

# Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I

JFIS I-Student Manual

*1st Edition, 2nd Printing-November 2006*



Homeland  
Security



DHS/USFA/NFA  
JFIS I-SM  
November 2006  
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*Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I*



**Homeland  
Security**

# Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I

JFIS I-Student Manual

*1st Edition, 2nd Printing-November 2006*



Homeland  
Security





**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**PREPAREDNESS DIRECTORATE**

**UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION**

**NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY**

**FOREWORD**

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), an important component of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Preparedness Directorate, serves the leadership of this Nation as the DHS's fire protection and emergency response expert. The USFA is located at the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and includes the National Fire Academy (NFA), National Fire Data Center (NFDC), National Fire Programs (NFP), and the National Preparedness Network (PREPnet). The USFA also provides oversight and management of the Noble Training Center in Anniston, Alabama. The mission of the USFA is to save lives and reduce economic losses due to fire and related emergencies through training, research, data collection and analysis, public education, and coordination with other Federal agencies and fire protection and emergency service personnel.

The USFA's National Fire Academy offers a diverse course delivery system, combining resident courses, off-campus deliveries in cooperation with State training organizations, weekend instruction, and online courses. The USFA maintains a blended learning approach to its course selections and course development. Resident courses are delivered at both the Emmitsburg campus and its Noble facility. Off-campus courses are delivered in cooperation with State and local fire training organizations to ensure this Nation's firefighters are prepared for the hazards they face.



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# ***UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION***

## **OBJECTIVES**

*The students will:*

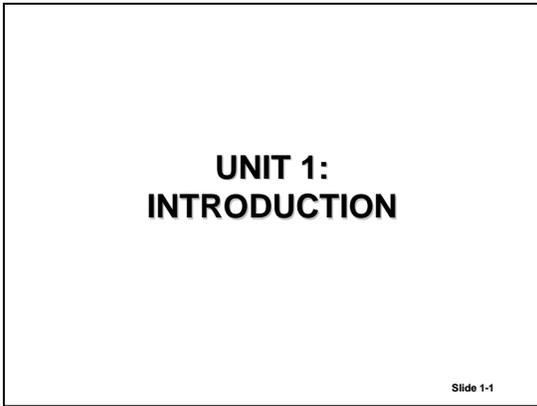
- 1. Become familiar with the course and each other.*
  - 2. Recognize the need for primary intervention strategies.*
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# NOTE-TAKING GUIDE



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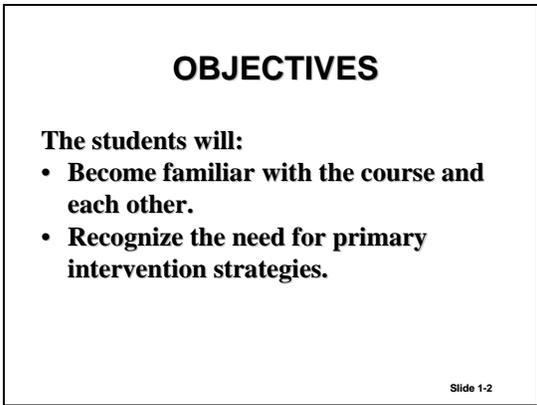
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Slide 1-2



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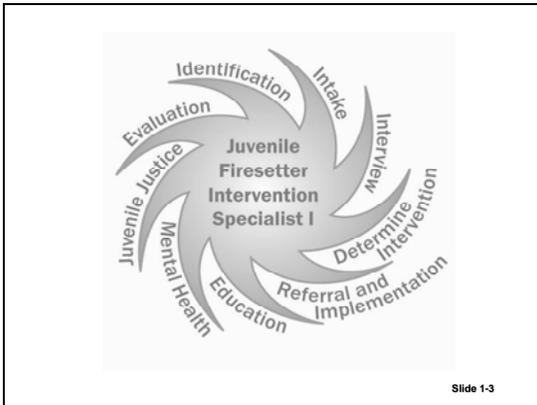
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Slide 1-3



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Slide 1-4

**OVERVIEW**

The issue of juvenile firesetting has many variables:

- Age.
- Motivation for firesetting behavior.
- Type of fires set.
- Ignition materials used to set the fire.
- Child's understanding and limitations.

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Slide 1-5

**OVERVIEW (cont'd)**

- Firesetting behavior is often a symptom of the problem.
- The end result is costly to:
  - The family.
  - The community.
- Firesetting behavior may be manifested through stress and crisis in their lives.

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**NAME GAME--SEMANTIC ANTICS**

- Juvenile firesetting
- Juvenile arson
- Child arson
- Youth firesetting
- Fire lighting
- Fireplay
- Match play
- Misuse of fire

Slide 1-6

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Slide 1-7



**Fire in the hands of children destroys-- regardless of a child's age or motivation**

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Slide 1-8

**ROLE OF THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER INTERVENTION SPECIALIST I**

Use the interview process

- Determine motivation for firesetting
- Assess the child
- Determine type of firesetter and risk level

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Slide 1-9

**ROLE OF THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER INTERVENTION SPECIALIST I (cont'd)**

- Use an approved interview/assessment screening tool
- Collect and document the intake information
- Distinguish simple from complex firesetting situations
- Determine most appropriate intervention strategy

Slide 1-9

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Slide 1-10

**ROLE OF THE JUVENILE  
FIRESSETTER INTERVENTION  
SPECIALIST I (cont'd)**

- Determine the intervention strategy
- Educational intervention
- Mental health
- Social services
- Child welfare
- Juvenile justice
- Other services as need dictates

Slide 1-10

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Slide 1-11

**NFPA 1035**



**Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I**  
The individual who has demonstrated the ability to conduct an interview with a firesetter and their family using prepared forms and guidelines and who, based on recommended practice, may determine the need for referral for counseling and or implements educational intervention strategies to mitigate effects of firesetting behavior.

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Slide 1-12

**NFPA 1035 (cont'd)**



**Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist II**  
The individual who has demonstrated the ability to coordinate child firesetting intervention program activities and the activities of Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist.

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Slide 1-13

**COURSE OUTLINE**

- **Student Manual (SM)**
- **Course units**
- **Student evaluation**
- **NFPA 1035--JFIS I**

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Slide 1-14

**Activity 1.1  
Introductions**

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Slide 1-15

**DISCUSSION**

*Successful Education, Don Porth,  
Public Education Officer, Portland  
Fire and Rescue*

Slide 1-15

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# ACTIVITY WORKSHEET



## Activity 1.1

### Introductions

#### Purpose

To become familiar with the course and each other.

#### Directions

1. You will introduce yourself individually by giving:
  - a. Your name.
  - b. Where you are from.
  - c. The organization you work for.
  - d. What you expect to get from this course.
2. The instructor will rearrange table seating according to experience level.



# BACKGROUND TEXT



**COURSE OUTLINE**



**Figure 1-1  
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist 1  
Course Graphic**

**OVERVIEW**

The issue of juvenile firesetting and juvenile arson has many variables, such as age, motivation for firesetting behavior, type of fires set, ignition materials used to set the fire, etc. The behavior of firesetting children is a symptom of the problem, communicating need in a very powerful and destructive manner. The end results of child firesetting and juvenile arson are costly to the child, his or her family, and the entire community in lives lost, injury, loss of environmental resources, and property damage, regardless of age or motivation for firesetting.

Fire in the hands of children destroys!

## ROLE OF THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER SPECIALIST I

The use of an interview process to determine motivation for firesetting behavior, and profiling a child to determine the risk level for future firesetting behavior are the next steps when dealing with the juvenile firesetter. The interview for child firesetters and their families is key in determining risk levels for future firesetting behavior.

The JFIS I is responsible for using an approved assessment instrument or tool, organizing information, and being able to distinguish a simple firesetting situation from a complex one.

The next step is to develop a program strategy. The JFIS I will determine intervention strategies, which may include

- education programs;
- counseling referral; and/or
- law enforcement/juvenile justice.

The development and implementation of a multiagency, community-based intervention program to address child firesetting and juvenile arson could affect the overall number of fires set by children and youth. Most importantly, it reduces repeat firesetting and identifies troubled children and youth by addressing the problems that cause the behavior.

## REVIEW OF THE NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION STANDARD<sup>1</sup>

The Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist (JFIS) I and the JFIS II Professional Standards are part of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1035, *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Public Fire and Life Safety Educator*, 2004 edition.

Chapter 9: Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I.

- 9.1 General Requirements.
  - 9.1.1 General Requisite. Fire safety education, Interviewing techniques.
  - 9.1.2 General Requisite Skills. The ability to Communicate orally, communicate in writing.
- 9.2 Administration.

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<sup>1</sup>Used with permission of NFPA.

- 9.2.1 Assemble forms and materials.
- 9.2.2 Assemble interview tools and material resources.
- 9.2.3 Utilize personal work schedule.
- 9.2.4 Report case information to supervisor.
- 9.2.5 Record and secure data, given case information.
- 9.3 Planning and Development.
- 9.4 Education and Implementation.
- 9.4.1 Review a case file, given intake information.
- 9.4.2 Initiate contact with the family, given the case file.
- 9.4.3 Conduct an intake/interview, given program forms and guidelines.
- 9.4.4 Determine intervention and referral options: educational, mental health and possible legal consequences.
- 9.4.5 Implement educational, mental health and legal interventions, given the case file.
- 9.4.6 Implement referral process, given current interagency network list.
- 9.5 Evaluation.
- 9.5.1 Collect and record feedback from the firesetter and family.
- 9.5.2 Measure changes in firesetter and family behavior.

Chapter 10: Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist II.

- 10.1 General Requirements.
- 10.1.1 General Requisite Knowledge.
- 10.1.2 General Requisite Skills.
- 10.2 Administration.

- 10.2.1 Formulate program policies and procedures.
- 10.2.2 Develop a program budget.
- 10.2.3 Identify and assign a JFIS I.
- 10.2.4 Supervise the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist I.
- 10.2.5 Maintain records and case files of each juvenile firesetter.
- 10.3 Planning and Development.
- 10.3.1 Develop an interagency network.
- 10.3.2 Develop or select program forms.
- 10.3.3 Design a training program for program personnel.
- 10.3.4 Develop a community awareness program.
- 10.3.5 Create a data collection system.
- 10.4 Education and Implementation.
- 10.4.1 Deliver a training program for program personnel.
- 10.4.2 Maintain a current interagency network.
- 10.4.3 Deliver community awareness training to current interagency network members.
- 10.5 Evaluation.
- 10.5.1 Evaluate program, given program goals, case records and feedback.
- 10.5.2 Analyze the effectiveness of the program.
- 10.5.3 Prepare a report on program outcome.

## **APPENDIX**

# ***SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION, DON PORTH, PUBLIC EDUCATION OFFICER, PORTLAND FIRE AND RESCUE***



## SUCCESSFUL EDUCATION<sup>2</sup>

Since the implementation of various youth related education programs, the Portland Fire Bureau has experienced some significant success that we would like to share. Probably most noteworthy is the use of the Bic "Play Safe! Be Safe!" kits (from the Bic Corporation) and the Learn-Not-To-Burn (LNTB) Curriculums (from the National Fire Protection Association).

Our first experience with the LNTB Curriculum came in late 1992. We introduced the Preschool Curriculum to our Headstart Preschool population. We feel that early education is the key to reducing the fire and injury risk recognized by children. The Preschool Curriculum was well received in the 29 Headstart programs we serve.

In 1994-95, the distribution of over 175 Bic "Play Safe! Be Safe!" fire safety education kits began. The registered group day care facilities (12 or more children in a nonresidential setting) were targeted. These helped fill a void in these numerous sites that we were unable to visit regularly.

While we realized the educational quality of the two programs, we did not necessarily expect it to have the impact that we found in our child-set fire problem. Now, looking back at the referrals to our Juvenile Firesetter Program, we are beginning to recognize a very positive trend.

The 3-5 year old population of curious firesetters (those we can expect to benefit from increased knowledge about fire and fire safety) represent a certain percentage of referrals to our Juvenile Firesetter Program each year. Since the implementation of these two programs, we have seen a drop of over 50% in referrals of curious firesetters in this age range. The numbers can be seen below:

1990-91	5.1%
1991-92	6.2%
1992-93	4.5%
1993-94	2.7%
1994-95	1.3%
1995-96	2.4%
1996-97	1.8%
1997-98	2.4%
1998-99	3.2%

There have been no other identified factors for which to attribute this change aside from the implementation of these programs.

To continue this positive trend in to the next age grouping, we looked to the LNTB Level One and Two Curriculums. In 1994, we became an NFPA Champion City and provided three elementary schools with the curriculum. Based on data from our Juvenile Firesetter

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<sup>2</sup>Used with permission of Don Porth.

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**INTRODUCTION**

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Program computer database, we placed the curriculum in the schools serving the area of town experiencing the greatest number of child-set fires.

In 1995, we began the task of supplying the LNTB Level One and Two curriculums to the remaining 79 elementary schools in Portland. We again targeted the top twenty schools as identified by those serving the areas at highest risk for juvenile fires. We distributed the curriculum and provided special educational assemblies in these schools. As we approached the 1996-97 school year, we again prioritized our schools. We found that the original schools addressed by our 1994 champion program were no longer in the top twenty. We feel very strongly that the inclusion of the LNTB curriculum was a major factor in this shift.

We also organized an Adopt-A-School program in 1995 that teamed our firefighters more closely with a particular elementary school. Administrative support added the requirement that our fire companies spend at least 10 contact hours per year with their school. Through this pairing, we have successfully provided our community's teaching professionals with a quality teaching tool (the LNTB Curriculum) and a technical expert within the community (the local fire station). This appears to be a winning combination that has turned the tide on the youth fire problem. The figures below illustrate a decline in youth fires since this concept was implemented in 1995. It should also be noted that only one child-caused fire death have occurred since 1992-93. The prior eight years recorded 16 child-caused fire deaths.

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL FIRES	YOUTH FIRES	% YOUTH TO TOTAL
1991-92	3347	301	8.9%
1992-93	3103	258	8.3%
1993-94	3158	376	11.9%*
1994-95	3202	360	11.2%
1995-96	2859	274	9.6%
1996-97	2738	207	7.6%
1997-98	2527	172	6.8%
1998-99	2659	177	6.7%

\*Certain fires within schools were not being included in the youth fires. When included, this accounted for an approximate 2% increase in the totals for 1991-92 and 1992-93.

For further information about this or other related programs, contact

Don Porth, Public Education Officer  
Portland Fire & Rescue  
55 SW Ash Street  
Portland OR 97204  
(503) 823-3615  
dporth@fire.ci.portland.or.us

## ***UNIT 2: WHO SETS FIRES AND WHY***

### **OBJECTIVES**

*The students will:*

- 1. Define levels of risk.*
  - 2. Become familiar with the facts and myths related to juvenile firesetting.*
  - 3. Identify the classification of firesetters.*
  - 4. Identify motivations and needs of children who misuse fire.*
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# NOTE-TAKING GUIDE



Slide 2-1

**UNIT 2:  
WHO SETS FIRES  
AND WHY**

Slide 2-1

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Slide 2-2

**OBJECTIVES**

**The students will:**

- **Define levels of risk.**
- **Become familiar with the facts and myths related to juvenile firesetting.**
- **Identify the classification of firesetters.**
- **Identify motivations and needs of children who misuse fire.**

Slide 2-2

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Slide 2-3



**For children,  
interest in fire  
is natural;  
setting fires is  
not!**

Slide 2-3

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Slide 2-4

**FACTS ABOUT  
JUVENILE FIRESETTING**

**\$272 million in  
property damage**

**Crime of arson has  
the highest rate of  
juvenile involvement**



NFPA 2003  
Slide 2-4

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Slide 2-5

**CHILDREN AND FIRE**

Of every 100 people in the U.S.		16 are children
Of every 100 people who die in fires in the U.S.		23 are children
Of every 100 children who die in fires in the U.S.		24 are killed because of children playing with fire
Of every 100 people who die in child-set fires		85 are children

Source: FEMA/USFA  
Slide 2-5

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Slide 2-6

**CHILDREN AND FIRE (cont'd)**

Of every 100 people in the U.S.		8 are under 5 years old
Of every 100 people who die in child-set fires in the U.S.		17 are under 5 years old
Of every 100 people who die in child-set fires in the U.S.		68 are under 5 years old

Sources: NFIRS Data, US Census Data  
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Slide 2-7

**There are effective educational programs in fire and life safety that have been developed for children.**

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Slide 2-8

**MYTHS ABOUT JUVENILE FIRESETTING**

- A child can control a small fire.
- Firesetting is just a phase.
- If you burn a child's hand, he/she will stop setting fires.
- Some children are obsessed with fire.
- Bedwetting leads to firesetting.

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Slide 2-9

**All BIG fires start small!**



Slide 2-9

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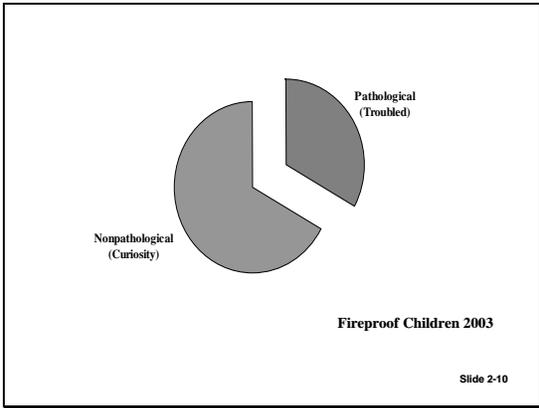
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Slide 2-10



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Slide 2-11

**CHILD FIREPLAY,  
FIRESETTING,  
AND FIRE STARTING**

- Labels can add confusion.
- Fire interest, motivation, and level of involvement may vary.
- Motivations may be simple to complex.

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Slide 2-12

**Activity 2.1  
Levels of Risk**

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Slide 2-13

**SOME RISK**

**Child**

- Most common risk category
- Often first time involvement
- Curious, experimentation, lacking knowledge, lacking intent, possible neurological limitations

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Slide 2-14

**SOME RISK (cont'd)**

**The incident**

- Uses matches or lighters
- In or near home
- Unsophisticated
- Unintentional fires

Slide 2-14

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Slide 2-15

**SOME RISK (cont'd)**

**The family environment**

- Family structure may vary.
- Parental modeling may be questionable.
- Lack of safety awareness.
- Easy access to ignition tools.
- Minor lapses in supervision.

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Slide 2-16

**DEFINITE RISK**

**Child**

- Consider all age groups.
- Primarily, but not limited to, males.
- May have poor social skills and peer relationships.
- May have neurological limitations.
- May have set multiple fires.
- Firesetting may be related to stress/crisis.

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Slide 2-17

**DEFINITE RISK (cont'd)**

**The incident**

- May use accelerants.
- Item burned may be symbolic.
- Firesetting is recurrent, purposeful, and intentional.
- May not show remorse.

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Slide 2-18

**DEFINITE RISK (cont'd)**

**The family environment**

- Home problems may be evident.
- Supervision lacking.
- Little understanding of dangers of fire.
- May have experienced recent stress/crisis.
- Chronic dysfunction.

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Slide 2-19

**EXTREME RISK**

**The child**

- Criminal implications may be present.
- Least common category of firesetting behavior (most in need of intervention services).
- May suffer from significant neurological limitations.
- Complex solutions for child/family.

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Slide 2-20

**EXTREME RISK (cont'd)**

**The incident**

- Item burned may be symbolic.
- Injury potential and property loss is high.
- Firesetting is recurrent, purposeful, and intentional.
- Other behaviors may seem extreme.

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Slide 2-21

**EXTREME RISK (cont'd)**

**The family environment**

- Home problems may be evident.
- Supervision lacking.
- Little regard for dangers of fire.
- Ongoing stress/crisis may overwhelm family.

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Slide 2-22

**Table 2-1**  
**Classification of Firesetters**

Type	Level of Risk/Concern	Classification
Curious/ Non-pathological	Some/Definite	Curious/Experimental Troubled/Crisis
Troubled/ Pathological	Definite/Extreme	Delinquent/Criminal or Strategic Emotionally Disturbed

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Slide 2-23

**SUMMARY**

- **Fire interest naturally emerges in most children.**
- **Parents, caregivers, schools, and fire service need to pay attention and intervene.**
- **Unchecked behavior may evolve into high-risk behaviors.**

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# ACTIVITY WORKSHEET



## Activity 2.1

### Levels of Risk

#### Purpose

To realize that just because you categorize in a particular way does not mean that the categories are necessarily clear cut.

#### Directions

1. The instructor will divide an easel pad into three columns: Some, Definite, and Extreme.
2. As a large group, describe who/what falls into each category.
3. Discuss the choices. Offer alternative choices.



# BACKGROUND TEXT



## FACTS AND MYTHS ABOUT CHILDREN AND FIRE

Interest in fire, for children, is natural; setting fire is not! The element of fire is seen by children from the time they're born. They see fire mostly controlled, for positive and pleasurable uses. So it's natural for children, as young as age 2 to become fascinated with the glow and warmth of fire. Wanting to learn more about it, as well as seeing "if they can make fire" is common. They have little understanding of the properties and consequences of uncontrolled fire. Protecting them by keeping matches and lighters out of reach in a secured place is a critical responsibility of parents and caregivers.

### Juvenile Arson Facts

Fires reported by U.S. fire departments show that children playing with fire started 41,900 fires, causing an estimated 150 civilian deaths, 1,900 civilian injuries, and \$272 million in direct property damage.<sup>1</sup>

The crime of arson has the highest rate of juvenile involvement. For the eighth straight year, juvenile firesetters accounted for at least half of those arrested for arson. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), nearly one-third of those arrested were children under the age of 15, and 5 percent were under the age of 10.<sup>2</sup>

Roughly three out of every four children experiment with fire, and at least four-fifths of associated deaths and injuries involve matches or lighters. Children also start fires by playing with candles, stoves, fireworks, and cigarettes.<sup>3</sup>

Just over half of children experimenting with fire in homes start fires in a bedroom. Three out of five such fires involve children igniting bedding, mattresses, upholstered furniture, or clothing.<sup>1</sup>

A major contributor to youth-set fires is a child having access to lighters. In 1998, the most recent year for which national fire loss data are available, an estimated 2,400 residential structure fires occurred that were caused by children younger than age 5 playing with cigarette lighters. Children younger than age 5 playing with multipurpose lighters caused an estimated 800 residential fires that resulted in about 20 deaths, 50 injuries, and \$15.6 million in property loss in 1998.<sup>4</sup>

According to studies of firesetting behavior, children who start fires may be children in crisis, with the fires acting as cries for help from stressful life experiences or abuse.<sup>1</sup>

A study by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) indicates a substantial link between arson and illegal drug activity, on the order of

one-fifth to one-fourth (20 to 25 percent) of reported arson cases in affected cities.<sup>1</sup>

The median age of children who start reported fires by experimentation is 5 years old, compared to a median age of 3 years old for fatal victims and a median age in the early 20's for nonfatal injuries.<sup>1</sup>

The median age of children who started fires by experimentation was 5 years old.<sup>1</sup>

Six to eight percent of all those arrested for arson are under age 10, a higher percentage than any other crime.<sup>1</sup>

Most children who experiment with fires start them with lighters or matches.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of child experimentation fires are started in bedrooms.<sup>1</sup>

Only a small percentage of school fire incidents are reported to fire departments each year. Incomplete fire reporting gives an inaccurate picture of the school fire problem.<sup>5</sup>

Children may set one fire out of curiosity or experimentation. More than one firestart may indicate other needs. Children as young as age 2 need to be taught about fire--what it is, what it does, and what it can do if out of control.

All big fires start small. In developing a child firesetter program in Rochester, NY, research showed that many children and adults did not think that an entire building could burn down starting with just one match! The concept of the power of just one match, and a lack of knowledge about the properties of uncontrolled fire (spreads quickly, high heat and smoke levels, etc.) are often two lessons learned too late!

The majority of juvenile firesetters are **ordinary children in need**: some are curious and experimental about fire (needing fire safety education); some troubled (in need of counseling and other services). Punishment and scare tactics do not **teach** a child about fire. Today, there are effective educational programs in fire and life safety that have been developed and tested with preschool age children. These materials and messages are sensitive to the special growth and development needs of very young children. Fire safety includes teaching children "what to do" if faced with an unsafe situation.

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<sup>1</sup>National Fire Protection Association, *Children Playing with Fire*, Nov. 2003.

<sup>2</sup>Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Report.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Data Center.

<sup>4</sup>Consumer Product Safety Commission, *Fires Caused by Children Playing with Lighters*, Sept. 2000.

<sup>5</sup>Office of the Oregon State Fire Marshal, *School Fires: The Need to Report*, Sept. 2000.

One message tailored to the preschool age child's needs, understanding, and capabilities would be "If you find matches or lighters tell a grown-up" versus the "give matches or lighters to an adult" message for an elementary-level child.

### **Myths about Children and Fire**

Firesetting is not related to bedwetting and cruelty to animals. Lighting matches is firesetting. Children need to be **educated** about fire and fire tools. Learning a child's motivation for his/her firesetting behavior is key in providing successful intervention to stop the firesetting behavior. Education about fire and fire safety needs to be introduced at the preschool level, and carried through the elementary and high school years. "**Drive-by**" education (provided infrequently, and through bumper stickers, posters, magnets) alone, and a once a year focus on fire during Fire Prevention Week in October are no match for the level of knowledge and practice needed by children to keep them safe from fire.

**Myth:** A child can control a small fire.

**Fact:** Most fires start small but can become uncontrollable quickly. A fire doubles in size every 30 seconds.

**Myth:** It is normal for children to play with fire.

**Fact:** It is **not** normal for children to play with fire. Curiosity about fire is common. Use of fire without a parent's knowledge, approval, or supervision is dangerous.

**Myth:** Firesetting is a phase that children will outgrow.

**Fact:** Firesetting is not a phase. If a child is not taught fire safety, the firesetting can get out of control easily. It is dangerous behavior; you can't afford to wait to change it.

**Myth:** Some children are obsessed with fire.

**Fact:** Very few children are obsessed with fire. There always is a reason for firesetting. That reason needs to be discovered and dealt with.

**Myth:** If you burn a child's hand, he/she will stop setting fires.

**Fact:** Purposely burning a child's hand is child abuse and is against the law. Burns only create fear and scars. The reason behind the fire use must be discovered and addressed.

**Myth:** If you take a child to the burn unit to see burn victims, he/she will stop playing with fire.

**Fact:** Going to the burn unit only instills fear, and does not teach the child anything about fire and fire safety. More importantly, we need to be sensitive to burn survivors who are trying to recover (emotionally and physically) from their burns and we should not put them on display.

**Myth:** Put a child in the back of a police car or have a firefighter talk sternly to them and they will be so scared they won't ever do it again.

**Fact:** A police officer will put a child in the back of their patrol car only if they have legal authority, and it is appropriate to do so. Scare tactics don't get to the root of the problem, and these kids typically continue to set fires.

**Myth:** Firesetting is related to bedwetting.

**Fact:** This correlation has never been proven. It is based on Freudian Domination theory; prehistoric man showed power by urinating on fires and putting them out.

## JUVENILE FIRESETTING

Child development specialists and educators openly object to the use of the word "play" in describing a child's negative behavior, or misuse of fire and fire tools. According to these professionals, the word "**play,**" being a child's work, or means of expression, **should be associated only with positive learning activities.**

Curious and experimental firesetting refers primarily to very young children (ages 2 to 10), although they can be as young as 12 months. Fascination with fire is a naturally occurring developmental sequence in children; setting fires is not. At least three distinct levels mark the chronological development of fire behavior in children: fire interest, fire starting, and firesetting. These categories of fire behavior represent increasing levels of involvement with fire. Through proper parenting, effective school and fire service education programs, and social interaction within their community, most children experience each of these levels of involvement and learn age-appropriate, fire-safe behaviors.

Most children experience fire interest between the ages of 3 to 5. Interest can be expressed in a number of ways: for example, asking questions about fire. These questions often focus on the physical properties of fire, such as how hot a fire is or what makes a fire burn. These questions are

similar to questions children have about the other physical elements in their environment; for example, children may ask why the sky is blue or what makes water wet. Children also express their interest in fire through their play. They may wear fire hats, play with toy fire trucks, and cook food on their toy stoves. This type of play is healthy and provides children with ways to explore and understand fire as a productive and useful part of their lives.

Fire starting occurs when children experiment with ignition sources such as matches and lighters. Some children may engage in at least one unsupervised firestart. Most of these unsupervised firestarts are single episodes motivated primarily by curiosity. In general, fires resulting from these incidents are accidental or unintentional. They are started with available ignition sources, and there is no typical target for these fires.

If these fires get out of control, children will make an attempt either to put out the fire or to go for help. If children continue to participate in more than one unsupervised firestart, the probability of starting a significant fire increases dramatically. It is very important not only to discourage unsupervised firestarts, but also to provide a solid education in fire safety to children to prevent unsupervised experimentation.

In some children, what begins as fire interest and leads to unsupervised firestarts, can result in repeated firesetting. Children in the age range of 7 to 10 years who understand the rules of fire safety may continue to be involved in repeated firesetting to pursue their interest, without their parents or caretakers being aware of this activity. While the actual setting of fire is intentional, it may not represent any underlying psychological or social problems. This type of firesetting can lead to more serious incidents if ignored. Intentional firesetting may be motivated by psychological or social problems. This type of firesetting consists of a series of planned firestarts that take place over several weeks, months, or even years. The severity of these fires varies. These fires can be motivated by different behaviors, including anger, revenge, attention seeking, malicious mischief, crime concealment, and intention to destroy or harm property and/or people. Once the fire is started, the firesetter rarely will make an attempt to extinguish it.

**Table 2-2** summarizes the characteristics of unsupervised fire starting and intentional firesetting. These behaviors represent significant problems for these juveniles, their families, and their community.

**Table 2-1  
Classification of Firesetters**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Level of Risk/Concern</b>	<b>Classification</b>
Curious/Nonpathological	Some/Definite	Curious/Experimental Troubled/Crisis
Troubled/Pathological	Definite/Extreme	Delinquent/Criminal or Strategic Emotionally Disturbed

**Table 2-2  
Fire Starting and Firesetting**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Unsupervised Fire Starting</b>	<b>Intentional Firesetting</b>
<b>History</b>	Single episode	Repeated
<b>Method</b>	Unplanned	Planned
<b>Motive</b>	Curious	Conscious
<b>Intent</b>	Accidental	Purposeful
<b>Ignition source</b>	Available	Collected
<b>Materials</b>	At hand	Flammable
<b>Target</b>	Nonspecific	Specific
<b>Behavior</b>	Extinguish fire	Runaway

## LEVELS OF RISK--SOME RISK

Older children are known to set unintentional fires out of experimentation. Most often, they attempt to replicate an experiment or demonstration seen in an uncontrolled environment. (An example of this might be a 10-year-old boy using a lighter and an aerosol can in a confined space, like a bathroom, after seeing this done on a TV science program.) Older children may not be as careful as they should be around open flame, not fully realizing the speed and power of fire, nor the devastating consequences (such as a Boy Scout troop being careless around a campfire: sparks land on dry grass and start a fire).

These firesetters may be either boys or girls, and account for approximately 60 percent of all child firesetting. They usually are first-time firestarters. Their actions are prompted by curiosity, experimentation, or carelessness. Sometimes it's a simple wish to explore the environment with little understanding of the consequences of uncontrolled fire. The child does not intend to be destructive or to do damage to life and property. The child is remorseful.

The child who sets a fire out of curiosity or experimentation usually uses matches or lighters, or has access to open flame. Fires are set in or near their home, and are relatively unsophisticated. These children may be found in any family structure. Reports indicate that frequently they are found in single-parent families where a lack of supervision is evident. Parents can be physically in the home but emotionally absent, which may have a negative effect on the child. Parents have a general lack of safety awareness. Parent(s) or caregivers have a poor understanding of the need for safety education. They miss the fact that the child needs to learn about fire and how to safely co-exist with fire in their everyday environment. Most significantly, these children have easy access to ignition tools such as lighters and matches

**Table 2-3** describes the individual traits, social circumstances, and firesetting scenarios of some-risk children. In general, the majority of these children are young boys between the ages of 3 and 7 who come from all types of social and economic backgrounds. Young girls also participate in unsupervised firestarts, but they do so less frequently than their male counterparts.

**Table 2-3  
Some Risk**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Profile</b>
Individual traits	The majority are young boys coming from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. Girls are involved less frequently. Physical, cognitive, and emotional development is normal. There is no evidence of psychiatric disturbance.
Social circumstances	There is a functional family providing support and guidance. Peer relationships are adequate. School performance and behavior are well within the normal range.
Firesetting scenario	Firestarts are unplanned, single episodes motivated by curiosity or experimentation. Resulting fires also may be accidental. Available matches or lighters are used, and there is no specific material or target ignited with the intention to destroy or harm. Attempts are made to extinguish the fire or call for help. Feelings of guilt or remorse occur after the incident.

**LEVELS OF RISK--DEFINITE RISK**

The child at highest risk for continued firesetting behavior is typically a male between the ages of 7 and 18, although some may be as young as 4. This category accounts for 30 to 40 percent of all child firesetting and arson. Often school-age children have poor social skills and peer relationships; some may be "loners." These firesetters may have learning disabilities or difficulty using words to express feelings such as fear, anger, frustration, confusion, sadness, and helplessness. They express themselves through actions, not words. They set multiple fires, and may use fire to express a wish to gain power, punish adults or caregivers, or gain status among their peers. Their firesetting may be related directly to a recent crisis at home or school.

Older children and teens often use accelerants such as gasoline, aerosol cans, or lighter fluid. Older children set a majority of their multiple fires in locations such as trash bins, dumpsters, brush or grass piles, vacant lots, abandoned cars, and buildings. What they burn might be very symbolic of the stress that they are experiencing (e.g., schools; a baby crib after the birth of a new sibling; school dumpsters following failing grades; etc.). This firesetting is recurrent, purposeful, and is intentional versus accidental. They show little remorse afterward.

Although each case is unique, among this group of firesetters significant problems in the home are typical. Often the child is not well supervised. There is little understanding of the dangers of uncontrolled fire. The family may be experiencing recent trauma or crisis, or drug and/or alcohol abuse may be evident among family members, including the firesetter. Many studies indicate that these children come from single-parent homes, or from homes where the father is absent or inactive. Parents or caregivers may have an attitude that the child will "grow out of" the firesetting behavior, or that he/she will learn about fire in school, or simply that "all kids play with fire, and this interest will pass."

The individual traits, social circumstances, and firesetting scenario for troubled juveniles are summarized in **Table 2-4**.

**Table 2-4  
Definite Risk (Troubled)**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Profile</b>
Individual traits	The majority are boys coming from a variety of social and economic backgrounds, although girls also are involved. One or more of the following problems exist: a greater number of physical illnesses, histories of physical or sexual abuse, poor impulse control, and overwhelming feelings of anger. For adolescent boys there may be gender confusion, higher levels of sexual conflict, lack of emotional depth, and greater risktaking behavior.
Social circumstances	Many live in single-parent households, with an absent father. There is little adult supervision and inconsistent methods of discipline. One or more parents may carry a psychiatric diagnosis. There are difficulties establishing and maintaining friendships. Learning difficulties are common, and attention deficit disorder (ADD) with or without hyperactivity may be diagnosed. School performance and behavior are below average.
Firesetting scenario	Recent or chronic stressful events trigger emotional reactions that result in fire starting. The fire represents the release of displaced emotions, such as frustration or anger. The fire also has the reinforcing properties of effect and attention. No attempt is made to extinguish the fire. There is no consideration of the negative consequences or potential destruction.

## LEVELS OF RISK--EXTREME RISK

Unsupervised fire starting and pathological firesetting can be classified as a crime of arson if there is significant damage caused by a fire and it is determined that the juvenile involved acted recklessly or intentionally. This determination varies from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and from State to State. State statutes outline the specific circumstances that classify fire starting and firesetting as arson.

The major element comprising most criminal-legal definitions of arson is intent. If the juvenile's reasons for firesetting reflect substantial emotional immaturity or indicate mental illness, then it will be difficult to establish criminal intent. If the firesetting represents a conscious act to destroy, harm, or conceal another crime, then the behavior can be classified as arson. Intent includes both the purpose and design that motivate as well as a description of the mental state leading up to, during, and immediately subsequent to the firestart. A juvenile must have intended to participate in the act of firesetting with a mental state that is "sound" and "sane." If this type of mental responsibility is demonstrated, then firesetting can be classified as arson. This is the smallest category of firesetting children and adolescents. These juveniles may suffer from significant mental dysfunction.

There are several severe mental disorders that include firesetting as a clinical feature. These include the psychotic disturbances of schizophrenia and affective disorders, as well as the organically impaired disturbances of mental retardation and fetal alcohol syndrome. These severely disturbed children and adolescents are beyond most fire safety and prevention programs currently available. Many of these children are a significant danger to themselves or others, and cannot take care of themselves adequately. If these youngsters come to the attention of the fire department, local mental health agencies knowledgeable about firesetting issues should be contacted immediately. Upon the advice of the mental health professionals, fire safety education could be offered for the family. A suitable time to provide education to the child could be determined.

## SUMMARY

Fire behavior naturally emerges in most children around the age of 3. Parents, caregivers, schools, and the fire service need to pay attention to children's interest in time and at young ages. Because of the impact of psychological and social factors, a certain percentage of children become involved in fire risk behaviors that include unsupervised fire starting and intentional firesetting.

We currently have information to determine levels of risk and to profile firesetters, but research is ongoing.

## **UNIT 3: IDENTIFICATION AND INTAKE**

### **OBJECTIVES**

*The students will:*

- 1. Identify necessary and effective intake procedures.*
  - 2. List information that they need to know at intake.*
  - 3. Document current intake and assessment procedures and identify areas that need to be modified or strengthened to be effective.*
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# NOTE-TAKING GUIDE



Slide 3-1

**UNIT 3:  
IDENTIFICATION  
AND INTAKE**

Slide 3-1

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Slide 3-2

**OBJECTIVES**

The students will:

- Identify necessary and effective intake procedures.
- List information that they need to know at intake.
- Document current intake and assessment procedures and identify areas that need to be modified or strengthened to be effective.

Slide 3-2

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Slide 3-3

**INTRODUCTION**

- When a fire occurs and juvenile involvement is suspected, identification procedures are set into motion.
- Once juveniles and their families are identified, decisions are made regarding a course of action.
- To arrive at these decisions, the first step is intake.

Slide 3-3

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Slide 3-4

**IDENTIFICATION**

**The earlier the identification is initiated, the better the chances of a successful intervention.**

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Slide 3-5

**IDENTIFICATION (cont'd)**

**Two ways juveniles involved in fire incidents come to the attention of a juvenile firesetter program:**

- Referred from outside of the fire service
- Result of suppression or investigation efforts

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Slide 3-6

**IDENTIFICATION SOURCES**

Proactive	Reactive
• Parents/Caregivers	• Fire service
• Schools	• Law enforcement
• Mental health	• Juvenile justice
• Others	• Child welfare
	• Others

Slide 3-6

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Slide 3-7

**FACTORS IN IDENTIFICATION**

- Nature of the fire
- Violations of laws
- Cause-and-origin determination
- Local Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)
- Age and history of the juvenile

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Slide 3-8

**INTAKE**

- Intake is the process of collecting background information for the juvenile and family regarding the incident(s) that brought the juvenile to the program. (NFPA, 2004)
- Procedures must be in place for intake regardless of identification factors.

Slide 3-8

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Slide 3-9

**INTAKE CONSIDERATIONS**

- Who identified the firesetting behavior (e.g., school, fire service, parent, etc.)?
- Who will be responsible to perform the initial intake/screening?
- Begin the documentation trail.

Slide 3-9

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Slide 3-10

**INTAKE--WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY**

- **Initiate intake procedures as soon as possible**
- **Approach to take depends on:**
  - **Structure and operation of the program**
  - **Availability of personnel**
  - **Resources**

Slide 3-10

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Slide 3-11

**Activity 3.1  
What's Your Top 10?**

Slide 3-11

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Slide 3-12

**SUMMARY**

- **Identification and intake may vary.**
- **A juvenile firesetting program must establish a standardized and secure pathway from identification, to intake, to the interview/screening.**
- **Documentation is essential.**

Slide 3-12

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# ACTIVITY WORKSHEET



### Activity 3.1

#### What's Your Top 10?

##### **Purpose**

To identify intake items successfully.

##### **Directions**

1. In your table group, brainstorm a list of information that you need to know at intake.
2. Discuss your list and determine the top 10 items.
3. Put this top 10 list on an easel pad to share with the rest of the class.
4. Share the group lists and develop a total class top 10 by listing three items from each table group.



# **BACKGROUND TEXT**



## **INTRODUCTION**

When a fire occurs and juvenile involvement is suspected, identification procedures are set into motion. Once juveniles and their families are identified, decisions are made regarding a course of action. To arrive at these decisions, the first step is intake.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

Juvenile firesetters are identified in a number of ways. Parents, upon finding unspent matches in their child's pants pockets and small burn marks on toys and furniture, call their local fire department for advice. A school, experiencing a series of trash can fires, identifies one or more youths involved in the incidents, and contacts the fire service for help. Fire suppression, called to a second-story house fire, discovers that a teenage boy left his 5-year-old brother untended for an hour, only to return to find him playing with a lighter.

The earlier the identification is initiated, the better the chances of a successful intervention. Typically, there are two ways juveniles involved in fire incidents come to the attention of a juvenile firesetter program. First, there are those juveniles who are referred from a number of different sources outside of the fire service, such as:

- parents and caregivers;
- schools;
- law enforcement;
- mental health;
- child protective services; and
- various youth groups.

The second way juveniles are identified is from within the fire service, generally as the result of suppression or investigation efforts. Immediately after suppression, most fire departments conduct a cause-and-origin determination. The purpose of a cause-and-origin determination is to learn as much as possible about the area of origin and how the fire started. This information is gathered by talking with firefighters at the fire scene, reviewing physical evidence at the fire, and interviewing witnesses. A cause-and-origin determination can identify juvenile involvement in a fire. In addition, observations made during suppression and investigation procedures can lead to the identification of juvenile firesetters. A youth identified by a cause-and-origin determination can be referred to a juvenile firesetter program or to juvenile justice.

Once the firesetter has been identified, the next action depends on a number of different factors:

- the nature and severity of the fire;
- the violations of local or State laws;
- a sufficient amount of evidence resulting from the cause-and-origin determination;
- the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) of the local fire service; and
- the age and firesetting history of the juvenile.

## **INTAKE**

Whether juveniles are identified by parents and caregivers, by community agencies, or as the result of a cause-and-origin determination, the juvenile firesetter program must have a set of intake procedures in place. Several questions must be addressed by a juvenile firesetter program when it sets up its intake procedures.

- Where is the juvenile's initial point of contact?
- Will the juvenile enter the program through the fire service and, if so, how: through fire investigation, fire prevention, or contact with on-duty line personnel or firefighters?
- What is a reasonable response time once the juvenile is referred to the program? It is recommended that the sooner the intake contact is made after the fire incident, the better the chance for a successful intervention.
- Who in the program will be responsible to make the initial contact?
- Will there be more than one person available to initiate the contact? There is a range of options; some programs have one contact person assigned per day, while others have one contact person available on a half-time basis or on call.
- What records will be kept of the initial contact?
- Will they be written or automated? It is recommended that, at the minimum, an initial contact form be filed.
- What methods will be employed to prioritize cases? How will the program determine which cases are more urgent and, therefore, need to be assessed more quickly than others?

To build an effective set of intake procedures, each juvenile firesetter program must develop its own answers to these critical questions. A juvenile firesetter program provides a frontline attack by identifying youths and their families. Because these juveniles have been identified, the fire service has created a significant but short window of opportunity to provide services for these at-risk youth. As soon as possible after the fire, a juvenile firesetter program should initiate intake procedures. The **Appendices** contain some examples of intake documents currently used by juvenile firesetter programs. Ideally, within 48 hours of the fire, the juvenile firesetter program should make contact with the juvenile and his/her family. Juvenile firesetter programs can take a variety of approaches in setting up their procedures. The selected approach will depend on several factors, including the structure and operation of the program and the availability of personnel and resources.

## **SUMMARY**

Depending on your departmental procedures, the intake may be completed by clerical staff, the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialist (JFIS) I, or by mental health personnel in the coalition. The intake may be done separately prior to the interview or in conjunction with the interview. A juvenile firesetter program must establish a secure pathway from identification to intake to interview. That is, there must be a standard route that all juvenile firesetter cases take. A standard pathway from initial contact to interview, which includes a paper trail, will ensure that no cases will be lost or will fall through the cracks.

