



Children's Health  
Education Center™

A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.



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# Fire **get alarmed and get out alive** safety

*Smoke from a fire can kill before  
you ever see a flame.*

A fire in the home starts innocently: a cigarette left unattended near furniture, a greasy pot overheating on the stove, or food left cooking too long in the oven. But once it starts, smoke and flames spread rapidly. Getting out can be the key to staying alive.

On average, 113,600 hospital visits occur each year as a result of a fire/burn-related incident. Nearly 500 children ages 14 and younger die in residential fires each year. For young children, the risk of death is even greater. They are less likely to sense danger, and have difficulty reacting quickly and properly to a fire. Many tragically die in their sleep as a result of smoke inhalation before they know there's a fire.

Take these simple steps to prevent fires, prepare your home for a fire and teach your child fire safety. They could save your child's life.

## Protect your child by preventing fires

To help prevent a fire from starting, closely inspect your home to eliminate potential hazards.

- **Keep matches, lighters, candles and other heat sources out of children's reach.** Playing with matches and lighters is a leading cause of fire deaths for children ages 5 and under.
- **Keep children away from cooking and heating appliances.**
- **Never smoke in bed.** Extinguish all cigarettes before leaving home or going to bed.
- **Avoid plugging several appliance cords into the same electrical socket.**
- **Replace old or frayed electrical wires** and appliance cords, and keep all cords on top of rugs.
- **Store all flammable liquids, such as gasoline, outside of the home and locked out of children's reach.**
- **Never leave cooking food unattended.** Home cooking equipment is the leading cause of injuries in residential fires.



*For proper installation, remember to always read the instructions that come with your smoke alarm. And, test monthly!*

## Protect your child by preparing your home

The chances of dying in a residential fire are cut in half when a working smoke alarm is present. Install smoke alarms in every sleeping area and on every level of your home.

- **Test smoke alarms monthly.** Maintain alarms by replacing batteries at least once a year, and replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- **Plan and practice two escape routes out of the house and each room.** These should be practiced spontaneously at night, because more than half of fire deaths in the home occur between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- **Designate an outside meeting place** to make sure all family members are accounted for quickly.
- **Sleep with bedroom doors closed.** This prevents smoke, gas and heat from entering.
- **Keep furniture and other heavy objects out of the way of doors and windows,** so they won't block an escape.
- **Place space heaters at least three feet from curtains, papers, furniture, and other flammable materials.** Make sure heaters are stable, and use protective coverings.

## Protect your child by teaching safety

Children need to be taught what to expect in a fire so they can act quickly.

Teach children:

- **Leave the house immediately** if they hear the smoke alarm, smell smoke or see flames. Stay low and crawl – the best air is by the floor.
- **Always feel doors before opening them.** If hot, do not open and find another way out.
- **Never go back into a burning building.** Children should be reminded not to stop or return for toys, pets, or to call 9-1-1 from inside the burning building.
- **Call the fire department from a neighbor's house** or cell phone outside the home.
- **Do not hide** in closets, under beds, in bath tubs, or in other areas of the home.
- **When firefighters arrive, immediately tell them if someone is inside or missing.**

