

## *The Great Escape*

### LESSON 1

Workbook answer key:

#### Why should you have smoke alarms in your house?

Smoke alarms save lives. Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. If there is a fire in your home, smoke spreads fast and you need smoke alarms to give you time to get out.

#### How often should you check your smoke alarms ? Why is this step so important?

Test your smoke alarms at least once a month. Press the test button to be sure the alarm is working. Smoke alarms can only save your life if they are working! Having working smoke alarms in your home improves your chances of surviving a home fire by 50%!

#### Why is it important to set up a meeting place for you and your family in case of an emergency?

It is important that parents and fire fighters know that everyone is out! By meeting in a common place, all are accounted for.

#### If there is smoke in the room, how should you move about in the room?

Crawl on your hands and knees. Smoke rises and contains toxic gases, so the air near the ground will be the most safe. Since smoke is black you will probably not be able to see much around you. Memorize where objects and windows and doors are and then move to a wall and move to an exit. If you are in a hotel or strange place, count the doorways from your room to an exit ahead of time so you will know how to escape. Never open a door if it is hot to the touch!

#### Why shouldn't you use an elevator in the event of a fire?

Fires often knock out the electricity in a building. You could end up trapped in an elevator that stops working while you are inside. Also, the elevator may open on a floor that is on fire exposing you to dangerous gases and heat.

#### What should you grab before leaving your house during a fire?

Cell phone so you can call for help once you are out. If you are staying in a hotel, also take your room key in case you have to reenter your room should the exits be blocked.

If your apartment building is on fire, you should take the stairs instead of the elevator.

TRUE

It is important to find your pets before leaving a burning building

FALSE

When the room is filled with smoke, it is important that you drop to the floor and start crawling to the exit.

TRUE

In the event of a fire, it is important to call your family first to let them know you are safe.

FALSE

#### Things in your home that can cause fires and burns / How to prevent home fires

- Keep paper towels, dish towels or other flammable items away from the stove.
- Maintain a kid-free safety zone three feet around the stove when you're cooking.
- Stay in the area when cooking food on the stovetop or under the broiler.
- Keep the oven and stovetop free of grease build-up.
- Turn pot handles toward the center of the stove.
- Store matches and lighters out of children's reach.
- Adults should stay near the stove/oven when cooking.

## Living Room

- Keep all flammable items at least three feet from the fireplace.
- Have your chimney cleaned and inspected annually.
- Use a fireproof screen in front of your fireplace.
- Replace halogen torchiere lamps with incandescent or fluorescent lights.
- Keep lamps and candles away from drapes and fabrics.
- Replace frayed or damaged electrical cords.

## Bedroom

- Don't drape scarves or clothing over lamps.
- Never set heavy objects on top of electric blankets that are in use.
- Keep space heaters at least three feet from bedding, furniture and other flammable items.
- Don't run extension cords under rugs.
- Be sure electrical cords are not pinched by doors, cabinets or under furniture.
- Never leave candles unattended.
- Don't use space heaters while sleeping.
- Never smoke in bed.
- Be sure secondary exits such as windows are not blocked by furniture.

## Bathroom

- Don't overload outlets with too many appliances.
- Keep curling irons, hair dryers and other hot appliances away from flammable materials.

## Laundry Room

- Clean your dryer's lint filter before each use.
- Shut off the dryer whenever you leave your house.
- Keep clothing and other flammable materials at least one foot from the dryer, if possible.
- Unplug the iron when it's not in use.

## Basement

- Have your furnace cleaned and inspected annually.
- Don't store paint, old newspapers, or other flammables near the furnace or hot water heater.

## Patio and Garage

- Position your grill away from siding, wooden railings and overhanging branches.
- Never add lighter fluid after the coals have been lit.
- Allow coals to cool completely in the grill before you dispose of them.
- Store the lawnmower and gas can away from heat sources.
- Keep oily rags in airtight metal containers.

## OTHER

- Blow out burning candles when everyone leaves a room or the house.
- Use pillar or jar candles rather than taper candles.
- If someone smokes, do so outside, or in a special area.
- Have smokers use a large, stable ashtray with a center island.

# LESSON 2

## Escape Planning

### FACTS:

- The majority of fatal fires occur in the home and at night. The smell of smoke won't always awaken you.
- Fire produces toxic gases which can put you into a deeper sleep.
- Having working smoke alarms in your home cuts your chances of dying in a house fire by 50%.
- You can survive a fire in your home if you know how to react quickly and correctly.
  - Plan at least two escape routes from each room.
  - Don't forget to draw a garage and/or porch roof if you have them... They might serve as an escape route from upstairs windows.
  - Sit down with your family and discuss your plan. Then PRACTICE it at least twice a year.
  - Plan an outdoor meeting place where you can count heads to be sure everyone made it out safely.