**IDENTIFICATION AND INTAKE**

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**APPENDIX A**

**FIRE STOPPERS**

**KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



**FIRE STOPPERS INCIDENT REFERRAL FORM**

Incident Number \_\_\_\_\_ Incident Date \_\_\_\_\_

Referring Officer: name \_\_\_\_\_ Employee number \_\_\_\_\_

Incident Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Fire Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Investigator's Incident # \_\_\_\_\_

**Youth Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex M ( ) F ( ) DOB \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

School currently attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Mother/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Wk phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ Home phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

Father/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Wk phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ Home phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident/fire occur? \_\_\_\_\_

Items ignited: \_\_\_\_\_

Source of ignition: matches ( ) lighter ( ) other ( )

Others involved in incident yes ( ) *list names on reverse side of this form* no ( )

**When applicable**

Were smoke detectors present?

Did they activate? Yes ( ) No ( ) (if no why) \_\_\_\_\_

*(When appropriate, test all smoke detectors and provide a new detector/battery.)*

*If matches and lighters are accessible to children, please ask parent/caregivers to remove them immediately. You will want to explain some about our program and that the parent/guardian can expect a call from the Prevention Division to extend these services and explain the intervention program in greater detail.*

*Comments*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX B**

**FIREPROOF CHILDREN**  
**ROCHESTER, NEW YORK**



## THE INCIDENT

Incident Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred by:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Company          | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health Agency El |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Investigator     | <input type="checkbox"/> School                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Police                | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent/Guardian         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Service Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____             |

Name of referring agent: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Incident:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire        | <input type="checkbox"/> Report of Fire Play |
| <input type="checkbox"/> False Alarm | <input type="checkbox"/> Report of Past Fire |

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**For actual fires note the following:**

Location (point of origin)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Own Home          | <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant Building  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupied Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School            | <input type="checkbox"/> Car/Truck        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church            | <input type="checkbox"/> Dumpster/Garbage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mercantile        | <input type="checkbox"/> Outside          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____       |   |

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If home or occupied dwelling, where did the fire originate:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bedroom            | <input type="checkbox"/> Attic    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen            | <input type="checkbox"/> Basement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bathroom           | <input type="checkbox"/> Porch    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Living/Family room | <input type="checkbox"/> Garage   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____        |                                   |

What was the ignition source:

- |                                  |                                |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Match   | <input type="checkbox"/> Stove |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lighter | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

## THE INCIDENT

What, if anything, was burned?

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Was there structural damage: Yes/No

Were there injuries: Yes/No    Number \_\_\_\_\_

Were there fatalities: Yes/No    Number \_\_\_\_\_

# Adult Civilians: \_\_\_\_\_ # Juveniles: \_\_\_\_\_ # Firefighters: \_\_\_\_\_

Was this fire:

- Strictly accidental.
- Result of play with no attempt to damage property or to cause injury (as in flicking a lighter, throwing matches, burning papers or leaves).
- Instrumental (using fire for some purpose) but showing poor judgment as in using a match to illuminate a dark place.
- Intentional result of a deliberate attempt to damage property (no matter how small) or to cause injury.

Describe

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## THE CHILD

**Incident Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Incident Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Male/Female

**Race/Ethnicity:**

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White    | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black    | <input type="checkbox"/> Native American/Alaskan Native |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic |   |

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_

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Known problems related to recidivism or relevant to referral:

**Witnessed or reported:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handicap or disability          | <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol use          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hyperactivity/attention deficit | <input type="checkbox"/> Drug use             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct problems                | <input type="checkbox"/> Prior police contact |

Describe

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## THE CHILD

### History of unsanctioned use of fire:

Any previous unsanctioned use of fire? (Yes/No)? If yes, check:

- Unsupervised, unauthorized use with no instrumental purpose (flicking a lighter, throwing matches, burning papers or leaves) but with no attempt to damage property or to cause injury.
- Instrumental use (for some purpose) but showing poor judgment (using a match to... illuminate a dark place).
- Deliberate attempt to damage property or cause injury.

Has the child ever been directly responsible for a fire incident (Yes/No)? Describe the most serious previous incident by checking the following:

- Was child able to extinguish it?
- Someone else was called to extinguish it.
- Fire department was called.
- If the fire department was called, is this incident in the files?

If so, note incident number:

If not, write brief description.

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## THE ENVIRONMENT

Incident Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### The Household:

Name of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Head of Household:

- Married Couple
- Single parent--mother living alone
- Single parent--father living alone
- Single parent--living with other adult(s)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_ (please explain)

Parent/Guardian employed? \_\_\_\_\_(Yes/Part-time/No)

Parent/Guardian on/eligible for public assistance \_\_\_\_\_(Yes/No)

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### Supervision at the time of the fire:

- Child was alone or with same age or younger siblings or peers
- Child was in the care of an older sibling or adolescent who: (check one)
  - demonstrated questionable judgment either before the incident (allowing the child inappropriate responsibility) or after the incident (did not follow appropriate fire safety standards or exit procedures).
  - was inadequately monitoring the child's behavior. (Could not accurately describe what the child was doing at the time of the fire.)
  - was unavailable (asleep, outside, intoxicated or otherwise preoccupied).

Age of sibling or sitter: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE ENVIRONMENT

- Child was in the care of a parent, guardian, or other adult who: (check one)
  - demonstrated questionable judgment either before the incident (allowing the child inappropriate responsibility) or after the incident (did not follow appropriate fire safety standards or exit procedures).
  - was inadequately monitoring the child's behavior. (Could not accurately describe what the child was doing at the time of the fire.)
  - was unavailable (asleep, outside, intoxicated or otherwise preoccupied).
- Child was being supervised adequately.

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### Access to matches and lighter:

- On display (on a table, on the counter)
- Easily available (in a low drawer or cupboard)
- Available with some difficulty (in a high cupboard)
- Inaccessible (not in the house or locked away)
- Obtained outside the home

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### Safety and adequacy of the physical environment:

- Inadequate shelter (holes in the roof, walls, or floor; broken windows; no heat)
- Unclean (feces, animal or human)
- Other health hazards
- Inadequate food or clothing

Describe

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**APPENDIX C**

**JUVENILE FIRESETTER  
PREVENTION PROGRAM  
STATE OF COLORADO**



IDENTIFICATION AND INTAKE

COLORADO JUVENILE FIRESETTER PREVENTION PROGRAM CONTACT FORM

DEPT. NAME Inc. Census Tract County

INCIDENT DATE: NO. TIME CR NO.
INCIDENT ADDRESS: Street City Zip
Multiple Juveniles Y N #
Ignition Source: Match Lighter Other Flammable Liquid/Accelerant Used
Loss: \$ Intentional: Y N Injuries: Y N # Deaths: Y N #
Hospitalizations: Y N # Describe Injuries/Deaths
Location of Fire: Outside-Location of Origin Inside / Inside Occupied
Room of Origin
Referral Source Name: Agency/Address: Phone:
Caregiver School Law Enforcement Mental Health Fire Service Juvenile Justice
Parent Other/Describe
Caregiver/Parent Smokes Y N Did the home meet community standards for health/welfare of the child? Y N
Was the child supervised by a person 12 years of age or older at the time of the incident? Y N
Description of the Incident and Pertinent Information:
Report by: Printed Name Signature

Juvenile Information:
Last Name: First Name: M.I. DOB / /
Sex M F Race: White Asian African Am. Native Am. Hispanic Other
Age: Grade in School School Currently Attending
Soc. Sec. #:
Home Address: Phone:

Adult No. 1 Residing With The Child
Name:
Address:
Phone: H W
Employed: Y N
Marital Status: Married Separated
Divorced Remarried Widowed
Relation to Juvenile: Natural Step
Adoptive Foster Grandparent
Other

Adult No. 2 Residing With The Child
Name:
Address:
Phone: H W
Employed: Y N
Marital Status: Married Separated
Divorced Remarried Widowed
Relation to Juvenile: Natural Step
Adoptive Foster Grandparent
Other

Others Residing With The Child
Name: Relationship:
Name: Relationship:
Name: Relationship:
Name: Relationship:



**APPENDIX D**

**PORTLAND FIRE AND RESCUE**  
**PORTLAND, OREGON**



JUVENILE FIRESETTER CONTACT RECORD

\*\*\*\*\*

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ (contact name)

- Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ In Person \_\_\_\_\_
No contact \_\_\_\_\_ appt. scheduled \_\_\_\_\_
message: call us \_\_\_\_\_ education/assessment \_\_\_\_\_
message: we'll call \_\_\_\_\_ education only \_\_\_\_\_
phone disconnected \_\_\_\_\_ referral \_\_\_\_\_
appt. scheduled \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_
referral by phone \_\_\_\_\_
other \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INITIATED BY: PFB \_\_\_\_\_ CLIENT \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS (SEE ATTACHED NARRATIVE)
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_

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Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ (contact name)

- Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ In Person \_\_\_\_\_
No contact \_\_\_\_\_ appt. scheduled \_\_\_\_\_
message: call us \_\_\_\_\_ education/assessment \_\_\_\_\_
message: we'll call \_\_\_\_\_ education only \_\_\_\_\_
phone disconnected \_\_\_\_\_ referral \_\_\_\_\_
appt. scheduled \_\_\_\_\_ other \_\_\_\_\_
referral by phone \_\_\_\_\_
other \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INITIATED BY: PFB \_\_\_\_\_ CLIENT \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS (SEE ATTACHED NARRATIVE)
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX E**

**PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT**



**Phoenix Fire Department  
Youth Firesetter Intake**

Parent/Guardian Interview: Intake Officer \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Referring person/agency/telephone and fax numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last, First)

School \_\_\_\_\_ School District \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Who lives in home/siblings names and ages? \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ Message/Cellular \_\_\_\_\_

Has there been a recent stressful event in the family? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If so, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Is child ADD/ADHD/Other diagnosis? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Is child in Counseling? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

How did you hear about the YFS Program? \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident Information**

Did the fire department respond? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No Incident #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Fire Co/Inv. \_\_\_\_\_

Ignition source \_\_\_\_\_ Location of incident \_\_\_\_\_

Was child alone or with others in the fire incident? \_\_\_\_\_ Alone \_\_\_\_\_ Others

Does child have a history of playing with matches or lighters? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (Yes) How long? \_\_\_\_\_

Has child set previous fires? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (If Yes) How many? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_

Has child attended a previous YFS class? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (if yes) When \_\_\_\_\_ Where \_\_\_\_\_

Does the residence have a working smoke alarm? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown

Is there a smoker in the residence? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Unknown

Synopsis of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Youth Firesetter Intervention Program, School Referral Form**  
Fax Completed Form to Phoenix Fire Department **602-495-5515**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Referring School: \_\_\_\_\_ School District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Fax # \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade in School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone (H): \_\_\_\_\_ (W): \_\_\_\_\_ (Message): \_\_\_\_\_  
Does Child Have A.D.D., A.D.H.D. or other mental health diagnosis? \_\_\_\_\_  
Was Parent/Guardian Notified? \_\_\_\_\_ By Whom? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_  
Was The School Counselor/Intervention Specialist Notified? \_\_\_\_\_ When? \_\_\_\_\_  
Was the School Resource Officer (SRO) Notified? \_\_\_\_\_ Is There a SRO? \_\_\_\_\_  
What Type of School Discipline Will the Child Receive? \_\_\_\_\_  
Is Mandatory attendance At a Firesetter Class Part of That Discipline? \_\_\_\_\_

**Fire Incident Information**

What Was Used To Start the Fire? (Matches, Lighter, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
How Did the Child Obtain These Items? \_\_\_\_\_  
Location of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Incident# \_\_\_\_\_  
Was Child Alone or With Others in Fire Incident? \_\_\_\_\_  
Names of Others Involved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Were The Others Referred to the Firesetter Program? \_\_\_\_\_  
How Was the Incident Brought To Attention of School? \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of School Official Making Referral: \_\_\_\_\_  
I am the Parent/Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ and I Give Permission  
For \_\_\_\_\_ School to Release This Information to the Phoenix  
Fire Department, for enrolling my child in the Firesetter Educational Program.  
(Parent's Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief synopsis of the firesetting event

**APPENDIX F**

**PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA**  
**REFERRAL FORM**



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**IDENTIFICATION AND INTAKE**

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Your child has been referred to the Juvenile Firesetter Educational Intervention program offered by Palm Beach County Fire Rescue. The Juvenile Firesetter Educational Intervention program is an opportunity for you and your child to learn about fire safety, the dangers of fire and the potential consequences of the choices they make about the use of fire. After successfully completing this program, your child will get a certificate of completion and **the case will not be processed through the Juvenile Justice system.**

**It is mandatory that both the child and their parents/guardians attend the following sessions:**

1. **An interview/assessment and possible counseling sessions, when recommended, with the Youth Services Bureau.** Please call Dr. JoAnn Lee's office to schedule at 561-625-2530. There is no cost to the juvenile firesetter or family for the session(s). The session(s) will be held at a Youth Services Bureau location, in Palm Beach County, which is most convenient to your home.
  
2. **A 2-1/2 hour Juvenile Firesetter Intervention program.** Please call Linda DeLeo at 561-616-7033 to schedule. This program will be held on the second Tuesday of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. When attending the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program, **please note that the doors will be locked at exactly 6:00 p.m.** and there will be no admittance after that time. This session will be held at:

**50 S. Military Trail (Second Floor, Room 202)  
West Palm Beach, FL 33415-3198**

As soon as you receive this letter, you must call to schedule your attendance at these sessions. There is a map with directions to the facility included. If you miss your scheduled attendance date you will have only one other chance to reschedule. After that point, your child's case will be sent on to the State Attorney's office and the Juvenile Justice system which may result in a criminal history, restitution of court and Fire Rescue costs, community service hours and/or probation.

Scheduling for these sessions is your child's **only chance** to make better decisions about fire safety. If they complete the program and continue to set fires, they will not be readmitted to the program and any additional cases will be dealt with through the Juvenile Justice system.

Sincerely,  
Palm Beach County Fire Rescue  
Bureau of Safety Services



# **UNIT 4: INTERVIEWING**

## **OBJECTIVES**

*The students will:*

- 1. Identify the aspects of communication.*
  - 2. Discuss interview tools and define approved versus validated instruments.*
  - 3. Identify who should conduct interviews and the characteristics of an effective interviewer.*
  - 4. Given the interview/assessment forms provided, identify the essential parts of the two forms.*
  - 5. Discuss rationale for interview questions.*
  - 6. Evaluate advantages and disadvantages of interview process and setting.*
  - 7. Gather relevant information using interview form.*
  - 8. Record and report observations and summarize findings.*
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# NOTE-TAKING GUIDE



Slide 4-1

**UNIT 4:  
INTERVIEWING**

Slide 4-1

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Slide 4-2

**VIDEO:**

**"Child Firesetting and  
Juvenile Arson--  
Interviewing Kids at Risk"**



Slide 4-2

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Slide 4-3

**OBJECTIVES**

**The students will:**

- **Identify the aspects of communication.**
- **Discuss interview tools and define approved versus validated instruments.**
- **Identify who should conduct interviews and the characteristics of an effective interviewer.**
- **Given the interview/assessment forms provided, identify the essential parts of the two forms.**

Slide 4-3

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Slide 4-4

**OBJECTIVES (cont'd)**

The students will:

- Discuss rationale for interview questions.
- Evaluate advantages and disadvantages of interview process and setting.
- Gather relevant information using interview form.
- Record and report observations and summarize findings.

Slide 4-4

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Slide 4-5

**INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEWING**

- The main objective of the interview is to gather information related to the firesetting incident, the child, and the family.
- The interview allows for the opportunity to gather pertinent information, provide education, and determine continued needs to prevent future firesetting behavior.

Slide 4-5

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Slide 4-6

**PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW**

- Determine risk
- Assess level of risk--some, definite, and extreme
- Basis for recommending intervention
- Use approved interview form

Slide 4-6

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Slide 4-7

**PURPOSE OF AN INTERVIEW  
(cont'd)**

The primary reason for performing interviews with each child and adolescent firesetter of any age is to be able to identify (at an early stage) children and parents who are troubled and in need of other existing community services.

Slide 4-7

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Slide 4-8

**THREE ASPECTS OF  
COMMUNICATION**

- Purpose (why)
- Content (what)
- Style (who)

Slide 4-8

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Slide 4-9

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS**

- Location (office, home, neutral)
- Formal versus informal attire (uniform or civilian clothing)
- Setting preparation
- Scheduled time

Slide 4-9

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Slide 4-10

**THE INTERVIEWER**

- Previous experience
- Ability to relate
- Communication skills
- Training
- Dress

Slide 4-10

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Slide 4-11

**EXPECTATIONS**

- Everyone participating in the interview comes with certain attitudes and expectations.
- Interviewers, juveniles, and parents will bring to the interview their hopes, fears, and ideas.

Slide 4-11

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Slide 4-12

**INTERVIEW PROCESS**

- Attentive listening
  - Sets tone
  - Shows interest in what is communicated
- Establish rapport
  - Want to hear what the youth and family have to say
  - Create a safe and secure environment

Slide 4-12

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Slide 4-13

**CHECKLIST FOR BUILDING RAPPORT**

- **Appear friendly**
- **Project calmness, confidence**
- **Use props, smalltalk, toys**
- **Identify the child's interests**
- **Use nonthreatening conversation**
- **Be objective**
- **Avoid sarcasm, talking down**
- **Listen**

Slide 4-13

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Slide 4-14

**ASSESS LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING**

- **Can the child and family understand the language of the interviewer?**
- **Can the child follow simple directions? Perform a simple task?**

Slide 4-14

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Slide 4-15

**INTERVIEW PROCESS**

- **Explain that children set fires for many reasons.**
- **Describe your multiagency program.**
- **Invite the family to participate as partners.**
- **Two-person interviews can be beneficial.**

Slide 4-15

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Slide 4-16

**THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR DEALING WITH PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS**

- Be sensitive
- Be clear
- Create an awareness
- Provide information

Slide 4-16

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Slide 4-17

**SEQUENCE**

- Meet with parents/caregivers and child together to explain the program
- Interview the parents/caregivers alone
- Interview the child/youth alone
- Interview preteens and teens before parents
- Bring family back together

Slide 4-17

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Slide 4-18

**Document findings, analyze results, and determine intervention strategy.**

Slide 4-18

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Slide 4-19

**ASKING THE QUESTIONS**

Although the interview forms present a set of structured questions for the interviewer to ask the juvenile and family, many of the questions may need further explanation, and may lead to other questions, or to other topics of conversation.

Slide 4-19

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Slide 4-20

**What experiences have you had with an interview process?**

**What interview forms do you use?**

Slide 4-20

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Slide 4-21

**THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD AND FAMILY RISK SURVEYS**

- Developed as a consistent process to assist in determining needs of child/family as well as risk for continued fire behavior.
- Efforts to make reliable instrument, based on the Comprehensive FireRisk Evaluation, resulted in the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys.

Slide 4-21

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Slide 4-22

**THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER FAMILY RISK SURVEY**

- **Introductory section.**
- **Seven-question survey.**
- **The scores on the survey are linked directly to specific recommendations for intervention and referral options.**

Slide 4-22

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Slide 4-23

**THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD RISK SURVEY**

- **Demographic information.**
- **Activity for the child that can be completed while the interviewer is conducting the Family Risk Survey.**
- **Development of rapport.**
- **An interview exercise for children ages 9 and over.**
- **The fifth section contains 14 questions with scoring instructions.**

Slide 4-23

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Slide 4-24

**RECORDING THE INTERVIEW**

- **Collect and maintain adequate documentation**
- **Methods**
  - **Take notes during interview**
  - **Take notes after interview**
  - **Audiotape and/or videotape interview with permission**
  - **Second interviewer/observer to take notes**

Slide 4-24

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Slide 4-25

**SUMMARY**

- **Purpose of the interview is to aid in determining risk and identifying needs.**
- **Outcome of the interview is categorization of risk level.**
- **Structured interview method.**
- **Use approved interview forms to provide consistency and reliability.**

Slide 4-25

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Slide 4-26

**Activity 4.1  
Juvenile Firesetter  
Interview**

Slide 4-26

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# ACTIVITY WORKSHEETS



## Activity 4.1

### Juvenile Firesetter Interview

#### Purpose

To analyze rapport building and practice capturing the interview information based on taped interviews.

#### Directions

1. Watch the video segments, and follow the directions in Parts 1 to 4 below.
2. After the videos are over, analyze the interviews in terms of rapport building using the form on the following Student Activity Worksheet (SAW). Did the interviewer accomplish the following?
  - a. Assess their level of understanding.
  - b. Develop rapport with the child.
  - c. Gain confidence.
  - d. Validate existing information.

#### Part 1

1. Observe the young child's interview video.
2. Use the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys in the Student Manual (SM). Use one of the actual interview/assessment forms in Appendix A during the interview. Capture the information that is observed in the taped interview.
3. As a large group discuss any difficulties that you had obtaining the information.

#### Part 2

1. Observe the young child's parent interview.
2. Use the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys in the SM. Use one of the actual interview/assessment forms in Appendix A during the interview. Capture the information that is observed in the taped interview.
3. As a large group discuss any difficulties that you had obtaining the information.

**Part 3**

1. Observe the teenage child's interview.
2. Use the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys in the SM. Use one of the actual interview/assessment forms in Appendix A during the interview. Capture the information that is observed in the taped interview.
3. As a large group discuss any difficulties that you had obtaining the information.

**Part 4**

1. Observe the teenage child's parent interview.
2. Use the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys in the SM. Use one of the actual interview/assessment forms in Appendix A during the interview. Capture the information that is observed in the taped interview.
3. As a large group discuss any difficulties that you had obtaining the information.

**Activity 4.1 (cont'd)**

**A Checklist for Building Rapport**

As you observe the interview with the juvenile firesetter, comment on the following dimensions of the interviewer's behavior. Use examples if possible.

<b>Behavior of Interviewer</b>	<b>Observer Comments</b>
Appear friendly	
Project calmness, confidence	
Use props, small talk, appropriate toys	
Identify the child's interests	
Use nonthreatening conversation	
Be objective, don't prejudge	
Avoid sarcasm, professional jargon,	
Avoid talking down, intimidation	
Develop good listening skills	
Be yourself!	



# BACKGROUND TEXT



## INTRODUCTION TO INTERVIEWING

The main objective of the interview component of a juvenile firesetter program is to understand why children set fires. An interview of juvenile firesetters and their families involves a determination of the nature and severity of the firesetting behavior.

The purpose of the interview is to determine the likelihood or risk that another firesetting incident will occur in the future. Risk determination classifies firesetting into three levels--some, definite, and extreme--and provides the basis for recommending appropriate types of intervention. A structured interview is the recommended method to evaluate juvenile firesetters and their families and to arrive at a risk determination.

If, during the course of the interview/assessment, it is discovered that the child or family is in a life-threatening situation, the interview should be stopped and the appropriate authority or organization should be contacted. The same is true if there are signs of neglect and/or abuse.

- **Abuse:** Harmful behaviors and/or actions, as defined by local law, that place an individual at risk and require reporting. (National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 2004)
- **Neglect:** Failure to act on behalf of, or in protection of, an individual in one's care, (NFPA, 2004)

Most instruments yield a classification of the juvenile and family into one of the three levels of firesetting risk. The decision of which instrument to use rests entirely with the juvenile firesetter program and will depend on the program's service goals, available resources, and desired outcomes. Once the interview procedure classifies the juvenile and the family into one of the three firesetting risk levels, the next step is to recommend the appropriate intervention.

The primary reason for performing interviews with each child and adolescent firesetter of any age is to be able to identify (at an early stage) children and parents who are troubled and in need of other existing community services.

## THREE ASPECTS OF COMMUNICATION

The purpose of the interview is to determine the level of risk for the firesetter. This purpose is different from the purpose of other forms of communication. Content refers to the questions you will be asking of the child and his/her family during the interview. These questions have been

designed by trained mental health professionals. They have been tested to determine level of risk.

Different scenarios present different interview requirements (fact finding, profiling, etc.). Information gathered during the interviews with the child and caregivers, together with observations, will address issues and behaviors:

- About the firesetting incident (planned or spontaneous event, set alone or in a group, etc.).
- History of previous fires set.
- Information about the child (medical, mental health history, interests, developmental level, etc.).
- Socially typical information (normal, expected behavior for the child at home, school, neighborhood, etc.).
- Information about the family (activities, disciplinary practices, ability to relate to the child, interest in child's welfare, relationship to siblings, concern for child, supervision of child, evidence of abuse or neglect, etc.).
- Facts about the environment, including safety factors.
- Changes in the child's immediate situation will be identified, such as recent trauma, divorce/separation in family, death or loss of a family member or friend, crisis at school, etc.

The screening tools also will include questions to help identify the perceived rewards for the firesetting incident(s) (i.e., peer attention, approval, money, or sensual/sexual gratification).

Style refers to the issues to be considered in order to achieve the goal of the interview. Each and every individual develops his/her own personal style in achieving his/her goals. Some techniques used by some individuals in interviewing children and their families may not work as well for others. Accomplishing your goal in conducting interviews, and gaining a comfort level in performing this service will take practice and skill development.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The basic rule is to conduct the interview in a place where there is a balance between comfort and support and the ability to maximize information exchange. Not only must the interviewer feel confident, but the juvenile and family also must feel secure enough to share information. Each juvenile firesetter program must decide where to conduct its interviews. Location may be mandated.

There are several location options. Many juvenile firesetter programs conduct interviews at the neighborhood fire station. A second option, if available, is an office space located in the fire department, but not necessarily at a fire station. For example, in urban areas, many fire departments have separate administrative offices that do not house fire suppression equipment. In some instances, depending on the nature and extent of the fire incident, interviews are conducted at the police station. Some juvenile firesetter programs conduct interviews in the home. Finally, juvenile firesetter programs have the option of selecting more than one site for the interview. For example, part of the interview may be conducted at the fire station, and part of the interview may be conducted in the home. The selection of one or more interview locations rests entirely with the juvenile firesetter program.

Be alert to how to provide an environment to meet the interview goal. Prepare the setting if possible. Make sure that the room is private. Make sure that there are enough chairs for everyone involved. Try to arrange for a comfortable setting. Be aware of physical barriers in the room (i.e., desk). For example, the semicircular pattern creates an open seating arrangement and facilitates open communication. Remove distractions.

Interviews conducted in the home can provide additional information about the juvenile and family that might not be observed during an interview in an office setting. If the home is the only interview location, when arranging the interview with the family, it is important to clarify that a certain amount of uninterrupted time must be set aside. In addition, it is recommended that, if possible, when visiting the home, two people conduct the interview. Use caution; a team approach lends a certain amount of comfort and security in the home setting. Talk about the area you are going into with those who know the area (social services, police, etc.).

A structured interview requires that a specific amount of time be scheduled between the interviewer, the juvenile, and the family. The average amount of time for the structured interview will vary according to the type of instrument selected to conduct the interview. The range of interview time can vary from 30 to 90 minutes, depending on how the

interview proceeds and which tools you use. The interviewer should call and schedule an appointment with the juvenile and the family. The appointment should specify where the interview is to take place, and the specific time and day. Place a reminder call to the family the day before the interview. If the family does not show up at the scheduled time, this should be documented.

## **THE INTERVIEWER**

There are many factors to take into consideration in the selection of interviewers:

- previous experience;
- ability to relate to juveniles and families; and
- communication skills.

A workshop or training program in conducting interviews is recommended. Interviews can be conducted by one or two people. The decision whether to use one or two interviewers rests on the resources available to the juvenile firesetter program. The major advantage of using two interviewers is that it creates a team approach, and can increase the amount of observation and information that is gathered during the interview. However, the one-interviewer method has been used successfully by the majority of juvenile firesetter programs that conduct structured interviews for evaluation.

There are differing opinions about whether interviewers should wear uniforms or street clothes to conduct interviews. Some fire departments mandate the wearing of uniforms at all times. Some interviewers feel more comfortable wearing their uniform. Uniforms suggest that the interview is official and the person wearing it is recognized as the authority. Some interviewers suggest that wearing a uniform is more effective with younger juveniles while others suggest it generates fear in young children. Some interviewers think that a uniform creates a barrier when interviewing preteen or adolescent firesetters while others think it reinforces authority. Each juvenile firesetter program must develop its own policy regarding the attire of interviewers.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

Everyone comes to the interview with certain attitudes and expectations. Interviewers, juveniles, and parents will bring to the interview their hopes, fears, and ideas.

**Table 9-1** presents some common, but often unrealistic, expectations that juveniles, parents, and interviewers bring to the interview. It is helpful if the interviewer is aware of these potential expectations, so that a more reasonable picture can be painted of the interview and its outcome.

**Table 9-1  
Common Interview Expectations**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Expectation</b>
Juvenile	Confusion and uncertainty about what is going to happen. Fear of punishment.
Parent	Sense of relief to share the burden. Someone else will solve the problem. Punishment for the child.
Interviewer	Authority--"I'm in charge and I know what's best." Substitute parent--"This is how to treat your child." Rescuer--"I am here to solve all your problems."

## **INTERVIEW PROCESS**

How the interviewer responds to the answers offered by the juvenile and family will set the tone of the interview. The interviewer has preconceived ideas that can filter the information received. Attentive listening is showing interest in what is communicated by the juvenile and family. Interest can be shown by what is said as well as by what is done.

**Table 9-2** outlines ways in which the interviewer can listen to the juvenile and family in a manner that will communicate interest and concern.

**Table 9-2**  
**Attentive Listening Methods**

Attentive Listening	Method
Show concern	Make eye contact.
Listen carefully	Do not interrupt; let them complete their thoughts.
Wait--Think--Respond	Reflect before responding.
Repeat for clarity	Recount in your own words what you hear.
Sharing of self	Disclose a small part of yourself to make a human connection.
Be honest	Be truthful about circumstances.
Give hope	Comfort, do not give false hope.
Observe incongruities	Note differences between what is said and the body language.
Suspend judgment	See the problem through the eyes of the child and family.

As the interviewer you must deliver the message that you want to hear what the youth and family have to say, and that you are there to listen. Greet them in an appropriate fashion, introducing yourself by name. Begin with talking about a non-fire-related issue to help ease the tension for everyone, especially the child. One of the interviewer's first steps is to create a safe and secure environment in which the youth and family are willing to share information during the interview. To accomplish this, the interviewer can think as an advocate, or as acting on behalf of the juvenile and family. An adversarial or antagonistic or judgmental attitude is likely to distance the youth and family.

What the interviewer does and says is critical for building communication with the juvenile and the family. The juvenile and family may be tense or anxious when talking about the fire incident. Help them relax by talking about general, neutral topics such as the weather, sports, television programs, etc.

A myth often expressed by adults, is that firesetting behavior has a "simple solution," namely punishment or scare tactics (that often is what they ask of the fire department personnel when they bring the child to the fire station). They may not be fully informed as to the seriousness of out-of-control fire, nor do they comprehend the full scope of danger and destruction that an out-of-control fire can cause in a very short amount of time. Unless they have experienced an out-of-control fire, they think that they can control fire, as they do in their daily living activities.

The following thoughts and suggestions may assist you in dealing with parents and caregivers who offer resistance during the interview, or when educational, or educational and counseling referral interventions are recommended:

- Be sensitive to what they may be feeling while addressing their child's negative behavior.
  
- Be clear and firm in explaining
  - The seriousness of firesetting behavior,
  - The need for their cooperation, and
  - The process of your program and possible legal ramifications.
  
- Create an awareness of the problem and needed intervention using appropriate methods.
  
- Provide them information relevant to fire safety and the function of your program.

Interview the parents/caregivers alone. Give the child something to do that's age-appropriate, and ask him/her to go to a designated room while you talk to his/her parents. If necessary, ask someone to supervise the child during this time. Often very young children will not want to leave their parents. Making this issue the focus will interfere with the success of your interview. Conduct the interview, as best you can, with the child present.

Interview the child alone to validate information given by parents (medical history, fire history) and gain to the child's perspective. Take time to build rapport and gain confidence. Children may be willing to offer information alone that they would not share with parents. Again, if very young children do not want their parents to leave, conduct the interview with the adults present. Otherwise, identify a place where parents or caregivers can go to fill out the "Parents Questionnaire," while you interview the child alone.

From field experience, we have learned to interview preteens and teens alone before interviewing their parents, to get more cooperation during the interview. Bring the child and family back together to discuss the next step in the process. It is important to follow through with determining the results of the screening interview process as soon as possible. However, if you have any difficulty conducting the interview, or have some concerns with the responses from the child or family, contact your mental health community partner to discuss the issues. Document findings, analyze results, and determine intervention strategy. Consult appropriate team partners if there are any questions, concerns, or doubts relative to the disposition of any case, prior to determining the appropriate intervention strategy.

Although the interview forms present a set of structured questions for the interviewer to ask the juvenile and family, many of the questions may need further explanation, and may lead to other questions, or to other topics of conversation. This can be a very positive feature of the interview, because more information is likely to be shared. It is important for the interviewer to remain open about exploring more questions, while at the same time keeping in mind the specific structure of the interview.

## THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD AND FAMILY RISK SURVEYS

In September 1995, the Colorado Department of Public Safety/Division of Fire Safety was awarded a Federal grant to design and test the application and effectiveness of the Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program model for statewide dissemination. The Colorado project determined that the fire service needed a fire-risk assessment instrument that was accurate in predicting future risk for firesetting, yet offered a reduction in the amount of time to conduct an evaluation interview.

First, the Colorado group revised the evaluation instrument developed by Dr. Kenneth Fineman, published in previous U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) handbooks, and currently used in juvenile firesetter programs across the country. The second step was to develop a measure of firesetting risk by selecting the most statistically valid questions contained on the **Comprehensive FireRisk Evaluation**. The development of the Comprehensive FireRisk Evaluation has taken place over the past 2 decades under the direction of Dr. Fineman. It has been published in previous USFA handbooks, and many fire departments throughout the country have been trained to use this instrument to evaluate juvenile firesetters and their families. From an analysis of these evaluations, the instrument has undergone many applications and revisions. It is used by mental health professionals to determine risk category and also to obtain information on psychological and social behaviors.

The result of this work to make a reliable, brief instrument based on the Comprehensive Fire Risk Evaluation was the Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys. The FireRisk Survey consists of two parts: the Family Risk Survey and the Child Risk Survey. The Family Risk Survey contains two sections. The first is an introductory section that records demographic information. The second is the survey which consists of seven questions, accompanied by scoring instructions. The scores on the survey are linked directly to specific recommendations for intervention.

The Child Risk Survey consists of five sections. The first section collects demographic information. The second section presents an informational activity for the child that can be completed while the interviewer is conducting the Family Risk Survey with the parents. The third section is the development of rapport. The fourth section is an interview exercise for children ages 9 and over asking them to describe their most recent firesetting incident from beginning to end and then in reverse order. The fifth section contains 14 questions with scoring instructions. As with the Family Risk Survey, the scores on the Child Risk Survey are linked directly to specific recommendations for intervention.

The Child and Family Risk Surveys are included in Appendix A. Instructions for application and scoring also are included in the Appendix. Also included in the Appendix is a participation release, signed by parents, that indicates they have an understanding of the evaluation procedure, gives permission for their child to participate, and authorizes release of information to other government agencies.

There is also a risk advisement, signed by parents, that indicates they understand that their child has a serious risk of continued involvement in firesetting and that they have been advised to seek help from mental health.

Release forms are included in Appendix A.

## **SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

Several special situations can occur while interviewing juveniles and their families. Although the interviewer cannot be prepared for every unusual event, there are some situations that can be anticipated and handled in an effective manner.

## **RECORDING THE INTERVIEW**

It is important to collect and maintain adequate documentation of interview information. Each juvenile firesetter program must decide how this will be accomplished. There are several options. Interviewers can take notes during the interview. However, communication is enhanced when an interview is conducted as a conversation and note-taking is kept to a minimum. Notes can be written immediately after the interview, when the scoring procedures are executed. The interview also can be audio or videotaped. If this occurs, it is recommended that the juvenile firesetter program have parents sign a written consent form. The question of how these records are stored and who has access to them is covered later.

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of interviewing juvenile firesetters and their families is to determine their risk for involvement in future firesetting. The outcome of an interview is the classification of juveniles and their families into three risk levels--some, definite, and extreme. Each risk level relates to a specific intervention. The structured interview is the method of choice for conducting an evaluation of juvenile firesetters and their families. Interview forms should be reliable.

It should be noted that the display of interview/assessment forms and tools along with education programs in this course does not constitute an endorsement. The choice should be based on a discussion and mutual agreement by the professional coalition that will be participating in the program and using the forms. The forms shown here can be copied for study, but are not intended to be reproduced for use. A contact for each tool is provided for your convenience. The author should be contacted prior to use to ensure proper application of the tool.



## **APPENDIX A**

# **FEMA/USFA JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD AND FAMILY RISK SURVEYS (SHORT FORM)**



## Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys

Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program

### Survey Development

In September 1995, the Colorado Department of Public Safety/Division of Fire Safety was awarded a grant to design and test the applicability and effectiveness of the Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program model for statewide dissemination. Funding for this program was provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, U.S. Fire Administration (EMW-95-S-4780), under P.L. 103-254, the Federal Arson Prevention Act of 1994.

The Adam and Dorothy Miller Lifesafety Education Center, Inc. (d.b.a. Miller Lifesafety Center), was awarded a grant in 1991 to develop a pilot program based upon the model produced by the Institute for Social Analysis for the Federal Bureau of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Fire Administration under Cooperative Agreement, #91-JN-CX-K002, "The National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program."

The Miller Lifesafety Center determined that the fire service needed a fire risk assessment tool that was accurate in predicting future risk of continued firesetting, yet offered a reduction in the length of time needed to conduct the survey. The Center also developed the training modules for the Colorado statewide program which started in 1995.

The Colorado project established that one of its primary objectives would be to develop this revision for the fire service. Kenneth Fineman, Ph.D., the primary author of the fire risk assessment forms that have been used by the fire service since the mid 1970's, with updates through the 1980's, offered his unpublished revisions to be used as the basis of the research in Colorado. In the fall of 1995, Fineman and members of the Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program staff (Marion Doctor, LCSW; Joe B. Day; Larry Marshburn; Kenneth Rester, Jr.; Cheryl Poage; Paul Cooke; Carmen Velasquez; Michael Moynihan, Ph.D.; and Elise Flesher, Ph.D. Candidate) met to revise the fire risk assessment tool so that it could be used as a basis for the planned research. The result was the *Comprehensive FireRisk Assessment* as published in the Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program: Training Seminar. Vol. 1., which is comprised of three forms; the Comprehensive Family FireRisk Interview, the Comprehensive Parent FireRisk Questionnaire, and the Comprehensive Child FireRisk Interview.

Moynihan and Flesher (1998), conducted a study of the Comprehensive FireRisk Assessment as published in the Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program: Training Seminar. Vol. 1. The purpose of this study was to develop the Juvenile Firesetter Risk Surveys consisting of two forms,

the Child Risk Survey and the Family Risk Survey. The questions comprising these two surveys were selected from the Comprehensive FireRisk Assessment and analyzed by Moynihan and Flesher (1998) for their statistical reliability and validity. The result of this study was the Family and Child Risk Surveys, which represents a statistically shortened instrument for fire risk assessment.

The program trained agencies throughout Colorado in the use of the Comprehensive FireRisk Assessment Forms until 1998. This training also included comprehensive program development, documentation, intervention education, network development, and mental health treatment modalities. Several agencies participated in the research which was conducted by Moynihan and Flesher at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Department of Psychology.

### Survey Use

The Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Surveys do not release the fire service from the need to properly conduct cause and origin investigations, case documentation, obtain the proper parental releases to interview a child, network community referral resources, and provide intervention education when appropriate.

The surveys do; however, offer an accurate means to assess risk of future firesetting that can be conducted in approximately one-half hour. The Comprehensive FireRisk Assessment forms generally take one and one-half hours to administer.

While the development of the new surveys represents a new tool for the fire service and those other professionals conducting assessments; the original work of Fineman is the basis for the research. As such, it is important to follow the general interview guidelines established in various training sessions for the prior USFA's Juvenile Firesetter Risk Assessments.

When using the Risk Surveys, it is recommended that the following procedures are followed:

- Obtain written permission from the parent or legal guardian prior to conducting the Child Survey.
- *Development of rapport is critical since there are few questions, each question's truthful response is important.*
- Asking the question exactly as it is written.
- Conduct the Parent Survey then the Child Survey.
- It is preferable to conduct the Child Survey without the parent(s) present in the same room.
- Include a copy of the incident report in the file if available.

It is also recommended that both the Family and Child Surveys be conducted. The highest degree of accuracy will be achieved if both surveys are used. The Family Survey can be conducted over the phone with the child's parent; however, the Child Survey must be conducted in person and only after the proper parental release has been signed. It is also recommended that a fire or police incident report be placed in the file whenever possible.

While the questions in the Child and Family Risk Surveys must be asked as they are written, there may be circumstances in individual cases where additional information is obtained. It is imperative for the surveyor to make comprehensive notes in the file regarding any information that was offered in the survey process even if not scored.

An education intervention is appropriate when the Juvenile Firesetter Risk Surveys for the parent score is less than 429 and the child score is less than 511.

A referral to a mental health professional or conducting the Comprehensive FireRisk Evaluation is recommended when the Juvenile Firesetter Risk Surveys for the parent score is equal to 429 but less than 457; and the child score is equal to or greater than 511 but less than 540.

A direct referral to a mental health professional is recommended when the Juvenile Firesetter Risk Surveys for the parent score is equal to or greater than 457; and the child score is equal to or greater than 540.

The release forms and case documentation forms can be found in the Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program: Training Seminar. Volume 1. A detailed explanation of appropriate levels of education intervention options is also offered in volume 1.

Volume 2 of the Colorado manuals contains numerous research articles that were selected to aid mental health professionals in expanding their knowledge base regarding juvenile firesetting. In addition, several treatment options for the children were discussed.

As with any scientific research, it is recommended that this work be replicated in another study by specialists in the field. In the meantime, the Colorado work utilized the most conservative options available for assessing future fire risk. This was done to make every effort possible to avoid errors in assessing future fire risk.

Poage, Doctor, Day, Rester, Velasquez, Moynihan, Flesher, Cooke, and Marshburn, (1997),. Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program: Training Seminar. Vol. 1. Denver, CO: Colorado Division of Firesafety.



**INTERVIEWING**

**JUVENILE FIRESETTER FAMILY RISK SURVEY**

Survey Date \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Time \_\_\_\_\_ Intake Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Constant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Score** \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |                   |     |       |
|--|-------------------|-----|-------|
| 1. If you had to describe (child's name) curiosity about fire, would you say it was absent, mild, moderate or extreme?   |                   |     |       |
| Absent   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| Mild   | _____             | 99  | _____ |
| Moderate   | _____             | 198 | _____ |
| Extreme  | _____             | 297 | _____ |
| 2. Has (child's name) been diagnosed with any impulse control conditions, such as ADD/ or ADHD or other disorder?  |                   |     |       |
| Yes  | _____ (Diagnosis) | 28  | _____ |
| No   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| 3. Has (child's name) been in trouble outside of school for non-fire related behavior?   |                   |     |       |
| Yes  | _____ (What?)     | 90  | _____ |
| No   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| 4. Has (child's name) ever stolen or shoplifted?   |                   |     |       |
| Yes  | _____             | 14  | _____ |
| No   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| Dk/na  | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| 5. Has (child's name) ever beat up or hurt others or animals?  |                   |     |       |
| Yes  | _____             | 14  | _____ |
| No   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| Dk/na  | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| 6. Besides this fire curiosity or firesetting incident, how many other times has your child played with fire, including matches or lighters, or set something on fire? |                   |     |       |
| 1 (current)  | _____             | 84  | _____ |
| 2 times  | _____             | 168 | _____ |
| 3 - 4 times  | _____             | 336 | _____ |
| 5 or more  | _____             | 504 | _____ |
| 7. Is there an impulsive (sudden urge) quality to your child's firesetting or fire curiosity?  |                   |     |       |
| Yes  | _____             | 71  | _____ |
| No   | _____             | 0   | _____ |
| Dk/na  | _____             | 0   | _____ |

**Total Family Risk Score** \_\_\_\_\_

8. *Is there a history of any type of abuse in the family?* Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Who \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child \_\_\_\_\_ Currently in Home \_\_\_\_\_

Moynihan, Flescher and Colorado Juvenile Fire Prevention Program Staff 06/29/98 Family Risk Survey  
\* Original questions appear in Fineman. (1996). Comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment, Published in the Colorado Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Program: Training Seminar Vol. I, (1997).



**INTERVIEWING**

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**JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD RISK SURVEY** Date Survey Conducted: \_\_\_\_\_

This Child Risk Survey is designed to be given to children (with their parent's written informed consent) who have played with fire or who have set a fire which has come to the attention of a fire department, police agency or other community agencies. The Child Risk Survey is intended for use only as a preliminary screening tool and should be used with the Family Risk Survey to assess the child's suitability for fire intervention education or mental health referral.

The Family Risk Survey may be administered to parents over the phone or in person. The Child Risk Survey should be administered to the child, in person, and separate from their parents only after the parents or guardians have provided written informed consent for the child's participation in the survey.

