fire than girls.
- African-American children are at an increased risk of death from fire.



Children and Fire: Life Saving Tips

- Keep matches, lighters and other items used for ignition in a secured drawer or cabinet out of the reach of children.
- Teach your children to tell you when they find matches and lighters.
- Always dress children in pajamas that meet Federal flammability standards. Avoid dressing children for sleep in loose-fitting, 100% cotton garments, such as oversized t-shirts.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters, but to get out quickly and call for help from another location.
- Show children how to crawl low on the floor, below the smoke, to get out of the house and stay out.
- Demonstrate how to stop, drop to the ground, and roll if clothes catch fire.
- Develop and practice a home fire escape plan and designate a meeting place outside. Get out and stay out.
- Familiarize children with the sound of your smoke alarm.
- Replace mattresses made prior to the 2007 Federal Mattress Flammability Standard.
- Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches, clothes, paper and toys. This can be evidence your child may be playing with fire.