### REMEMBER:

- A proper escape plan includes working smoke alarms on every level of the home and in all sleeping areas; two ways out of each room; an unobstructed and easy-to-use meeting place outdoors; a posted emergency phone number for the fire department.
- If there are infants or family members with special needs, a designated member of the family should plan to assist them.
- Make sure that doors needed for escape can be opened easily and the windows are not nailed or painted shut. Everyone in the family, including children, should practice unlocking and opening windows and screens as part of the escape plan.
- Consider purchasing a UL approved collapsible ladder for escape from upper story windows. Know how to use it and practice!
- To make sure that the fire is not on the other side of the door, use the back of your hand to feel the closed door,

the doorknob and the crack between the door and the door frame. If it is cool, open the door carefully and proceed to your planned exit. Crawl low under smoke, if it is present. If the door is hot, don't open it and use your secondary route. Even if the door feels cool, open it carefully. If heat and smoke come in, slam the door and make sure that it is securely closed then use your secondary escape route.

- If there is no escape from your room, stay low near the floor. Block all spaces around the door and door frame with blankets, pillows, clothing, etc. to keep the smoke out. Signal at the window by waving, or use a cell phone to call 911 and advise them of your location.

- React immediately to the sound of a smoke alarm and make getting out your priority. Do not waste time trying to save property or pets.
- Escape first, then call 911. NEVER go back inside the home for any reason. When firefighters arrive, inform them of anyone or of any pets that may still be inside. Firefighters are equipped and trained to perform rescues safely.
- Teach children not to hide from firefighters.
- Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home if you have an attached garage or burn wood, kerosene, oil and/or gas. You should have at least one detector near the sleeping areas of your home.

## LESSON 3

### Youth Fire Misuse

- Many youth incorrectly think that they can control the ignition sources they misuse (i.e. lighters, matches, fireworks, explosives, etc.) and the fires they set.
- Many parents believe their children “know better” than to play with fire, when in fact fire misuse by youth remains a serious and widespread problem.
- Even though most fires set by youth are started out of curiosity or experimentation (versus intentional malice), the damage they cause in terms of both economic and human costs is real and devastating.
- Children “playing” with fire is a very dangerous behavior. Each year, children “playing” (intentional fires not included) with fire cause on average of 49,300 fires, 860 injuries and 80 deaths. (NFPA 2014)
- These fires cost \$235 million in property damage each year in the United States. Not included in these astronomical costs are other expensive indirect costs, such as medical care, fire department response, lost wages or business, etc. (NFPA 2014)
- Data extrapolated from fire department records (which include both intentionally-set fires and fire play) show that every year approximately 187,000 reported fires are caused by youth. Even more alarming, due to lack of reporting it is likely that this number under-estimates the actual number of youth-set fires by 300%. (NFPA 2009 - 2011)
- Approximately 40% of the fires that youth set in a home originate in the child's bedroom. Older children and teenagers are more likely to set fires outside or to other structures. (NFPA 2011)
- About 40% of the fires that kill young children less than 5 years old are started by kids “playing” with fire. (NFPA 2005)
- Fires that youth set to structures cause on average over \$22,600 in damages. (NFPA 2009)
- Youth who misuse fire can be charged with a crime, may be prosecuted as an adult, and can have a permanent criminal record. Children under 18 years old account for nearly 50% of all arson arrests in the United States. (U.S. Department of Justice-FBI, 2000-2011)
- In many states, parents are held legally and financially responsible for their child's fire misuse.
- There are many reasons why youth misuse fire. It can be attributed to experimentation, curiosity, boredom, or peer-pressure. However, there are times when it is motivated by other things in a child's life. Fire misuse can be a sign that a child is struggling and needs additional support or help.
- Without appropriate intervention, many youth will continue to set fires throughout their lifetime placing themselves, family, neighbors, classmates, innocent bystanders, other citizens, first responders, and firefighters at high-risk for injury or death.

## LESSON 4

### What a real fire is like

Fire is fast, hot, dark, and can quickly get out of hand. It can double in size every 30 - 60 seconds. This means your family may have less than 3 minutes to escape from your home. The dangerous, toxic smoke produced from fire can make breathing difficult, impair thinking, and cause you to lose consciousness. This means that it may be impossible for you and/or other family members to escape from your home.