Prior to administering the Child Risk Survey, please provide the following incident and demographic information if it has not already been provided in the Family Risk Survey section.

**I. Incident #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Incident Date:** \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ **Incident Location:** \_\_\_\_\_ **CR #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Incident Description:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**II. Child's Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **M.I.** \_\_\_ **D.O.B.** \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

**Child's Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Child Attends:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Name of Parent/Guardian providing information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address if different from Child's:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Referral Source if not a fire call (Name/Agency):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency's Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Surveyor's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Surveyor's Affiliation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Surveyor's notes and/or comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

**JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD RISK SURVEY**

Survey Date \_\_\_\_\_ Survey Time \_\_\_\_\_ Intake Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Constant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Score** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you have any brothers or sisters?			
Yes	_____	0	_____
No	_____ (if no, skip to Q. 3)	0	_____
2. How well do you get along with them?			
Always get along	_____	28	_____
Usually get along	_____	56	_____
Sometimes get along	_____	84	_____
Don't get along very often	_____	112	_____
Never get along	_____	140	_____
3. How well do you get along with your parent/guardian?			
Always get along	_____	10.5	_____
Usually get along	_____	21	_____
Sometimes get along	_____	31.5	_____
Don't get along very often	_____	42	_____
Never get along	_____	52.5	_____
4. Do you fight or argue with your parent/guardian?			
Never	_____	10.5	_____
Rarely	_____	21	_____
Sometimes	_____	31.5	_____
Usually	_____	42	_____
Always	_____	52.5	_____
5. Do you see your parent/guardian as much as you'd like?			
Yes	_____	0	_____
No	_____	60	_____
Too Much	_____	60	_____
6. When you are asked to do something, do you usually do it?			
Yes	_____	0	_____
No	_____	17.5	_____
7. Do you lie a lot?			
Yes	_____	17.5	_____
No	_____	0	_____
8. What happens at home when you get in trouble?			
Grounded _____	Physical Punishment _____	0,0	_____
Talk/lecture _____	Sought outside help _____	0,0	_____
Abused _____	Other/nothing _____	0,0	_____
Yelled at _____		32	_____
9. Has there been an ongoing (chronic) crisis or problem in your life or in your family?			
Yes _____	(What?) _____	62	_____
No _____		0	_____

**INTERVIEWING**

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**JUVENILE FIRESETTER CHILD RISK SURVEY**

Date Survey Conducted: \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many other times have you experimented with fire, including matches or lighters, or set something on fire?

1(current)	_____	32	_____
2 times	_____	64	_____
3-4 times	_____	128	_____
5 or more	_____	192	_____

11. What did you do after the fire started?

Put it out	_____	Called for help	_____	0,0	_____
Ran away	_____	Didn't try to run	_____	0,0	_____
Panicked	_____	Tried to extinguish	_____	0,0	_____
Other	_____	Didn't try to extinguish	_____	0,0	_____
		Stayed and watched	_____	40	_____

12. Did you intend to experiment with fire or set the fire, that is, did you experiment or set the fire on purpose?

Yes	_____	187	_____
No	_____	0	_____

13. Where did you set the fire?

**(If any type of structure was involved as a target or a location, score:)**

	_____	47	_____
Other	_____	0	_____

14. Do you like to look at fire for long periods of time?

Yes	_____	250	_____
No	_____	0	_____

**TOTAL CHILD RISK SCORE** \_\_\_\_\_

15. How did you get the ignition source (match/light/other) used in the fire incident?

- A. The Cut Off Score For Mental Health Referral For The Child Risk Survey Is 540 or Above. If either the Child Risk Survey is equal to or greater than 540 and/or the Family Risk Survey is equal to or greater than 457, the child should be referred to a mental health professional.
- B. If the Child Risk Score is equal to or greater than 511, but less than 540, and/or the Family Risk Score is equal to or greater than 429, but less that 457, consider conducting the comprehensive firesetter risk assessments for both the child and the parents, or refer to a mental health professional.
- C. AN INTERVENTION EDUCATION PROGRAM is appropriate if the Child Risk Score is less than than 511 and/or the Family Risk Score is less than 429.



**PARTICIPATION RELEASE**

The \_\_\_\_\_ utilizes the juvenile firesetter screening program developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the United States Fire Administration to evaluate the child that has been involved in a fire incident or has been referred to the City by a parent or another entity or agency.

The evaluation tries to assess the risk of involvement in future firesetting behavior. To do this, six areas describing individual characteristics are evaluated (demographic, physical, cognitive, emotional, motivation, and psychiatric).

Based on the results of the evaluation, your child's tendencies will place him/her in one of the following areas of concern:

- Little Concern - needs educational intervention
- Definite Concern - needs referral for evaluation by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist and educational intervention
- Extreme Concern - needs immediate referral for evaluation by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist and educational intervention counselling

If educational intervention is indicated, the \_\_\_\_\_ program will offer further educational activity for your child.

Depending on the circumstances regarding an individual case, other agencies such as the school your child attends, local law enforcement, social services departments, etc. may become involved.

The questions asked in this evaluation may be viewed prior to signing this release upon request.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the previous statement and do hereby grant permission for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to participate in the \_\_\_\_\_ Intervention Program and hereby authorize to release information regarding my child to such other governmental entities and agencies as it may deem appropriate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date / Time

\_\_\_\_\_  
Juvenile

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness



**RISK ADVISEMENT**

I have been informed that the FEMA/USFA Juvenile Firesetter Evaluation indicates that my child, \_\_\_\_\_ has a serious risk of continued involvement with fire setting activity.

I have also been informed by the \_\_\_\_\_ Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program of the serious risk of injury and property damage that may continue to exist until the problem is resolved.

I have been advised to seek an evaluation by a licensed psychotherapist or psychiatrist.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date / Time

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness



**APPENDIX B**

**FEMA/USFA JUVENILE FIRESETTER  
CHILD AND FAMILY RISK SURVEYS  
(LONG FORM)**



**INTERVIEWING**

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Child Firesetter Ages 3 to 18

Kenneth R. Fineman, Ph.D.-USFA- FEMA  
Fire Service Professional- Version 3.0

**Child FireRisk Evaluation Form**  
(Questions to be asked of Children and Adolescents 3 to 18 Years of Age)

INTERVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

JUVENILE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SEX \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ ETHNICITY/RACE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

**DEVELOPMENT OF RAPPORT**

The purpose of this section is to make the child comfortable with you. The more at ease you can make him, the greater the likelihood that he will answer all of your questions. If the following questions aren't enough, add your own. Questions or language can be modified throughout this form to accommodate the age of the child or adolescent.

A. [Introduce yourself] I'm \_\_\_\_\_ what's your name? \_\_\_\_\_

B. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What school do you go to? \_\_\_\_\_

What grade are you in? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you like your school? \_\_\_\_\_ Are there nice/okay teachers at your school? \_\_\_\_\_

D. What classes/subjects do you like/not like? \_\_\_\_\_

E. What do you do for fun?. Do you have hobbies? \_\_\_\_\_

F. Who's your best friend? \_\_\_\_\_

G. What do you like to play/do with your friend? \_\_\_\_\_

H. What do you watch on TV and/or what videos do you watch? \_\_\_\_\_

I. What is your favorite person/show on TV? \_\_\_\_\_

J. What is your favorite video/computer game? \_\_\_\_\_

K. What do you like about that game? [Is there is extreme interest in violence or fire?]

[When rapport is established, determine level of understanding if the child is under 7, or appears to have problems communicating.]

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

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**DETERMINE LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING**

It is often difficult to determine if a young child really understands you. (This section may be skipped if you are interviewing an older child). There may be an age barrier, a language barrier, a learning problem, or sub-normal intelligence. It is fruitless to go through an entire interview unless you are first assured that the child has enough understanding to complete the interview. There are several ways to gauge whether you are on the same "wave length" as the child. The following are suggested ways to do so:

- a. Obtain information from rapport section above:  
By paying close attention to the manner in which a young child responds to the 11 questions above, you can estimate whether he can understand and respond to the other questions in this instrument.
- b. Using crayons/paper as a tool:  
You can ask the child to draw pictures of common objects, his favorite toys, houses, trees and people. Then, ask him to describe what he has drawn. Clear explanations of his drawings and the action taking place in some of those drawings will tell you something about the child's vocabulary and his ability to understand.
- c. Using toys and games:  
Have toys of the appropriate developmental level of the child available. Engage the child in a game with the toys or allow the child free play with the toys. After a while ask the child about the toys and the game he is playing. Inquire about the rules, the purpose, etc. Estimate the child's vocabulary in terms of his ability to complete the interview.
- d. Using puppets:  
Have hand puppets available. Allow the child to set the interaction, with the child playing all parts or with you playing some of the parts. Quiet children can become quite verbal with this approach. Focus on the child's ability to understand your questions during the puppet play and determine if this level of communication is sufficient for continued interviewing.

If you are satisfied that the child has adequate understanding, proceed with the interview.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS BELOW THAT APPLY**

**SCHOOL** [If home schooled skip question 2]

- 1. Do you like school/learning? No (C-2) Yes (C-1)
- 2. Do you listen to your teacher(s) most of the time? No (C-2) Yes (C-1)
- 3. Have there been any problems with your school performance in the last year? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 4. Have you gotten in trouble at school? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

School- Column 1		School- Column 2		School- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PEER ISSUES**

- 5. Do you get along with most of your friends? No (C-2) Yes (C-1)
- 6. Do you get picked on? (C-2) or are you accepted by peers (C-1)
- 7. Do you have as many friends as you want? No (C-2) Yes (C-1)

**INTERVIEWING**

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- 8. Do you want to be alone or with other kids? Alone (C-2) With Kids (C-1)
- 9. Do you think your friends are a bad influence on you? (C-2) or a good influence (C-1)

Peers- Column 1		Peers -Column 2		Peers -Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**BEHAVIOR ISSUES**

- 10. Do you get in trouble a lot outside of school? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 11. Do you usually not do things that you are asked to do? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 12. Have you ever stolen or shoplifted? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 13. Have you lied a lot, ever? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 14. Have you ever used drugs, alcohol, or inhalents? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)
- 15. Have you ever beat up or hurt others? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)

Behavior- Column 1		Behavior- Column 2		Behavior- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY ISSUES**

circle all that apply but only score the most severe response for each question]

- 16. Do you like going home? Yes No Why \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. Usually, how well do you get along with your mother (female caregiver)?  
always get along (P-1) usually get along (P-1) sometimes get along (P-2)  
don't get along very often (P-2) never get along (P-3)
- 18. Do you fight or argue with your mother?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes (P-1) rarely (P-1) never (P-1)
- 19. Are you afraid of your mother?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes (P-2) rarely (P-1) never (P-1)
- 20. Usually, how well do you get along with your father (male caregiver)?  
always get along (P-1) usually get along (P-1) sometimes get along (P-2)  
don't get along very often (P-2) never get along (P-3)
- 21. Do you fight or argue with your father?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes (P-1) rarely (P-1) never (P-1)
- 22. Are you afraid of your father?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes (P-2) rarely (P-1) never (P-1)
- 23. Do your mother and father fight? [have child elaborate on the fights] \_\_\_\_\_  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes (P-1) rarely (P-1) never (P-1)
- 24. Tell me about your brothers and/or sisters. Usually, how well do you get along with them?  
always get along (P-1) usually get along (P-1) sometimes get along (P-2)  
don't get along very often (P-2) never get along (P-3)

**INTERVIEWING**

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25. Do you see your mom as much as you'd like? No (P-2) Yes (P-1)
26. Do you see your dad as much as you'd like? No (P-2) Yes (P-1)
27. What do you do that gets you into trouble at home? \_\_\_\_\_
28. What happens at home when you get in trouble?
- grounded (P-1)                      physical punishment (P-1) or (P-2)                      nothing (P-2)
- talked/lectured (P-1) or (P-2)      sought outside help (P-1)                      yelled (P-1) or (P-2)
- abused (P-2) or (P-3)                      other (P-1) or (P-2) Explain \_\_\_\_\_
29. Do you get spanked/punished too much? Yes (P-2) No (P-1) If so, by whom \_\_\_\_\_

Family- Column 1		Family- Column 2		Family- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**CRISIS OR TRAUMA**

30. Within the last year has anything bad happened in your life? Yes (C-2) or (P-2) No (C-1)  
What? \_\_\_\_\_
31. Has there been an ongoing (chronic) crisis/problem in your life or in the family?  
Yes (C-2) or (P-2) No (C-1)
32. Was the fire set after:
- family fight (C-2)                      being angry at sibling (C-2)                      being angry with boss (C-2)
- being angry with school authority (C-2)                      being angry at another (C-2)
- other crises such as stress, death, depression (C-2) or (C-3) or (P-2) or (P-3)                      None
- What? \_\_\_\_\_

C or T- Column 1		C or T- Column 2		C or T- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**FIRE HISTORY**

33. Do you like to look at fire for long periods of time? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)
34. Do you dream about fires at night? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)
35. Do you think about or day dream about fires in the day? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)
36. Number of past (inappropriate) fires or fireplay incidents \_\_\_\_\_ 1 (C-1) \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 (C-2) \_\_\_\_\_ 4+ (C-3)
37. Tell me about all the fires that you started or your fire play before this one. [Use a common time frame i.e. Christmas, school starting, etc. to help child describe when fires were started or fireplay occurred]

**INTERVIEWING**

What Set	Date Set	Where Set	With Whom	Ignition Source	Accelerant if used
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

38. Do you feel the need to set fires over and over again? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)

39. If fires are more than 1 ask, do you always set your fires in exactly the same way? Yes No

Fire Hx- Column 1		Fire Hx- Column 2		Fire Hx- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTERISTICS OF FIRESTART OR FIREPLAY**

[circle all that apply but only score the most severe response for each question]

40. Tell me about how you think the fire/fire play started?

Admits/confesses (C-1)      denies or minimizes (C-2)      denial then truth (C-1)

41. What did you use to set the fire or start the fire play?

matches      lighter      flammable liquid/aerosol      fireworks

other (butane torch, flare, stove, pilot light)      What? \_\_\_\_\_

42. How did you get the (above) ignitor to start the fire or the fire play?

went out of way to acquire (C-2)      found it (C-1)      hidden stockpile (C-2)

readily available at home (P-2)      another child had material (C-1)

43. What was set on fire?

object of little or no value (C-1) or (C-2)      object of value to child (C-2)

object of value to others (C-2)      part of a building (C-2)

people, animals, self (C-3)      flammable liquids/aerosols (C-3)

fireworks (C-2)      wildland (C-2) or (C-3) intentional= C-3

paper, tissue, cardboard, twigs (C-1)      bedding/bed-child's own (C-2)

bedding/bed-someone else's (C-2)      clothing-child's own (C-2)

clothing-someone else's (C-2)      toys (C-2)

furniture (C-2)      trash, leaves, grass (C-2) animals (C-3)

matches only (C-1)      lighter only (C-1) insects (C-2)

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**INTERVIEWING**

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44. Where was the fire set or did the fire play occur?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| home-occupied (C-3)                      | other structure-occupied (C-3)           |
| home-unoccupied at time (C-2)            | other structure-unoccupied at time (C-2) |
| other residence-occupied (C-3)           | vacant structure (C-2)                   |
| other residence-unoccupied at time (C-2) | vehicle (C-2)                            |
| school-occupied (C-3)                    | dumpster (C-2)                           |
| school-unoccupied at time (C-2)          | wildland (C-2) or (C-3)                  |
| outside (C-2)                            |  |

45. Did you intend to set the fire? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

46. What do you think made you want to start the fire or the fire play/what happened?

- |                                |  |             |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------|
| to express anger (C-2)         | to see it burn (C-2)                         | bored (C-2) |
| to show power or control (C-2) | didn't want to (accident or curiosity) (C-1) |             |
| reaction to stress (C-2)       | from peer pressure (C-2)                     |             |
| to destroy something (C-2)     | to hurt self (C-3)                           |             |
| to hurt others (C-3)           | to get attention (C-2)                       |             |
| don't know (C-2)               | rebellion - was told not to do so (C-2)      |             |

47. Did you drink or take any drugs before, during or after the fire or fire play? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

48. What did you do after the fire or fire play started?

- |                                   |                       |                                    |            |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------------|
| put it out (C-1) or (C-2)         | called for help (C-1) | ran away [if appropriate] C-1      | else (C-2) |
| stayed and watched (C-2) or (C-3) | panicked (C-1)        | tried to extinguish (C-1) or (C-2) |            |
| other (C-1) or (C-2) or (C-3)     |                       |                                    |            |

49. How did your parents punish you for the fire?

- |                                |                                    |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| grounded/restricted (P-1)      | physical punishment (P-1) or (P-2) | nothing (P-1) or (P-2) |
| talked/lectured (P-1) or (P-2) | sought outside help (P-1)          | yelled (P-1) or (P-2)  |
| abused (P-2) or (P-3)          | other (P-1) or (P-2) Explain _____ |                        |

50. Did the fire or fires you started make you happy or make you laugh? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

51. Can fire do magical, special or miraculous things? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

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52. After the fire how did you feel?

happy (C-2)   nervous (C-1)   sad (C-1)   powerful (C-2)   angry (C-2)

hateful (C-2)   vengeful (C-2)   scared (C-1)   remorseful (C-1)   elated (C-3)

guilty (C-1)   ashamed (C-1)   excited (C-3)

aroused sexually (C-3)   aroused sensually (C-3)   curious (C-2)

C.O.F.- Column 1		C.O.F.- Column 2		C.O.F.- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**OBSERVATIONS**

53. Are child's behavior and mannerisms:  
 normal (C-1)                      troubled (C-2)                      very troubled (C-3)

54. Is the child's mood:  
 normal (C-1)                      troubled (C-2)                      very troubled (C-3)

55. Is the child's way of thinking:  
 normal (C-1)                      troubled (C-2)                      very troubled (C-3)

56. Are there signs of abuse?   Yes (P-2) or (P-3)   No (P-1)   Explain \_\_\_\_\_

57. Are there signs of neglect?   Yes (P-2) or (P-3)   No (P-1)   Explain \_\_\_\_\_

Observ.- Column 1		Observ.- Column 2		Observ.- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

Transfer the information you placed in Summary Boxes 1-8 to the Summary of Child Interview Form below. Then total each column and put the sum at the bottom.

SUMMARY OF CHILD INTERVIEW						
	C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3
School Issues						
Peer Issues						
Behavior Issues						
Family Issues						
Crisis or Trauma						
Fire History						
Characteristics of Firestart/play						
Observations						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

Now that you have all the totals, use the totals to compute the percentages according to the formulae below.

**Child Risk**

$$\frac{C-2 + C-3}{C-1 + C-2 + C-3} = \frac{\quad}{\quad} = \quad\%$$

$$C-1 + C-2 + C-3$$

**Family Risk**

$$\frac{P-2 + P-3}{P-1 + P-2 + P-3} = \frac{\quad}{\quad} = \quad\%$$

$$P-1 + P-2 + P-3$$

**Total Risk**

$$\frac{C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3}{C-1 + P-1 + C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3} = \frac{\quad}{\quad} = \quad\%$$

$$C-1 + P-1 + C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3$$

**INTERVIEWING**

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Child Firesetter Ages 3 to 18

Kenneth R. Fineman, Ph.D- USFA- FEMA  
Fire Service Professional- Version 3.0

**Family FireRisk Evaluation Form**  
(Questions to be asked of parents of Children and Adolescents 3 to 18 Years of Age)

INTERVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ INTERVIEWEE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

JUVENILE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SEX \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ ETHNICITY/RACE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

PREVIOUS ADDRESS(ES)-5 YRS. \_\_\_\_\_

HAVE THERE BEEN FIRES AT THESE ADDRESSES? \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

FEMALE CAREGIVER \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

MALE CAREGIVER \_\_\_\_\_ RELATIONSHIP \_\_\_\_\_

MOTHER \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS (If not caregiver) \_\_\_\_\_

FATHER \_\_\_\_\_ ADDRESS (If not caregiver) \_\_\_\_\_

EMPLOYERS of caregivers and parents \_\_\_\_\_

FEMALE CAREGIVER MARITAL STATUS:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widow  Separated  Remarried

MALE CAREGIVER MARITAL STATUS:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widow  Separated  Remarried

MOTHER'S MARITAL STATUS:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widow  Separated  Remarried

FATHER'S MARITAL STATUS:  Single  Married  Divorced  Widow  Separated  Remarried

LIST ALL IN THE FAMILY Give their ages and relationship to the child \_\_\_\_\_

RELATIONSHIP OF CHILD TO YOU Birth  Foster  Adopted  Friend  Step  Other \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD LIVES WITH Birth Parents  Single Birth Parent  Birth Parent + Step Parent  Which Other \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

---

**CIRCLE ALL ANSWERS BELOW THAT APPLY**

**HEALTH HISTORY**

1. What medical or physical problems does your child have? \_\_\_\_\_  
Professionally diagnosed No Yes By whom \_\_\_\_\_
2. Has your child taken any medication in the past 3 months? If so, what? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Has your child been diagnosed with any impulse control conditions such as ADHD/ADD (hyperactivity)?  
Yes No Diagnosis \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is your child currently in counseling or has he/she been seen by a counselor before? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)  
For what \_\_\_\_\_ With whom: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Is any other family member currently in counseling or have they been seen before? Yes (P-2) No (P-1)  
By whom \_\_\_\_\_ For what reason \_\_\_\_\_
6. Are there smokers in your home? Yes (P-2) No (P-1)

Health- Column 1		Health- Column 2		Health- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY STRUCTURE/ISSUES**

7. How long have you rented or owned at present location? \_\_\_\_ If less than 1 yr. score (P-2) if more than 5 yrs. score (P-1)
8. Do you think that you or your spouse/partner may be overprotective of the child?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes rarely never
9. Is Mother/female caregiver available to the child (not gone) as much as the child needs her?  
always (P-1) usually (P-1) sometimes rarely (P-2) never (P-3)
10. Is Father/male caregiver available to the child (not gone) as much as the child needs him?  
always (P-1) usually (P-1) sometimes rarely (P-2) never (P-3)
11. Do you feel you spend enough time with your child?  
always (P-1) usually (P-1) sometimes rarely (P-2) never (P-3)
12. Are there significant conflicts between this child and other members of the family?  
always (P-3) usually (P-2) sometimes rarely never
13. Do you believe that you have adequate influence and control over your child?  
always (P-1) usually (P-1) sometimes rarely (P-2) never (P-3)

**INTERVIEWING**

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14. What do you discipline your child for? \_\_\_\_\_ How often? \_\_\_\_\_

15. How do you normally discipline your child? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Is there a history of emotional abuse in the family? Yes (P-2) or (P-3) No (P-1)

Who? \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_ Currently in the home? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Is there a history of physical abuse in the family? Yes (P-2) or (P-3) No (P-1)

Who? \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_ Currently in the home? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Is there a history of sexual abuse in the family? Yes (P-2) or (P-3) No (P-1)

Who? \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship? \_\_\_\_\_ Currently in the home? \_\_\_\_\_

Family- Column 1		Family- Column 2		Family- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PEER ISSUES**

19. Does your child interact normally with peers? Yes (C-1) No (C-2)

20. Does your child get into fights frequently? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

21. Does your child frequently get picked on by other children? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

22. Does your child frequently play/stay alone rather than with other children? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

23. Do you think his/her friends are a bad influence? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

Peers- Column 1		Peers- Column 2		Peers- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOL ISSUES**

24. Is your child in the age appropriate grade? Yes No [Is your child ahead (C-1) or behind (C-2)]

25. How does your child perform academically? Well (C-1) Average (C-1) Poorly or below expectation (C-2)

26. Have there been any recent negative changes in your child's academic performance? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

**INTERVIEWING**

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27. Does your child have any special educational [special ed.] learning needs?

Yes [e.g., learning disabled, developmentally disabled (retarded)] (C-2) No (C-1)

28. Have there been any discipline problems at school? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

School- Column 1		School- Column 2		School- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**BEHAVIOR ISSUES**

29 Has your child been in trouble outside of school for non-fire related behaviors? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

What \_\_\_\_\_

30. Does your child frequently say no when he is asked to do something? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

31. Has your child ever stolen or shoplifted? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

32. Has your child ever lied excessively? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

33. Has your child ever used drugs/alcohol/inhalants? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

34. Has your child ever beat up or hurt others? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)

Behavior- Column 1		Behavior- Column 2		Behavior- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**FIRE HISTORY**

35. What were you doing when the fire occurred?

appropriate supervision (P-1) not home, asleep, or other indication of inappropriate supervision, score (P-2)

36. Are matches or lighters readily available to the child in the home? Yes (P-2) No (P-1)

37. How did you teach your child about fire? appropriate (P-1) inappropriate (P-2)

38. Have any of your child's siblings engaged in inappropriate fire behavior? Yes (P-2) No (C-1)

39. If you had to describe your child's curiosity about fire, would you say it was:

absent? (C-1) mild? (C-1) moderate? (C-2) extreme? (C-3)

40. How many times has your child used fire inappropriately? 1 time =(C-1), 2-3 times =(C-2) more than 3=(C-3).

If no other times, skip #41

**INTERVIEWING**

41. Tell me what you know about all the fires that he started before this one. [Use a common time frame i.e. Christmas, school starting, etc. to help parent describe when fires were started or fireplay initiated]

What Set	Date Set	Where Set	With Whom	Ignition Source	Accelerant or used
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					

Fire Hx- Column 1		Fire Hx- Column 2		Fire Hx- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CRISIS OR TRAUMA**

42. Has anything bad happened in the family or in your child's life in the last year? Yes (C-2) or (P-2) No (P-1)  
 What \_\_\_\_\_

43. Has there been an ongoing (chronic) crisis/problem in your life or in the family? Yes (C-2) or (P-2) No (P-1)

44. Did the fire/fireplay occur after:

- family fight (C-2)      being angry at sibling (C-2)      being angry at boss (C-2)  
 being angry with school authority (C-2)      being angry with another (C-2)  
 recent move (P-2)      other crisis (C-2) or (C-3) or (P-2) or (P-3)      None

C or T- Column 1		C or T- Column 2		C or T- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**CHARACTERISTICS OF FIRESTART OR FIREPLAY** [circle all that apply but only score the most severe response for each question]

45. Materials used to set the fire or fireplay

- matches   lighters   flammable liquid/aerosol   fireworks  
 other (butane torch, flare, stove, pilot light)   What? \_\_\_\_\_



**INTERVIEWING**

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52. Did child lie about involvement? total denial, minimizing, score (C-2) denial at first and then confessed, score (C-1)  
no denial (C-1)

53. Did child act alone?

List names \_\_\_\_\_

54. Was child pressured or coerced into firesetting or fireplay behavior by his peers? Yes (C-2) No (C-2)

Child was instigator (C-3)

55. Did the child respond to the fire or fireplay as if it were a positive or humorous experience? (C-2)

or as a negative (remorseful) experience? (C-1)

56. Does the child believe that fire has spiritual qualities or extraordinary powers? Yes (C-2) or (C-3) No (C-1)

57. Is there an impulsive quality to the child's firesetting or fireplay? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

58. Did your child set the fire or play with fire in an intentional, deliberate or planned manner? Yes (C-2) No (C-1)

59. What did you do to the child in response to the fire or fireplay?

grounded him/her (P-1)

physical punishment (P-1) or (P-2)

nothing (P-2)

talked/lectured (P-1) or (P-2)

sought outside help (P-1)

yelled (P-1) or (P-2)

other (P-1) or (P-2)

abused (P-2) or (P-3)

Explain \_\_\_\_\_

C.O.F.- Column 1		C.O.F.- Column 2		C.O.F.- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**OBSERVATIONS**

60. How does the mother act toward the child?

Appropriately concerned (P-1) inappropriately concerned (P-2) indifferent or hostile (P-3)

61. How does the father act toward the child?

**INTERVIEWING**

Appropriately concerned (P-1) inappropriately concerned (P-2) indifferent or hostile (P-3)

62. Does the mother show appropriate self-care? Yes (P-1) No (P-2)

63. Does the father show appropriate self-care? Yes (P-1) No (P-2)

Observ.- Column 1		Observ.- Column 2		Observ.- Column 3	
C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Transfer the information you placed in Summary Boxes 1-8 to the Summary of Child Interview Form below. Then total each column and put the sum at the bottom.

SUMMARY OF FAMILY INTERVIEW						
	C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3
Health History						
Family Structure/Issues						
Peer Issues						
School Issues						
Behavior Issues						
Fire History						
Crisis or Trauma						
Characteristics of Firestart/play						
Observations						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

Now that you have all the totals, use the totals to compute the percentages according to the formulae below.

**Child Risk**

$C-2 + C-3 = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } \%$

$C-1 + C-2 + C-3$

**Total Risk**

$C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3 = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } \%$

$C-1 + P-1 + C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3$

**Family Risk**

$P-2 + P-3 = \text{ \_\_\_\_\_\_ } \%$

$P-1 + P-2 + P-3$

**INTERVIEWING**

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Child Firesetter Ages 3 to 18

Kenneth R. Fineman, Ph.D.- USFA- FEMA  
Fire Service Professional- Version 3.0

**PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

(For the Parents of Children and Adolescents 3 to 18 Years of Age)

PARENTS: Please complete this form. Mark the answer under "rarely to never," "sometimes" or "frequently" that best describes your child for each question. When marking the form, consider all parts of the child's life (at home, at school, etc.) where the events below might occur. If an item does not apply, leave it blank. If you do not understand a term of question, make a mark next to it in the left margin and ask the interviewer for clarification.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>RARELY TO NEVER</u>	<u>SOMETIMES</u>	<u>FREQUENTLY</u>
Hyperactivity at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of concentration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Learning problems at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behavior problems in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impulsive (acts before he thinks)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impatient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fantasizes (day dreaming)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Likes school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listens to teacher(s)/school authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shows age appropriate interest in future school/jobs/careers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Truant/school runaway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----			
Convulsions, seizures, "spells"	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Need for excessive security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Need for affection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excessive weight loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excessive overweight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Knows what is moral	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Feels good about self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comfortable with own body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Likes overall looks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stuttering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wets during the day (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Night time bed wetting (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soiling (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is good in sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Injury prone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shyness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tries to please everyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relationships are socially appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**INTERVIEWING**

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ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Physically fights with peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdrawn from peers/group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Destroys toys/property of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a poor loser	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shows off for peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easily led by peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plays with other children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shows appropriate peer affection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plays alone (not even with adults)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picked on by peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has many friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participates in sports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is a loner (few friends)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----			
Lies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excessive & uncontrolled verbal anger	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Physically violent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cruel to animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cruel to children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is/was in a gang	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expresses anger by damaging the property of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Destroys own toys/possessions (if age 3-6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Destroys own toys/possessions (if age 7-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disobeys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Severe behavior difficulties (past or present)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expresses anger by destroying others' things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has been in trouble with police	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uses drugs or alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jealous of peers/siblings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Temper tantrums	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unacceptable showing off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual activity with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**INTERVIEWING**

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ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Stomach aches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nightmares	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleeps too deep or problem waking up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anxiety (nervousness)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has twitches (eyes, face, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bites nails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vomits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aches and pains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chews odd/unusual things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extreme mood swings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depressed mood or withdrawal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Constipation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-imposed unnecessary, or excessive diet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sleep walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phobias	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
General fears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Curiosity about fire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plays with matches/lighters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plays with fire (singing, burning)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was concerned when fire got out of control	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was proud or boastful regarding fireplay or firestart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stares at fire for long periods (fire fascination)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unusual look on child's face when he/she stares at fire(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Daydreams or talks about fires	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of fire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other(s) in family set fire(s) (past or present)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Set occupied structure on fire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate reaction to fire(s) he/she set	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**INTERVIEWING**

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ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Extensive absences by father	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extensive absences by mother	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family has moved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Runs away from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has seen a counselor/therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other family member has seen a counselor/ therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Makes attempts at age appropriate independence from parents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In trouble at home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent or sibling with serious health problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage is unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mother's discipline is effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Father's discipline is effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fighting with siblings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflicts in family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----			
Unusual fantasies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strange thought patterns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bizarre, illogical, or irrational speech	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Out of touch with reality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strange quality about child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Expresses anger by hurting self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Destroys own property or what he likes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was/is in a cult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Severe depression or withdrawal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor or no eye contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**INTERVIEWING**

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Child Firesetter Ages 3 to 18

Kenneth R. Fineman, Ph.D.- USFA- FEMA  
Fire Service Professional- Version 3.0

**PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**(For the Parents of Children and Adolescents 3 to 18 Years of Age)**

**Scoring Key**

PARENTS: Please complete this form. Mark the answer under “rarely to never,” “sometimes” or “frequently” that best describes your child for each question. When marking the form, consider all parts of the child’s life (at home, at school, etc.) where the events below might occur. If an item does not apply, leave it blank. If you do not understand a term of question, make a mark next to it in the left margin and ask the interviewer for clarification.

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>RARELY TO NEVER</u>	<u>SOMETIMES</u>	<u>FREQUENTLY</u>
Hyperactivity at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of concentration	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Learning problems at school	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Behavior problems in school	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Impulsive (acts before he thinks)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Impatient	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Fantasizes (day dreaming)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Likes school	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Listens to teacher(s)/school authorities	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Shows age appropriate interest in future school/jobs/careers	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Truant/school runaway	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
-----			
Convulsions, seizures, “spells”	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Need for excessive security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Need for affection	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Loss of appetite	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Excessive weight loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Excessive overweight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Knows what is moral	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Feels good about self	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Comfortable with own body	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Likes overall looks	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Stuttering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Wets during the day (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Night time bed wetting (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Soiling (after age 3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Is good in sports	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Injury prone	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Shyness	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Tries to please everyone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Relationships are socially appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1

**INTERVIEWING**

ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Physically fights with peers	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Withdrawn from peers/group	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Destroys toys/property of others	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Is a poor loser	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Shows off for peers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Easily led by peers	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Plays with other children	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Shows appropriate peer affection	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Plays alone (not even with adults)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Picked on by peers	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Has many friends	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Participates in sports	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Is a loner (few friends)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Lies	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Excessive & uncontrolled verbal anger	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Physically violent	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Steals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Cruel to animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Cruel to children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Is/was in a gang	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Expresses anger by damaging the property of others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Destroys own toys/possessions (if age 3-6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Destroys own toys/possessions (if age 7-18)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Disobeys	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Severe behavior difficulties (past or present)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Expresses anger by destroying others' things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Has been in trouble with police	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Uses drugs or alcohol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Jealous of peers/siblings	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Temper tantrums	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Unacceptable showing off	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Sexual activity with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3

**INTERVIEWING**

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ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Stomach aches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Nightmares	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Sleeps too deep or problem waking up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Anxiety (nervousness)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Has twitches (eyes, face, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Cries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Bites nails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Vomits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Aches and pains	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Chews odd/unusual things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Extreme mood swings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Depressed mood or withdrawal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Constipation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Diarrhea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Self-imposed unnecessary, or excessive diet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Sleep walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Phobias	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
General fears	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
-----			
Curiosity about fire	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Plays with matches/lighters	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Plays with fire (singing, burning)	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Was concerned when fire got out of control	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Was proud or boastful regarding fireplay or firestart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Stares at fire for long periods (fire fascination)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Unusual look on child's face when he/she stares at fire(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Daydreams or talks about fires	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Fear of fire	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
Other(s) in family set fire(s) (past or present)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P3
Set occupied structure on fire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Appropriate reaction to fire(s) he/she set	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
-----			

**INTERVIEWING**

ITEM	RARELY TO NEVER	SOMETIMES	FREQUENTLY
Extensive absences by father	<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Extensive absences by mother	<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Family has moved	<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Runs away from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Has seen a counselor/therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Other family member has seen a counselor/ therapist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Makes attempts at age appropriate independence from parents	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/> C1
In trouble at home	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Parent or sibling with serious health problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Marriage is unhappy	<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/> P2
Mother's discipline is effective	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P1
Father's discipline is effective	<input type="checkbox"/> P2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P1
Fighting with siblings	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Conflicts in family	<input type="checkbox"/> P1	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> P2

Unusual fantasies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Strange thought patterns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Bizarre, illogical, or irrational speech	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Out of touch with reality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Strange quality about child	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Expresses anger by hurting self	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Destroys own property or what he likes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2
Was/is in a cult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Severe depression or withdrawal	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	<input type="checkbox"/> C3
Poor or no eye contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	<input type="checkbox"/> C2

SUMMARY OF PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE						
	C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3
School Issues						
Health/Developmental Issues						
Peer Issues						
Antisocial Behavior						
Symptoms of Anxiety or Depression						
Fire History						
Family Issues						
Severe Dysfunction						
<b>TOTAL</b>						

Now that you have all the totals, use the totals to compute the percentages according to the formulae below.

Child Risk	Family Risk	Total Risk
$\frac{C-2 + C-3}{C-1 + C-2 + C-3} = \_ = \_ \%$	$\frac{P-2 + P-3}{P-1 + P-2 + P-3} = \_ = \_ \%$	$\frac{C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3}{C-1 + P-1 + C-2 + P-2 + C-3 + P-3} = \_ = \_ \%$

**INTERVIEWING**

<b>FEMA Comprehensive FireRisk Analysis Form</b>									
* Kenneth R. Fineman, Ph.D. *									
	Little Concern		Definite Concern		Extreme Concern		Child Risk	Family Risk	Total Risk
	C-1	P-1	C-2	P-2	C-3	P-3			
<b>Child FireRisk Interview</b>									
School Issues							___%	___%	___%
Peer Issues									
Behavior Issues									
Family Issues									
Crisis or Trauma									
Fire History									
Characteristics of Firestart									
Observations									
SUBTOTAL									
<b>Family FireRisk Interview</b>									
Health Issues							___%	___%	___%
Family Issues									
Peer Issues									
Behavior Issues									
School Issues									
Fire History									
Crisis or Trauma									
Fire Behavior									
Observations									
SUBTOTAL									
<b>Parent FireRisk Questionnaire</b>									
School/Attention							___%	___%	___%
Health/Developmental									
Peer Issues									
Antisocial Behavior									
Symptoms of Anxiety/Depression									
Fire History									
Family Issues									
Severe Dysfunction									
SUBTOTAL									
<b>TOTAL</b>							___%	___%	___%



**APPENDIX C**

**FIRE STOPPERS INTERVIEW FORMS**





## INTERVIEW FORM GUIDELINES

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The Child and Parent Interview forms were designed by Fire Stoppers Children's Fire Prevention Program of Washington. The forms were created in response to interventionists needing a high quality, yet, easy to use tool to help assist them in the intervention process. The goal of the forms is to give the non-clinical (fire service) user a broad picture as to the level of functioning of the youth referred for firesetting. These forms will help the user to determine if referrals for further services are advisable.

Each form is simple to use. Start by asking the questions and checking off the answers given. You will notice that the "answer key" includes answers that are a circle as opposed to a square. If any circle answer is given then you check the large circle score in the left hand margin. Note that some questions have more than one possible circle answer, however, you only check the large circle score once.

When finished you add the number of large circle scores (from the left hand column) together. You will then have both a Parent/Child Interview score. You then add the two scores together to arrive at a composite score.

**If the composite score is greater than 12, then referrals for further services are recommended.** Referrals should also be made if the interventionist has a compelling belief that youth would benefit from further services even if the score were less than 12. The tool is there to help give you guidance, but understand that it is a non-clinical tool with no psychometric studies to substantiate its use. The cut score of 12 is based upon a sample of 200 subjects and represents one standard deviation above the mean for the composite scores. The majority of the youth you interview will score less than 12. They represent the classical construct of Little Concern/Curiosity fire setting.

Finish by completing the Interviewer Observation section of the interview tool. Your comments here could be helpful to someone receiving your referral.





**INTERVIEWING**

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10. Tell me the reason you decided to light the fire or play with the matches/lighters.
- Another child told me to     To see it burn     To see what would happen
- To destroy something     To hurt someone    Other: \_\_\_\_\_
11. How did you feel when you started this fire or played with the M/L.
- Happy     Sad     Excited     Scared     Nervous
- Normal     Angry    Other: \_\_\_\_\_
12. Has anything happened lately that really bothers you?
- Nothing     Being angry at a brother/sister     Parents split up     Death     Moved
- Argument with parent     Family fight     Problem at school
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
13. How many fires have you set or how many times have you played with matches/lighters?
- None     One     Two     Three or more
- Explain: \_\_\_\_\_
14. What have you set on fire in the past?
- Nothing     Paper product     Grass     Flammable liquids
- Trash     Others belongings    Other: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Have you ever been with your friends when they have set fires?
- Yes     No    Explain: \_\_\_\_\_
16. What are two things that could happen when children play with fire?
- A. \_\_\_\_\_    B. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Do you have any M/L hidden anywhere or know where some are?
- Yes     No    Where: \_\_\_\_\_
18. Do you think that you will continue to light more fires?
- Yes     No    How come: \_\_\_\_\_
19. Is there anything else about fires that you want to tell me? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

---

**SOCIAL HISTORY QUESTIONS**

20. How do you get along with parents, caregivers, siblings? ( for negative response)

*(The following sample questions are to help generate dialogue.)*

Do you spend as much time with them (parent/caregiver) as you would like?

How do you feel about this? \_\_\_\_\_

What are things that you and your family do together? \_\_\_\_\_

Tell me about them,(parent/caregiver/siblings) what are they like? \_\_\_\_\_

21. How often do you fight, argue or disagree with your parent(s)?

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Often  All the time

What is it usually about? \_\_\_\_\_

22. How are you punished when you have done something wrong?

Don't get punished  Time-out  Ground or take away privileges

Yell  Spank  Hit/Beat Other: \_\_\_\_\_

23. When you get punished do you think the punishment is fair?

Never  Rarely  Sometimes  Mostly  Always

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

24. Does anyone else in your family argue a lot?

Yes  No  Sometimes

Who and what about: \_\_\_\_\_

25. Is there anything else that you want to tell me about you? ( for negative response) \_\_\_\_\_

*(These are some optional questions that may be used to generate dialogue regarding abuse issues.)*

Has anyone done mean things to you that hurt you?

Yes  No Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Is/has there anyone that touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable?

Yes  No Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**INTERVIEWING**

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**For Official Use Only**

*Interviewer's Observations (compared to other interviews)*

During your interview it is important to recognize some important signs the child may be giving to you. Your observations relating to behavior, mannerisms, mood and way of thinking are important to note. If a referral is necessary, counselors or therapists may get some insights based on your notes and observations.

Child's behavior: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. fidgety, nervous, stubborn, eye contact, shy, open, hyper, polite)

Child's mood: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. angry, sad, defiant, happy, depressed, excited, afraid)

Child's way of thinking: \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. rational, age appropriate, scattered, illogical)

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Within Normal Limits?</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Child's behavior: .....		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child's mood: .....		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Child's cognitive process: .....		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you visited the home, what was the appearance? \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. orderly, messy, unsafe)

- Do the caregivers appear indifferent towards the child? .....
- Do the caregivers appear hostile towards the child? .....
- Does the child appear neglected/abused? .....

Does mother , father , caregiver , appear to be developmentally disabled?

Does mother , father , caregiver , show signs of substance abuse?

Total ○ Score = \_\_\_\_\_ (parent+child forms)

Additional Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**PARENT INTERVIEW FORM**

**CAREGIVER INFORMATION**

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First Date of Birth

Female caregiver name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Male caregiver name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to child: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (male/female) Work (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ (male/female)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**FAMILY INFORMATION**

1. Biological parent's present marital status:  
 Never married  Married  Divorced  Separated
2. Who is the custodial parent and/or primary caregiver?  
 Mother  Father  Both  Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. Has/is your child been in counseling?  Yes  No  
If yes, when and with whom \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does anyone in your home smoke?  Yes  No How many? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Has your family ever experienced a serious fire or burn injury?  Yes  No
6. Where are matches/lighters generally kept in your home? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How did your child get the materials used in this incident?  
 Found it easily  Went out of the way to acquire

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**INTERVIEWING**

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8. Do you believe this fireplay/firesetting was intentional?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_  
Do you believe your child was attempting to do harm or destroy property?  
 Yes  No
9. Has your child expressed an interest/fascination in fire?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_
10. Do you believe your child was pressured or coerced into fireplay/firesetting by peers?  
 Yes  No If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_
11. Within the last 6 months has there been an event in your child's life that could have contributed to this behavior?  Yes  No *If yes, check those that apply:*  
 Family problems  Parent/child conflict  Family moved  Death  
 Problem at school  Angry at self or another  Trauma  
 Other ( if negative response) \_\_\_\_\_
12. What was your child's behavior after this fireplay/firesetting incident?  
 Denied or lied about involvement  Hid  Did nothing  Extinguished the fire  
 Sought help  Other \_\_\_\_\_
13. Does the fireplay/firesetting appear to be an attempt to get attention by your child?  
 Yes  No  Not sure
14. Please check any of the behaviors that apply or are demonstrated by this child:  
 Jealousy  Stealing  Bedwetting  Destructive  Compulsive behaviors  
 Moody  Nightmares  Impulse  Cruel to animals  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Please check if any of the following apply to this child:  
 Physical abuse  Sexual abuse  Emotional abuse  Neglected abuse  
 Other/explain: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D**

**OREGON OFFICE OF STATE FIRE  
MARSHAL JUVENILE WITH FIRE  
SCREENING TOOL**





# JUVENILE WITH FIRE

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## Screening Tool



Distributed by Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal  
Oregon Department of State Police  
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Unit  
4760 Portland Road NE,  
Salem, Oregon 97305-1760  
(503) 373-1540, ext. 230

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## Introduction

The Juvenile Firesetter Screening Tool is designed for use by fire service personnel to screen youth referred to them for a fire-related incident. This is a basic screening tool. It is used to decide if a youth needs fire education intervention or needs to be referred to other community agencies. The screening tool is only the first step in the evaluation process for a youth who is using fire. It is not a risk inventory nor does it attempt to predict recidivism.

