

## *The Great Escape*

### LESSON 1

#### 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.
- can be a sign that a child is struggling and needs additional support or help.
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## LESSON 2

### ESCAPE PLANNING

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#### 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

### COMMON CHEMICAL REACTIONS

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- Rusting of iron: iron plus oxygen and water produce rust
- Photosynthesis: plants in the presence of sunlight, carbon dioxide and water produce glucose and oxygen
- Combustion: Fuel (wood) in the presence of oxygen and heat produce fire (heat)
- Changing of colors of leaves: when photosynthesis stops, leaves turn colors

## LESSON 4

### HOW CAN WE PREPARE OUR HOME IN CASE OF A FIRE EMERGENCY?

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- Conduct a home safety inspection to identify and remove hazards
- Develop a home escape plan
- Practice the escape plan twice a year including at night when people are in bed
- Prepare a plan for sheltering in place until help can arrive

### IN WHAT WAYS CAN WE MAKE SURE OUR SCHOOLS AND HOMES HAVE PLANS IN PLACE IN CASE OF EMERGENCY?

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- Write the plan down
- Review it every year
- Practice it twice a year