The tool is based on the statistical analysis of 130 juvenile firesetter assessments. The assessment form used in the research was developed by Kenneth Fineman, Ph.D. The analysis, done by Paul Yavonoff, Ph.D. and Michael Bullis, Ph.D. of the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, was based on Item Response Theory (IRT). The National Arson Prevention Initiative provided the funding for this research effort.

The present document reflects the work of many fire and mental health professionals in Oregon. However, the format of the interview is based on the work of Laurie Birchill, LCSW. Ms. Birchill developed a screening tool for youth applying for entrance into residential treatment in 1989. Ms. Birchill's instrument proved to be user-friendly and stood the test of time. Ms. Birchill made a significant contribution to this project by refining many of her original questions. We are indeed grateful for her expertise.

The Oregon fire service participated in the research which formed the basis for this inventory. They recognized the need for a screening instrument based on empirical data. During the course of the project, interventionists from over twenty fire departments participated in the development of this tool. We are grateful for the dedication of the many men and women from the Oregon fire service who worked so hard to make this screening tool a reality.

Additional funding and facilitation for this project was provided by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Unit.

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The Oregon *Juvenile with Fire* screening tool was designed to give the fire service professional or community partner a “broad brush” approach to understanding the firesetting behavior of a youth. In Oregon, this screening tool represents only the first step in an evaluation process. The next step includes a mental status evaluation, psychosocial history, firesetter history, diagnosis and treatment recommendations. This step is completed by a qualified mental health professional in the community. A more comprehensive evaluation may also include a battery of psychological testing given by a state licensed clinical psychologist.

The *Juvenile with Fire* screening tool was designed to meet the needs of both a paid and volunteer fire service. The tool is easy to administer, can be completed in a relatively short period of time, is flexible and focuses mainly on the fire incident. It is not a psychometric risk inventory and therefore does not assign levels of risk. Rather, the fire service in Oregon believes that any fire started by a youth has the potential to cause property loss, injury, and even death and is, therefore, a serious risk-taking behavior.

**The screening booklet has several parts:**

**Steps for Conducting a Screening Interview:** Self explanatory

**Personal Information:** Serves as a basic intake form or the face sheet on a file

**Youth Interview:** Since the focus of the screening tool is on the fire incident, eleven questions in the youth interview are fire-related. Only three of the fourteen questions in the youth interview are non-fire related. The three questions ask about school, peer group and recent family crisis. Under each of the fourteen primary questions is a list of “suggested” questions. You may ask one of them, all of them, or even probe the topic area with your own questions. You want to ask as many questions as you need until you feel comfortable enough to be able to score the question. Each question is scored on a range of 1-3 with 1 being the most normative behavior. It is recommended that you score the questions after you complete the entire interview. The Comment section is for your notes.

**Parent Checklist:** This is a self-report checklist. It is included in the referral package. Fire personnel do not need to ask any follow-up questions on this checklist. Many of the items on the checklist were determined to be red-flag behaviors requiring the services of community partners working with at-risk youths.

**Parent Interview:** The parents are asked ten questions. These questions deal with past firesetting behavior, parents’ perceptions of their child’s behavior and what fire safety is practiced in the home. The parent interview gives fire professionals an indication of the level of fire education the family needs.

**Scoring and Referral Procedure:** See Scoring and Referral Procedure Page

**Report:** This is a sample format to use when writing up a referral.

**Authorization for Release of Information:** This form is used in Oregon. Other jurisdictions may have their own form.

**Child-Parent Contract:** This form outlines safety precautions for the child and family. It is recommended that you select one or more items for the family to complete. Have the family sign the form, make a copy for them and put a copy in your files. While one cannot predict a child’s future firesetting behavior, the fire service can make sure that the family was given fire safety and fire survival information at the time of the interview.

**Good Fire, Bad Fire:** This is an activity sheet for the younger age child. There are many activity sheets available for younger age youth. You may have your own preference.

**Fire and Life Safety Questionnaire:** This activity sheet was designed for the middle school aged youth. It can assist the interviewer in assessing the educational level of the youth, which can be helpful in assigning reading or writing homework assignments.

**Form 10J:** Submit to the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal for data collection. (Your state or department may have their own data collection point.)

## Steps for Conducting a Screening Interview

- Step 1:** A request for a screening interview is received. This request may come from several sources: a parent/caregiver, fire personnel, or other agency (i.e. juvenile, school, mental health)
- Step 2:** When the person calls for a screening interview, complete as much as possible of the **Incident Information** form.
- Step 3:** Schedule screening interview. Inform the family that the interview will take about an hour.
- Step 4:** At the time of the interview, introduce yourself, explain the purpose and format of the meeting.  
*Example:* “We are here today to gather information that will help determine what educational intervention is needed to stop your child from playing with or setting fires. There are many reasons why kids are interested in fire. We are concerned about your child’s safety and the safety of your family. We know only too well how fast fire can get out of control and we want to make sure that it doesn’t happen to you. So, we are going to ask you and your child a series of questions about the fire incident. I will also be asking you to complete a checklist. This information will direct us on how to best help your child.
- Step 5:** Give the parent the **Parent Checklist** and place them in a separate room to fill it out. Time permitting, you might also want them to view a safety video. We recommend *Plan to Get out Alive* or *Fire Power*.
- Step 6:** Interview the youth. Complete the **Youth Interview** form. Take time to establish rapport with the youth before beginning your questions about the fire.
- Step 7:** After the parent has completed the **Parent Checklist** and you have finished interviewing the child, bring the parent and child back together to complete the **Parent Interview** form. Depending on your situation, you may want to interview the parent alone.  
(Optional: If interviewing the parent first, give the youth an assignment to complete such as a work sheet\*, a fire safety questionnaire\*, or ask them to draw a picture of their fire.)
- Step 8:** Score the **Youth Interview** form and the **Parent Interview** form. Depending on the results of the scoring, the interviewer will recommend intervention strategies. There are basically two:
- 1) Fire Education for the youth and family
  - 2) Referral to another agency for a more comprehensive assessment, accountability program, and fire education for the youth and family

**When is a release of information form\* needed?** If the interviewer is recommending a referral to another agency, have the parent/caregiver complete a release of information form. This release allows the fire department personnel to discuss the case with other providers. We recommend that you list the county juvenile firesetter network on the release form.

\*Sample provided at back of book.



**INTERVIEWING**

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**Juvenile Firesetter Incident Information  
Personal Information**

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ Agency/Department \_\_\_\_\_ Initial Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Person/Agency Requesting Service \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Youth's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_

Parents/Caregivers

Father \_\_\_\_\_ Work# \_\_\_\_\_ Home# \_\_\_\_\_

Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Work# \_\_\_\_\_ Home# \_\_\_\_\_

Other adults in the home

Name	Relationship
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Brothers/Sisters

Name	Age
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

.....

**Incident Information**

Did the fire dept. respond? (Yes \_\_\_\_\_) (No \_\_\_\_\_) Incident # \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the incident take place? \_\_\_\_\_

What was set on fire? \_\_\_\_\_

What was the ignition source? \_\_\_\_\_

Have there been any other firesets? \_\_\_\_\_

.....

**Action Taken**

Screening Interview Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Interviewer \_\_\_\_\_

Results: Fire Education \_\_\_\_\_ Referral to \_\_\_\_\_

Describe educational intervention provided: (Use back.) \_\_\_\_\_



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**INTERVIEWING**

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**Youth Interview**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's name \_\_\_\_\_

Total score \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Place a check mark next to the scoring level that best describes the situation for this youth. Expand the questions as you feel necessary to complete the interview with confidence. Use the comment line for anything that seems out of the ordinary or supports your impressions.

**A.** Is the youth experiencing any school problems?

Suggested Questions: *How's school? What do you like about school? What don't you like? Do you get in trouble at school? Do you have lots of friends at school? Who is your best friend?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth likes school and has minimal problems.
- \_2 The youth has some trouble in school either socially or academically.
- \_3 The youth has frequently been in trouble at school, hates the teachers, doesn't like the classes, etc.

Comments:

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**B.** How does the youth get along with the others in the neighborhood?

Suggested Questions: *Do you have any friends in the neighborhood that you hang out with? Do you like them? Do they like you? Do you ever get picked on by the kids in the neighborhood?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth has friends in the neighborhood.
- \_2 The youth gets into fights frequently in the neighborhood or has few friends. The youth may get picked on by others.
- \_3 The youth is involved in a gang or is "hanging out" with other youths involved in delinquent or criminal activity.

Comments:

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**C.** What was set on fire? \_\_\_\_\_ Was there anything significant about the object ?

Suggested Questions: *Tell me about what was burned? Tell me about the fire. I wonder why you wanted to burn \_\_\_\_\_? Have you ever burned \_\_\_\_\_ before? What other types of things have you burned? Whose stuff did you burn?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The object that was burned had little emotional significance for the youth. (i.e. toilet paper, leaves or trash)
- \_2 The object that was burned had some emotional significance for the youth (i.e. plastic army figures, other person's possessions)
- \_2 For an adolescent, the object may not have any significance but may be an act of vandalism.
- \_3 The object that was burned had emotional significance for the youth or someone else (i.e. sibling's crib or favorite toy, a parent's or caregiver's possession)

Comments:

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**INTERVIEWING**

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**D.** Where was the fire set? Was there any particular significance to the location of the fire?

Suggested Questions: *Where did the fire start? If at home, what room were you in, or were you outside? If not at home, do you go to this place often? Do you like being there?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The fire was started in a place where the youth plays such as his/her bedroom, a closet, a fort, a hiding place.
- \_2 The fire was started in a place with community significance i.e. church, a school, a park, in the forest.
- \_3\* The fire was set in a building occupied with people with the intent to place people at-risk.

Comments:

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---

**E.** How much planning was done prior to the fire?

Suggested Questions: *Tell me what you were you doing right before the fire? Did you think about how you were going to start the fire? Where did you get the things that were burned? What was used to light the fire? Where did it come from?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The fire was started using available materials; the act of firesetting was spontaneous and done without planning. Matches and lighters were readily available.
- \_2 There was some pre-planning for the fire and some gathering of materials; however, the fire was not especially thought out.
- \_3 There was definite planning for the fire, materials were sought out, and matches and lighters were stashed and/or hidden at the site beforehand. Accelerants may have been used.

Comments:

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**F.** Who was with the youth at the time of fire?

Suggested Questions: *Was anyone with you when the fire started? If yes, who? What did they say about the fire? Did the person with you do anything as the fire started burning?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth was with many peers/siblings when the fire was set.
- \_2 The youth was with other peers/siblings and this youth might have instigated the fire.
- \_3 The youth was alone when the fire was set.

Comments:

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**G.** What was the youth's response to the fire?

Suggested Questions: *What was the first thing you did when the fire started to burn? What was the next thing? Did you tell someone (an adult) about the fire? If so, who was it: When was it?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth tried to extinguish the fire and called for help.
- \_1 The youth engaged in match or lighter play.
- \_2 The youth may have made some attempts to extinguish the fire, but called for help only after others discovered the fire.
- \_3 The youth ignored the fire, did not call for help, may have stayed to watch, or may have left the fire scene.

Comments:

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**INTERVIEWING**

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**H.** How did the youth feel after the fire?

Suggested Questions: *What did your (parents/caregivers/principal/dad/mom) say to you about the fire? Was anyone angry with you about the fire? Do you care about what others think of you for having started a fire? Did you feel like you had done something bad or did the fire scare you? Did you think you would be in trouble?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth showed remorse for the fire.
- \_2 The youth showed interest in how others reacted.
- \_3 The youth is unconcerned about others' reactions or is pleased with the fire.

Comments:

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**I (A).** Was the youth supervised when the fire occurred at home?

Suggested Questions: *When you were playing around with the matches and lighters, where was mom or dad? Was anybody at home at the time? Who was taking care of you?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 Parents or caregivers were home at the time of the fire incident.
- \_2 Parents or caregivers were home but unavailable (i.e. sleeping, watching TV, not being attentive)
- \_3 Youth was left alone or with younger children.

or ...

**I (B).** Was the youth supervised when the fire occurred outside of the home?

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth was under appropriate adult supervision (i.e. school, church, neighbor's home, babysitter).
- \_2 The youth was NOT directly supervised at the time of the fire (i.e. at recess, in bathroom, at the park).
- \_3 Youth was left alone or with younger children.

Comments:

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**J.** How knowledgeable is the youth about fire? How much does the youth understand about the dangers of fire? Does the youth use fire for power or control?

Suggested Questions: *Did you think that the fire could get out of control and get really big? Do you feel you can control a fire that you start? Can you determine how big the fire will get? How? What did you want to have happen when you started the fire?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth is knowledgeable about some aspects of fire survival but is unaware of the destructiveness or speed of fire.
- \_2 The youth may indicate some concern about the dangers and risk of firesetting but thinks they can control it.
- \_3\* The youth does have an understanding of fire and uses it to defy authority, to gain status or attention, to express anger or for revenge.

Comments:

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**INTERVIEWING**

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**K.** Has the family experienced any kind of crisis in the past six months?

Suggested Questions: *Tell me about home. Do you like being at home? Is there anything about home that you don't like? Has anything happened at home in the last six months that upset you?*

*Is there anything different at home lately?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 There has been no major crisis in the family in the last six months.
- \_2 There have been some changes in the family structure in the last six months, ie. divorce, death, moving, death of a pet, etc.
- \_3 The family is in a state of crisis or chaos.

Comments:

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**L.** Does the youth have a fire history?

Suggested Questions: *Tell me the other times you have burned things? What was the smallest fire? What was the largest fire? What are some of the other things you have burned? If you started other fires, how did you start them? Have you ever used an accelerant like gasoline or lighter fluid? How about fireworks? Have you ever altered fireworks?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 This is the first known incidence of fireplay or firesetting.
- \_2 The youth admitted to setting from 2-5 fires or played with matches/lighters.
- \_3\* The youth has started more than 5 unsupervised or inappropriate fires. One or more of the fires has resulted in property loss or injury.

Comments:

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**M.** How concerned was the youth for accepting responsibility for the fire?

Suggested Questions: *Now the fire is out and you have had a chance to think about what has happened, would you do it again? Tell me your reasons or why this fire occurred?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting and accepts help appropriately.
- \_2 The youth acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting but seeks to blame others and denies his/her own responsibility.
- \_3 The youth denies the seriousness of the firesetting and his/her own responsibility for it or takes full responsibility for it because he/she intended to cause destruction or injury.

Comments:

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**N.** Has the youth ever been burned?

Suggested questions. *Have you ever been hurt by fire? Tell me what happened? Where did it happen? Who was involved?*

**Scoring:**

- \_1 The youth has never been burned.
- \_2 The youth has been burned unintentionally.
- \_3 The youth has been burned by another person, may have scars from this burn.

Comments:

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**INTERVIEWING**

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**Parent Checklist**

*(Please print)*

Name of youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Name of person filling out this questionnaire: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to child \_\_\_\_\_

Are there smokers in the home? Y m N m

My son or daughter takes medicine for a behavior problem. Y m N m

**Please check if any of the following statements are true for your son or daughter.**

- | Yes | No  | Some-<br>times |  |
|-----|-----|----------------|--|
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has set more than one fire or has played with matches more than one time. |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has set fires outside of the home before.                                 |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | Other people in the home have set fires.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter is fascinated with fire (for example, often stares at flames).            |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has misused or altered fireworks.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has easy access to matches and/or lighters.                               |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | There is a fireplace, wood stove, and/or candles or incense frequently in use in our home.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter fights with brothers and sisters.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter argues with parents/caregivers.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has witnessed parents arguing.  |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter spends as much time as he/she would like with father/male caregiver.      |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter spends as much time as he/she would like with mother/female caregiver.    |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | There has been a traumatic experience in my child's life or family in the last year.         |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | There has been physical or sexual abuse in the family.                                       |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | The family has moved frequently.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has special education needs.  |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has been suspended/expelled from school.                                  |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has few friends.  |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter is often picked on by others.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has friends who are a bad influence.                                      |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has a history of lying.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has stolen/shoplifted.  |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter destroys his/her own possessions.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has been or is in counseling.   |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter is physically aggressive or hurts others.                                 |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | My son or daughter has intentionally harmed or injured an animal.                            |
| ___ | ___ | ___            | I feel like I have no control over my son or daughter.                                       |

**Use back for additional comments.**



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**INTERVIEWING**

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**Parent Interview**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Total score \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Place a check mark next to the scoring level that best describes the situation for this youth. Expand the questions as you feel necessary to complete the interview with confidence. Use the comment line for anything that seems out of the ordinary or supports your impressions.

**A.** What was the parent's or caregiver's response to the fire?

Suggested Questions: *Mom, Dad, what was your reaction to the fire?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The reaction of the parents to the fire was an immediate and appropriate response, with concern for any victims.
- 2 The reaction of the parents to the fire was one that appears too lax or too punitive.
- 3 The reaction of the parents to the fire was either nonexistent or was an immediate and overly punitive response (such as burning of the youth's hands).

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**B.** Is there a family history with fire?

Suggested Questions: *Did anybody else in the family ever play with fire or get burned from a fire that got out of control? Have you ever had a house fire?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 There is no traceable history of fire in the family. There are no parents, siblings or close relatives who are/were firefighters, who were burned in a fire, lost their home in a fire or were firesetters.
- 2 There is some fire history in the family that the youth has or may have heard about.
- 3 There is a fire history about which the youth has direct knowledge.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**C.** Does the youth have a history of fireplay or firesetting?

Suggested Questions: *How many other times has your child lit matches, played with a lighter or burned things of little or no value? Do you know if he has ever threatened anybody with fire or if he/she has been hurt by fire himself/herself?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 This is the first known incidence of fireplay for the youth.
- 2 The youth has a sporadic history of fireplay. There was little or no damage from previous fireplay.
- 3 The youth has a history of chronic fireplay and/or has set at least one fire with serious consequences.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

**D.** What kind of modeling is going on in the home? How did the parents/caregivers teach their youth about fire?

What kinds of fire safety practices occur in the home? Are there any cultural or traditional ways the family uses fire?

Suggested Questions: *How did you teach your child about fire? Do you have a working smoke detector? Do you have candles or a woodstove? How do you store matches and lighters? How does your family use fire? Are there smokers in the home?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 Appropriate fire safety is observed in the home. Smoke detectors work, woodstoves are safely installed. Parents, siblings or other family members avoid modeling fire play.
- 2 There is modeling of fire play at home and fire safety is only moderately observed by parents and siblings.
- 3 Family members have used fire inappropriately. The youth's home is not firesafe.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**INTERVIEWING**

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**E.** How is the youth supervised?

Suggested Questions: *When you are not at home, who takes care of the child?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The youth has good, continual parental and/or caregiver supervision.
- 2 The youth has some supervision, but the supervision is often sporadic.
- 3 The youth has minimal supervision.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**F.** Does the youth have any problems in school?

Suggested Questions: *Is the youth having any problems in school? Does your child have any learning problems, ie. school referral for problem behaviors, trouble paying attention or being impulsive? Is he or she in a special classroom of any kind?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The youth has minimal problems in school.
- 2 The youth gets some school referrals.
- 2 The youth receives special education services.
- 3 The youth has been suspended or expelled from school.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**G.** Has the youth ever been in counseling?

Suggested Questions: *Has your child ever seen the school counselor or other mental health provider for problems?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The youth has never been in counseling.
- 2 The youth has been in counseling in the past.
- 3 The youth is currently in counseling or has been referred for counseling.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**H.** How would you describe your youth's friends?

Suggested Questions: *Do you like your kid's friends? Are they a positive influence on ...? Who is his best friend?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The youth has a healthy, supportive peer group.
- 2 The youth has some peer support, but his/her behavior is influenced by peers (bad friends).
- 3 The youth has little or no peer support, is shunned by peers and is isolated and withdrawn.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**I.** *Has any kind of crisis or traumatic event happened within your family? Please describe.*

**Scoring:**

- 1 There has not been a traumatic family experience in the past year.
- 2 There has been a major traumatic family experience in the past year.
- 3 There has been a major traumatic family event in the past that may be influencing the youth's behavior.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**J.** *Would you be willing to seek additional help for your child such as taking him/her to counseling?*

**Scoring:**

- 1 The youth's family acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting and seeks help appropriately.
- 2 The family protects the child, seeks to blame others and denies their own and the child's responsibility for the fire.
- 3 The family doesn't seem to take the behavior seriously and simply wants the fire department to "fix" the youth and/or doesn't see the need for other services. They may even refuse services.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Scoring and Referral Procedure

**Add the face value of the checked responses for both the youth and the parent interview. Enter the total on the lines provided below:**

Total Score: (Youth Interview) \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent Interview) \_\_\_\_\_

If the total number for the **youth interview** is from 14-19 then:

The fire behavior appears to be basically experimental in nature and set out of curiosity. This youth does not have a history of fire behavior. The intervention for a youth motivated primarily out of curiosity is fire education for the youth and the family. There are numerous fire education intervention curricula available to use with this child. The family should set clear rules about fire use in the home and practice home fire safety. Fire departments should emphasize the importance of working smoke alarms and home escape planning for these families. With education, curiosity firesetters usually do not continue their fire behavior. However, because curiosity firesetters do not understand the consequences of their actions, it is important that parents/caregivers increase their knowledge of fire safe practices.

If the total number for the **youth interview** is 20-42 then:

The youth has a sporadic history of firesetting and needs to be referred to other community agencies that serve children and their families. These agencies include community mental health centers, teen courts, youth service teams, multi-disciplinary teams, or juvenile departments. Many of these youths will require a more comprehensive mental health evaluation to determine the motives for his/her behavior. Youth who score in this range are setting fires as a cry for attention, as a response to a crisis event, to express anger or to defy authority. Many youth use fire because they are seeking power and control. The firesetting in this case is often a symptom of other family, school or peer group problems. Mental health professionals are positioned to evaluate all the dynamics affecting this youth's firesetting behavior.

In addition to referring the family for further evaluation, fire departments need to provide fire safety education. As with the curiosity firesetter, families often do not understand the power of fire and need to increase their knowledge of home fire safety practices. Again, emphasizing the importance of working smoke alarms and practicing home escape planning. After a mental health evaluation or court referral, fire departments may be asked to provide additional educational intervention. Helping educate the youth about how their firesetting behavior affected the community and the risk involved is another way fire departments can provide a service to the youth and their family and hold youth accountable for their behavior. Curricula for educating adolescent firesetters are available.

**If question D, J and/or L is answered with a 3 response, consider referring this youth for a crisis evaluation.**

If the total number for the **parent interview** is from 10-15 provide fire safety education to the youth and family.

If the number for the **parent interview** is between 16-30

provide fire safety education to the family and recommend to the family that they seek the services of other community agencies to further evaluate the youth's firesetting behavior.

**Referral should consist of:**

- 1) a cover letter which includes-
  - a statement of the fire incident
  - observations of the interviewer
  - recommendations
- 2) copies of the parent checklist and both screening interviews
- 3) copy of the fire report
- 4) a brief summary of the education provided
- 5) release of information form



## Juvenile Firesetter Screening Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

**Presenting Problem** (Includes date of interview, name of child and accompanying adult, location of interview and presenting fire problem.)

**Fire History** (Includes a list of the fires reported by the child and/or accompanying adult/s.)

**Results of the Screening** (Gives an explanation of the screening instrument, how it is being used by the fire service. Indicate that it is a basic screening tool used to determine if a child needs to be referred for a more comprehensive assessment. Do NOT assign a risk level.)

**Observations** (Includes only statements of facts, i.e. family was late for interview, child refused to answer all questions.)

**Recommendations** (Given the child's scoring, suggest fire safety education or a referral for a needs assessment or more extensive mental health assessment/treatment, and conditions for a fire safety plan for the family.)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_



Child/Parent Responsibility Contract

This contract outlines several steps both children and their parents/caregivers can take to prevent firesetting behavior in the home. While increasing safety in the home, they may not eliminate all fire risks and are not a substitute for parent/caregiver supervision.

THE YOUTH (initial on line)

- Shall not possess any incendiary devices of any kind. This includes but is not limited to matches, lighters, lit cigarettes, lighter fluid, fireworks, aerosol cans and other flammable liquids.
Shall submit to searches of his/her person and property by his/her parent/caregiver. This includes the youth's personal property and immediate area where the youth is located (car, room, school locker, back-pack, etc.).
Shall complete a fire-escape plan for their family and practice it with his/her parent/caregiver.
Shall tell an adult if they find matches or lighters.
Shall not play with friends who engage in any form of fire activity.
Other

Youth \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

THE PARENT

- Shall install and maintain working smoke alarms in every room of the home, including garages and sheds. A working class (2A-10BC) fire extinguisher shall be accessible to every level of the home and garage.
Shall secure all combustibles and all matches, lighters, flammable liquids, fireworks, and other sources of ignition in an area where the youth does not have access, preferably a locked cabinet.
Shall use only a child resistant lighter if a smoker and kept on their person at all times.
Shall conduct routine searches of the youth's room and possessions for matches or lighters.
Shall monitor the youth's access to the Internet for information that can assist them in modifying fire-works or manufacturing destructive devices.
Shall give permission to other children in the home to tell on someone who misuses fire.
Shall increase supervision of youth. Youth should not be left alone or unsupervised in other youth's homes where ignition material may be easily available.
Shall set firm rules that any child in the house should not touch matches, lighters, the stove, barbecue lighters, flares, fireworks or any other object that could potentially set a fire.
Inform children of the fire safety rules and the consequences of breaking them. Discuss the rules and consequences with your child to check for understanding.
Shall not display any candles, incense lamps or other fire related items in the home regardless of their use.
Shall complete a home fire safety checklist obtained from the local fire department.
Shall forbid youth to watch shows or videos with provocative fire themes.
Shall lock up all flammable chemicals such as turpentine, gasoline, lighter fluid or charcoal starter for barbecues.
Shall remove closets doors to avoid a hiding place.

Other \_\_\_\_\_
Parent or Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Removing the risk today prevents the fires of tomorrow.
Provided by the Office of State Fire Marshal, June, 2001



## Fire and Life Safety Questionnaire

Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Describe the fire. Tell what happened. Who was involved? What methods were used to start the fire?

2. On a scale from 1 to 10, how much responsibility for the firesetting is yours?  
1 (no responsibility) - 10 (full responsibility)

3. List four things you could have done to stop yourself from starting the fire.

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_



# ***UNIT 5: INTERVENTION STRATEGIES***

## **OBJECTIVES**

*The students will:*

- 1. Identify intervention strategies.*
  - 2. Given a case study, select appropriate interventions (education, mental health, and legal consequences).*
  - 3. Classify intervention strategies as legal, voluntary, or a combination of legal and voluntary.*
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# NOTE-TAKING GUIDE



Slide 5-1

**UNIT 5: INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

Slide 5-1

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Slide 5-2

**OBJECTIVES**

**The students will:**

- **Identify intervention strategies.**
- **Given a case study, select appropriate interventions (education, mental health, and legal consequences).**
- **Classify intervention strategies as legal, voluntary, or a combination of legal and voluntary.**

Slide 5-2

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Slide 5-3

**SORRY, THEY DON'T LIVE HERE ANY MORE!**

- **Only 30 percent of youth live in homes with two biological parents.**
- **Many children live in homes with step-parents and blended families.**
- **At least 40 percent of youth live with a single mother and have no adult male in the home.**

Slide 5-3

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Slide 5-4

**THE FIRESETTER ISN'T THE "TYPICAL KID" IN SCHOOL**

- Fifty-eight percent of juvenile firesetters may have a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD) before their first fire referral.
- Eighty-eight percent of the complex firesetters have been involved with a doctor, a psychiatrist, or a counselor before their first referral.
- Thirty-eight percent of firesetters reported that they had started three or more fires (up to 100+ fires!) before their first referral.

Slide 5-4

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Slide 5-5

**THE FIRESETTER MAY HAVE ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER**

- It's likely that 45 percent of all firesetters have one or more diagnosed neurological conditions by the time they are referred to a juvenile firesetter program.
- Examples of diagnosis:
  - ADD
  - Fetal alcohol syndrome/effect
  - Oppositional defiance disorder
  - Post-traumatic stress disorder
  - Reactive attachment disorder
  - Physical and/or sexual abuse
  - And so many others

Slide 5-5

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Slide 5-6

**These are not necessarily normal, healthy, developing children and adolescents.**

Slide 5-6

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Slide 5-7

**What does the  
interventionist need to  
know?**

Slide 5-7

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Slide 5-8

**Clear up misconceptions  
about fire.**

Slide 5-8

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Slide 5-9

**Awareness versus education--  
know the difference.**

**Teach them what they need to  
perform!**

**Eliminate the word "don't"  
from your vocabulary.**

Slide 5-9

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Slide 5-10

**EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT HOW TO TEACH CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT LEVELS**

- Learning styles
- Go to where teachers learn
- Limitations of different ages, groups, and development disabilities
- Teaching tools--workbooks, activity sheets (you don't need to reinvent the wheel)
- Understand which messages work best

Slide 5-10

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Slide 5-11

**What does a young child understand about fire?**

Slide 5-11

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Slide 5-12

**What do elementary school children understand about fire?**

Slide 5-12

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Slide 5-13

**WHAT ABOUT ADOLESCENTS?**

**The normal adolescent brain isn't "complete" until the mid-20's!**

Slide 5-13

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Slide 5-14

**EXECUTIVE FUNCTION...STILL DEVELOPING IN TO THE 20'S**

**These are the functions often missing in children who are firesetters**

- **Planning**
- **Setting priorities**
- **Organizing thoughts**
- **Suppressing impulses**
- **Weighing consequences**

Slide 5-14

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Slide 5-15

**Hormones add excitement!**

Slide 5-15

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Slide 5-16

**RISK TAKING IS NOT EVIL...ADOLESCENTS NEED TO LEARN TO TAKE HEALTHY RISKS**

They need to

- Experiment with new aspects of life
- Take on new challenges
- Test how things fit together

Slide 5-16

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Slide 5-17

**RISK TAKING HEALTHY VERSUS UNHEALTHY**

- Fire can be a misguided attempt at risk-taking.
- It's an indicator of a bigger "risk taking" syndrome.
- Parents may need to learn the difference between healthy and unhealthy risk taking.

Slide 5-17

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Slide 5-18

**INTERVENTION STRATEGY-- EDUCATION**

- Used with those cases classified as some risk.
- Some cases will be classified as definite risk, and they also will require education, along with referral.
- Every intervention should include an education component.

Slide 5-18

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Slide 5-19

**EDUCATION STRATEGIES**

- **Punishment alone does not teach a child about fire.**
- **Children need fire safety education (very young through teen years).**
- **Messages, methods, and materials should be broad-based.**
- **Education may be delivered in varied ways.**

Slide 5-19

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Slide 5-20

**EDUCATION STRATEGIES  
(cont'd)**

- **Important strategy for incarcerated youth.**
- **Mental health or court system may delay the educational intervention.**
- **Parents/Caregivers need to follow up.**
- **Information given to parents/caregivers can reinforce your educational messages.**

Slide 5-20

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Slide 5-21

**FACTORS IN EDUCATION**

- **Education goals**
- **Target group to be served**
- **Format of the learning environment**
- **Teaching materials employed**

Slide 5-21

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Slide 5-22

**GOALS IN EDUCATION**

- **Setting fires is information seeking.**
- **Intervention must deal with**
  - **Fire science.**
  - **Fire safety.**
  - **Fire survival.**
  - **Firefighting.**

Slide 5-22

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Slide 5-23

**TARGET GROUP**

- **Age level**
- **The developmental level or ability of the juvenile to understand and learn fire-safety education**

Slide 5-23

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Slide 5-24

**FORMAT**

**There is a wide range of options, ranging from individual sessions with the juvenile and parent to working directly with the schools.**

Slide 5-24

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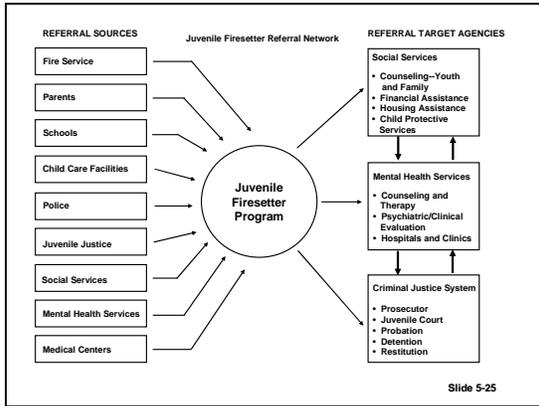
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Slide 5-25



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Slide 5-26

**INTERVENTION STRATEGY--  
COUNSELING, MENTAL  
HEALTH REFERRAL**

- When motivation goes beyond curiosity or experimentation
- If there is a risk for repeat firesetting
- If an interviewer experiences difficulty
- To provide the family with guidance
- To reduce repeat behavior

Slide 5-26

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Slide 5-27

**SOCIAL SERVICES**

**There are certain circumstances, namely families who are unable to support themselves, that will require a Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program to refer definite-risk cases to social services.**

Slide 5-27

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Slide 5-28

**INTERVENTION STRATEGY--  
JUVENILE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES**

- A decision to file charges marks a youth's entry into the juvenile justice system.
- Graduated sanctions are designed to interrupt the progression of criminal activity.
- There are two graduated sanctions components--rehabilitation and corrections.

Slide 5-28

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Slide 5-29

**ASSESSMENT--  
PROGRAM STRATEGY**

Assessment action depends on:

- Violation of law
- Losses
- Amount of evidence
- Local procedures
- Age of legal culpability
- Firesetting history

Slide 5-29

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Slide 5-30

**ASSESSMENT**

- Select either legal or voluntary or both.
- Voluntary action can be taken while legal actions are pending.
- If legal action is taken, steps must be taken on behalf of the juveniles.

Slide 5-30

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Slide 5-31

**LEGAL ACTION**

- **Specific procedures**
- **Legal guidelines and requirements**
- **Recognize defendant's rights**
- **Juvenile Miranda rights**
- **Authorized person**

Slide 5-31

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Slide 5-32

**VOLUNTARY ACTION**

- **Most incidents result in voluntary action.**
- **Decision relies on the cooperation of juveniles and parents.**
- **Assess the severity of the fire behavior.**

Slide 5-32

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Slide 5-33

**JOINT VOLUNTARY AND LEGAL ACTION**

- **Referred by district attorney while court date is pending**
- **Family may elect to participate**
- **Court can mandate involvement**
- **Occur independently or coincidentally with legal action**

Slide 5-33

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Slide 5-34

**Activity 5.1  
Voluntary or Legal?**

Slide 5-34

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Slide 5-35

**FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION**

**National Fire Protection Association  
(NFPA) 1035 JFIS Standard**

Slide 5-35

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Slide 5-36

**FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION  
(cont'd)**

- The typical exit for most juveniles is after education or referral.
- There are cases that exit without referral to other community agencies.
- There are cases that exit with referral to additional services.

Slide 5-36

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Slide 5-37

**FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION  
(cont'd)**

The two important features of followup procedures are when and how they are implemented by the juvenile firesetter program.

- Primary follow-up is recommended 4 to 6 weeks after exit.
- A secondary follow-up can take place between 6 to 12 months after exit.

Slide 5-37

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Slide 5-38

**FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION  
(cont'd)**

- Followup methods include telephone calls, written contacts, and visits.
- Return visits require the most resources, but allow for a direct assessment of the firesetting problem.

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Slide 5-39

**FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION  
(cont'd)**

Followup procedures help to reinforce fire-safe behavior for juveniles and their families, and provide information on the program's effectiveness in reducing involvement in firesetting and arson.

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Slide 5-40

**SUMMARY**

- Education intervention is essential for everyone.
- Treatment for juvenile firesetters and their families includes mental health and social services.
- Juveniles repeatedly arrested for arson can expect a juvenile justice system intervention.

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Slide 5-41

**Activity 5.2  
Select an Intervention  
Strategy**

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Slide 5-42

**COURSE CONCLUSION**

Slide 5-42

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Slide 5-43

**COURSE EXAMINATION**

**25 Multiple Choice Questions**

Slide 5-43

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# ACTIVITY WORKSHEETS



## Activity 5.1

### Voluntary or Legal?

#### Purpose

To determine legal versus voluntary program strategies.

#### Directions

1. Your instructor will break you into two groups.
2. Read the scenarios and determine whether the program strategy is legal or voluntary.
3. Be prepared to report to the remainder of the class.

#### Scenario 1

Billy, age 6, is a first grade student at Adams Elementary school. During a recess break the principal, Mr. Allen, found Billy in the bathroom lighting pieces of toilet paper on fire. Mr. Allen took Billy to his office and called his parents. He also called you and asked you to come to the school. No damage was done and the alarm did not activate.

#### Scenario 2

Angela is 15 years old. She has been dating a young man who is 19 years old against her parents wishes. Angela is a poor student and is often in trouble at school. Her boyfriend works at the gas station across the street from the school. Angela often waits in his car for him to get out of work. One afternoon Angela was waiting in the car and she was smoking. Her mother came to look for her and Angela shoved the cigarette between the seats so she would not be caught smoking. Shortly after her mother took Angela home the car caught fire completely destroying the car. You responded with the Fire Department and learned from the boyfriend about Angela waiting in his car.

#### Scenario 3

Darrel is 8 years old. His older brother Phil is 14 years old and watches Darrel until their mom gets home around 5 p.m. One afternoon Darrel found some matches and was lighting leaves on fire behind their garage. All of a sudden the fire got away from him and he realized that the garage was on fire. Darrel got scared and hid in his room without reporting the fire. Damage to the garage was heavy.

#### **Scenario 4**

Mike is 10 years old and lives in a very affluent neighborhood. Both of his parents are doctors and Mike is an only child. Rachel lives next door and they have a swimming pool. Mike does not have a pool and one hot day this summer he asked Rachel if he can come swim with her in the pool. Rachel told Mike that she is being punished and cannot have any friends over. Mike got very angry and set a fire that damaged the pool shed. The fire investigators got the story from Rachel. Mike admits setting the fire but his parents refuse to cooperate with the program.

#### **Scenario 5**

Ten-year-old Sara is an only child and hardly ever gets in trouble. She and her mom are best friends and Sara tries to copy her in every way she can. One evening the fire department responded to a bedroom fire at Sara's house. A candle was knocked over in Sara's room and caught the curtains on fire. No one was injured, but the room sustained moderate damage. In your investigation Sara tells you that her mom likes to light candles at night and she thought she would like to have candles lit while she was reading her book.

## Activity 5.2

### Select an Intervention Strategy

#### Purpose

To select appropriate interventions strategies and implement an educational intervention.

#### Directions

1. In groups of three or individually (as determined by your instructor), analyze the case and suggest an appropriate intervention strategy.
2. Discuss the disposition of the case.
3. Design the critical elements of your selected intervention strategy.
  - a. What groups will be involved?
  - b. How are you going to follow up?
4. Be prepared to report back to the class on your strategy, educational components, community coalitions, and follow-up.



# BACKGROUND TEXT



## INTERVENTION STRATEGY--EDUCATION

Juvenile firesetter programs are two-phase programs. The interview is the recognition piece. Although education is our primary intervention service, a half hour can't possibly prepare you with all the teaching information and techniques you need. It's important to have a good base knowledge of fire safety before you work with youth firesetters and their families.

The "Leave it to Beaver" days where one parent stays home with the children are gone. Many families have limitations, such as, transportation, work schedules, children with illnesses, school activities and many other things that create barriers for family involvement in a youth firesetter program.

The days of 15 desks lined up in a neat row are gone! Teachers get all the social, emotional, physical, and other problems that children deal with in their lives...and so will you! Youth firesetter interventionists always have thought that approximately 85 percent of the children and adolescents they see are in need of education only and are at low risk for setting another fire. Research shows that exactly the opposite may be true. Many of the youth already have seen a doctor, psychiatrist, or a counselor before they ever end up in a youth firesetter program.

Teaching all firesetter children and families as if everything is normal may cause us to miss the boat. Children who are experiencing behavioral problems already, whether it's due to neurological complications or environmental issues, are bigger risk-takers. Using fire inappropriately often is just one behavior in a cluster of other excessive risk-taking behaviors a child may be engaged in. If a child has been involved with mental health services or other social service providers and they have been identified as having some diagnosis already, they may have bigger problems than a youth firesetter program can address with education only. It's better to err on the side of caution. Refer the family for professional evaluation before you make the decision simply to educate and walk away.

Don't assume that all children and parents know the basics about fire safety and fire survival. Some can learn to make good decisions and some need a very structured program. A normal brain that is not fully developed or neurologically compromised cannot predict consequences. Therefore, they have to rely on the experience or education by adults to understand the danger of the action.

Evaluate the level of fire knowledge with both the child and parent before you begin your education. Find out where their knowledge level leaves off. The goal is to give both the parent and the child an equal understanding of the issues. It all boils down to correcting a miscommunication about fire and fire safety.

Determine the key issues and then provide the appropriate message to clear up the misconceptions about fire and safety. Start by finding out what the child does not know about fire and fire safety. Fill in those gaps. However, the most important student may be the parents. They may not consider fire to be a dangerous tool. They may be minimizing the danger. They may need to set up the same kind of rules for fire that they have for guns, sharp knives and chain saws, etc.

Parents also may suffer the same experience deficits and neurological considerations as their children. They may have some of the same difficulties recognizing true hazards and making choices.

We've been using the timesaver messages out of necessity in the fire education industry. Many of our messages offer an increase in awareness. But increased awareness doesn't necessarily **teach** or change behavior. Human beings need to be given a solution, a way to respond. "Be Safe with Fire" on a pencil reminds us that fire safety is important, but it will be forgotten the second the next distraction comes along. "Be Safe with Fire" won't even enter their minds the next time they start that campfire with gasoline because "that's the way we've always done it." Conditioning once again has taken over and the fire education message has not offered an understandable alternative to the appropriate steps for starting a safe campfire. Humans need to be given information about **the behavior you want them to perform**, not information about what you **don't** want them to do. Example: "Don't play with matches and lighters" doesn't tell a child what to do if they encounter matches and lighters, it only mystifies these tools and makes them wonder "why" they shouldn't handle them. Tell children and adults what you want them to do, not what you don't want them to do. Offer the solution, the proper behavior, to children. Example: "Go tell a grownup if you find matches and lighters." Keep your educational messages positive. Tell them what you **want** them to do. Teach with expectations, not warnings.

Don't show children how to set fires and pretend that it will make them stop. Scare tactics don't work especially for the children we work with in the firesetting venue. They've been desensitized by TV and video games that it just doesn't work!

Children are conditioned to seek information about the world around them. If fire is available, children will most often try to explore its nature. All children need to know more about fire than just our basic messages, but children engaged in the misuse of fire are at higher risk and the education must go beyond what we have done typically. We also must understand that development of a child's brain has a lot to do with what they have the capability to understand.

Preschool children, many kindergartners and even some first graders, focus on only one feature of an object at a time. A single match is small. A house fire is large. How one becomes the other is a mystery. Even if we show them how it happens, they really don't understand.

In our survey of elementary school children, we asked what they thought one match could burn up. All of the children understood that one match could burn up a piece of paper. But when asked about toys, furniture, and houses, the youngest children were not so sure.

When asked if a match could burn up a house, less than half of the 6-year-olds believed that this could happen. Preschool children have only a limited understanding of cause and effect. Those children who do have some notion of what it is all about are confused easily by too much or distracting information. This is crucial because until a child can understand cause and effect he or she can't recognize unsafe conditions or figure out how to correct or avoid them.

Many parents are unaware or underestimate their child's level of misunderstanding. Parents confuse their children's language ability with a real understanding of cause and effect. Many 3- and 4-year-olds have remarkable language skills. Since parents overestimate their children's ability to understand, they focus on teaching these young children safety principles long before the children can benefit from them, rather than simply eliminating the hazards and closely supervising the children.<sup>1</sup>

Often we see parents' unrealistic expectation of young children when they try to reason with a child explaining he/she can die if he/she uses fire. Many parents believe that just because a child can mimic their words about the reality of death, it means the child understands the concept. Children do not understand the concept or the finality of death. Using that approach to keep a child away from fire does not work. It has nothing to do with intelligence and everything to do with brain development.

Most elementary school children have a better appreciation of the power of small flames, but it is limited. In our survey of elementary and junior-high-school-age children, only three out of five children between the ages of 7 and 11 understood that one match could burn down an entire house.

Elementary school children understand the transformations that fire can make and they understand cause and effect. They have these abilities, but they don't always use them. Children at this age can't anticipate events they haven't experienced. They rely heavily on their own experience; if they haven't seen how a large fire gets going, they can't quite picture it.

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<sup>1</sup>*Firefighter's Complete Juvenile Firesetter Handbook*, Fireproof Children, Robert Cole, Ph.D., Lt. Robert Crandall, Jerold Bills. ©1999 Fireproof Children Company.

Parents often are fooled by children of this age too. Elementary school children are very good at following directions. If they are shown how to do something, most often they can do it and do it correctly time and again. What they **are not** good at is anticipating what might go wrong and how to respond if something does. So even if they can cook, and do so regularly, they need close supervision. If the grease catches on fire or a napkin falls across a burner, it is only by chance that they will respond quickly and appropriately.

Think about hiring a babysitter for your own children. Most people don't actually hire a sitter until he/she is out of elementary school. They understand, intuitively, that one of the key requirements of a babysitter is to keep their children safe in an emergency--that is, in the event that something unexpected happens.

Elementary-school-age children have no real fear of fire. They first experience fire at birthday party with candles on the birthday cake. One good breath and the fire goes out. Older children watch their parents struggle to light barbeques, campfires, and fireplaces. Even the most gentle breeze can extinguish a match and keep a fire from getting started. Children trust their own observations, not the words of grown-ups. Every time a child takes a risk and doesn't get hurt, or is hurt only a little, the chance increases that they will take that risk again.

Children who play with fire have an unrealistic sense of control. We asked children if they felt they could put out a small fire. Only the youngest children were unsure of themselves.<sup>2</sup>

Brain development in adolescents is becoming more understandable! Impulsiveness, questionable decisionmaking skills, attention problems, and the frustrating lack of initiative seem to be tied to brain development. Research is showing that the brain continues to develop in these areas well beyond age 25! These executive functions are some of the last and hardest for the brain to develop. These functions are also the hardest to teach in a normal brain, but even more difficult for individuals with any neurological compromise.

Hormones do play a part in adolescent behavior. Dr. Ronald Dahl, a psychiatrist at the University of Pittsburgh says, "Adolescents are actively looking for experiences to create intense feelings. It's a very important hint that there is some particular hormone-brain relationship contributing to the appetite for thrills, strong sensations and excitement."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>*Firefighter's Complete Juvenile Firesetter Handbook*, Fireproof Children, Robert Cole, Ph.D., Lt. Robert Crandall, Jerold Bills. ©1999 Fireproof Children Company.

<sup>3</sup>"What Makes Teens Tick?" Claudia Wallis: *Time Magazine*, May 10, 2004.

In other words, hormones may be partially responsible for a normal teens' thrill-seeking behavior. The parts of the brain that helps them exercise judgment are still under construction. The result in a world of fast cars, early driving, drug and alcohol accessibility, etc., puts a teen at risk.

Taking healthy risks can develop more complex thinking and increase confidence. Examples of healthy risks are supervised sports, supervised training, and use of tools and guided safety practices for those activities.

Parents' ideas of risk taking are influenced by their own experiences. He may not see anything wrong with his child setting small fires. For example, a father who experimented with fire as a youth believes there's no danger in it because he never got caught or hurt. He may not see anything wrong with his child setting small fires.

Science is giving us a better understanding of why teens are susceptible to impulsive risk-taking behavior. It also gives us a clue that, although education about fire is critical for teens, it has to be complimented with other critical components. If teens have increased difficulty making mature decisions and understanding the consequences of their actions, education must be accompanied by **rules, structure, supervision, patience, and love**. When working with a youth firesetter and his/her family, our job isn't complete if we don't teach about risk as well as fire. The youth interventionist must be ready to teach families how to structure opportunities for independence.

The majority of the cases identified by a juvenile firesetter program will be classified as some (little) risk. Curiosity, or experimentation, motivates the firesetting of these juveniles. The recommended intervention strategy for these cases is education.

Some cases will be classified as definite risk, and they also will require education, along with referral to additional treatment.

Educational intervention for the child firesetter and family "after the fact" should incorporate the following concepts and strategies in planning this segment of your community program:

- Punishment alone does not teach a child about fire.
- Children need fire safety education (very young through teen years).
- Messages, methods, and materials should be broad-based (without bias, educationally sound, etc.) and age appropriate.

- Education may be delivered in various ways (groups by age, one-on-one, etc.). Educational intervention also is important to deliver to incarcerated youth.
- If firesetting goes beyond curiosity or experimentation, mental health or court system may delay the educational intervention.
- Parents/Caregivers need to follow-up with home intervention practice.
- Simple brochures and informational pamphlets given to parents/caregivers can reinforce your educational messages.

To build an education component, a juvenile firesetter program must consider four important factors:

- education goals;
- target group to be served;
- format of the learning environment; and
- teaching materials employed.

### **Goals**

Setting fires is information seeking. Intervention must deal with:

- fire science;
- fire safety;
- fire survival; and
- firefighting.

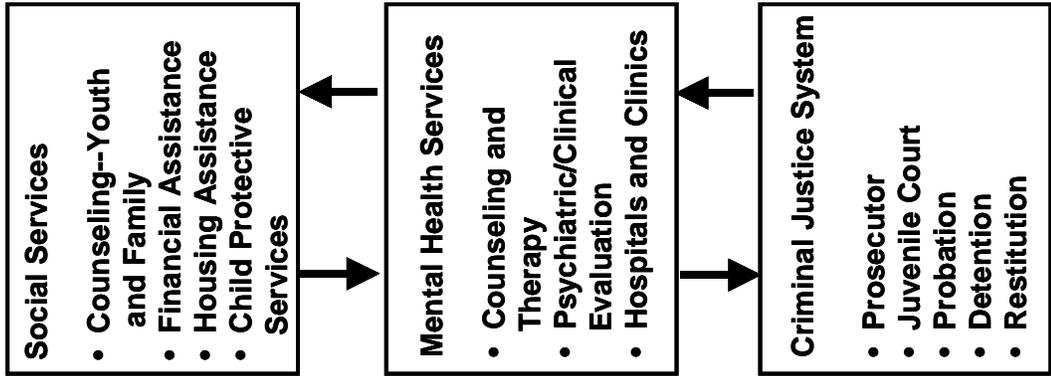
### **Target Group**

A juvenile firesetter program must determine the appropriate intervention for a specified target group. The developmental level or ability of the juvenile to understand and learn fire safety education and age are factors to consider.

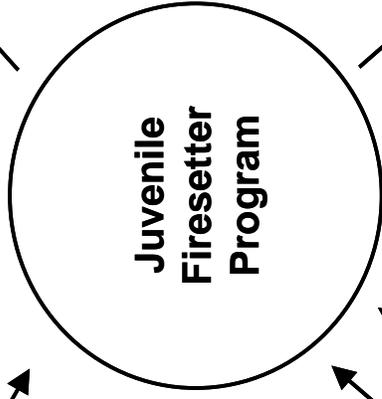
### **Format**

There are a number of different formats for teaching the education component of a juvenile firesetter program. There is a wide range of options, ranging from individual sessions with the juvenile and parent to working directly with the schools. Each juvenile firesetter program can choose an education format to fit its program structure.

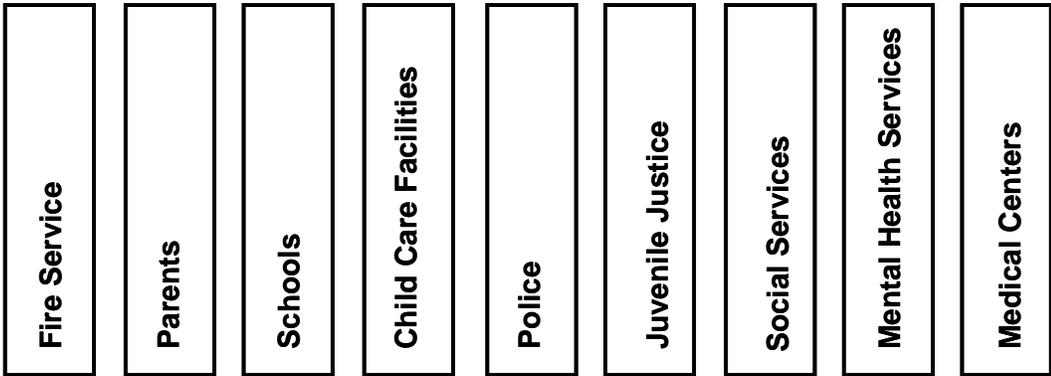
REFERRAL TARGET AGENCIES



Juvenile Firesetter Referral Network



REFERRAL SOURCES



## **INTERVENTION STRATEGIES--COUNSELING, MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL**

Counseling referral networks are used when motivation goes beyond curiosity or experimentation or if there is a risk for repeat firesetting.

There are certain circumstances, namely families who are unable to support themselves, that will require a juvenile firesetter program to refer definite-risk cases to social services.

Federal, State, and local governments operate social services, also known as human resources, or public assistance programs. These programs provide basic services for families in need of financial assistance, counseling, or housing. In addition, most States operate child protective services, an agency set up to respond to reported cases of child neglect and abuse. If a juvenile firesetter program identifies a case of abuse or neglect, most States, by law, require it to report the case within 24 or 48 hours to child protective services. This agency then investigates the case, and may or may not take action, depending on its findings. Social services programs, using public funds, provide basic assistance to families who cannot provide for themselves.

## **INTERVENTION STRATEGY--JUVENILE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES**

A decision to file charges marks a youth's entry into the juvenile justice system. An effective juvenile justice system combines accountability and sanctions with increasingly intensive treatment and rehabilitation services. Graduated sanctions are designed to interrupt the progression of delinquent and criminal activity. There are two graduated sanctions components--rehabilitation and corrections which provide an integrated program.

## **ASSESSMENT--PROGRAM STRATEGY**

There are two different types of assessment actions that can take place for juvenile firesetters and their families: legal and voluntary. The decision as to which action will take place depends upon a number of different factors related to the fire incident. These factors include

- violations of local or State laws;
- losses (property, dollar, or human) incurred from the fire;
- amount of sufficient evidence resulting from the cause-and-origin determination;
- local operating procedures of the fire service;

- age of legal culpability; and
- firesetting history of the juvenile.

On a case-by-case basis, a decision to select either a legal or voluntary course of action will be made, taking one or more of these factors into consideration. In addition, there are certain cases in which a voluntary course of action can be taken while legal actions are pending. This situation will be described later, in the section on voluntary action. If the decision is made to take a legal action, then there are certain steps that must be taken on behalf of the juveniles and their families.

### **Legal Action**

There are specific procedures to follow to ensure the integrity of the decision to take legal action. All of the legal guidelines and requirements of the particular jurisdiction and State must be followed. Initiating a legal action for firesetting is a very serious matter. At the point the arrest is made, all defendant civil rights must be recognized and honored. In many jurisdictions, juveniles and their families must be informed of the decision to arrest, and the juvenile **Miranda** rights must be read. If you do not have authorized arrest powers, then you must call an authorized person.

If further interviews with the juvenile are to take place, there may be specific legal requirements, such as parents being present, or approved interview locations. Because policies and procedures vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction regarding juvenile law, it is important for each juvenile firesetter program to consult with its local district attorney regarding the protection of a juvenile's legal rights. Local law enforcement and the district attorney hold the responsibility for how the case is conducted. These responsibilities and procedures can vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and from State to State.

After an arrest, any interventions administered to juveniles and their parents are mandated by law. This often ensures that the necessary type of help and rehabilitation will be available. Arrested juveniles also are not necessarily excluded from participating in the voluntary actions described in the following section. If local law enforcement or the district attorney decide that there may be a benefit derived from these voluntary procedures, then they can be pursued also.

## **Voluntary Action**

If legal action or arrest is ruled out, then the remaining option is voluntary action. Legal action typically is ruled out when local or State laws are not violated, the losses resulting from the fire are minimal, the cause-and-origin determination results in insufficient evidence, and the juvenile does not meet the age of legal culpability. Most of the identified juvenile fire incidents will result in voluntary action. A voluntary action is defined as a decision not to file a criminal case and to take specific steps to ensure fire incidents do not occur in the future.

The decision to take a voluntary course of action relies heavily on the cooperation of the juveniles and their parents. If the initial point of contact is by telephone, an explanation of the juvenile firesetter program is presented and parents are asked to participate in the program. If parents agree to participate, the program can proceed with information collection. The type of information programs collected by telephone will vary, depending on their initial identification procedures and screening format. Some programs will collect a minimal amount of demographic information by telephone and ask the parents to bring their child in for a personal interview. Other programs will assess the severity of the presenting fire behavior over the telephone by asking specific questions or using a screening instrument.

Because juveniles involved in fire incidents have been identified, a juvenile firesetter program is in the best position to provide an assessment of the severity of the fire behavior and to recommend a prompt course of action.

## **Joint Voluntary and Legal Action**

There are also certain instances when a voluntary course of action, i.e., participation in a juvenile firesetter program, can occur with a coinciding legal action. For example, a district attorney can recommend that a youth and family be referred to a juvenile firesetter program while their court date is pending. Or, the family may elect to participate in a juvenile firesetter program prior to their court date. Finally, the court can mandate youth and family involvement in a juvenile firesetter program. Therefore, voluntary entry into a juvenile firesetter program can occur independently or coincidentally with legal action. In cases where both voluntary and legal actions are options, the juvenile firesetter program and the local district attorney must work together to deliver swift and effective intervention.

## **FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION**

The typical exit for most juveniles is after education or referral. There are two types of exits: cases that exit without referral to other community agencies and cases that exit with referral to additional services. It is important that followup procedures are setup for both types of exits so that youth and their families understand that the juvenile firesetter program will continue to be concerned about their welfare.

The two important features of followup procedures are when and how they are implemented by the juvenile firesetter program. For all cases, a primary follow-up is recommended 4 to 6 weeks after exit. A secondary follow-up can take place between 6 to 12 months after exit.

A juvenile firesetter program can conduct followup procedures in a number of different ways. Followup methods include telephone calls, written contacts, and visits. Telephone calls are the most cost-effective and least time-consuming method of follow-up. Written contact can include postcards, letters, surveys, and electronic communication. Return visits require the most resources, but allow for a direct assessment of the firesetting problem.

In addition to selecting the method of follow-up, a juvenile firesetter program must consider the content of the followup contact. The content can be a standard set of questions for all cases or a set of questions designed specifically for each case. Followup procedures help to reinforce fire-safe behavior for juveniles and their families, and provide information on the program's effectiveness in reducing involvement in firesetting and arson.

## **SUMMARY**

- Education intervention is essential for everyone.
- Treatment for juvenile firesetters and their families includes mental health and social services.
- Juveniles repeatedly arrested for arson can expect a juvenile justice system to use increasingly severe methods of sanctions, including loss of freedom.



It should be noted that the display of interview/assessment forms and tools along with education programs in this course does not constitute an endorsement. The choice should be based on a discussion and mutual agreement by the professional coalition that will be participating in the program and using the forms. The forms shown here can be copied for study but are not intended to be reproduced for use. A contact for each tool is provided for your convenience. The author should be contacted prior to use to ensure proper application of the tool.



# **APPENDIX A**

# **CASE STUDIES**



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: George Burns**

**Incident Number: 02-00102**

**Location of Incident: 1001 E. Peacock Lane Salon, Maryland  
12445**

On April 16, 2002, at 0750 hours, Fire Investigator Al Sparks responded to 1001 E. Peacock Lane Salon, Maryland 12445 in response to a dumpster fire behind ABC Counseling Services. Upon arrival he was advised by Psychologist George Smart that during a break from one of their anger management classes, George Burns a 14 year-old white male, walked outside and lit a dumpster on fire with a lighter. He stated that the dumpster was behind their building and that he, Dr. Smart put the fire out using a fire extinguisher. Investigator Sparks stated that he examined the dumpster and found burned materials in the dumpster along with burn marks on the side of the dumpster. He placed the damage at \$0.00 dollars. Dr. Smart stated that George was at DEF Middle School and that he could be interviewed there.

Investigator Sparks then went to DEF Middle School to interview George. When asked what happened, George stated that during a break from the anger classes, he went outside and asked a classmate if he could borrow his lighter. He took the lighter and walked over to the dumpster and tried to light some paper and it would not light. When it didn't light, he tried to light some different paper. He stated that he got that paper lit and when the fire got bigger, he tried to put it out using a water bottle. He stated that did not work and that is when Dr. Smart saw what was happening and ran and got a fire extinguisher and put the fire out. When asked why he did it, George responded that he did not know and his mom kept asking him the same thing. Investigator Sparks asked him if there was something frustrating him or making him angry, he replied that his sister sometimes messes with his belongings. When prodded a little further by Investigator Sparks, George replied that his mother thinks that he inherited his father's temper and that he does not like his father. He also stated that he is 14 years old born 03/17,1988, his parent's are divorced and he lives with his mother and his sister at 1022 E. Wren Hen Drive Salon, Maryland 12445 and that his telephone number is 888-555-1212. When asked, George stated that he gets C's in school and has never been in trouble with the law or set fire before and he doesn't know why he set this fire.

On April 18, 2002 Investigator Sparks was finally able to contact George's mother. She stated that George told her what he did and that he is very concerned about the consequences of his actions. She stated that to her knowledge, he has never shown an interest in playing with lighters or matches or

set any previous fires. She also stated that he has never been in trouble with the law or been a behavior problem at school. She did tell Investigator Sparks that he and his father used to get into fistfights because George was trying to protect her and his sister from physical abuse from her husband. She told me that's why he is in anger management classes. He hates his father and is very angry about the abuse his father placed on the family. When asked about George's medical background, Mrs. Burns replied that he is a very healthy child, but is very angry. Mrs. Burns was very receptive to any help the fire department could provide her family and would participate in any programs that were recommended. She also stated that George offered to clean the dumpster.

Investigator Sparks checked the background on the Burn's family through the Salon Police Department Records Section and found that Mr. Burns had been arrested numerous times for domestic violence, however there was no criminal record on George Burns.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Bill Johnson**

**Incident Number: 02-00105**

**Location of Incident: 12345 E. Orange Drive Camel Hump,  
Nebraska 64521**

On September 13, 2001 at 1310 hours, Fire Investigator Paul Liter and Firesetter Specialist Julie Barbeque were dispatched to Shining Lamp Elementary School located at 12345 E. Orange Drive Camel Hump, Nebraska in reference to three school bathroom fires that occurred every half-hour starting at 1130 hours on this date. Upon their arrival they contacted School Resource Officer I. Citem. He stated that he and the school janitor responded to three separate school bathroom fires and on the third fire he caught Bill Johnson, a 10 year-old white male exiting the restroom after the fire was set. He stated that he contacted Bill's father Richard and that Richard was on his way to the school. Officer Citem also stated that Bill admitted setting the fires with matches he stole from his father's match collection, toilet paper and a lunch sack, but would not tell him why he set the fires.

While waiting for Bill's father to arrive Investigator Liter and Firesetter Specialist Barbeque were given Bill's school records to review. It was found that Bill was an A and B student and this was the first behavior problem ever documented at the school, he resides at 1515 N. Cheese Lane Camel Hump, Nebraska with his parents Richard and Tish Johnson, telephone number 888-511-4111. Investigator Liter also was able to examine all three bathrooms for evidence and photographed the fire damage prior to Mr. Johnson's arrival at the school. Damage was estimated to be about \$150.00 dollars.

Once Bill's father arrived, Bill, his father, Investigator Liter and Firesetter Specialist Barbeque were all escorted into the school principal's office for the interview. Because Bill was ten years of age and could be arrested for arson, he was read his Juvenile Miranda Warnings. He invoked his rights and refused to speak to Investigator Liter.

Bill's father Richard was then interviewed without Bill present. Richard said that this was "way out of character" for Bill and he could not believe Bill would do this. When shown the matchbook Officer Citem took away from Bill, Richard said that the matchbook came from his match collection. Richard related that Bill seemed to be a very happy child. He stated that he and his wife are Bill's natural parents and Bill has an older brother and sister and a younger sister. When asked if there were anything stressful going on in the family, Richard stated that Bill's older sister was in a court case because she had been molested by a

relative, but other than that, everything was going well for the family. Richard also related that Bill has never been a behavior problem in the family and seems to get along well with everyone. He again stated that he could not believe that Bill would set these fires.

Bill was released to the custody of his father after being suspended from school for five days and required to attend the Juvenile Firesetter Class and complete community service work at the school.

On September 16, 2001, Firesetter Specialist Barbeque received a telephone call from Mr. Johnson. He told her that Bill finally told him why he set the fires. Bill was so upset about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers, the Pentagon and the airline crash in Pennsylvania, that he set the fires so he would get in trouble. Bill theorized that if he got in trouble his father would not be drafted into the military and would not leave home. Mr. Johnson related that back in 1991, he was drafted to fight in Desert Storm because he was in the Army Reserves. When he and his wife talked about Desert Storm, Bill would get upset and ask his father if he would ever have to fight again and his dad would tell him only if America was attacked.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Huck Finn**

**Incident Number: 02-001016**

**Location of Incident: 1001 Lariat Way Chester, Michigan**

On July 18th, 2000 at about 1300 hours, Fire Investigator Gene Simmons was dispatched to 1001 Lariat Way Chester, Michigan in reference to a house fire. Upon arrival he contacted the incident commander and was advised that the fire had started either in the southeast bathroom or bedroom of this residence. Through further investigation it was determined that the fire had started in the southeast bathroom. Fire damage was estimated at \$40,000.

During the investigation, a next-door neighbor told Investigator Simmons that Suzy, a child who lived at the residence was going around telling people that Huck, her 4-year-old younger brother, had set the fire. Investigator Simmons attempted to contact Suzy and Jimmy however their father stated that they were at their grandparent's residence. He also stated that there was no way his children would set the fire and that it was caused by an electrical problem. When Investigator Simmons explained that the fire was not caused by an electrical problem and was set by someone, Mr. Finn stated that his children were not involved and that the investigator could not speak with them. Investigator Simmons told Mr. Finn that if he did not cooperate, the police investigations unit would investigate Mr. Finn for obstructing an investigation. At this point Mr. Finn contacted his wife and told her to bring the children back to their residence so Investigator Simmons could talk with them.

Investigator Simmons interviewed 8 year-old Suzie Finn. She stated that she heard Huck scream from the bathroom and then run and that there was smoke following him out of the bathroom. She said that he told her that his older brother Daryl got matches out of his dad's coat pocket and gave the matches to him and he lit toilet paper on fire. Investigator Simmons then interviewed Huck Finn. Huck told him that he got matches from his brother Daryl and took the matches into the bathroom and lit the toilet paper on fire and watched the fire burn. Huck went on to say that he liked to light fires and watch them because they are pretty. Investigator Simmons then interviewed Daryl. He stated that Huck told him to get matches from his dad's coat pocket so that he, Huck, could set paper on fire. Daryl said that he also liked to look at fire and encouraged his brother to light the fire.

When Mr. Finn heard the confessions, he began screaming at his children saying that they were going to get the whole family deported back to Iceland

because of the fires and that he never should have brought them to the United States.

Mr. Finn was given Investigator Simmons' telephone number to schedule his family for the youth firesetter program education classes. Investigator Simmons has never heard from the family and when he went back to the residence to contact the family they had moved their belongings out of the residence. The neighbors stated that they moved back to Iceland. No further information.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Charlie Brown**

**Incident Number: 98-01014**

**Location of Incident: 1565 Tempo Way Schroeder, Montana  
56655**

On July 4, 1998, at approximately 1608 hours, the Schroeder Fire Brigade responded to a fence fire located at 1565 Tempo Way Schroeder, Montana. Upon arrival the fire captain, Jay Matchbox contacted resident owner Kathy Spring. Kathy stated that she was in the house when her 12 year-old charge Charlie Brown ran inside the residence to tell her that the wooden fence caught on fire. Kathy stated that she looked outside and saw the fire and then called 9-1-1. Kathy stated that she asked Charlie how the fire started and he stated that he did not know. After extinguishing the fire, Captain Matchbox observed a burned towel and melted lighter on the ground near where the fire started. He informed Kathy of this and she again asked Charlie how the fire started and he said that he did not know. Captain Matchbox stated that someone had to light the lighter and the towel for the fire to have started. Captain Matchbox took down Charlie and Kathy's information and referred the family to the juvenile firesetter program.

On July 5th, 1998, Juvenile Firesetter Specialist Tiffany Spears contacted Kathy Spring by telephone in reference to the fence fire. Kathy stated that she did not know how the fire started but thought that Charlie may know more than he is telling anyone. She related that she has had Charlie since he was 2 months old. She said his mother was a drug addict and after Charlie was born she gave him to Kathy because she could not take care of him. Kathy related that she has had guardianship of Charlie since he was given to her. She stated that he is very healthy and very intelligent. She related that he gets A's and B's in school and has few if any behavior problems. She did state that her boyfriend and Charlie do not get along so there is some stress in the household. She also stated that when Charlie gets home from school he is not allowed inside the house until he takes care of the 12 dogs that they own and breed. He is responsible for feeding, watering, exercising, washing and grooming all of the dogs. After receiving this information, Tiffany scheduled the family for a Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Class. Kathy was not very receptive to the class and said the family would probably not attend because the fire department could not prove that Charlie set the fire.

On August 10, 1998, Charlie, Kathy, Kathy's boyfriend and her son Calvin attended the Juvenile Firesetter Class. During the class Charlie admitted that he had set the fence fire but refused to tell why he did it. When the adults left for the

parent group, Charlie related that the reason he set the fire might be for revenge, but refused to say anything else. At the end of the class the counselor facilitator for the parent group sat down with Charlie and asked him about the fence fire. He related that the neighbor behind them squirts water on the dogs, cusses at the dogs and throws things at the dogs. He stated that he has asked her to stop numerous times but she just ignores him. He stated that he got so angry with her that he lit a towel on fire with a lighter and tried to throw the towel over the fence but the towel got caught on the fence and started the fence fire. Charlie said that he was sorry but that the neighbor just got him very angry. Charlie stated that this was his first and only fire and that he would never do it again.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Missy Manners**

**Incident Number: 98-012435**

**Location of Incident: 15 Kittyhawk Way #50 Wrightbrothers, FL  
54321**

On April 1, 1998 at approximately 0835 hours the Wrightbrothers Fire Department responded to an apartment fire at 15 Kittyhawk Way #50 Wrightbrothers Florida. Upon arrival they found a bedroom fire in apartment #50. When Fire Captain George Michael found out that an 8 year-old juvenile had started this fire, he immediately contacted Arson Investigator Randy Johnson. Investigator Johnson made contact with apartment resident Jolene Bird who related the following; On April 1, between 0820 and 0828 hours, Missy Manners used a cigarette lighter she carried from her mother's bedroom to her brother's bedroom and set fire to the bedding and or mattress along the south side of the bed because she was angry with her 9 year-old brother Ben. She then returned to her own bedroom and hid under the covers without making any attempt to extinguish the fire. Ben discovered the fire as he left the bathroom. Upon discovering the fire, Ben attempted to evacuate his sister from her room but she would not respond. When he pulled her from her bed and out into the hallway, she pushed him down into the doorway of the burning bedroom. She then returned to her bedroom. He escaped down the stairs alerting his mother, who was sleeping on the couch. Ben exited the apartment and Jolene ran upstairs to Ben's bedroom. She attempted to put the fire out by dousing it with water, but was unsuccessful. She then attempted to evacuate Missy however Missy refused to leave her bed until her mother screamed and cursed at her. Jolene then went downstairs and retrieved a fire extinguisher and attempted to put out the fire. Ben contacted 9-1-1 from the residence and Wrightbrothers Fire Department responded. Jolene went on to say that on March 25, 1998 between 0800 and 0830 hours Missy was the only person on the second floor of the apartment when she was seen walking down the steps. A few minutes later Ben walked upstairs to find papers he had put on his bedroom door in flames. He yelled for Jolene and when she arrived the fire had burned itself out. It was then discovered that a folding pocketknife had been stabbed into the wall of Ben's room with a handwritten note attached that read "YOU WILL DIE." The cumulative damage for the 2 fires was \$1,500.00.

On April 1, 1998 at approximately 0930 hours, Investigator Johnson conducted a taped interview with Missy. He advised her of her Juvenile Miranda Warnings and she waived her rights and agreed to talk with Investigator Johnson. Missy admitted to three incidents of firesetting, the two previously mentioned fires that had damaged her brother's bedroom and another fire. She

stated that she set these fires because she was angry with Ben and wanted to scare him. She also admitted to writing and stabbing the death threat note into his bedroom wall.

Missy is an eight year-old white female and is reported to be in good health. She is an excellent student receiving straight A's in her second grade class at Campus Elementary School. She lives with her mother Jolene and her brother Ben. She is currently under psychiatric care regarding issues of alleged prior sexual abuse or molestation by a stepfather. She is currently taking Zoloft and Depakote for her psychiatric condition. Missy was referred to the Wrightbrother's Juvenile Firesetter Program in January of 1998 for lighting matches and dropping them on her brother's bedroom floor. She and her mother and brother attended the program in February of 1998. At that time she was already in counseling through a non-profit counseling agency. Missy has had numerous behavioral problems to the extent that her mother has placed an alarm on her bedroom door to monitor her activities.

On April 1, 1998, Missy was referred to a 23-hour locked mental health facility for evaluation of her behavior. On April 2, 1998, the attending psychiatrist contacted Jolene to tell her that Missy had been evaluated and was determined not to be a danger to herself or others and she could be picked up from the facility.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Chet Smith**

**Incident Number: 99-01235**

**Location of Incident: 2 W. First Avenue Dillybar, Minnesota  
00022**

On September 12, 1999 at about 1422 hours the Dillybar Fire Department responded to a house fire at 2 W. First Street Dillybar, Minnesota. Upon arrival homeowner Jere Smith advised Fire Captain Spark that her five year-old son Chet had started the fire with a lighter from her purse. Captain Spark immediately contacted Fire Investigator Steve Ashes and related the information.

On September 12, 1999 at approximately 1515 hours Investigator Ashes responded and took over the investigation of the fire. Investigator Ashes interviewed Jere Smith, mother of firesetter, Chet Smith. Mrs. Smith stated that she kept her purse in the master bedroom of her residence. She said that she normally keeps one lighter and Candy in her purse and that Chet likes to go into her purse and get the candy but has never taken out the lighter. She said that she believes that he went into her purse looking for candy and did not find any so he took out the lighter and began to play with it accidentally lighting the bedspread on fire. After the bedspread was lit on fire, Chet came running out of the bedroom yelling fire and everyone exited the residence. She said that no one got hurt and that Chet immediately told her what had happened and began to cry and say he was sorry. She related that Chet was in Kindergarten at Palomino School and that he was a great student. She said that she and her husband have very few problems with Chet's behavior and that he seems to be a happy and healthy child. Chet has a younger sister and younger brother and is very good with both of them.

Investigator Ashes then interviewed Chet. Chet began to cry and said that he did not mean to burn down his house and that he was sorry. After Chet calmed down, he stated that he went into his mom's bedroom looking for her purse so he could get candy. He said that when he opened the purse he couldn't find any candy so he took out the lighter. He said that he sat on the bed and tried to light the lighter and when he did it got hot and he dropped it on the bedspread starting the bedspread on fire. He said that he tried to put the fire out with a cup of water but that the fire kept getting bigger. Chet said that he ran out of the room yelling fire and that everyone ran out of the house. He again said that he did not mean to start the fire and that he was really sorry.

After Investigator Ashes examination of the fire scene, he determined the fire to be accidental and the damage to be \$65,000.00. He stated that the house would have to be re-built. No further information.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jose Stubbins**

**Incident Number: 02-0123**

**Location of Incident: 101 Gizzi Street Greenduck, Alabama  
12343**

On February 5, 2002 at approximately 0801 hours Greenduck Fire Department Dispatch received a report of a house fire at 101 Gizzi Street Greenduck, Alabama. Upon arrival the residence was found to engulfed in flames on the northeast side. After the fire was extinguished Fire Investigator Butch Bic began his investigation.

Investigator Bic found that the area of fire origin was the guest bathroom and the 12 year-old resident's bedroom. He also located multiple pour patterns of a flammable liquid throughout the residence that were un-ignited. He found the flammable liquid to be "Jim Beam" whiskey. He also located the empty bottle of Jim Beam lying on the living room floor. During his examination of the fire scene he was advised by Greenduck Police Detective Joe Friday that the only person at home at the time of the fire was 12 year-old Jose Stubbins, son of the homeowner, Tig Stubbins. Upon completing his fire scene examination, Investigator Bic interviewed Jose Stubbins.

Jose Stubbins is a 12 year-old Hispanic male who attends the 6th grade at Cinder Middle School and is an "A" student. Jose is very small for his age and states that he has only one friend and the rest of his class picks on him because of his size and intelligence. Jose stated that he lives with his mother and father and that his older sister sometimes lives with them but mostly lives with her natural father. Jose stated that he suffers from asthma but no other medical conditions. He also stated that he has never been in trouble at school or with the law. When asked about what happened this morning in reference to the house fire, he related the following story. On February 5, 2002 at about 0745 hours his mother left for work and he was getting ready to walk to school. He stated that a man wearing a "Scream" style masked, black hooded robe and white tube socks with red stripes pulled over police type boots broke into his residence through the back arcadia door. He stated the unidentified man went through the kitchen drawers until he found matches and lighters and then went to his parent's liquor cabinet and took out a bottle of "Jim Beam" whiskey and poured the whiskey all over the house. He stated that the man then came into his bedroom and grabbed a pocket knife from his, Jose's, dresser and cut Jose on the under side of Jose's left forearm causing a scratch. Jose stated that during the assault he was able to get away from the man and get his dog, the dogs collar and leash,

and leave the house with the dog and run down the street to his friend's house where he called 9-1-1. Jose stated that this was all the information that he had.

An investigation of the scene showed no forced entry into the residence from the rear arcadia door. There were no footprints found in the muddy backyard. SRP Service Workers were in the alley behind the house from approximately 0730 on and did not see anyone in the rear yard of this residence or in the alley. The service workers also related that they were working directly behind this residence the whole time and saw no movement in the backyard or heard no noise from the backyard. The knife that Jose stated the intruder used to cut him was found on the dresser of Jose's burned room and a lighter was found on Jose's bedroom floor. It also should be noted that the only two rooms in the house that were burned were Jose's bedroom and bathroom.

When Jose was interviewed again, with the lack of evidentiary information regarding his story, he still would not admit to setting the fire, however did agree to go to any type of class or do any type of community service that was asked of him.

Investigator Bic interviewed Jose's mother, Gloria Stubbins, who related that Jose is a very well behaved boy and does excellent at school. She stated that he rarely gets into any trouble. She stated that he does not have many friends and recently got into a fight with his only friend from down the street. When she was told about the story Jose had told about an intruder and then given the information about the lack of evidence that would verify his story she stated that she believed that he did start the fire but does not have any idea why he would do it. Mrs. Stubbins could provide no further information. However, when her husband arrived on scene he immediately began to yell at Jose. Mrs. Stubbins had to calm him down before he could talk with investigator Bic. Tig Stubbins could provide no further information.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Mick Jagger**

**Incident Number: 01-01235**

**Location of Incident: 1600 Catclaw Way Couchman, Tennessee  
98765**

On November 2, 2001 at approximately 0400 hours the Couchman Fire Department responded to a garage fire located at 1600 Catclaw Way Couchman Tennessee. Upon arrival homeowner Jules Lofgren told Deputy Morse of the Couchman Police Department that his grandson Nils Lofgren and his friend Mick Jagger had started the garage fire by pouring gasoline on the garage floor and lighting it with a lighter that Mick had stolen from a minimart. Deputy Morse interviewed both of the boys and they both admitted setting the fire with gasoline and a lighter. Deputy Morse turned the boys over to Fire Investigator Ray Day for further processing. Investigator Day contacted both boys' parents and referred the boys to the fire departments juvenile firesetter program. On November 6, 2001 Nils and his family attended the fire safety class and accepted the fire departments offer of counseling. Mick Jagger and his family never attended any of the fire safety classes.

On January 10, 2002 at approximately 1900 hours, Jill Jagger mother of Mick, and Mick showed up at Couchman Fire Station 3 because Jill had caught Mick lighting fires in a field by their residence and also making spray torches out of hairspray and a lighter. Mick was again referred to the Couchman Juvenile Firesetter Program. The family never attended any safety classes or accepted the offer of counseling.

On April 12, 2002 at approximately 1620 hours, the Couchman Fire Department responded to 2 dumpster fires located at the Cat City Apartments 500 Catclaw Way Couchman, Tennessee. Upon arrival Fire Captain Cat Johnson was contacted by Deputy Morse of the Couchman Police Department who stated that he had 3 boys in custody for setting the dumpster fires; Mick Jagger, Sean Jagger, and Toby Keith. At this time Captain Johnson contacted Investigator Day and requested his response at the fire scene. Investigator Day read each boy their Juvenile Miranda Warnings and then interviewed all three boys. All three boys admitted to setting the dumpster fires using "Bounce" dryer sheets and lighters. Because Investigator Day had previous contact with Mick Jagger, he contacted the national and local criminal data base service to obtain any information they had on Mick. It was found that in the recent past, Mick has been arrested for burglary, shoplifting, curfew and truancy. Investigator Day then submitted the arson report to the juvenile court for prosecution.

It should be noted that Mick Jagger is a 14 year-old white male. He does poorly in school, has an arrest record, lives with his mother and younger brother and is unsupervised. His demeanor towards authority figures is very negative. He demonstrates this by name calling, being argumentative and cursing at the police and fire personnel he comes in contact with. Mick has no known medical conditions and has been diagnosed with a series of behavior disorders. His mother is very protective of him and told the police and fire personnel that he did not set any fires and that they coerced him in to admitting his guilt. Jill Jagger is also not willing to comply with any court orders pertaining to her son. Through this investigation it was found that Jill Jagger has a criminal history and is currently on probation for a concealed weapons violation.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jim Green**

**Incident Number: 00-0543**

**Location of Incident: 2002 Mississippi Street Bitters, California  
54320**

On June 4, 2000 at approximately 1343 hours Officer Coker responded to 2002 Mississippi Street Bitters, California in reference to an incorrigible juvenile call. The complainant stated that a young juvenile male had been starting fires under the carport of his residence. Upon arrival Officer Coker was contacted by Fire Captain Jones who stated that 12 year-old Jim Green had been burning a cardboard box in the carport area of his residence. Captain Jones also stated that he and the fire company had gone into the residence and found it to be very unsanitary with old food lying in the kitchen on the counters and floors and trash, clothing and shoes to be strewn throughout the residence.

Officer Coker then made contact with Jim Green a 12 year-old Asian male. Jim had shaved his head and applied some type of red makeup in a flame pattern on his head, placed black makeup around his eyes and painted his fingernails black. Jim stated that he was cooking eggs on the stove when the box caught fire and he took the box outside and watched it burn. Officer Coker asked if this was really true and Jim said no, he just wanted to see fire so he burned the box using a lighter. When asked if this was his first fire, he stated that he sets fires in the wash behind his house all of the time but is always able to put them out with a water hose. Jim was also asked about the conditions of his residence and he stated that his mom is always drunk and knocks things on the floor and never picks them up. He also stated that his mother blows marijuana smoke and cigarette smoke in his face and tells him that someday he will be a smoker. He stated that the house always looks like this because his mom is always drunk and never cleans, does laundry, takes out the trash or picks things up off of the floor. Jim also stated that he has to cook his own food and wash his clothes and that sometimes his mother is gone for days at a time and there is nobody to watch him. Jim told Officer Coker that he adores Marilyn Manson and that is why he dresses like he does. When asked why he was not in school, he stated that he hates school and his mother does not make him go. During the conversation with Jim, his mother arrived at the residence. She smelled of alcohol and was slurring her words when contacted by Officer Coker. Mrs. Green became very belligerent and refused to answer any questions after she was told why the police and fire personnel were at her residence.

Officer Coker took custody of Jim and transported him to the police station so the fire investigators could interview him about the fire. Social services was

contacted and responded to the scene to offer their assistance to Mrs. Green. Upon the social workers contact with Mrs. Green she promptly spit in their faces and slammed the door on them.

Based on the condition of the residence, Jim was placed in the temporary custody of Child Social Services without the consent of his mother who refused to sign the Temporary Custody Notice.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Dilly Partridge**

**Incident Number: 99-0543**

**Location of Incident: 15 W. Union Street Banker, Arizona**

On June 16, 1999 at approximately 1217 hours a 9-1-1 call was received from the residence located at 16 W. Union Street Banker, Arizona. The caller stated that the house located directly across the street was on fire. The caller said the address was 15 W. Union Street and that everyone was out of the house. The Banker Fire Department was dispatched to the scene and upon their arrival they indicated that it was a "fully involved" house fire. Fire Investigator George Michael was assigned to investigate the fire.

Investigator Michael contacted homeowner Milly Partridge at the fire scene. She stated that she was doing laundry when her 3 year-old daughter Dilly came running into the laundry room crying and saying, "I'm sorry mommy, I'm sorry mommy." At this time Milly stated that the smoke alarms in the house were activated and when she looked down the hallway towards Dilly's bedroom she saw flames shooting out of the door. Milly stated that she grabbed Dilly and their dog Bark and went across the street to the neighbor's house and called 9-1-1. She said that while they were at the neighbors, Dilly told her that she took sticks and scratched them and pretty light came from the sticks like at a birthday party. Dilly said she dropped the sticks on the bed and more pretty lights started on the bed. She said she got hot and ran out of the room because the pretty light was getting too big.

Investigator Michael then talked with Dilly. Dilly said she saw pretty lights at a birthday and that to make the lights you had to rub sticks across a box. She said she found a box and sticks in the bathroom closet and wanted to make pretty lights. She took the box and sticks into her bedroom and scratched the sticks across the box and got pretty lights. She said that she dropped the pretty lights on the bed and the lights got too big and were hot so she ran out of the room. She said the lights began to scare her.

After interviewing Milly and Dilly Investigator Michael examined the fire scene and found the remainder of a box of matches under the bed frame in Dilly's bedroom. Total fire damage to the residence was estimated at \$40,000. The American Red Cross relocated the family to a temporary residence.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jack Spratt**

**Incident Number: 01-001113**

**Location of Incident: 124 Pumpkin Way Horsebow, Indiana  
77224**

On July 4, 2001 at about 0300 hours the Horsebow Fire and Rescue were dispatched to a garage fire located at 124 Pumpkin Way Horsebow, Indiana. Upon arrival it was found that the homeowner had extinguished the fire. Horsebow Fire Investigator Andy Griffith contacted homeowner Jennifer Spratt who told him that Jack, her 14 year-old son had awakened her and told her that the garage was on fire. She stated that she and her boyfriend Alvin immediately went to the rear yard and grabbed a garden hose and extinguished the fire with the garden hose. She stated that Jack had minor burns on his legs and that no one else was injured. She stated that Jack told her that he and his friend Roger found the garage fire.

Investigator Griffith examined the area of the fire and found a can of WD-40 lying under a bush behind the garage.

I contacted Jack who told me that that he had been igniting WD-40 with a "BBQ clicker" and accidentally lit a plastic bottle containing gasoline on fire that had been lying near the garage. The "BBQ clicker" was an igniter switch from to a BBQ grill that sparked when squeezed. He stated that he went to pick up the plastic bottle and move it away from the garage and he dropped it burning his legs and catching a pile of rags on fire that caught the garage on fire. He stated that he then went to get the garden hose and tried to put the fire out but couldn't, so he awakened his mom and told her about the fire. When asked what role Roger had in the fire Jack stated that Roger just watched but did not play with any fire. He also stated that Roger told him not to play with fire because he could get hurt.

The burns on Jack's legs were minor and Jennifer stated that she would take Jack to the Urgent Care Center as soon as the fire investigation was completed.

Jack is a 14 year-old Native American male who attends Sunbeam Middle School. He has a "C" grade point average and states that school is "OK." He lives with his mother, her boyfriend and a 6 year-old sister named Heather. Jack has no known medical problems and has no criminal history. Jack states that he has experimented with fire on numerous occasions but has never been caught and the fire has never spread. He stated that he was making a torch at 0300 hours because he was bored and could not sleep. No further information.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Tye Law**

**Incident Number: 99-0543**

**Location of Incident: 18 E. Keri Way Napa, Hawaii 87689**

On January 6, 1999 at approximately 1700 hours, Brenda Law mother of 4 year-old Tye Law walked into the Napa Fire and Rescue Station 10, asking for assistance. She spoke with Fire Captain Andrew Johnson. She stated that she had just caught Tye playing with a BBQ lighter in his bedroom. He had ignited a pile of dirty clothes on fire and that the fire had extended to the mattress of his twin bed. She stated that she was able to put the fire out with a bucket of water and did not call the fire department. She stated that this was the first time Tye has ever played with matches or a lighter. Brenda went on to say that Tye is a healthy 4 year-old who suffers from ADD and has been on medication since he was 3 years old. She also stated that he sees a psychologist and a psychiatrist for his behavior issues. Brenda stated that Tye attends Charter Hill Pre-school and does well in school except when it comes to his behavior. She stated that he is always being disciplined for moving around and disturbing the class. Brenda related that she wants Tye and the rest of the family to attend a fire safety class if one is available. She also related that she wanted to take Tye to the county burn unit to scare him but when she called they referred her to the fire department.

Tye is a very intelligent 4 year-old white male who lives with his biological mother, father and older sister at 18 E. Keri Way Napa , Hawaii. When asked why he was playing with the BBQ lighter he stated that on Saturday they had a BBQ and he watched his father light the BBQ. He stated that he had so much fun that he wanted to have a BBQ in his room so that he could cook hotdogs. When he was asked why he thought his mother brought him to the fire station he stated that he started a fire in his bedroom and now he had to tell a fireman what he did. He said his mom got mad at him after she dumped water on the fire and told him they were going to the fire station.

Per Brenda, this is Tye's first experience with matches or lighters and she and her husband should not have left the BBQ lighter on the counter. She stated that neither she or her husband smoke and the BBQ lighter is the only lighter they own. She stated that she will now lock up the lighter and make sure that Tye does not know which cabinet it is locked in.

Brenda could provide no further information. She estimated the fire damage to be about \$250.00



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jose Rivera**

**Incident Number: 02-1543**

**Location of Incident: Wells Junior High Wellton, Ohio 65411**

On April 12th, 2002 Wells Junior High School Psychologist Jennifer Aniston contacted the Wells Fire Department about one of her students, Jose Rivera. She stated that she found Jose's notebook covered with drawings of people on fire and the following saying, "Life sucks, then you burn." She stated that when she found this she contacted Jose's mother Bertha who told her that she had found burned school papers, school books and other items burned in Jose's bedroom. She also stated that she found 15 lighters under Jose's mattress. She stated that when she asked Jose about the burned items and lighters he told her to, "f--- off."

Jennifer related that Jose has been having problems in school for the past 6 months. She stated that his grades have dropped from A's and B's to D's and F's. She also stated that he has been skipping classes or walking in ½ way through a class. He has stopped turning in homework assignments and has begun to disrespect his teachers. A urine test was requested by the school and when done showed no signs of drugs or alcohol in his system. She went on to say that Jose has become very distant and appears to be very depressed. She stated that he no longer talks to his friends and does not "hang out" with anyone from the school. He also failed to try out for the track team this year even though he got first in the 6 mile run last year at the state meet. Jose has no known medical problems and has never been a behavior problem in school up until six months ago. She stated that no one knows why he is acting like this. Per his mother nothing in his life has changed over the past three years; no deaths, no moves, no family problems and no known problems with friends. It is a mystery as to why he has changed so dramatically.

Jennifer requested that the fire department enroll Jose in the juvenile firesetter class. She stated that the school will be enrolling him in their counseling program and that his mother will be taking him to see a psychiatrist. Jennifer could provide no further information on Jose.

When the juvenile firesetter specialist contacted Jose and his mother, Jose refused to talk with the specialist and left the room. His mother stated that she is willing to try anything to help Jose. No further information.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: James Monroe**

**Incident Number: 99-113**

**Location of Incident: 222 Pony Court Jipsum, Texas 88987**

On March 2, 1999 at 1600 hours James Monroe and his friend Artie Johnson burned two homes and a fence after trying to kill ants using hairspray and a lighter. Damage was estimated at over \$200,000.

On March 2, 1999 at about 1600 hours a 9-1-1 telephone call was received by the Jipsum Fire Dispatch Center in reference to a fence fire located at 222 Pony Court. Upon the fire department's arrival it was found that the fire had spread from the fence to two residences. Fire Investigator Jeff Robertson arrived on scene and was immediately contacted by a very distraught James Monroe a 14 year-old white male. James stated that he and his friend Artie Johnson caused the fire but that it was an accident. He said that they had finished packing his belongings, because his parents had sold the house, and he and Artie were in the backyard killing ants with a hairspray torch. He related that they had some giant ant hills in the backyard and were frying the ants. He said there were a couple of flying ants that flew out of the ant hills and they tried to spray them in the air. He said that after they were done spraying the ants they threw the hairspray can away in the dumpster in the alley and went inside to help with more packing.

About one half hour later he heard someone in the alley yelling "your fence is on fire" and he looked outside and saw the fence between his house and the neighbors house on fire and the couch that was next to the fence was in flames. James said that Artie called 9-1-1 and he went outside to try to put the fire out with a garden hose, but was unsuccessful. The fire spread to his and the neighbors residence. James was very distraught and kept asking if he was going to be arrested.

Investigator Robertson then interviewed Artie Johnson who told the same story. Artie was also very much saddened by the fire and said that he would help re-pay the homeowners for the damage. Investigator Robertson then interviewed the witness who was in the alley and found the fire. The witness stated that it appeared to him the couch was on fire first and then caught the fence on fire. He stated that when he began yelling, the only thing on fire was the couch, but the fire quickly extended to the fence and then to a palm tree and then to the homes.

During his investigation, Investigator Robertson found that both James and Artie were A/B students at Jipsum High School and neither one had a history of firesetting or other criminal behavior. Both lived with their biological parents and

brothers and sisters. Neither James nor Artie suffered from any type of physical or mental illness and neither had any type of behavior issues.

When the neighbor of James arrived home and found his residence burned he demanded that James and Artie be arrested for arson of an occupied structure. The neighbor also stated that if they both were not arrested, he would make a complaint to the district attorney and the news media.

After Investigator Robertson completed his fire scene investigation it was determined that a flying ant started the fire. James and Artie had sprayed a couple of flying ants with their torch and one of the ants flew into the cushions of the couch while on fire and ignited the couch causing the fence, tree and house fires.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jeff Stang**

**Incident Number: 98-105**

**Location of Incident: Juniper School Fuji, Alaska 97654**

On February 7th, 1998 at about 1316 hours, Juvenile Firesetter Specialist Kim Chang of the Kodak Fuji Fire Department received a telephone call from Patty Snee, School Counselor of the Juniper Elementary School. Patty related that she had received a telephone call from May Stang mother of Jeff Stang a 6 year-old kindergarten student at her school. May Stang told Patty that she needed help with Jeff because he has been setting fires in the alley behind their residence. She stated that the fires started after the whole family watched the White Bear Supermarket go up in flames about a month ago. May told Patty that they live across the street from the supermarket and the fire is all Jeff has talked about since he saw it. May also stated that Jeff is a very angry and violent young man. On numerous occasions he has punched and kicked his stepfather, chased his older sister with a butcher knife, kicked his older brother in the groin and bit his grandmother on the ear. She also stated that he shows no remorse for his violence and says he doesn't care if anyone dies. May said that she has taken all of the lighters and matches out of the house, has unplugged the stove and turned off the hot water heater. She said she still finds him with matches he has stolen from the store on the corner. May doesn't know what to do and really wants help.

Patty Snee stated that Jeff is a six year-old Eskimo male. He is a very poor student and is constantly getting into trouble in class. There is not a day that goes by that he has not been placed in detention. She stated that she believes he suffers from ADD or ADHD but his mother refuses to have him tested. She stated that he appears to be healthy, but his mother refuses to take him to a doctor, stating that she does not believe in doctors. Patty related that at age 2, Jeff was in the bathtub with his 11 month-old sister when she drowned. His mother had left the room to get clothes and when she came back, the baby was face down in the bathtub not breathing. Jeff has two older brothers and an older sister and they live in the back of a tire shop with Jeff's mother, stepfather, grandmother and grandfather. There have been numerous domestic violence incidents at the residence and both his mother and stepfather have been arrested numerous times for assault. Patty Snee could provide no further information on the family.

On February 8, 1998 May agreed to meet with Firesetter Specialist Kim Chang and Fire Captain Doug Worthy. May had related the same information she had given to Patty Snee, but added that she was leaving her husband

because of domestic violence issues. She also stated that she thought Jeff's step-grandfather was molesting Jeff's step-sister, but could not prove it. It should be noted that during the conversation with May, it appeared that she was under the influence of some type of drug. Her words were slurred and she was unable to sit still in her chair. It also appeared that there were old track marks up the inside of both of her arms. When the fire department offered counseling assistance through the county social service department, May stated that there was nothing wrong with her son and proceeded to end the conversation and stomp out of the room. She has refused to return telephone calls and will not open her door to talk with the fire department.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Terry Bradshaw**

**Incident Number: 01-890**

**Location of Incident: 1515 Trail Way Apt # 5 Udo, Vermont  
43435**

On September 10, 2001 Captain Dan Oto of the Udo Fire Service responded to 1515 Trail Way Apt #5 Udo Vermont to check a fire-out call. Upon arrival, he was contacted by resident Sheila Mack mother of four year-old Terry Bradshaw. She stated that she caught Terry lighting her roommate's purse on fire with a lighter he took from over the stove. She stated that she grabbed the purse and threw it in the bathtub and ran water on it to extinguish it. Sheila said that this is the fourth fire Terry has set in the past week. The first fire he set was to a pile of her ex-husbands clothes. The second fire was at 0400 hours when she was awakened by the screams of her roommate. Terry had lit the roommate's socks on fire while she was in bed and wearing the socks. The third fire he attempted to set was to his two year-old sisters crib with her in it. Sheila said that she took all of the lighters and matches out of the house, unplugged the stove and microwave and turned off the hot water heater pilot light. She kept one lighter in a cabinet over the stove behind some plants, but Terry found it. She aid that Terry is a very angry and violent little boy who suffers from ADD, Depression, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and Insomnia. She said that he is on four different kinds of medication and sees both a psychiatrist and a psychologist. She also stated that he shows no remorse for the violent acts he commits. She related that she believes he is evil and has been since birth.

Captain Oto referred Terry to the Juvenile Firesetter Program for further assistance. He attended the firesetter class in October of 2001. During the class he was caught pulling other children's hair, standing behind the instructor making "farting sounds" and pulling on the instructor's pants, he also was climbing under and over the tables in the classroom.

On November 15, 2001 the Udo Fire Department again responded to 1515 Trail Way Apt #5 on a living room fire. Upon arrival contact was made with Sheila Mack. Sheila stated that Terry started the couch on fire with matches he took from the grocery store. She stated that when the smoke alarm sounded she ran to the living room and found Terry staring at the fire and laughing. She then grabbed him and his sister and left the apartment. Sheila stated that she does not know what to do with terry and will accept any assistance the fire department can give her. The fire damage was estimated at \$30,000.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Billy Kidd**

**Incident Number: 98-0448**

**Location of Incident: 1600 Micro Way Chance, Rhode Island  
67895**

On February 3, 1998 at approximately 1320 hours the Chance Fire Service responded to a report of a grass fire at 1602 Micro Way Chance, Rhode Island. Upon arrival Lieutenant Sara Berg made contact with homeowner James Long. He stated that he was sitting in his backyard reading a newspaper when he heard a crash and saw flames coming from the Southeast corner of his yard. When he went to investigate and put the fire out with his hose, he saw Billy Kidd his next-door neighbor, holding a glass bottle with a rag hanging out of the stem, on fire. Mr. Long put the fire out with the hose and then dialed 9-1-1.

Lieutenant Berg contacted Fire Investigator Tab Moore and advised him of the information on the fire. Investigator Moore arrived on scene and examined the fire scene in Mr. Long's backyard. Through the investigation it was determined that a "Molotov Cocktail" had been thrown over the fence into Mr. Long's yard from the rear yard of the residence located at 1600 Micro Way. Investigator Moore contacted the residents at 1600 Micro Way and spoke with 11 year-old Billy Kidd. Billy stated that he was responsible for starting the neighbors yard on fire. He stated he made a firebomb and then threw it over the fence because he hated Mr. Long. He also told Investigator Moore that he has been making firebombs for about 3 years and has a history of match and lighter play. Billy said that he attended the Spades Alternative School because he had been kicked out of a bunch of schools. He also related that the juvenile court couldn't do anything to him because he is disabled. He said that he suffers from Attention Deficit Disorder, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, and Depression and that he is a Special Ed student. He said that he takes 3 kinds of psych drugs, Adderrall, Effexor and Resperadal. Billy told Investigator Moore to go ahead and charge him for the firebombing because the courts would just throw out the charges. He also related that he wasn't afraid of anything.

After leaving the fire scene, Investigator Moore contacted the juvenile firesetter specialist to see if he had any history on Billy. Investigator Moore was advised that Billy had been referred to the firesetter program on 3 previous occasions, but had never attended any of the classes or taken advantage of the counseling offered. All of his previous firesetting referrals were for firebombing other neighbor's property.

Contact was made with Billy's mother, Shelly Kidd, who was at work during the most recent incident. She stated that Billy did not set the fire and that all of the neighbors are against him because of his disability. She also related that the fire and police departments accuse him of many things because he is an easy scapegoat for them. She went onto say that nobody respects the rights of the mentally ill. She then hung up on Investigator Moore.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Richard Rogers**

**Incident Number: 02-15678**

**Location of Incident: 200 N. Design Dr. Segway, Massachusetts  
01122**

On June 5, 2002 at approximately 0800 hours, the Segway Fire Dispatch Center received a frantic 9-1-1 telephone call from Mimi Rogers. Mimi was heard screaming that her residence was on fire and that she and her 2 children, Richard 5 and Natelle 2, were trapped in the bedroom and could not get out. The dispatch center immediately dispatched the Segway Fire and Rescue Service while staying on the telephone with Mimi to give her instructions. The fire department was on scene within 4 minutes however during that time, telephone contact had been lost with Mimi. Fire crews found Mimi, Natelle and Richard in the bedroom and unconscious and removed them from the house. Mimi died at the scene; Natelle died at Segway Hospital and Richard was in critical condition at Segway Hospital's Burn Unit with third degree burns over 40% of his body.

Investigator Jim Thorpe responded to the scene and was in charge of the investigation. During his investigation, friends of the family told him that Richard had been caught setting fires during the week prior to the fatal house fire. He had set fires in the family room, to a pile of clothes near the washer and dryer, and outside on the deck. His firesetting had begun after his mother's boyfriend was arrested for molesting him. Richard is a 5 year-old white male who resides with his mother, sister, mother's girlfriend and her children. He attends Segway Headstart and is an average student. He suffers from no known medical or psychological illnesses. Richard's grandmother Nellie told Investigator Thorpe that under no circumstances did Richard start the fire.

Investigator Thorpe's investigation revealed that the fire started in the middle of the family room floor and the ignition point was not near any electrical outlets or appliances. He also found a burned pack of matches under the remains of the burned sofa, near the point of origin. He also found that the family was what he considered "very dysfunctional." Richard's mother was divorced from Richard's father because her best friend had run away with Richard's father. After a year, the best friend "dumped" Richard's father and started dating Richard's mother. Richard's mother Mimi was recently diagnosed with severe depression and would sleep up to 18 hours a day. Because of this Richard and Natelle were not being supervised.

Investigator Thorpe has yet to be able to determine a cause of the fire because he has not yet interviewed Richard. Richard remains in a drug-induced coma on life-support healing from his burn injuries.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Tye Peterson**

**Incident Number: 02-0010013**

**Location of Incident: 6200 E. Artichoke Street Mouse,  
Mississippi**

On April 16, 2000 at 0900 hours 16 year-old Tye Peterson lit his shirt on fire with a candle while he was at his residence located at 6200 E. Artichoke Street Mouse, Mississippi. The damage was estimated to be \$500.00. After the fire, Tye was rushed to Mouse Children's Hospital Burn Unit with 3rd degree burns, which extended from his lower abdominal area to just under his chin and down both arms.

Fire Investigator Tommy Tune interviewed both Tye and his mother Priscilla at the hospital. Priscilla stated that Tye and his sister Tina had been adopted from a Russian orphanage when Tye was 7 years old. She stated that while at the orphanage he and his sister suffered from emotional and physical neglect that often causes aggressive behavior patterns to develop in these children. She also stated that Tye suffers from Cerebral Palsy, which severely limits his speech and impairs his mobility, however he is very smart. Priscilla went on to say that there has been a lot of stress going on in the family. She stated that they recently lost a lawsuit against the school district for not doing enough for Tye based on his disabilities and the family lost \$3,000 in this lawsuit. She said that Tye has been picked on by his classmates and has not been doing his homework. She also related that she and her husband have been arguing a lot lately and Tye and his sister have heard the arguments. She explained that due to this fire incident, the family is being investigated by the local child protective services agency and the State Fire Marshal's Office. According to Priscilla, Tye has no history of criminal behavior or firesetting.

Fire Investigator Tune interviewed Tye while he was recovering in the burn unit of the hospital. Tye stated that on April 16th he got up early in the morning and acted as though he was going to school. He hid until his mother went to work and then went back inside the house. He stated that he was upset and did not want to go to school because his homework was not done. He went to the kitchen and got some candles and a lighter and lit the candles. He dripped the candle wax on the floor, on one of the family dogs and on his hand. He stated that when the hot wax hit his hand he dropped the candle, which fell on his shirt causing his shirt to ignite. He stated that he extinguished his clothing and called 9-1-1. He said that he liked to watch the candle wax drip on different things and that he has a past history of lighting candles but not firesetting. Tye talked freely and expressed his frustrations about school and how badly some of the other

children treat him. He did acknowledge that he was angry and upset when he stayed home from school and lit the candles. Tye stated that besides suffering from Cerebral Palsy he also suffers from clinical depression and is on medication. He did not provide any further information.

Tye went through about 12 reconstructive surgeries before succumbing to his injuries from an infection.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jay Edgar Hoover**

**Incident Number: 02-00109**

**Location of Incident: 200 Geeman Drive Fingerprint, Arkansas  
44444**

On August 10, 1998 at about 1400 hours, child psychiatrist Bernard Harris contacted the Fingerprint Fire Department Firesetter Program requesting assistance for one of his clients, six year-old Jay Hoover. Dr. Harris was requesting that fire safety intervention be part of Jay's treatment program. Dr. Harris had received written consent from Jay's mother Bonnie, to provide the firesetter program with information regarding Jay's firesetting history.

It was determined that Jay had been setting fires since he was three years old. The first incident was when he lit the curtains on fire while his parents were asleep. They awoke to find him laughing. Approximately two days later while Jay's father was asleep, Jay lit his father's socks on fire while the socks were on his father's feet. That same day, Jay placed a tube of toothpaste in the oven at his grandmother's house. It was also found that Jay had lit several other fires when the family lived in another city, however there was never any fire department response or intervention.

At the time of Jay's first appointment in 1998, his mother had discovered burn marks on his fingers and burned items in his closet. She stated that she also found 4 "exploded" lighters on the floor of his closet. She also stated that Jay and his 8 year-old brother, Jesse James get fireworks from friends and ignite them and throw them out the bedroom window. Bonnie went on to say that Jay has been caught vandalizing cars and stealing money and other items from her purse.

Bonnie related that Jay had recently been hospitalized for ten days for treatment of ADHD, depression and sleep apnea. She also stated that he currently sees Dr. Harris and goes to group therapy, however only takes medication for asthma. Bonnie said that Jay's brother Jesse also "plays with fire," has previously attempted suicide and is bulimic.

During the initial interview Bonnie also related that Jay had 2 younger siblings that were given up for adoption at birth. Jay currently resides with his mother, stepfather and brother and never sees his natural father. Bonnie also admitted to doing "acid" while she was pregnant.

A fire safety strategy plan was begun along with his continued psychiatric treatment for approximately one year. The family then moved away from Fingerprint and further contact was not maintained.

On December 14th, 2001, the Fingerprint Firesetter Program received a telephone call from the Fingerprint Hospital Education Department advising that a woman by the name of Bonnie James was seeking help for her 10 year-old son Jay Edgar Hoover, who had been attempting to set fires. When contacted Bonnie revealed numerous new firesetting incidents that happen when she is asleep. She stated that Jay likes to put clothes into the space heater, play with the space heater's pilot light, play with candle wax and put wet cloth on lights. She also stated that Jay has nothing in his bedroom except the space heater because he and his brother have destroyed their beds. She stated that Jay's biological father just recently came back into Jay's life and after a brief period of time he broke into Bonnie's house and robbed her and her family. He is currently incarcerated and Jay is very upset that Bonnie had his real father arrested. She said that Jay's anger problem is way out of control. She stated that he bites and punches her, her husband and his brother. She also revealed that she recently caught him attempting to have sex with their little dog. She requested that the fire department "scare" Jay so he will stop firesetting.

Jay's mental condition has deteriorated since his interview in 1998. He takes Aderal, Seroquel, Clonidine, Beconaise, Ventolin and (an unknown named) new sleeping pill. These medications are taken for anxiety, ADHD, bedwetting, major depression and a sleeping disorder. When interviewed, Jay had difficulty putting words and sentences together and did not appear to be coherent. He cried during the interview stating he was "always out of control" and he couldn't help it. Jay did state that he had set over ten fires and that he sets fires when he is angry. He also said that he likes to watch the fires. He admitted that he is never scared of fire because he is always able to put the fires out. Jay said he hates his mother and stepfather because they call him names like "stupid" and "retarded" and his mother had his real dad arrested. He said is in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade at Geeman Elementary School, but hardly ever goes because he hates school, hates the teachers and hates his classmates.

After their initial interviews, a recommendation was given to Jay's mother to have him admitted to an inpatient treatment program. Bonnie refused to have Jay admitted and left the hospital. A few days later Bonnie returned to the hospital with Jay and agreed to have him admitted for inpatient treatment.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: George Washington**

**Incident Number: 02-00110**

**Location of Incident: 400 White House Boulevard Woodenteeth,  
Kentucky, 77777**

June 16, 2001 at about 2030 hours, the Woodenteeth Fire Department's Fire Safety Education Program received a telephone call from Mary Washington, grandmother of George Washington, a 10 year-old African-American male. Mary said that George had just left from his weekend stay at her house and she found melted plastic Easter eggs, a burned fire truck and a burned and charred mattress. She also stated that she found a lighter and spent matches under the bed. She stated that when she telephoned George about the burned items, lighter and matches, he denied everything. Mary said that she was so upset about this that she telephoned the fire department immediately after talking with George.

Mary related that George has a troubling past. His mother left many years ago and his father and his father's girlfriend were bringing him up. About two months ago George's father took a gun and shot his girlfriend and then turned the gun on himself killing them both. George was then placed with his birth mother, however his grandmother sees him on weekends. George's firesetting started after his father's death. Mary went on to say that George attends counseling everyday after school. She stated that through counseling George revealed that his father's discipline was very abusive. Through counseling, George was diagnosed with ADHD and is currently on medication. Mary said he suffers from no other illnesses, however has poor eye contact and suffers from concentration problems.

George is a polite 10 year-old little boy who does not look at people when he talks to them. He said that he has lit three fires in his lifetime and has always put the fires out. He said that he likes school because his teachers are nice to him. He also said that he is happy living with his mother because she does not hit him like his dad did. He does not have any brothers or sisters but would like to have one to play with. George said that he would not be lighting any more fires because he learned from the fire department how dangerous fires can be. He also said that he wants to be a firefighter when he grows up.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Johnny Qwest**

**Incident Number: 02-001015**

**Location of Incident: 4444 S. 16th Street Elk, Maine**

On March 2, 1998 at approximately 1400 hours the Elk Fire Department was dispatched to an apartment fire at 4444 S. 16th Street Elk, Maine. Upon arrival they found smoke showing from a three-story apartment building. The fire was found to be emanating from a third floor apartment where two adults and six children lived. After the fire was extinguished and investigated it was found that the fire was started on a bed in Johnny Qwest's bedroom with a blue Bic lighter that was found under the bed. Fire Investigator Doreen Brewster interviewed Johnny (a six year-old African American male) and found out the following information; Johnny was angry with his mother because she would not let him watch television. He stated that he wanted to get her back so he took her cigarette lighter and lit his bed on fire to scare her. He said that he tried to put the fire out with a glass of water but the fire kept getting bigger so he left the apartment. He stated that he has set 3 fires in the past but was always able to put them out with no problem. Johnny stated that he has 3 brothers and 2 sisters and lives with his mother and his grandmother. He is in kindergarten at Elkhorn Elementary School and likes school. He says that his mother makes him mad because she is always gone and when she does come home she always yells at him and his brothers and sisters. He went on to say that he hates his mother but likes his grandmother because she is nice and cares about him. Johnny appeared to be very upset about the fire as evidenced by his crying and continually saying that he was sorry for the fire.

Investigator Brewster interviewed Johnny's mother Beverly. Beverly stated that she was a single parent with six children. She has to work 12 hours a day, six days a week to support her family and she only gets paid minimum wage. She says that her mother lives with them and helps her raise the children because she is never home. Beverly also stated that this is the first time that Johnny has set a fire and that he is usually a very good boy and gives them no trouble. Beverly was very concerned that they would be evicted for this fire and have nowhere to go. She was relieved to find out that the Red Cross would be assisting them with another place to live.

Investigator Brewster related that the damage to the apartment was \$10,000 and three other families would have to be relocated because of smoke damage and no electricity. No further information.



## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: John Patrick**

**Incident Number: 02-00101**

**Location of Incident: 100 W. Saturn Drive Bugaboo, Arizona**

On October 5, 2001 at 1600 hours I received a telephone call from John Patrick's mother saying she had just caught John and a friend sitting in the middle of John's bed lighting matches. Mrs. Patrick said that she had smelled something burning and walked into John's bedroom and saw a burned mark in the middle of his bedspread and John and his friend hiding matches behind their backs. Mrs. Patrick stated that she wanted John to learn how dangerous fire is and she also wanted him to learn fire safety. Mrs. Patrick stated that there was no large fire and the fire department did not have to respond. I made an appointment with John's mother for her to bring John to the fire department for an interview and educational intervention.

On October 7, 2001 at 1600 hours, John and his mother arrived at the fire department for their interviews and educational intervention. I first interviewed John's mother Helen. Helen told me that she has never before caught John playing with any type of fire. She stated that there are lighters and matches in the house because John's father smokes, but that John has never showed an interest in them before. She said that John's older brother never showed an interest in fire either and she can't understand what got into John. She said that he is an A and B student in the third grade at Sunset Elementary School and loves school. She also stated that John has never been a behavior problem at home or at school until about 2 weeks ago when he started playing with a boy who just moved into the neighborhood. She told me that last week the neighbors caught John and the new boy, David, pulling up flowers in the neighbor's yard and throwing rocks at cars. She stated that after this fire incident, David is no longer welcome in their home and John is forbidden to play with him. She also told me that She was very disappointed in John and that she and her husband punished him by taking away his TV and computer privileges for two weeks. When asked if John suffers from any medical conditions, she replied that he is a happy and healthy child.

I then talked with John. John is an 8 year-old multi-racial boy born on July 4th, 1993. He told me that he lives at 100 W. Saturn Drive in Bugaboo, Arizona. John said that after school he and David went upstairs to his bedroom to play with Hotwheel cars. He stated that David told him that cars were boring and that they should have some "real fun!" He said that David took out a pack of matches that he said he swiped from John's father's desk. David told him that they were going to play a "dare" game and see who could hold onto a lit match the longest.

John told me that David dared him to go first and when he lit the match it got hot and he dropped onto the bedspread, which caught fire. He said that he immediately put blankets on the bedspread to put out the fire. John said that is when his mother walked in and caught them. John started to cry and told me he would never play with fire again because it made his mother and father lose trust in him and he has learned how dangerous it is. He said that he is never allowed to play with David again and that's OK with him.

There was no further information provided by John or his mother and the interviews were concluded.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: James Madison**

**Incident Number: 02-001006**

**Location of Incident: 103 W. Noah's Ark Dr. Animal, New York  
00032**

On February 16, 2002 at approximately 1658 hours, the Animal New York Fire Department responded to 103 W. Noah's Ark Drive Telephone number 800-665-4444 in reference to a house fire. Upon their arrival they found the residence back steps fully engulfed in flames. During the process of extinguishing the house fire a 9 year- old white male by the name of James Madison came up to one of the firefighters and told him that he did not set the fire. Fire damage was estimated at \$150.00

Fire investigators Cindy Hydrant and Ralph Bunker responded to this fire to complete the fire scene investigation and determine this fires cause and origin. During their initial interview with James, he told the investigators how the fire started but that he did not start the fire. James stated that three boys started the fire but he was unable to give the boys' names to either fire investigator.

Approximately two weeks after the fire James confessed that he had started the fire. He stated that he was playing with a friend and his younger brother David when his mother yelled at him for stealing cigarettes. After his mother yelled at him James became angry and suggested to his friend that they set the house on fire. They walked around the back of this three-story wood tri-plex to an area under the stairs. He stated that they put rags and a can of "Heet" under the steps and then used a lighter to set the stuff on fire. James said the fire got really big really fast and they could not put it out so they ran away.

James showed no remorse for setting this fire or the previous fifty fires he has set since age four. At age four he set David's crib on fire. Since that time he has set his residence on fire on numerous occasions sometimes using accelerants such as gasoline, aerosol cans and Heet, he has set numerous grass fires and he also set David's hair on fire once while David was sleeping.

During his interview James related that he hates school, hates his family, and hates his brother David. He said that he was in the third grade at Camelback Elementary School and was getting all F's. He told the investigators that he lives with his mother and her boyfriend Ted, which is David's real father. He said that his real father once tried to drown him by holding his head under hot water and he hates him too.

James' mother Mary was interviewed and she stated that James has been a problem child since he was born. He has hit her, her boyfriend and David on many occasions and also has tried to burn David with a lighter and matches. She stated that when he was 4 years old, he set David's crib on fire and David almost died. She said that James is scheduled for a court hearing on February 28th, 2002 and he may be placed in a halfway house or foster care because he is so out of control. Mary went on to say that James has problems in school and that he is being tested for learning disabilities, however besides being unable to read, he is a very healthy child.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jilli Jones**

**Incident Number: 02-00100**

**Location of Incident: 1000 W. Macgregor Drive Panel, Wisconsin**

On January 4, 2002 at 1530 hours Jilli Jones an 8 year-old white female was playing with her friend Melissa at Melissa's house located at 1000 W. Macgregor Drive Panel, Wisconsin 54806, when Jilli decided to light a fire. She found gasoline in her friend's garage and poured the gasoline from the sidewalk up to the garage. She then told Melissa to stand by the garage while she lit a match and placed it on the gasoline on the sidewalk. The sidewalk caught fire and followed the gasoline path to the garage door trapping Melissa between the sidewalk and the garage. Melissa received 2nd and 3rd degree burns to her hands trying to escape the fire. The garage door caught on fire and Melissa's mother put the fire out with a garden hose. The Panel Fire Department Arson Investigator Captain Ed Nelson responded to the scene and interviewed Jilli, Melissa and Melissa's mother and investigated the fire. He determined the fire damage to be approximately \$1,000 dollars.

Captain Nelson interviewed Jilli and she initially told him that Melissa was responsible for the fire and that she had nothing to do with it. After further interviewing, Jilli finally told Captain Nelson the truth. She told him that this was the third fire she has set this month because she likes to watch fire. She stated that in the first fire she just lit a pack of matches and watched them burn on the sidewalk, the second fire she lit some paper on fire and watched it burn and then she lit this fire with matches she took from her parents without permission. She stated that her mom and dad both smoke, so she had easy access to matches and lighters. She said that she lit the fire because she just likes to watch fire, however she never intended for Melissa to get hurt. She said fire was pretty, and interesting the way it dances around, that is why she did not run away from this fire after she lit it. During her interview with Captain Nelson she told him that she was in an accelerated program at school receiving straight A's and has never been in trouble before. She told him that she lives with her mom and dad at 1015 W. Macgregor Street Panel, Wisconsin telephone number 715-111-2222 and that she has no brothers or sisters, but has a dog named Apple and a cat named Orange. She stated that she loves her mom and dad because they go on family outings every weekend. She said that she does not get to see them much during the week because they both work. When asked if she would be punished for setting this fire, she stated that she would probably be grounded from her computer and lectured to about the dangers of fire.

On January 4, 2002 at 1800 hours, Captain Nelson interviewed Jill's parents, George and Linda Jones. They stated that they had no idea about Jill's interest in fire or that she took matches from their home. They confirmed that Jill is in an accelerated class at school, receives straight A's, is in the 3rd grade at Panel Elementary School, has no known medical or psychological problems and is a very loving child. They also stated that she has never been in trouble with the law, before this incident. George and Linda both described their relationship with their daughter as good, with very few arguments or disagreements. They stated that they have a "happy family" and they can't understand why she did this. When asked about how they will deal with this firesetting incident, they stated that they will punish her by grounding her, taking away her computer privileges, requiring her to pay for the damage and anything else Captain Nelson requires.

Captain Nelson required Jill to attend a juvenile firesetter program through the fire department and the burn center and required her mother and father to attend a parenting and fire safety education program. Jill was not arrested for this fire.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Megan Simpson**

**Incident Number: 02-00107**

**Location of Incident: 2525 Tangerine Dr. Cumquat, Florida  
25555**

On October 15, 2000 at 0700 hours Megan Simpson, a 10 year-old white female was brought into the emergency unit of the Cumquat Psychiatric Hospital by her parents Fred and Georgia Simpson. On October 14, 2000 at approximately 2200 hours, Megan attempted to burn the family house down. (The family residence is located at 2525 Tangerine Dr. Cumquat, Florida 25555 telephone number 888-777-3333). Megan waited until all family members were asleep and then left her bedroom in search of her mother's lighter. Once she found the lighter, Megan made a trail of all of the family member's dirty clothes from her parent's bedroom door down the stairs to the kerosene heater. She then stuffed the clothes with crumpled paper. She ignited the crumpled paper inside the clothes with her mother's lighter, (near her parent's bedroom door) and left the house. Once outside, Megan sat down in the driveway and waited for the house to burn down.

After a few minutes of the paper burning, the smoke from the burning paper triggered the smoke alarm, which awoke Megan's mother Georgia, who put out the fire by stomping on the clothes. Georgia then checked the house and found Megan missing from her bedroom. Georgia went outside and found Megan sitting in the driveway. Georgia reported no fire damage to the residence.

Georgia woke all of the sleeping family members and told them what Megan had done. The family then left the residence and went to Megan's maternal grandmother's house until morning, at which time they took Megan to the emergency unit of the Cumquat Psychiatric Hospital.

During Megan's initial intake interview she stated that she understood what she had done and knew the consequences of her actions. Megan related that she was hopeful her family had died in the fire because she hates her mom, dad, and brother. She also told the intake nurse that she had planned the fire for over a week. During other interviews Megan stated that she attended Naval Orange Elementary School, was in the fifth grade and hated school. Megan had no previous criminal, match or lighter play, or firesetting history.

Megan's medical history revealed no previous diagnosis of mental illness, however she did have a history of anxiety and behavior problems. Megan had

been hospitalized several times in the past for bowel impactions and had a history of encopresis.

Megan was admitted to the locked children's psychiatric ward of Cumquat Hospital. During counseling sessions Megan refused to discuss why she set the fire, but kept telling hospital staff that she had a secret. When pressed about her secret all she would say was that she was so disgusted with the condition of the house, she wanted to burn it down. When Megan was asked again about the motivation for her fire play, she walked out of her counseling session. Later, prior to Megan leaving the hospital, she told the staff that there was a 25% chance she would try to burn the house down again.

Georgia was interviewed on several occasions during Megan's stay in the hospital. Georgia related that Megan had been going through a few stressful situations; Her parents were in the midst of separating, her maternal grandmother had recently been hospitalized, her maternal grandfather had died the previous year and the family was planning to move to another town. Georgia went on to say that Megan had some behavior problems at home and at school, but had never used lighters, matches or anything else to set a fire. Georgia was extremely upset about this incident and wanted Megan to receive the help that she needed.

The hospital social worker notified the Cumquat Fire Department's Juvenile Fire Prevention Officer of this incident and fire department, police department, and child protective service reports were made regarding this incident.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Tim Burr**

**Incident Number: 02-00108**

**Location of Incident: 2000 N. Talking Stick Ln. Flash, Colorado  
55555**

On September 15, 1999 at approximately 1700 hours the Flash Fire Department received a telephone call from Scott Burr in reference to a fire incident that his 5 year- old son Tim had been involved in. Mr. Burr related that on September 14, 1999 at about 1000 hours he was in the basement doing laundry when he smelled something burning and came up the stairs. Mr. Burr asked Tim what he was doing and Tim denied doing anything. Scott looked around the kitchen and found a burned piece of paper towel. Scott again asked Tim what he was doing and Tim admitted to using the gas stove to light the paper towel on fire. Tim told Scott that when the paper started to burn he quickly put the fire out by using a bowl of water that was sitting near him. Scott also discovered a scorch mark on the floor near the bowl of water. Scott then punished Tim by smacking him on the rear end and making him stand in the corner.

The fire department invited the family to an assessment interview and a firesetter education program. During the assessment interview it was discovered that this was Tim's first incident with fire however there were many other problems in Tim's past. Tim was born in jail to a drug-addicted mother who was in jail on drug charges. He was born showing positive signs for cocaine addiction. He was placed in the custody of his maternal grandmother who was addicted to prescription medication. When Tim was 3 years old he awoke to find his 48 year-old grandmother dead from a drug overdose. Tim was then given to his maternal uncle who was also a drug user and had past arrests for DUI and drug possession. Shortly after Tim's grandmother died he was given a kitten as a pet. The uncle turned his pit bull on the kitten and made Tim watch the kitten being mauled to death. The uncle would frequently take Tim with him and leave him in the car when he went to drug houses to purchase drugs. Tim's uncle would also assist Tim in lighting and setting off fireworks. Shortly after these incidents, Tim was removed from his uncle's care and given to Burrs who would eventually adopt him.

After the fire play incident, Mr. and Mrs. Burr were questioning whether or not they should have adopted Tim and were looking for ways to "void" the adoption. The fire department was able to find many services for this family through support groups, hospitals and other social service agencies.

During the interview with Tim, it was found that Tim was a highly energetic Puerto Rican 5 year-old. He smiled a lot and asked a lot of questions. Tim stated that he liked school and really liked his adoptive parents because they were nice to him and didn't use "bad" medicine. He said that he had to take medicine because his doctor said so, because it made him behave better. Tim was very excited about learning fire safety and left the fire department telling his mom and dad everything he learned.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Jerry Smith**

**Incident Number: 02-00103**

**Location of Incident: 1004 Railroad Street Bearcat, Georgia  
62345**

On October 28, 1999 at about 1555 hours, there was a fire at a warehouse located at 1004 Railroad Street Bearcat, Georgia. This fire spread quickly and every piece of fire equipment from eight fire stations was used to help contain this warehouse fire. The warehouse was located near a gasoline tank farm, a wrecking yard and other industrial buildings. Once extinguished, this fire did approximately \$2,000,000 dollars of damage to this 100 year-old warehouse. Fire Investigator Jay Torch responded to investigate the fire and was advised by witnesses that three unidentified boys were seen leaving the warehouse minutes before the fire was spotted. Investigator Torch did not have any leads as to the individuals who started this fire until approximately three days after the fire. Two boys walked into the police station and admitted that they were involved in the fire and wanted to admit their guilt and tell on the third boy, Jerry Smith. All three boys were arrested.

On October 31, 1999, Jerry was arrested for the fire and interviewed by Investigator Torch. During his interview, Jerry, a fourteen year-old Native American male who resides at 1516 Keri Street Bearcat, Georgia, took full blame for the fire and stated that the other two boys had nothing to do with it. He told investigators that he had been arrested in the past for shoplifting and theft, but had never been caught or arrested for previous fires he had set. He stated that he used matches he brought with him and paper and wood scraps found in the warehouse to start the fire. He stated that he has been setting fires for a long time because he hunts with his family and learned to build campfires when he was four years old. He also stated that he believes that he can control fire and did not realize how fast fire could spread. When asked why he set the fire, he did not have an answer. Jerry did not show any remorse for the fire and thought it was "no big deal" because it was an abandoned warehouse.

On November 2, 1999, Jerry's mother Martha Smith, contacted Investigator Torch by telephone and requested a meeting regarding Jerry. She and her common-law husband William met with Investigator Torch on November 3, 1999. Martha stated that she was at "wits-end" with Jerry. She stated that he was very intelligent but always in trouble. She told Investigator Torch that Jerry had been arrested for shoplifting and theft, was truant from school, had used marijuana on numerous occasions, had killed animals with a screw driver, made bombs with information from the internet and drew pictures of decapitated bodies on a

railroad track. She went on to say that Jerry's natural father had committed suicide in 1997 and that Jerry was very close to his father prior to his death. Martha said that Jerry has two sisters, one younger and one older and the younger sibling had begun to use marijuana and regress since their father's suicide. She stated that the older sibling was doing OK. When asked if she had attempted to get help for the family following the father's suicide, she stated that she had gotten counseling for Jerry and his sisters, however, Jerry refused to participate in counseling. She related that he has been getting into trouble ever since his father's suicide.

Martha Smith did not know what she would do with Jerry. He had been released to her custody pending the court process and she was afraid of him. He had assaulted her in the past, severely damaged the family home and was very angry and abusive. Last night he had left a note saying he was going to run away to Canada and that he could handle himself and for her not to worry.

## **Firesetting Case History**

**Youth Firesetter's Name: Dolly Madison**

**Incident Number: 02-001014**

**Location of Incident: 123 E. Lake Street O'Dowd, Oregon**

In January of 2000, Fire Investigator George Matcher received a telephone call from Kim Madison in reference to her 11 year-old daughter, Dolly, playing with matches. Mrs. Madison stated that she had caught Dolly playing with matches in her bedroom closet and in her bedroom, playing with fire in the fireplace and also playing with candles. Mrs. Madison related that Dolly suffered from a brain tumor as an infant and had undergone brain surgery however there did not appear to be any handicaps as a result of the tumor or the surgery. Mrs. Madison did say that Dolly had been diagnosed with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and was taking medication prescribed by her pediatrician but was not in counseling.

Dolly was enrolled in the O'Dowd Fire Department's Juvenile Firesetter Program and received only one session of intervention due to the fact that they were moving to Kansas. Dolly stated that the reason she liked to light fires was to watch the flame. She related that the flame really intrigued her. Dolly went on to say that she knew playing with fire was dangerous, but she just had to watch the flame. She said that she had a happy family life and that she had an older brother and younger sister and a mom and dad. She also stated that she loved school and was a very good student and never got into trouble. She promised Fire Investigator Matcher that she would never play with fire again because of how dangerous it was.

On October 15, 2002 at approximately 2127 hours, Investigator Matcher received a report of a fire at 123 E. Lake Street O'Dowd, Oregon. When he responded to this fire he realized that this was the same address that he had been to in 2000 when he worked with Dolly Madison. When he arrived he contacted Kim Madison in the driveway of her residence. She stated that they had returned from Kansas to paint and fix up the home, for sale. She said that Dolly had been in the garage right before the fire started, but would not admit to starting the fire. After about fifteen minutes of conversation, Dolly stated that she had gotten a candle and some matches from the kitchen drawer and went out to the garage and lit the candle so she would have light in the garage. She left the garage a few minutes later to help her mother and she forgot to extinguish the candle. About 15 minutes later her brother discovered that the garage was on fire. The fire did approximately \$3,000 worth of damage. Dolly was extremely upset by the fire because she had been so good in Kansas about staying away from matches and lighters and had not set any fires.



**APPENDIX B**

**PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT  
SAFETY AND EDUCATION**



## Phoenix Fire Department Youth Firesetter Parent Group

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**Goal: To raise the awareness of parents and caregivers regarding the issues and consequences of youth firesetting.**

### **LESSON PLAN**

#### **I. Introduction**

##### **A. Parent Group Facilitator**

1. Who am I?
2. Program Goals
  - a. To provide parents with fire safety information
  - b. To provide parents with information on Arizona Arson and Fireworks Laws
  - c. To provide parents with information on the consequences of youth firesetting
  - d. To provide parents with parenting tips
  - e. To provide referral and resource information on assistance available to families of youth firesetters

##### **B. Parents**

1. Parents introduce themselves
2. Why are they here?
3. Was the fire department, police, or school involved?

#### **II. Fire Statistics, Myths and Facts, Reasons Children Set Fires, What To Do If A Child Is Setting Fires, ADD/ADHD and Firesetting**

##### **A. Fire Statistics**

1. Child curiosity fires are the leading cause of residential fire-related death and injury among children ages 9 and under. (National Safe Kids Campaign)
2. Fire and burns remain the third-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children ages 14 and under. (National Safe Kids Campaign)
3. A working smoke alarm is not present in two-thirds of the residential fires where a child is injured or killed. (National Safe Kids Campaign)

**LESSON PLAN**  
**PARENT GROUP**  
**PAGE 2**

4. Since 1997, over 1,500 youth and 1,000 parents have attended the Phoenix Fire Department's Youth Firesetter Intervention Program.
5. Since 1997, over 300 families have been referred to mental health providers for counseling services.
6. In 1998, 2 people died as a result of a youth set fire, 1 so far in 2000.
7. So far in 2000, over 2.7 million dollars of property loss has occurred because of investigated youth set fires.

**B. Fire myths and facts**

1. Myth: A child can control a small fire  
Fact: All fires start small and can quickly become uncontrollable. A fire doubles in size every 30 seconds.
2. Myth: It is normal for children to play with fire.  
Fact: It is not normal for children to play with fire. Curiosity about fire is common. Use of fire without a parent's knowledge is dangerous.
3. Myth: Firesetting is a phase children will outgrow.  
Fact: Firesetting is not a phase. If children are not taught fire safety, firesetting can get out of control.
4. Myth: If you burn a child's hand he will stop setting fires.  
Fact: Purposely burning a child's hand is child abuse and is against the law.

**C. Why children set fires**

1. Fire curiosity/experimentation
2. Imitating behavior
3. Crisis firesetting
4. Delinquent firesetting
5. Strategic firesetting
6. Pathological firesetting

**D. What to do if a child is setting fires**

1. Keep matches and lighters locked up
2. Explain the dangers of fire to your child
3. Supervise your children when they are around candles, campfires, fireplace fires, barbecues, etc.
4. Keep lighter fluid, gasoline, and propane locked up.
5. Take your child's fire curiosity/ experimentation and setting, seriously.
6. If there is a fire, leave your residence and call 9-1-1.

**LESSON PLAN  
PARENT GROUP  
PAGE 3**

7. Take advantage of counseling services available, if you feel the problem is continuing.

E. ADD/ADHD and firesetting

1. 3-5% of the juvenile population nation-wide has been identified as ADD/ADHD
2. 20% of firesetter referrals are ADD/ADHD
3. ADD/ADHD characteristics
  - a. Inattention
  - b. Impulsivity
  - c. Hyperactivity
4. What to do
  - a. Talk with your child's teacher
  - b. Consult with the school psychologist
  - c. Make an appointment with your child's physician

F. Video " Prime Time Live Florida"

**III. The Phoenix Fire Department's Youth Firesetter Program**

A. Introduction to program

1. History
2. Where referrals come from
  - a. Fire investigators
  - b. Fire companies
  - c. Schools
  - d. Parents/family
  - e. Police
  - f. Other fire departments
  - g. Social service agencies
  - h. The juvenile court

B. Fire safety education classes

1. Age groups
2. Who teaches
3. Parent group
4. What is taught

C. Parent group

1. Who facilitates
2. What is discussed

**LESSON PLAN**  
**PARENT GROUP**  
**PAGE 4**

- D. Counseling services
  - 1. Available to all City of Phoenix residents
  - 2. Up to 7 sessions free of charge
  - 3. 7 Psychologists and 1 Social Worker
  - 4. 2 Psychologists are Spanish speaking
  - 5. Locations are throughout the valley
  - 6. Hand out counseling referral forms

**IV. Arizona Arson And Fireworks Laws**

- A. Arizona Arson Laws (ARS Title 13)
  - 1. Reckless Burning
  - 2. Arson Laws
- B. Arizona Fireworks Laws (ARS Title 13)
- C. Video " Just a Firecracker"
- D. Minimum age to be arrested
- E. Video "Make the Right Choice"

**V. Home Fire Safety**

- A. The importance of smoke alarms
  - 1. Does your family have one?
  - 2. Placement and location of smoke alarms
    - a. One on every level, if possible one in every room
    - b. Look at installation instructions
  - 3. Maintenance and operation
    - a. Test once a month
    - b. Change the battery once a year
    - c. After 10 years, get a new one
- B. Fire safety behaviors
  - 1. Stop, drop, cover your face, and roll
  - 2. Crawl low under smoke
  - 3. Cool a burn
  - 4. Home escape plan

**LESSON PLAN**  
**PARENT GROUP**  
**PAGE 5**

**VI. Parent Information**

- A. Stability factors identified in children, by Dr. S. Anthony Baron San Diego, CA
- Genuine love and respect between parents
  - Consistent discipline without punishment
  - Academic success
  - Belongs to socially accepted, law-abiding groups, friends
  - Balanced religious faith/philosophy
  - Intact family
  - Positive role models in family
  - Future oriented, sense of hope
  - Self-activating
  - Cooperative and independent
  - Long-standing, good relationships
  - Accepts appropriate responsibility
  - Ability to become empathetic
  - History of social/legal compliance
  - Little pre-occupation with weapons
  - No history of drug/alcohol abuse
  - No history of serious psychopathology
  - Able to adapt to moderate change
- B. Risk factors identified in children, by Dr. S. Anthony Baron
- Recurring preoccupation with themes of violence, hopelessness, despair in word, writings, or artwork
  - Easily angered, insulted, and/or hurt
  - Rejected or humiliated from a love relationship
  - Narcissism or paranoia
  - Alienated and dehumanizes others
  - Exaggerated sense of entitlement
  - Attitude of superiority
  - Externalizes blame
  - Anger management problems
  - Intolerance (racial or religious)
  - Macabre, insulting, or mean humor
  - Seeks to manipulate others
  - Closed social group
  - Changes in behavior
  - Negative role models
  - Rigid, opinionated, and judgmental
  - Unusual interest in sensational violence Fascination with violence filled entertainment

**LESSON PLAN  
PARENT GROUP  
PAGE 6**

**VII. Conclusion**

- A. Questions or comments
- B. Any family's interested in counseling?
- C. What will happen next
  - 1. Courts, school or person who referred your child will be advised of your child's participation in this class.
  - 2. You now will return to the classroom and be asked to fill out any evaluation
  - 3. Thank you for participating

**PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT  
YOUTH FIRE SAFETY CLASS  
(AGES 3-7)**

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**GOAL: Stop youth fire experimentation and firesetting**

**LESSON PLAN**

**I. Introduction**

A. Instructor

1. Who am I? (Establish credibility)
2. Introduce assistants/guests

B. Students

1. Have them answer the following questions:
  - a. Why are you here?
  - b. What happened?
  - c. Reasons for the firesetting?
  - d. What did you use to set the fire?
  - e. Where did you get the lighter/matches?
  - f. Were you alone or with friends?
  - g. Did you learn anything?
  - h. Are you required to be here?

C. Set ground rules for the class

1. Raise hand to speak
2. Listen
3. Remain in your seat unless asked to get involved

D. Explain goals of the class

1. Each child will be able to demonstrate the key fire safety behaviors
2. Briefly discuss consequences of firesetting
3. Discuss why kids set fires
  - a. Curiosity
  - b. Crisis
  - c. Delinquent
  - d. Strategic
  - e. Pathological

**\*\*\*\*\*Parents leave to attend Parent Group\*\*\*\*\***

Lesson Plan  
Age 3-7  
Page 2

## II. Class with the Student

- A. View " Fanny Flame" (Massachusetts Property Ins. Underwriting Association)
  - 1. Discuss video
    - a. What did you learn?
    - b. Big fires start small
    - c. Give matches to a grown-up
    - d. A tool has a special purpose
    - e. Some special tools are only safe for grown-ups
- B. Fire Safety Key Behaviors
  - 1. Tools and Toys
    - a. Use Tools and Toys flannel board or tool kit
    - b. Have students distinguish between tools and toys  
Example: lighters/matches are tools
  - 2. Stop, Drop, and Roll
    - a. Have student demonstrate:
      - i. Stop where you are
      - ii. Drop to the ground
      - iii. Cover your face and roll until the fire is out
  - 3. Cool a burn
    - a. Burn treatment - use only cool water
    - b. Call 9-1-1 for serious burns
  - 4. Smoke Alarm
    - a. Do you have one?
    - b. Why do you need one?
    - c. Placement / location - one on every level
    - d. Maintenance and operation
      - i. Test once a month
      - ii. Change battery once a year
    - e. Battery/Electrical smoke alarms
      - i. Pros/Cons
      - ii. Have battery-operated smoke alarm as a back-up

Lesson Plan  
Age 3-7  
Page 3

5. Exit Drills In The Home (E.D.I.T.H.)

- a. Sleep with door closed
- b. Feel door with back of hand
  - i. If warm go to second exit
  - ii. If not warm:

Open slowly

Check for smoke

If smoke is present close door, go to second exit

If no sign of smoke go to primary exit

c. Discuss second exit

- i. How to get out:

Discuss types of windows, security bars, doors

d. What to do if trapped?

- i. Don't hide under bed, closet, in showers, or toy box
- ii. Block crack under door
- iii. Stay low next to window

6. Meeting place

- a. Out front, away from house. Examples: Tree, streetlight, Mailbox
- b. Make sure everyone is accounted for
- c. Designate person to make 9-1-1 call from neighbor's house and return to meeting place

7. Crawl Low Under Smoke

- a. Explain "bad" air
- b. Four children hold "smoke" (gray fabric or blanket)
- c. Children crawl under blanket of "smoke"
- d. Each child takes turn holding the blanket
- e. Praise and encourage child as they "crawl low"

**III. Break**

**IV. View Video**

- A. "Sparky's ABC's of Fire Safety" (National Fire Protection Assoc.) OR "Be Cool About Fire Safety" (All State Insurance)
- B. Review fire safety tips

Lesson Plan  
Ages 3-7  
Page 4

**V. Parents Return**

- A. Students demonstrate newly acquired fire safety skills
  - 1. They will use props for demonstration (door, window, tree, and blanket)

**VI. View "Fire Power" Video (National Fire Protection Assoc.)**

- A. Discuss lessons learned from video
  - 1. How fast fire spreads
  - 2. Sleep with bedroom doors closed
  - 3. Importance of an escape plan

**VII. Home Escape Plan**

- A. Draw and discuss the plan
- B. Take home and practice

**VIII. Fire Safety Packet**

- A. Distribute at end of class
  - 1. Funotimes Fire Safety
  - 2. Urban Survival 9-1-1 Coloring Book (PFD)
  - 3. Home Escape Plan (PFD)
  - 4. 9-1-1 Book Mark (PFD)
  - 5. Fire Department Trading Cards
  - 6. JR. Firefighter Badge (PFD)
  - 7. 9-1-1 Pencil (PFD)

Lesson Plan  
Ages 3-7  
Page 5

**IX. Parent Packet**

- A. Distribute at the end of class
  - 1. Youth Firesetter Parent Guide (PFD)
  - 2. 40 Developmental Assets (Search Institute)
  - 3. Home Safety Tool List (PFD)
  - 4. Escape Plan Newspaper Article (Arizona Republic 10/08/00)
  - 5. Smoke Alarm Battery
  - 6. 9-1-1 Magnet (PFD)
  - 7. 10 Tips for Fire Safety (NFPA)
  - 8. Latchkey Safety (PFD)
  - 9. Use a Home Escape Plan (PFD)
  - 10. Smoke Detectors Save Lives (PFD)
  - 11. Home Safety Inspection (PFD)
  - 12. Fire Extinguishers (PFD)
  - 13. 9-1-1 Stickers (3) (PFD)

**X. Evaluation**

- A. Parents and children complete an evaluation form (page 49)

**XI. Give out Certificates to the Students for Completing Class**  
(page 51)

**XII. Class Dismissed**

- A. Remind parents to continue the fire safety education at home
- B. Thank you



**PHOENIX FIRE DEPARTMENT  
YOUTH FIRE SAFETY CLASS  
(AGES 8-12)**

---

**GOAL: Stop youth fire experimentation and firesetting**

**LESSON PLAN**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Show "Bret Tarver" video
- B. Instructor
  - 1. Who am I? (Establish credibility)
  - 2. Introduce assistants/guests
- C. Students
  - 1. Have them answer the following questions:
    - a. Why are you here?
    - b. What happened?
    - c. Reasons for the firesetting?
    - d. What did you use to set the fire?
    - e. Where did you get the lighter/matches?
    - f. Were you alone or with friends?
    - g. Did you learn anything?
    - h. Are you required to be here?
- D. Set ground rules for the class
  - 1. Raise hand to speak
  - 2. Listen
  - 3. Participate
  - 4. Stay seated
- E. Explain goals of the class
  - 1. Increase awareness about fire safety
  - 2. Discuss the consequences of firesetting
  - 3. Explain why youth set fires
  - 4. Understand how firesetting affects the community
  - 5. Explain Arizona arson laws
    - a. Define arson
    - b. Minimum age to be arrested
  - 6. Explain court process when a youth is arrested

Lesson Plan

Ages 8-12

Page 2

**II. View "Prime Time Live" Video**

- A. Discuss lessons learned from video
  - 1. Stages of fire
    - a. Time frame
    - b. Temperature
    - c. Sleep with bedroom doors closed
- B. Explain the importance of smoke alarms
  - 1. Do you have one?
  - 2. Why do you need one?
    - a. Explain the dangers of smoke
  - 3. Placement / location - one on every level
  - 4. Maintenance and operation
    - a. Test once a month
    - b. Change battery once a year
  - 5. Battery/Electrical smoke alarms
    - a. Pros/Cons
    - b. Have battery-operated smoke alarm as a back-up
- C. Importance of an escape plan

**II. Break**

**III. View "Urban Survival" Video (Phoenix Fire Department)**

- A. Discuss other services provided by the Fire Department
- B. Draw a map of a neighborhood where a youth set a fire
  - 1. Discuss how this fire affects other Fire Department services
    - a. Response time
    - b. Companies out of service
    - c. Consequences
      - i. Heart attack victim
      - ii. Response time means life/death

Lesson Plan

Ages 8-12

Page 3

**IV. View "Fire Facts" Video (Phoenix Fire Department)**

A. Fireworks are illegal in Arizona

B. Arson arrest

**V. View "In an Instant" 10-minute burn video**

A. Discuss properties of gasoline and other flammable liquids (aerosols, etc.)

B. Discuss burn injuries and treatment  
1. Cool a burn

C. Stop, Drop, cover your face and roll

**Parents Return**

**VI. View "Make the Right Choice" video**

A. Parents and youth complete an evaluation form

B. Youth complete the Peer Relations Questionnaire

C. Handout certificates and packets

**VII. Class Dismissed**

A. Remind parents to practice fire safety at home

B. Thank you



## Phoenix Fire Department Youth Fire Safety Class (Ages 13-17)

---

**GOAL: Stop firesetting behavior, understand consequences of firesetting and identify ways to make better choices.**

### LESSON PLAN

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. Show "Bret Tarver" Video
- B. Instructor and Parent Group Facilitator
  - 1. Who am I? (Establish credibility)
- C. Students
  - 1. Have them answer the following questions:
    - a. Who are you?
    - b. Why are you here?
    - c. What happened?
    - d. Why did it happen?
    - e. What was used to start the fire?
    - f. Were you alone or with friends when the fire was started?
    - g. Were you arrested by the police or fire investigator?
    - h. How did you get caught?
- D. Set ground rules for class
  - 1. Raise hand to speak
  - 2. Listen
  - 3. Participate
  - 4. Be courteous
- E. Explain the class objectives:
  - 1. To understand the properties of fire
  - 2. To learn Arizona Arson and Fireworks Laws
  - 3. To learn the consequences of firesetting
  - 4. To learn how fire affects the entire community
  - 5. To understand the meaning of choices
  - 6. To learn fire safety

**\*\*\*\*\* Parents leave to attend Parent Group \*\*\*\*\***

Lesson Plan  
Ages 13-17  
Page 2

## II. The Properties of Fire

### III. Arizona Arson and Fireworks Laws

- A. Arizona Arson Laws (handout)
  - 1. Pick a student to read each one out loud
  - 2. Reckless burning: A person commits reckless burning by recklessly causing a fire or explosion which results in damage to an occupied structure, a structure, wildland or property. Class 1 misdemeanor
  - 3. Arson of a structure or property: A person commits arson of a structure or property by knowingly and unlawfully damaging a structure or property by knowingly causing a fire or explosion. Class 4 felony
  - 4. Arson of an occupied structure: A person commits arson of an occupied structure by knowingly and unlawfully damaging an occupied structure by knowingly causing a fire or explosion. Class 2 felony
  - 5. Ask the students if they know what a misdemeanor or felony is?
  - 6. Misdemeanor defined: An offense for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment other than to the custody of the state department of corrections is authorized by any law of this state. Class 1, 2 and 3 misdemeanors. 1 is most severe.
  - 7. Felony defined: An offense for which a sentence to a term of imprisonment in the custody of the state department of corrections is authorized by any law of this state. Class 1-6 of felonies. Class 1 is most severe.
  - 8. Ask the students where the crime of arson falls?
  - 9. The minimum age you can be arrested in the state of Arizona is 8!
  
- B. Arizona Fireworks Laws (handout)
  - 1. Pick one student to read the fireworks law out loud
  - 2. Fireworks prohibited: Except as provided by this article, it is unlawful to sell, offer or expose for sale, use, explode or possess any fireworks. In the city of Phoenix it is a class 1 misdemeanor
  
- C. Show Roman Candle and PFD Fireworks Video
  - 1. Answer any questions
  - 2. Show fireworks poster board and explain that everything on the board is illegal in the state of Arizona

Lesson Plan  
Ages 13-17  
Page 3

#### IV. Consequences of Firesetting

- A. Define consequences: The result of something you do or choose not to do.
1. Consequences can be both good and bad
    - Good consequences: Studying for a test
    - Good consequences: Helping the community
    - Bad consequences: Stealing from a store
    - Bad consequences: Setting a fire
  2. Have each student give a different example of a consequence of setting a fire. Write their responses on the white board. Make sure the responses include:
    - Property damage or loss
    - Injury to self or others
    - Fines and restitution
    - Incarceration
    - Death to self or others
  3. Pass out the 2 newspaper articles
    - a. The instructor will read the first article out loud
    - b. Pick a student to read the second article out loud
    - c. Discuss the consequences learned from the articles
- B. View the video "In a Flash: The Consequences of Youth Firesetting."
- C. View new burn video " In an Instant" Show 10- minute segment, the tape is where it needs to be to start it.

**\*\*\*Break for 10 Minutes\*\*\***

#### V. How Firesetting Affects the Community

- A. Use the table-top map
- B. Use example of them setting a fire in a dumpster near fire station number 4, engine 4 responds, an elderly man has a heart attack near station 4 and engine 9 has to respond. The response time is 6 minutes away. A person's brain begins to die in 4 minutes

Lesson Plan  
Ages 13-17  
Page 4

- C. Explain how their setting a fire can take precious minutes and seconds away from someone who truly needs the fire department
  - 1. Slower response time
  - 2. Could mean the difference between saving and not saving possessions
  - 3. Could mean the difference between life and death

## VI. Choices

- A. Choices defined: The act of making a selection, an option.
- B. Have each student give a different **CHOICE** of activities, other than setting a fire
  - 1. List the choices on the white-board next to consequences
- C. Discuss answers

## VII. Fire Safety

- A. Smoke alarms
  - 1. Smoke alarms are your nose at night
  - 2. You should have at least one on every level of your home
  - 3. Test the smoke alarm once a month: Demonstrate
  - 4. Change the smoke alarm battery once a year
  - 5. If you have electrical wired smoke alarms, make sure at least one has a battery back-up
  - 6. Replace smoke alarm after 10 years
- B. If your clothes catch on fire
  - 1. Stop, do not run
  - 2. Drop to the ground
  - 3. Cover your face
  - 4. Roll over and over until you smother the fire out
  - 5. Pick someone in the class to demonstrate
- C. If there is smoke in your house/demonstrate
  - 1. Remember, the clean air is near the floor
  - 2. Hot smokey air is near the ceiling
  - 3. Crawl to the nearest exit
  - 4. If that exit is a door and the door is closed, feel the door with the back of your hand
  - 5. If the door is hot, do not open it/use another exit to leave the building

Lesson Plan  
Ages 13-17  
Page 5

D. COOL A BURN

1. If you burn yourself
2. Pour cool water over the burn and seek medical attention
3. Do not use ice, butter or creams

E. Home escape plan

1. Know two ways out of every room
2. Know where your smoke alarms are located
3. Have smoke alarms in or near sleeping areas
4. If your smoke alarm goes off, leave your residence
5. Once out of the house, go to your families meeting place
6. Call 9-1-1 from a safe location such as a neighbors house
7. Never ever go back into a burning building

F. View "Prime Time Live"

G. Handout home escape plan

1. Have students draw a diagram of their residence
2. Have list items of importance in the rooms
3. Have them draw the 2 exits out of every room
4. Have them label their family's meeting place

H. View "Make the Right Choice" video

**VIII. Parents Return**

A. Have parent and child complete evaluation

B. Have child complete the Peer Relations Questionnaire

C. Handout out youth firesetter contracts and have student and parent sign them

D. Give students education packet

E. Let student and parent know that whoever referred them to this class will be notified of their attendance

F. This class is a one-time opportunity

G. Thank you for attending and please leave the evaluations on the table



## **APPENDIX C**

# **OREGON OFFICE OF STATE FIRE MARSHAL CURIOSITY AND ADOLESCENT FIRESETTERS EDUCATION**





## Program Overview

The majority of child-set fire incidents are the result of a child's curiosity, ready access to matches and lighters, lapses in supervision and a lack of understanding about fire. Therefore, intervention programs for curiosity firesetters need to be aimed at both parents and children.

Parents are reminded to put matches and lighters out of sight and reach of children. They are encouraged to know where their children are and what they are doing at all times. They need to develop a family escape plan and practice it with their children.

Children in the primary grades can understand and retain some basic fire safety messages. This curriculum is designed to teach children the difference between fire tools and toys; fire survival behavior such as crawling low in smoke and stop, drop and roll; and following the rule of keeping away from matches and lighters. The curriculum is interactive in that it involves the fire safety educator, the child and the parent.

This curriculum is taught in three lessons with homework assignments. The involvement of the parents is critical to the effectiveness of this intervention program.

The curriculum written materials were a project of the Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network. Please return curriculum evaluation to Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Unit, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, Department of State Police, 4760 Portland Rd. NE, Salem, OR 97305-1760.

### Acknowledgments

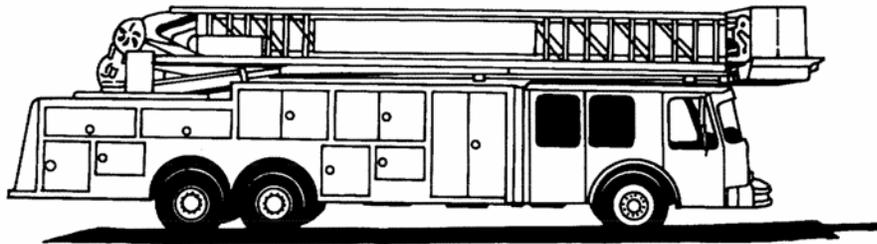
The network wishes to thank Rosy Taylor and Sandi Wilson, Oregon Trail School District; Colleen Olson, Office of State Fire Marshal; and Chuck Chaffin, Lake Oswego Fire Department, for contributing to the development of the written materials, Sight and Sound Productions for the production of the training video, and Judy Okulitch and Carol Baumann from the Office of State Fire Marshal.

Funding for this project was provided by a grant from  
The Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal.



July, 1996  
Second revision, May, 1999

**WARNING!**



**DO NOT show firehouse  
and apparatus as  
part of the sessions.**

**(Rewarded behavior repeats itself!)**

Note: Showing the firehouse and apparatus  
for the completion of the program may be appropriate

# INDEX

## Session I

- Activity 1 -A.....Tools and Toys
- Activity 1 -B.....Good Fires, Bad fires

## Session II

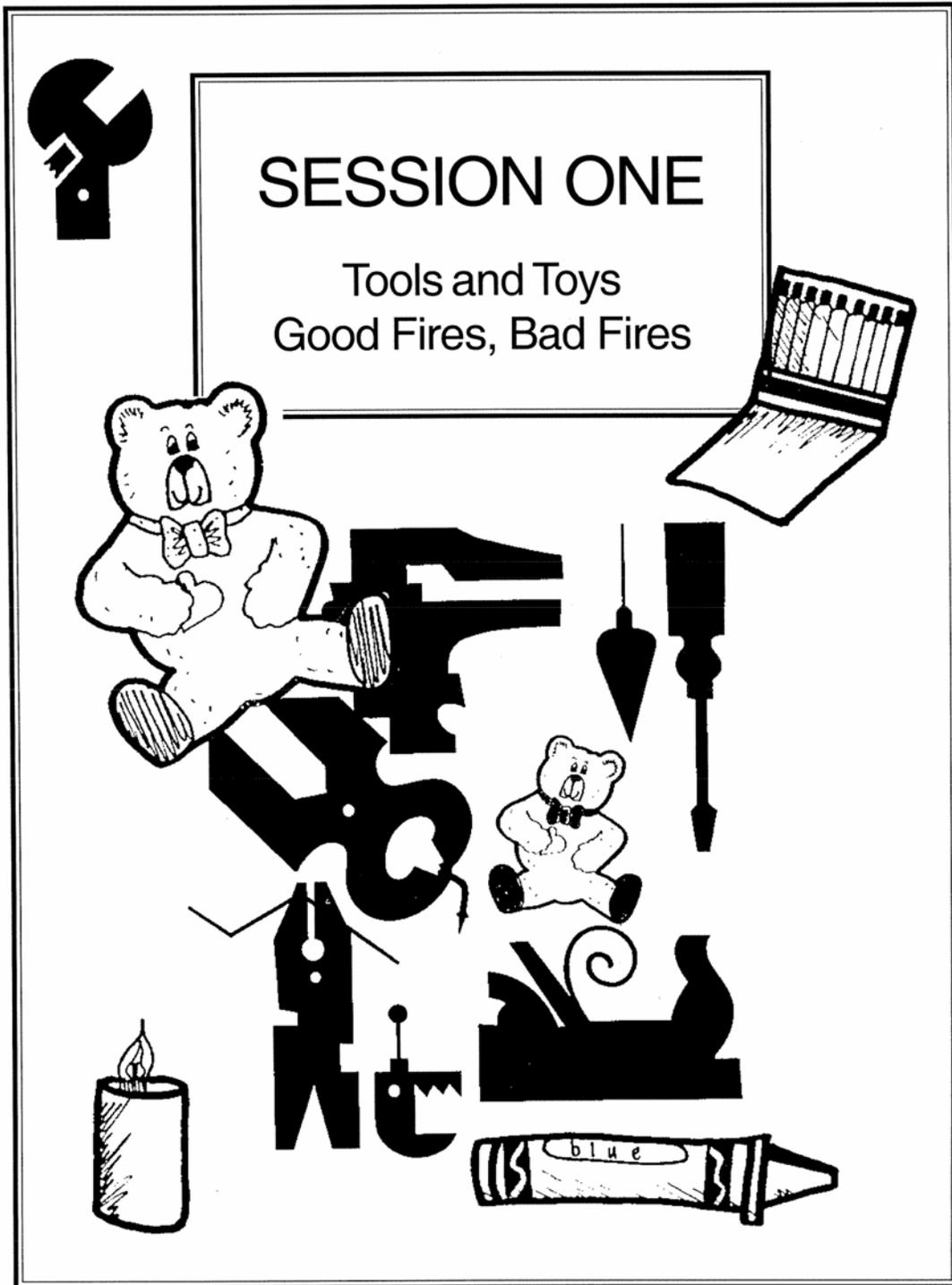
- Activity 2 -A..... Homework Review
- Activity 2 -B..... *play safe! be safe!*
- Activity 2 -C..... The Home Escape Plan

## Session III

- Activity 3 -A..... Homework Review
- Activity 3 -B..... Clifford the Firehouse Dog
- Activity 3 -C..... Reward and Certificates

## Appendix

- Certificate
- Parent/caregiver letter
- Follow-up letter
- Tips for interviewing juvenile firesetters
- Brochure
- Characteristics of middle childhood
- Evaluation form



# SESSION ONE

Tools and Toys  
Good Fires, Bad Fires

## Tips of the Trade

Time: 15-20 min.

This activity is also appropriate for older elementary aged children. Simply select toys that are appropriate to the age group. It is more effective if the box is out of sight.

It is better to use non-moveable and non-noise making toys.

Give homework assignment at the end of the session.

Establish a smoke detector give-away program for your department.

If you think you may not get the video back, collect a deposit until they return it.

## ACTIVITY 1-A: Tools and Toys

This interactive game helps build rapport and gives the educator an opportunity to assess the level of fire knowledge of the child.

### MATERIALS:

- One box
- Smoke detector
- A variety of small age-appropriate toys (10-15)
- A variety of tools (i.e., pliers, screwdrivers) (5-10)
- A variety of fire tools (i.e., book and stick matches, BBQ lighters, novelty lighters, standard lighters) (5-10)
- Video - *Plan to Get Out Alive*

### OBJECTIVES:

- Teach the fire safety message: *Lighters and Matches are Fire Tools, Not Toys.*
- Establish rules about use of lighters and matches in the home.
- Have parents take the fire behavior seriously and immediately install more smoke detectors in their home.

### PROCEDURE:

- Tell child you are going to play a game.
- Discuss difference between toys and tools.
- Pull an object out of the box one at time.
- Child decides if object belongs on tool side or toy side of table.
- Continue until the box is empty.

### HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES WITH THE PARENTS:

- ★ Child and parent hunt for fire tools in home.
- ★ Have parents bring the fire tools back to next meeting.
- ★ Child and parent install smoke detectors in child's bedroom.
- ★ Have parents watch video and return it to the fire department.

### HANDOUTS:

- Brochure on smoke detectors.

5

*Tips  
of the  
Trade*

Note:  
You may want to  
mention rewards child  
can get for completing  
sessions.

**ACTIVITY 1-B: Good Fires, Bad Fires**

**MATERIALS:**

- *Good Fires, Bad Fires* handout
- Large sheet of paper or poster board.

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Help child understand that good fires are safe fires and bad fires are out of control fires.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Explain the difference between good fires and bad fires.
- Do the *Good Fire, Bad Fire* handout with the child.
- Give child homework activity.

**HOMEWORK ACTIVITIES WITH THE PARENTS:**

- ★ Child will make a poster that shows at least one good fire and one bad fire.
- ★ Child will discuss the poster with parent.
- ★ Child will bring the poster back to the fire department.



**DIRECTIONS**  
Draw a line from the good fire to good fires.  
Draw a line from the bad fire to the bad fires.



**GOOD FIRE**  
  
**BAD FIRE**  




## SESSION TWO

Homework Review  
*play safe! be safe!*  
Home Escape Plan



*Tips  
of the  
Trade*

Time: 5 min.

**ACTIVITY 2-A: Homework Review**

**MATERIALS:**

- Child's returned homework assignment

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Review prior learning objectives.

**PROCEDURE:**

- Discuss found fire tools.
- Discuss installation of smoke detector.
- Discuss poster.

**Interact with children and parents to ensure understanding of homework.**

*Tips  
of the  
Trade*

Time: 30 min.  
depending  
on activities.

This kit is an excellent public fire education tool. The color forms and the last vignette on the video can also be used effectively with a firesetter. You will need to choose the activities that are appropriate for your firesetter.

*play safe! be safe!* is available for \$12.00 from BIC, 500 BIC Drive, Milford, CT 06460, or call National Fire Service Support System at 716-264-0840.

**ACTIVITY 2-B: *play safe! be safe!***

**MATERIALS:**

- *play safe! be safe!* kit
- video
- activity boards
- story cards
- card game

**OBJECTIVE:**

To understand and demonstrate fire survival skills:

- My friend the firefighter.
- Crawl low under smoke.
- Stop, Drop & Roll.
- Safe for play! Keep away!

**PROCEDURE:**

- Choose appropriate activities and follow directions in the manual in the *play safe! be safe!* kit.

## Tips of the Trade

Time: 15 min.

This activity is directed toward the parents.

10 minutes with parents and child. Assignment to be completed at home.

Be sure parent returns *Plan to Get Out Alive* video.

Child is responsible for initiating home escape drill.

Test smoke detector. (Small children can reach the button with a broom handle.)

## ACTIVITY 2-C: Home Escape Plan

### MATERIALS:

- *Our Fire Escape Plan* (3 worksheets).
- Chalkboard or paper to demonstrate escape plan.

### OBJECTIVE:

- Reinforce fire safety behavior. The child and parent will design a home escape plan and practice it.

### PROCEDURE:

- Review with the parents the immediate dangers of fire in a home (heat, blackness, toxic smoke). Ask if they have any questions about the video, *Plan to Get Out Alive*.
- Talk to the parents about the reasons children often do not escape from a residential fire (no smoke detector, can't open the window, hide, go to parents' room, go toward the fire area instead of directly outside, afraid of firefighters).
- Have child help demonstrate the home escape plan on the chalkboard or paper and explain to parents.

### HOMEWORK ACTIVITY:

- ★ Give the parent and/or child the *Our Fire Escape Plan* worksheets and talk about how to complete them.
- ★ Have family design a home escape plan. Discuss with them how each person in the family could get out safely if a fire started at night.
- ★ Home escape plan.

## Fire Escape

# Homework Assignment

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_

### Objective

The child and parent(s) will design a home escape plan and practice it at least once with the family.

### Props

*Our Fire Escape Plan* worksheet

### Directions

Tell your child that you would like him/her to help you plan the best way for the family to escape from a fire if one started at night when you were all sleeping. Ask *What are the dangers of a fire?* (blackness, choking, smoke, heat, poison gases) Talk about how the different dangers make it impossible for anyone to find their way through their house. It is very important that everyone get straight out of the house right away. Together, draw a picture of your home floor plan. Mark the location of:

- smoke detectors
- two exits from every bedroom
- a place to meet outside
- the closest telephone (next door neighbor)

Together, check the exits from each bedroom. If the second exit is a window, can it be reached? Can it be opened? Can someone drop safely to the ground? Make plans for any babies and toddlers in the family. (Early warning from the smoke detector is especially important so you will have time to get the baby and get out.)

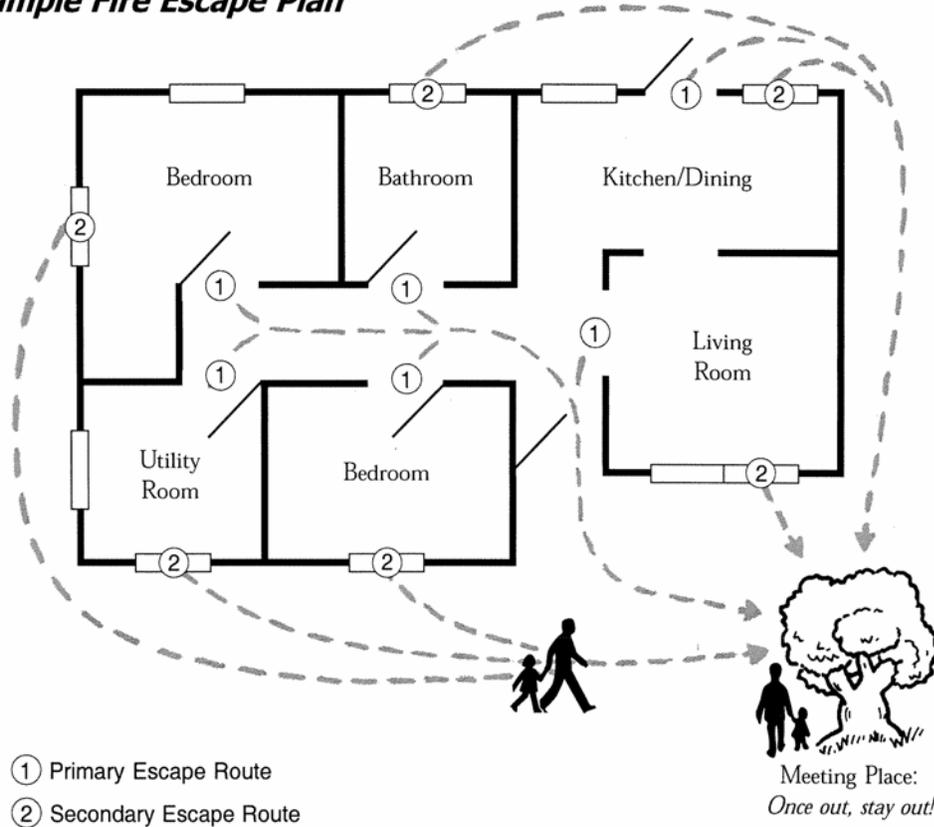
Tell your plan to the rest of the family. As a group, practice the plan to be sure it works. (Each person in their bedroom; you set off the smoke detector as a signal; everyone meets at the meeting place to count noses.) Make any changes needed.

Child's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**Sample Fire Escape Plan**



**Exit Drill In The Home  
(EDITH)**

1. Everyone in bedrooms, doors closed.
2. Someone sound the smoke alarm.
3. Each person tests their door.
4. Pretend it's hot; use alternative escape route.
5. Everyone meets outdoors at the meeting place.
6. One person goes to the prearranged phone.

EDITH can SAVE YOUR LIFE.

Learn not to burn.



# SESSION THREE

Homework Review  
*Clifford the Firehouse Dog*  
Rewards and Certificates



*Tips  
of the  
Trade*

Time: 5-10 min.

**ACTIVITY 3-A: Homework Review**

**MATERIALS:**

- Child returns home escape plan.

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Homework follow-up

**PROCEDURE:**

- Review home escape plan.
- Discuss success of home escape drill.

*Tips  
of the  
Trade*

Time:15 min.

If you have money in your budget, you may want to present child with the Clifford book (ISBN#48419-2) as a reward. To order: call Scholastic Customer Service at 1-800-724-6257. Cost: \$2.50 or check with your local school librarian.

**ACTIVITY 3-B:** *Clifford the Firehouse Dog*

**MATERIALS:**

- The book, *Clifford the Firehouse Dog*

**OBJECTIVE:**

- Review fire safety messages from Sessions One and Two.

**PROCEDURE:**

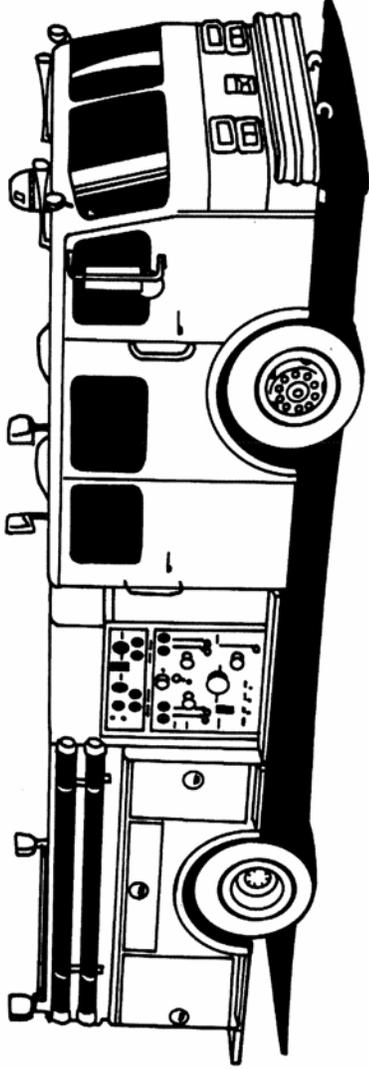
- Read book to child, while emphasizing fire safety messages as they occur in the book.
- Review fire safety rules at the end of the book.
- Present child with certificate of completion.
- Have parents complete evaluation form.

**INTERACTION WITH PARENTS AND CHILD:**

- Ask parent and child if they have any questions. Last chance for questions and review.

## Appendix

- Certificate
- Parent/Caregiver letter
- Follow-up letter
- Tips for interviewing juvenile firesetters
- Brochure
- Middle childhood characteristics
- Evaluation form



\_\_\_\_\_ has successfully completed  
the fire safety skills curriculum  
and is hereby known as  
a firesafe kid.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fire Educator

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

---

**INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

---

Date:

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

Our fire department is very concerned about the number of children involved in fire incidents. Many children exhibit a curiosity about fire and experiment with matches or lighters. Others use a fire as a way to get attention. Our fire department provides screening to determine a child's motives for setting the fires. We also have a fire education program that helps to address the child's curiosity about fires. It is a three-session program lasting approximately 30 minutes per session. We require your participation in the program, as we provide information regarding fire survival and fire prevention to both you and your child.

To receive more information about this program or to set up an appointment, please call \_\_\_\_\_(name)  
at \_\_\_\_\_ (telephone)

I hope you will join in helping us at the fire department keep you and the other children and families in our community safe from fire.

Sincerely,

Your name

**Follow-up letter.** Mail to parents six months after completion of the program. Put letter on fire department letterhead.

Date:

Dear

Recently, you and your child participated in a fire safety intervention program. To help us improve our educational program, please complete this short questionnaire and return it to

1. Has your child set any more fires?                      yes                      no
  
2. Does your child continue to show a curiosity about fire?
  
3. Do you practice your home escape plan?
  
4. Has your child demonstrated any fire safety behaviors? (i.e. wanting to check the smoke detector, practicing the home escape plan, crawling low in smoke or knowing the rules about match and lighter use)
  
5. Is your smoke detector working?                      yes                      no
  
6. What was the most important concept you learned about fire safety as a parent?

Thank you for taking your time to complete this questionnaire.

Sincerely,

## Tips for interviewing juvenile firesetters

by Linda Nishi-Strattner, Ph.D.

Children under the age of five may have little experience with formal interviews. Since they usually have not yet begun formal schooling, they may not understand the utility of sitting in a chair next to your desk, or even the concept of telling the truth without embellishing or exaggerating. Preschoolers may have difficulty talking about things or events without a physical cue or prop, as they are quite literal and concrete in their thinking.

An important psychological dynamic to keep in mind with preschoolers is that they often exhibit "black and white" thinking, in which a person can be either "all good" or "all bad," but not a combination of both. Thus, when you ask about something he did which might be thought of as "bad," the very young child may be hesitant to reveal anything that might indicate he is a "bad" person.

The following techniques are helpful for interviewing children between the three and five years old.

- 1** Arrange your office or interviewing space so the child feels as comfortable as possible. This means using smaller chairs, chairs with arms (so the child is not afraid of falling off), and a table or desk adjacent to the chair. This gives the child something to lean on and a sense of where to direct her attention. Position props within view, but not within reach of the child. Be prepared to provide drawing or coloring materials. These can come in handy during the interviewing procedure.
- 2** Try to be as close to the child's eye level as possible. This means kneeling down when he is standing, or sitting in a lower chair.
- 3** Keep your voice volume low, even when laughing. Young children often equate loudness with anger or with "being in trouble."
- 4** Use the child's words and terminology, even if she mispronounces a particular word. Resist the temptation to correct the child's grammar, pronunciation, or behavior.
- 5** Use a fake book of matches or lighter. Ask the child to show you how he made the fire(s) by pretending to do it for you. Fake matches can be made by cutting off the tips of real matches. Color the cut ends with a felt tip marker. Fake lighters can

be purchased at stores that sell magic or gag supplies.

**6** Ask the child to help you draw a picture of the fire, then a picture of their house (or location of the fire), and then a map of where they went and what they did. Using this prop, ask where adults and siblings were during each step of the firesetting sequence. Ask questions by pointing to the "map" and asking, "What was going on here when you were doing (each step of the firesetting sequence) this?"

**7** At the end of the child's interview, ask if anything he told you was "just pretend" or "just a story." Very young children will sometimes tell elaborate stories just to entertain their adult interviewers. When possible, ask the child to demonstrate or pretend to show you what happened.

**8** Keep the interview short. Alternate questions with periods of play, an opportunity to color, draw other pictures, or go to the bathroom or water fountain. Children under the age of five rarely have more than a fifteen to twenty minute attention span. If necessary, tell the very young child that you would like him to do you a favor: "Would you do me a favor and sit here, instead of doing that?"

**9** End the interview on a positive note before the child starts to dislike the procedure. This will be helpful to you or to the next interviewer should this child require further interviewing. Be sure to tell the child what a terrific job she did answering your questions. Compliment the child on her memory skills, not on her firesetting behaviors.

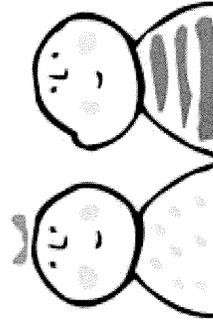
**10** Check the child's descriptions with adults or other caretakers for accuracy. Young children often have their own made-up words or idiosyncratic ways of describing things. Often, parents can help to clarify what their child was trying to tell you.

**About the author:** Dr. Linda Nishi-Strattner is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Portland, Oregon, who works extensively with juvenile firesetters. She is a member of the Treatment Strategies Task Force at the Office of State Fire Marshal.

## FACTS

- ☞ Children are curious about fire.
- ☞ Even toddlers can start a fire with a match or lighter.
- ☞ Each year children are seriously burned or die from playing with matches or lighters.
- ☞ Parents need to take their child's curiosity about fire seriously.
- ☞ Children who are curious about fire can be helped with fire education.

**KEEP MATCHES AND LIGHTERS AWAY FROM CHILDREN.**



## HOW TO GET HELP

1. Contact your local fire department.
2. A fire professional will interview you and your child and recommend fire safety education or counseling.
3. If education is recommended, you and your child will be offered three educational sessions.
4. Your participation is required in the program for it to be effective. Homework assignments are included.
5. For more information, contact:

## EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION FOR K - 2

### Session 1 activities teach:

- ☞ Matches and lighters are tools, not toys.
- ☞ The difference between good fires and bad fires.

### Session 2 activities teach:

- ☞ Smoke detectors save lives.
- ☞ Home escape planning.
- ☞ Fire survival skills.

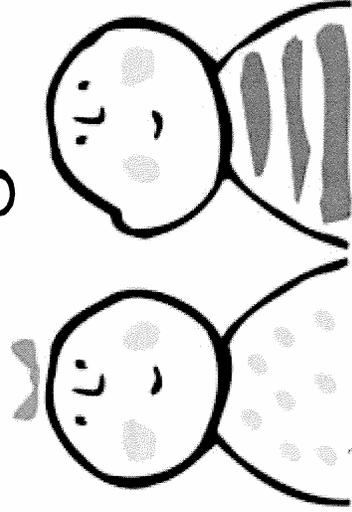
### Session 3 activities:

- ☞ Review.
- ☞ Reading *Clifford the Firehouse Dog*.
- ☞ Certificate of completion.

**SEVEN STEPS to take at once if your child has set a fire**

1. Install smoke detectors in your child's bedroom, closet, hall ways and common living area.
2. Find all matches and lighters in the house and lock them up.
3. If you're a smoker, keep your lighter only on your person at all times and only use child-resistant lighters.
4. Establish a rule that your child is never to have lighters or matches.
5. Lock up all flammable liquids such as gasoline, lighter fluid, or charcoal starter fluid for barbecues.
6. Forbid children to watch shows or videos with provocative fire themes.
7. Increase supervision for fire setting children. Do not let them play alone or unsupervised in other children's homes where matches or lighters may be easily available.

**CURIOSITY  
FIRESETTERS:  
A SERIOUS  
PROBLEM**



# Characteristics of Middle Childhood

Ages 6 through 11 years

There is some opposition to describing particular age groups because individual differences are so great and growth patterns are diverse. However, there is agreement that despite individual differences, certain ages have common characteristics. Most children's development shows organization, pattern and direction that is characteristic of a particular age. It is unlikely that any child will conform in every detail, but most children will conform to most characteristics. Hence such a "measure" may be useful in determining "age-appropriate" and may provide a useful basis when working with children of particular ages.

The age profiles described here are not to be considered rigid models for specific ages. Much of the information has been drawn from materials developed for the Gesell Institute of Human Development by Louise Ames, Frances Ilg, M.D., and Sidney Baker, M.D. For in-depth information refer to the books from the Gesell Institute of Human Development, to *Childhood* by Melvin Konner, or to other human development texts.

NOTE: These brief profiles were compiled at the request of CSD child welfare workers by Co-Management staff and are used with permission.

## 6...busy and active

### General characteristics

- Extremely ambivalent and changes rapidly
  - Quick mood swings
  - Changes mind often
- High physical activity level
  - Hands and mouth are especially busy: chewing pencils, fingernails, etc.
  - Usually outgoing
- Shows beginning signs of rebelliousness
  - Can be stubborn
  - May be argumentative
- Wants to be first, but most of all wants to win!
  - Difficulty sharing the limelight
  - Age of self-centeredness

### Peer relations

- Name calling popular
  - "You stink!" etc.
  - Easily hurt by name calling
- Boys and girls play together
- Often rough in play
- Often critical of friends

### Commonly acquired skills

- Prints first name
- Counts to 30, writes numbers to 20
- Knows month of birthday
- Balances on one foot
- Ties shoelaces
- Throws ball overhand
- Colors, staying within the lines

### School information

- Most start first grade
- Relates to teacher through activities
- Great learning spurt in reading and arithmetic
- Likes to achieve
- Difficulty sitting all day
- Takes pride in personal achievement
- Pressures of school may cause regression
- Usually a positive attitude about school

### Hints for living with a six-year-old

- Likes stuffed animals to sleep with
- Child responds to recognition
- Child responds to praise of accomplishments
- Important to review school work, e.g. post art on refrigerator, etc.
- Likes to be read to
- Usually ready to go to bed (11 hours average)
- A night light might help child settle down and reduce fear
- Lay clothes out the night before
- Occasional bed-wetting is common

## 7...a thoughtful age

### General characteristics

- Fascinated with horror and guns
- Collects almost anything (rocks, comics), volume important
- Fairly well oriented in space, knows community and school
- May worry (school may be too difficult, kids may make fun of them)
- May have fears—of dark, of being late for school
- May frown or sulk
- May cry easily
- Good listener

### Peer relations

- Friends are important
  - Less fighting than at 6
  - If conflict arises, child more apt to leave
- Doesn't want others to laugh at him/her
- Often reports about "girlfriend" or "boyfriend"
- Concerned about rightness/wrongness of lying and cheating
  - May tattletale a lot
- Discrimination toward opposite sex may occur
- Games often have rules like table games

### Commonly acquired skills

- Improved physical coordination
  - Jumps rope, skates, plays hopscotch and games with instructions
- Can tell time to the minute
- Learning side orientation, e.g. bat a ball, bow and arrow
- Can tell current month, day, season
- Can tell month and day of birth
- Knows own neighborhood, hospital, school, etc.
- Can name penny, nickel, dime, quarter

### School information

- Relates to teacher on personal level
  - May have a "crush" on teacher
- Difficulty shifting vision, far to close
  - Eyes may tire easily
- Prints more uniform size
- Beginning to read to self
- Can add up to 20, subtract 10 or less
- Language
  - Increasing precision in meaning
  - Most ready for dictionary
  - Spelling skills usually lag behind reading
- Fairness is very important

### Hints for living with 7 year olds

- May want wrist watch
- May like pictorial dictionary
- Is a good listener and likes to chat
- Likes to hold hands
- Bedtime frequently 7:30 - 8 but may talk to self, listen to radio for a while
- For most, bed-wetting is no longer a problem
- Rules/limits need to be clear and consequences swift

## 8...outgoing bundle of energy

### General characteristics

- Aggressive, physically and verbally
  - May take frustration out on younger siblings
  - Boastful
- Sensitive to criticism
- Talkative
  - Laughs and whispers
  - Spells out toilet or sex words
- Conflict with mother
  - Wants mother's attention
  - Doesn't want to share her
- Accident prone. In fact, accidents major cause of death

### Peer relations

- May like "code" language
- Often has a best friend
- Tends to exaggerate or argue
- Prefers to play with own sex
- Aware of "pretty" girls, "handsome" boys
- Many girls like paper dolls, classify and organize
- Most boys are collecting, focus on quality
- Often play organized seasonal sports

### Commonly acquired skills

- Knows difference between fantasy and reality
- Can tell time
- Can tell day, month, year
- Can tell months of year
- Can read for fun
- Large muscle control is well established
- Fine motor skills increasing, e.g. weaving, woodwork, sewing
- Some have local bus riding skills

### School information

- Can count to 40 by 4s
- Can carry and borrow
- Some fractions, 1/2 and 1/4
- Writing is more uniform
- Baseline is solid

### Hints for living with 8 year olds

- Ten hours sleep is average
- TV is very important; loss of TV is significant
- Does not obey immediately, but will usually comply
- Will listen to reason
- Fairly honest, may take money to treat friends
- Rooms are often messy

## 9...unpredictable

### General characteristics

- More independent
  - More distant from mother
  - Relies on peers or alone
- Likes both outdoor and indoor activities
- Individual differences vary greatly:
  - Some organized, others totally unorganized
  - Some boisterous and wild
  - Some withdrawn and thoughtful
- Most put themselves into activity wholeheartedly
  - Works and plays hard
- Wants to perfect skills
- Responsible
- Likes to please and satisfy adults in their life

### Peer relations

- Loves to talk things over with friends
- Disdain for opposite sex
- Can be loyal friend
- Either likes or dislikes peers
- Many get on well with playmates
- Better able to resolve disagreements
- Good-natured rough housing
- Identifies with the group

### Commonly acquired skills

- Can name president of country
- Can use hands independently
- Can visualize a route
- Can use dictionary
- Multiplies through 9s
- Uses measurements
- Uses fractions

### School information

- A good student
- Reading to learn replaces learning to read
- Can apply simple logic and decide conclusion
- Emergence of critical thinking
- Some abstract thinking
- Can use glossary, index

### Hints for living with 9 year olds

- Can run errands responsibly
- Can take self to activity (within reason)
- When praising, show child his or her progress, i.e. be factual
- Usually 9 of hours of sleep
- May awaken spontaneously or want to use alarm clock
- 9 o'clock is common bedtime

## 10...happy and active

### General characteristics

Mostly a happy age  
 Good eaters  
 Play is of paramount importance  
 Many interests  
 Loves both indoor and outdoor play  
 Moves a lot physically  
 When provoked, can be violent

### Peer relations

Boys tend to get along well together  
 Girls tend to fight and make up  
 Both say they don't like the opposite sex  
 Girls' bodies are showing beginnings of adolescent changes  
 Clubs abound—scouts, etc.  
 Fairness is very important  
 Wants to bring friends home

### Commonly acquired skills

Has good use of large muscles, skate, etc.  
 Skill emerging in fine motor (drawing, putting models together)  
 Beginning strategic games, e.g. chess  
 May play musical instrument  
 May read paper, mostly for pictures  
 Knows states and capitals  
 Can put cities, rivers on maps  
 Can memorize poems, etc.

### School information

Most like school  
 Most easy to teach  
 Wants to be kept interested  
 May compliment teacher  
 Likes time structured  
 Emerging interest in science, animals, adventure  
 Hates to miss school—fear they won't be able to catch up

### Hints for living with 10 year olds

Bedtime usually 8:30 to 9:00  
 Still likes nighttime rituals  
 Most are choosy about clothing, often they prefer old clothing  
 Prefers to have own room  
 Most have an allowance, but are casual about money and may lose it  
 Organized groups, scouts, etc., very popular

## 11...a difficult stage

### General characteristics

Definite disequilibrium stage  
 Often contrary and oppositional, unhelpful around house  
 Behaves like beginning adolescent, at times may scream, etc., uncooperative  
 Egocentric  
 Energetic—constant motion  
 Especially critical of mother, quick to criticize others  
 Moody  
 Enjoys life and has great curiosity  
 Loves to eat

### Peer relations

Peer competition is keen  
 Friendships very important  
 More quarrelling than at 10  
 Some admit their friends smoke cigarettes  
 Tends to gossip  
 Girls may be in growth spurt  
 Girls may get first bra  
 Boys may cheat  
 Girls may steal

### Commonly acquired skills

Knows multiplication tables  
 Has conscience developed and may feel guilty  
 Basic written skills are good
 

- Usually writes cursive
- Understands sentence structure

 Knows self care skills, although may choose not to do  
 Many begin adolescent development tasks

### School information

Can be exciting time for learning  
 Not very cooperative  
 Poor conduct is common—away from home may be ideal  
 Tasks need to be structured to utilize energy, curiosity, enthusiasm  
 Can do projects in groups  
 May like art exhibits  
 Often likes to portray own ideas

### Hints for living with 11 year olds

Remember that many physical changes are occurring—this is a difficult time for child
 

- Some, rapid height growth
- Some, secondary sexual characteristics

 Parents may need to let things go as much as possible, in a few months, youths will again achieve equilibrium, e.g. close door to child's room  
 Keep child busy with clubs, groups, activities, sports, etc.  
 Expect much stalling at bedtime  
 Bedtime often 9 to 9:30, may vary due to activities

# Evaluation

The Office of the State Fire Marshal Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program, in an ongoing effort to provide useful and effective materials to prevention providers such as yourself, has enclosed a brief evaluation component.

After presenting the curriculum to either a group or an individual, please take a few minutes to complete the evaluation and mail to the address below. Only by receiving feedback from the individuals who use the curriculum can the State Fire Marshal continue to develop quality programs that have a positive impact.

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to call at the number below.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of individuals curriculum was presented to: \_\_\_\_\_

Age of individual or average age of group: \_\_\_\_\_

Did the curriculum address the fireplay behavior of the youth(s)?

If changes were to be made to the curriculum, what would you suggest they should be?

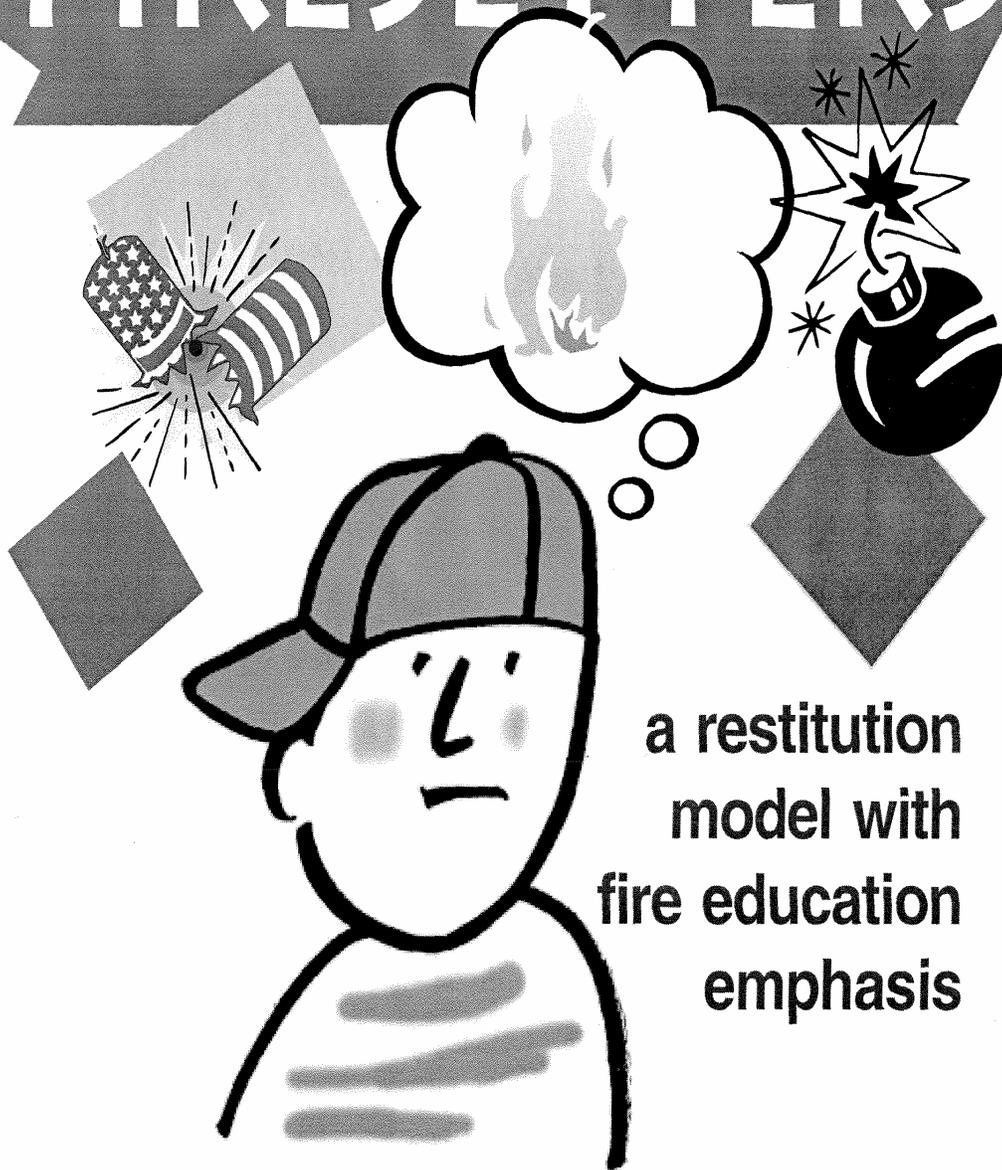
Suggestions, comments, concerns?

Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal  
Department of State Police  
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Unit  
4760 Portland Road NE  
Salem Oregon 978305-1760

(503) 373-1540 ext 230



# ADOLESCENT FIRESETTERS



a restitution  
model with  
fire education  
emphasis

## Acknowledgments

The Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network developed a restitution program with an emphasis on fire education for youth charged with fire related offenses. Representatives from the Clackamas County fire service worked in partnership with the Clackamas County Juvenile Department to develop this program which requires the youth to complete a community impact report or art project and meaningful community service.

**Clackamas County Firesetter Intervention Network would like to thank the following contributors:**

**Development of the matrix for the community impact report**—Sue Patterson, American Red Cross; Tegan Steen, Josephine County Firesetter Intervention Network; Walt Rivers, Oak Lodge Fire Department; Tim Murphy, Marion County Health Department.

**Project refinement and implementation**—Chuck Chaffin, Sandy Fire Department; Jim Court, Boring Fire Department; Ellen Crawford and Mark McDonnell, Clackamas County Juvenile Department. We would like to especially recognize these four and Director Doug Poppen of the Clackamas County Juvenile Department for their enthusiastic support of a community service and restitution model for firesetters.

Funding and technical support for this project was provided by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal.

Revised January, 1997

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The Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network is a multi-agency team which provides evaluation, education, referral and treatment for children with firesetting behaviors.

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## Program overview

Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network recognized a need for a comprehensive intervention program to use with youth ages twelve to seventeen referred on first-time fire related incidents. They determined that such a program would include educating the youth on the social, emotional, and financial consequences of their firesetting behavior. This *Adolescent Intervention Curriculum* is the product of a multidisciplinary team from the fire service, juvenile department, mental health and Red Cross brought together by the network to address this need. The program goals are to hold adolescents accountable for the impact of their fire behavior on the community, and to establish consequences, which include performing community service.

These project plans outline a process for the fire department to use with youth referred on fire-related incidents. Lesson plans, sample letters, contract agreements and suggestions for community service projects are included. All plans require the collaborative efforts of the juvenile counselor and fire professional with the adolescent and his or her parents. This program is not designed for youth making explosive devices or bombs.

### **Procedure**

- A fire professional, in consultation with the juvenile court counselor, assigns homework tasks to be completed by a youth who has been adjudicated or has signed a formal accountability agreement.
- The academic ability of the youth needs to be determined so the youth can successfully meet the requirements of the project.
- A contract between the youth, fire department professional, juvenile counselor and parents needs to be signed prior to beginning.
- A timeline for completion of the homework tasks needs to be established.
- Whenever possible, parents should view the recommended educational videos to help them understand the seriousness of the youth's fire behavior and their responsibility.

**INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

**Instructions**

Educational resources and project ideas correlate to type of fire. The intervention plan should be determined by the fire professional and juvenile counselor. Video tapes may be appropriate for parent education.

Type of Fire	Educational Resources for parents	Project Ideas		
		1. Community Impact Report (CIR)	2. Art Project	3. Community Service
Dumpster	<i>Brian's Story</i> (video)			
School	<i>Countdown to Disaster</i> (video)			
Vehicle	<i>Fire in the Hills: the Oakland story</i> (video)			
Structure	<i>Plan to Get Out Alive</i> (video) <i>Countdown to Disaster</i> (video)			
Wildlands	<i>Fire in the Hills: the Oakland story</i> (video) <i>Brian's Story</i> (video)			
Fireworks	<i>Brian's Story</i> (video)			
Alarm Pullers	Curriculums from F.I.R.E Solutions			
Other	<i>Marked by Fire</i> (video)  <i>Taming Fire</i> (book)			
<b>6</b>				

(to be copied on department letterhead)

## Contract

I \_\_\_\_\_ understand that firesetting is a serious behavior and that my behavior affected other people in the community. I will complete the following assignments to learn about the financial and social consequences of my actions. I agree to:

1.

2.

3.

Fire Department Official \_\_\_\_\_

Probation Counselor \_\_\_\_\_

Youth \_\_\_\_\_

Parent \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Tips of the Trade*

• *Be sure to call juvenile dept before meeting with the youth.*

*This lesson is not appropriate for the youth who would be empowered by recognizing the emotional and financial cost of his actions.*

*This project should be completed over a period of three to four weeks.*

*Have youth report in each week with at least one interview completed.*

*This alleviates the problem of the youth doing a last minute project and not being successful.*

## Project Plan 1

### Activity: community impact report (CIR)

#### Materials



letter of introduction  
interview questions  
report format/notebook or journal

#### Objective

To educate the youth about the consequences of their firesetting behavior on other people in the community.

#### Age level

12-17 years of age

#### Procedure

Have youth identify and interview all parties affected by their fire. Have youth report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries to these parties. Have youth report on how this crime affected him/her, and the potential ramifications of his/her actions. The Victim-Offender Mediation Program may be a part of the CIR. Check with juvenile counselor.

Step One: Have youth complete Matrix Form.

Step Two: Interview. Have adolescent schedule an appointment with three to five of the interviewees on the following page.

Step Three: Prepare a report. Depending on adolescent's skills, this may be a written report, an art project or some other audio-visual project. Optional: Coordinate with parent and school for child to receive credit for work.

Step Four: Present findings to court, juvenile counselor, youth services team or firesetter network.

Community Impact Report Matrix Form

**Instructions:** To be completed with the youth. Have youth identify the agencies or people affected by his or her fire.

Select three to five interviewees	dumpsters	school fire	vehicle	structure	wildlands	fireworks	false alarm	other
1. fire department which responded								
2. insurance company involved								
3. EMS responders								
4. school/business administrator								
5. funeral home								
6. apartment manager								
7. police								
8. Oregon Burn Center								
9. Red Cross								
10. church leader								
11. fire restoration service								
12. replacement of important documents (clerk's office, record keeping, credit union, etc.)								
13. Oregon Department of Forestry								
14. Bureau of Land Management								
15. US Forest Service								
16. Parks and Recreation Department								
17. city services								
18. Chamber of Commerce								
19. neighborhood association								
20. 9-1-1 center								
21. alarm services								
22. emergency room								
23. firesetter's family								
24. sanitation department								

**Directions:** The following list of questions is designed to elicit the kinds of information the youth needs to complete the community impact report. Have the youth add other questions to this list. The list should be copied and given to the student.

## Interview Questions

**Person interviewed** \_\_\_\_\_

**Agency** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

- 1) What do you do in your job?
- 2) How did my fire affect you?
- 3) What were the costs incurred by your organization as a result of my fire?
- 4) What emotional distress did you feel because of my fire?
- 5) How much paperwork did you have to do because of my fire?
- 6) What kind of injuries resulted from my fire?
- 7) In what other ways did my fire affect you or the community?

**(Sample Letter to an insurance company)**

Date:

Dear

The fire service and the juvenile court have formed a partnership in dealing with youth who have been referred on fire-related charges. A restitution program has been developed that includes community service work and education. The fire department is coordinating the educational aspect of the program. We are asking you to help us educate the youth about the impact of his/her firesetting behavior on you and your organization

The adolescent offender is required to complete a community impact report. This report requires the youth to report on how their firesetting behavior affected others in the community. Specifically the youth must report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries his fire caused. This report is then returned to both the fire department and the juvenile court.

As a professional with the insurance industry, we ask that you provide information about:

- why insurance is important
- cost of the fire and/or potential costs of the fire
- number of hours spent on the case (investigation/cause determination) paperwork, etc.
- cost of temporary housing (if applicable)
- the victim's emotional loss and loss of memories or pictures, or nonreplaceable items
- your personal stress and inconvenience
- effect this fire may have on the insurance rates of other people

\_\_\_\_\_ has been referred to us to complete this community impact report. He will be calling you in the next few days to schedule an appointment. We appreciate your help and we are hoping that this community based approach to juvenile crime will have a positive effect on \_\_\_\_\_ and on our community.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at.

Sincerely,

(Sample Letter to a fire department)

Date:

Dear

The fire service and the juvenile court have formed a partnership in dealing with youth who have been referred on fire-related charges. A restitution program has been developed that includes community service work and education. The fire department is coordinating the educational aspect of the program. We are asking you to help us educate the youth about the impact of his/her firesetting behavior on you and your organization

The adolescent offender is required to complete a community impact report. This report requires the youth to report on how their firesetting behavior affected others in the community. Specifically the youth must report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries his fire caused. This report is then returned to both the fire department and the juvenile court.

As a professional with the fire service, we ask that you provide information about:

- different aspects of your job (firefighting, fire investigation, fire prevention education, paperwork, etc.)
- how this fire affected you
- how much fire suppression costs
- the personal stress and inconvenience it caused you
- firefighter and volunteer safety issues such as fire injuries, driving hazards, etc.
- whether other areas of your community were at risk while you were attending the fire

\_\_\_\_\_ has been referred to us to complete this community impact report. He will be calling you in the next few days to schedule an appointment. We appreciate your help and we are hoping that this community based approach to juvenile crime will have a positive effect on \_\_\_\_\_ and on our community.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at.

Sincerely,

**(Sample Letter to school administrators)**

Date:

Dear

The fire service and the juvenile court have formed a partnership in dealing with youth who have been referred on fire-related charges. A restitution program has been developed that includes community service work and education. The fire department is coordinating the educational aspect of the program. We are asking you to help us educate the youth about the impact of his/her firesetting behavior on you and your organization

The adolescent offender is required to complete a community impact report. This report requires the youth to report on how their firesetting behavior affected others in the community. Specifically the youth must report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries his fire caused. This report is then returned to both the fire department and the juvenile court.

As a professional in the field of education, we ask that you provide information about:

- safety problems and/or injuries this fire created
- personal cost and inconvenience (students, faculty, property destroyed, etc.)
- emotional stress of parents, teachers, students, etc.
- cost to the school district
- time involved to deal with the problems fire caused (paperworks, phone calls, meetings, etc.)
- costs to rebuild or replace (if applicable)

\_\_\_\_\_ has been referred to us to complete this community impact report. He will be calling you in the next few days to schedule an appointment. We appreciate your help and we are hoping that this community based approach to juvenile crime will have a positive effect on \_\_\_\_\_ and on our community.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at.

Sincerely,

**(Sample Letter to a business person)**

Date:

Dear

The fire service and the juvenile court have formed a partnership in dealing with youth who have been referred on fire-related charges. A restitution program has been developed that includes community service work and education. The fire department is coordinating the educational aspect of the program. We are asking you to help us educate the youth about the impact of his/her firesetting behavior on you and your organization

The adolescent offender is required to complete a community impact report. This report requires the youth to report on how their firesetting behavior effected others in the community. Specifically the youth must report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries his fire caused. This report is then returned to both the fire department and the juvenile court.

As a professional business person we ask that you provide information about:

- cost of damages
- employee time loss
- personal loss
- Were any important papers destroyed that need to be replaced?
- Will there be price increases because of the fire?
- emotional stress
- personal items ruined or destroyed
- loss of business
- customer loss and inconvenience

\_\_\_\_\_ has been referred to us to complete this community impact report. He will be calling you in the next few days to schedule an appointment. We appreciate your help and we are hoping that this community based approach to juvenile crime will have a positive effect on \_\_\_\_\_ and on our community.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at.

Sincerely,

(Sample Letter to a hospital or EMS)

Date:

Dear

The fire service and the juvenile court have formed a partnership in dealing with youth who have been referred on fire-related charges. A restitution program has been developed that includes community service work and education. The fire department is coordinating the educational aspect of the program. We are asking you to help us educate the youth about the impact of his/her firesetting behavior on you and your organization

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As a professional with the hospital industry, we ask that you provide information about:

- explain what you do
- stress from the victim
- time spent as a result of the fire
- costs incurred because of the fire
- loss of care or time spent with other patients—did this leave you short handed?
- personal loss and inconvenience—were you on call?
- paperwork
- dealing with the victim's family
- victim recuperation—suffering, time costs, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_ has been referred to us to complete this community impact report. He will be calling you in the next few days to schedule an appointment. We appreciate your help and we are hoping that this community based approach to juvenile crime will have a positive effect on \_\_\_\_\_ and on our community.

If I can be of assistance to you, please call me at.

Sincerely,

*Tips of the Trade*

*Give a letter with instructions to youth detailing the collage process.*

*Involve school personnel (teacher, librarian, or counselor) to assist youth needing academic help.*

*Some schools will give credit for this report.*

*Set a timeline for the project to be completed and returned.*

**Project Plan 2**

**Activity: an art project/collage**

**Materials**



daily newspapers  
art supplies such as poster board, glue and scissors

**Objective**

To educate the youth about the effect of fire on a community.

**Age level**

12-17 years of age.

**Procedure**

Ideas:

- research the local paper for fire incidents and make a collage;
- make visual aids for fire safety programs;
- make safety posters for school or parents' work environments.

**Instructions for collage**

1. Have the youth research the local newspaper daily and look for any article relating to fires or explosions. Have the youth cut the complete article out of the paper. Limit the research to the headline and local news sections.
2. Have the youth make a collage on a poster board that includes all of the articles found.
3. Have the youth write a report identifying the details of each article on the collage. The report shall be on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper, single spaced, and typed and a minimum of three pages in length. It should include the following information as a minimum. Further details may be required depending on the content of the article.
  - A. Basic description and headline of each article found.
  - B. Dollar loss due to fire or explosion
  - C. Cause of fire or explosion
  - D. Details on persons or person who may have started the fire or explosion.
  - E. Fire deaths and injuries
4. Return the completed project to the fire department.

**(Sample Letter to a Youth Being Assigned Project Plan 2 / Collage Project  
to be printed on fire department letter head)**

Date:

Dear

You have been referred to me by the juvenile department. As part of your educational intervention program you are required to complete the following requirements.

1. Research the (name of local paper) daily starting on (date) through (date). Look for any articles relating to fire or explosions and cut the complete article out of the paper. Limit your research to the headline and local news sections. Disregard the sports, financial, comics, and living sections, etc.
2. Make a collage on a minimum of 24 inch by 24 inch poster board that includes all of the articles found.
3. Write a report identifying the details of each article on the collage. The report shall be on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper, single-spaced, and typed. The report shall be a minimum of three pages in length. Include the following information in the report as a minimum. Further details may be required depending on the content of the article.
  - A. Fire deaths and injuries
  - B. Dollar loss due to fire or explosion
  - C. Cause of fire or explosion
  - D. Details on person or persons who may have started the fire or explosion
  - E. Basic description and headline of each article found

This project shall be completed and returned to (name) no later than (date). If you have any questions during this project, call me at (phone number). I will be checking on your progress regularly.

Sincerely,

*Tips of the Trade*

*Relate community service to the fire incident.*

*Most community service projects will be assigned by the court. However, the fire service may influence the selection.*

*With every school district, identify key players such as risk manager, business manager, disciplinary counselor-who may have some ideas for community service projects in the schools.*

**Project Plan 3**

**Activity: community service project**

**Materials**



varies with project

**Objective**

To give the youth the opportunity to take responsibility for his or her actions by doing something to benefit the community. This project demonstrates both accountability and responsibility.

**Age level**

12-17 years of age.

**Procedure**

Step One: Elicit cooperation of agencies within the community. Make sure that there is adequate supervision for the juvenile (most juvenile departments already have arrangements made with local agencies). The most effective community service program has a link to fire and burn safety.

Step Two: The court or court counselor determines the number of service hours.

Step Three: Have some form of a summary at the end of the community service program to give the youth an opportunity to describe what he or she did and what they learned from it. The fire department should ask for a copy of the report.

# Community Service Project Ideas

These organizations may offer these service projects in your community. Make local contacts and add/delete to this list to meet your community need.



**Parks and Recreation Department**  
Beautification, maintenance

**American Red Cross**  
assemble disaster kits,  
office support  
washing vehicles, blood drives

**Humane Society**  
maintenance, animal care

**Habitat for Humanity**  
cleanup, construction

**Oregon Food Bank**  
inventory, assembling food baskets

**Salvation Army**  
feeding and cleaning

**Homeless Shelter**  
feeding, maintenance

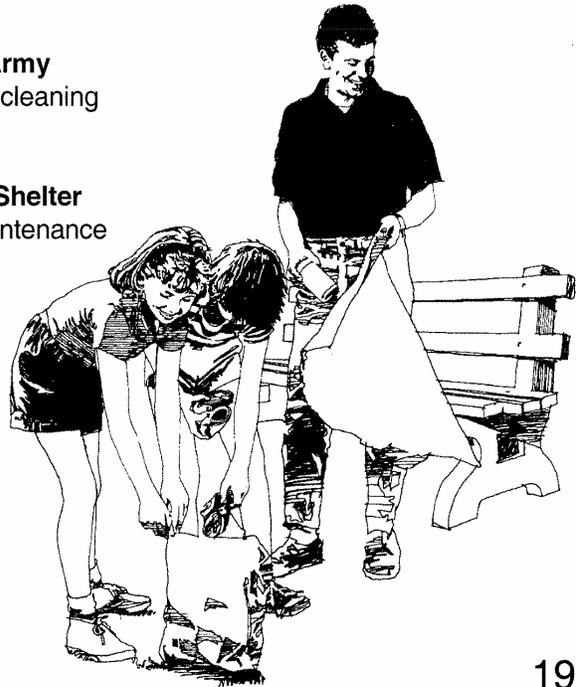
**Granges/FFA/Farm Bureau**  
recycling  
landscaping

**Special Olympics**  
recreation assistants

**Loaves and Fishes**  
food baskets

**Service Clubs (Elks, Lions and Rotary)**  
maintenance work,  
kitchen help

**Senior Centers**  
reading, writing letters





**Recycling Centers**  
sort inventory

**Neighborhood Associations**  
to be determined

**Fire Prevention Cooperatives**  
helping at fairs, setting up  
taking down displays

**Bureau of Land Management/Oregon Department of Forestry/United States Forest Service**  
trail and campsite  
maintenance, tree planting

**Churches**  
landscaping, office support,  
maintenance

**Youth Groups**  
recreation aid, maintenance

**Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism (SOLV)**  
cleaning up litter

**Local Business**  
to be determined

**Litter Patrol**  
picking up litter

**Chamber of Commerce**  
beautification, office support

**Schools**  
paint bathroom  
scrub



## Appendix

Where to find the video and book resources listed in this program:

***Marked by Fire***

available from The Insurance Federation of Minnesota

cost: \$20

to order call 651-228-7376

or e-mail: [mjensen@insurancemn.org](mailto:mjensen@insurancemn.org) (Include mailing name and address. Video will be shipped with invoice.)

***Taming Fire***

No longer available.

***Brian's Story***

available from Reel to Reel Video Productions

cost: \$49.95 plus \$4.50 for shipping and handling

to order call 1-800-241-8273

***Countdown to Disaster***

available from National Fire Protection Association

Video #FL68VH

cost: \$458.75

to order call 1-800-344-3555

***Plan to Get Out Alive***

available from First Alert and McDonalds

cost: \$9.95

to order write to MediaTech, 110 West Hubbard St., Chicago, Ill 60610

***Fire in the Hills: the Oakland story***

available from the National Interagency Fire Center

cost: \$5

to order write to National Interagency Fire Center, 3833 S Development Ave, Boise, ID 83705 and specify PMS711-2, or phone 1-208-387-5104, Fax 1-208-387-5573, or Web site <<http://www.nifc.gov>>

Curriculums from F.I.R.E. Solutions:

***False Alarms: an intervention program***

***Fire Alarms and Warning Device***

to order call 508-636-9149

# Tips for interviewing adolescent firesetters

by Linda Nishi-Strattner, Ph.D.

Adolescence is a time when children start to break away from the influence and control of their parents. Their task is to develop the independence which will enable them to function as adults, without the continual support and guidance of their parents or guardians. To make this transition, they often rely heavily on their peer group as a replacement for family influence. They may experiment with a number of styles, beliefs and identities as they search for their own identity.

When interviewing the adolescent, keep in mind that they may relate best to peers and to being treated as an equal. Many adolescents are also capable of complex abstract thought and may think that their newly developed skills are superior to yours. The following techniques can be helpful in interviewing the adolescent firesetter:

1. Invest the time and effort to explain your role and ethics as an interviewer to the adolescent. This often saves time, as you clarify that your role is to evaluate and to try to understand his/her point of view, rather than to be a prosecutor. The adolescent firesetter will think about the potential uses and misuses of this information, so take the initiative to discuss the extent of confidentiality you can provide.
2. Appeal to the adolescent's sense of self-preservation, bargaining sense and interest in "working the system." You can do this by helping them to see that it is to their benefit to cooperate with the interview and to be as honest in their disclosures as possible. Point out there will be fewer questions later if they help you to write a complete report. Explain that "it will look good on your record" to cooperate during this part of the legal process. Suggest that after you write your report, they can simply say "read my record" when others inquire about their case. This may appeal to the adolescent who is feeling resentful and rebellious.
3. Be alert to the adolescent's tendency to feel intellectually superior to you. You may be able to capitalize on this willingness to prove you wrong by challenging the teenager to prove that a particular firesetting sequence was indeed feasible. You may elicit more details as they attempt to educate you regarding their firesetting expertise or the intricacies of the interactions which preceded the firesetting incident.
4. Guard against showing alarm or surprise. This may convince adolescents that they are more intelligent, brave, daring or cool than you, and it may set you up as the "stupid authority figure." Instead, appear only mildly surprised when the adolescent tells an incredulous story. Confront adolescents without becoming emotionally invested. Calmly ask for confirming evidence to prove what they claim.
5. Be honest if you possess information in advance, such as the fire investigation report. Do not trick the adolescent by pretending to be ignorant.
6. Be honest with adolescents if you think they are not telling the entire story. Say something such as, "I'd like to believe you, but I sense that there is more to this story," or, "Help me out. If I'm going to be able to help you, I need more complete information so that others will believe this."
7. Look for reasons other than curiosity as the underlying root of the firesetting. Adolescents may be involved in drugs and alcohol, they may be sexually active or they may be responding to peer pressure. Inquire about these possible dynamics along with the facts of the firesetting incident.
8. Avoid lecturing. This encourages the adolescent to back further into an anti-authority rebellion. Instead, give positive feedback about any favorable aspect of their participation in the interviewing process. This might include being willing to take responsibility for their behavior, being decent enough to avoid blaming others, appearing as though they really want to turn their troubles around or simply being cooperative about the interviewing process.

**Dr. Linda Nishi-Strattner is a private practice clinical psychologist in Portland, Oregon. She works extensively with juvenile firesetters. This article is reprinted from the Winter, 1992, issue of *Hot Issues*.**

## Authorization for Release of Information

To our clients: We can help you better if we are able to work with other agencies that know you and your family. By signing this form, you are giving permission for these organizations to share information about your situation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ DOB \_\_\_\_\_ ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Children \_\_\_\_\_

**I authorize the following individuals or agencies:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**to provide information to:** (name) \_\_\_\_\_

(address) \_\_\_\_\_

**including records of:**

- |                              |                             |                                |  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | family history                 | <input type="checkbox"/> other, as listed: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | employment/unemployment        | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | educational reports            | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | alcohol/drug treatment*        | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | mental health services*        | _____                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no | medical/psychiatric treatment* | _____                                      |

\*Alcohol/drug, mental health and medical records include all aspects of diagnosis and treatment and prognosis. Educational records include both behavioral and progress reports.

**I agree that the agencies and individuals listed above may share and exchange information about my family and circumstances.**  yes  no

Purpose: The information received will be used to evaluate my situation and to plan for and coordinate services for me and my family, or for other purposes as specified:

**This permission is good for one year or until:**

**I can cancel this at any time, but I understand that the cancellation will not affect any information that was already released before the cancellation. I understand that information about my case is confidential and protected by state and federal law. I approve the release of this information. I understand what this agreement means. I am signing on my own and have not been pressured to do so.**

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> client | <input type="checkbox"/> guardian      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> parent | <input type="checkbox"/> legal custody |

signature \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

worker name \_\_\_\_\_ worker signature \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

To those receiving information under this authorization: This information disclosed to you is protected by state and federal law. You are not authorized to release it to any agency or person not listed on this form without specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains unless authorized by other laws.

This is a true copy of the original authorization document.

(agency staff person)

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## INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

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### For people who cannot write

I understand this form and am completing it voluntarily. I cannot write. I am placing my mark by my name to sign this form.

My mark: \_\_\_\_\_ Full name of client \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness #1 \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Witness #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

### For people who cannot read

I have read this form to the client. He/she understands it and signed it voluntarily.

Worker's name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation: Supplying the social security number is voluntary and in general the refusal to supply the social security number cannot be used to deny services. However, it is necessary for identifying records for employment and vocational rehabilitation information. In either case, if supplied, the social security number may be used to enforce agency regulations.

### Instructions

1. The worker should fill out this form for the client. Be sure the client understands it before signing. Encourage the client to ask questions about the form and what it allows.
2. Mail requests. If this form is being used to request information by mail, be specific about what you need. If you have a series of questions, use a cover letter. The more clear you are in your request, the more likely you are to receive a prompt and accurate response. Do not ask for information you do not need.
3. Family records. This release covers information about the person signing the form, minor children and information about the family he/she supplied for the record. It would not cover information supplied by other adult family members unless they also sign a release.
4. Children. Minors can consent to medical treatment at age 15, mental, emotional or chemical, depending on treatment, at age 14. They may sign their own permission for release of information forms needed for such treatment.
5. Photocopying. Keep the original in the file and send copies to other agencies. The person making the photocopies should sign each copy at the bottom of the first page certifying it as a true copy. The agency receiving the authorization should reject if there is not an original signature by the person who made the copy.
6. Redisclosure. Information received under this authorization should not be redisclosed to any party not identified on this form without specific written consent. Criminal penalties may apply to illegal disclosure.  
Federal regulations (42 CFR Part 2) prohibit you from making any further disclosure of alcohol and drug information without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by such regulations. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is not sufficient for this purpose.
7. Revocation. If the person later cancels this authorization, write "revoked" and the method and date of revocation boldly across the form. Date and initial it, and keep in the file. Federal regulations do not allow us to require that the revocation be in writing.
8. Duration. The authorization is valid for one year unless otherwise specified. Check to be sure that the release you are using is still current.
9. HIV. This form should not be used to request information about HIV testing. Use the form developed by the Oregon Health Division.
10. Guardianship/custody. If the signer is a guardian, a copy of the guardianship paper must be attached when the request is sent. Similarly, if an agency has custody and their representative signs, the custody order should be included.
11. This is a voluntary form. However, clients should be given accurate information on how the refusal to allow the release of information will adversely affect eligibility determination or coordination of services. If the client decides not to sign, attempt to refer the family to a single service which may be able to help them without an exchange of information.

**APPENDIX D**

**PSYCHOLOGICAL AND  
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
REDUCE CHILDREN'S  
INVOLVEMENT WITH FIRE**



## **Psychological and Educational Services Reduce Children's Involvement with Fire**

April 2001 - New research from the University of Pittsburgh suggests that structured treatments designed specifically to intervene with children who set fires are more effective in the long term than a brief service in which a firefighter visits the child's home, a commonly used intervention for child fire setters.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) and fire safety education (FSE) were found to significantly curtail firesetting and matchplay behaviors up to a year after intervention. More fires were set by children who received a home visit by a firefighter (HVF) by this one-year follow-up period.

Results of the study were published in the March 2001 issue of the *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*.

“Our results show that children who set fires are less likely to exhibit either firesetting or matchplay by 12-month follow-up if they receive CBT or FSE, rather than HVF,” said David J. Kolko, Ph.D., associate professor of child psychiatry, psychology and pediatrics at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. “Our research shows that using these two alternative approaches can reduce the number of repeat occurrences of these behaviors.”

Dr. Kolko cautioned that because children set fires for different reasons, including curiosity and behavior problems, researchers need to determine how best to apply each intervention -- for example, CBT may work better for kids with behavioral problems and FSE may work better for children who are just curious about fire. Those interventions would then need to be refined to achieve the best results.

For the study, Dr. Kolko assessed a total of 70 children who had set a recent fire. Of the 54 children who entered the study, 38 were assigned to receive either CBT or FSE and 16 received HVF. At the conclusion of the intervention period, all three interventions were associated with a marked decrease in fire-related activities.

Initially, out of 13 children who received HVF, four (28.6 percent) had set another fire by the time they had completed the intervention. Only three out of 17 children receiving CBT (17.6 percent) and two out of 13 who received FSE (14.3 percent) repeated the behavior.

During a follow-up assessment one year later, children who received CBT or FSE had been less involved with fire and had fewer other problems related to fire than children who received HVF only. According to Dr. Kolko, only 15.4 percent of children in the study who received FSE and 23.5 percent of children treated with CBT had set fires in the 12 months after treatment, whereas 50 percent of the children who received HVF had set another fire.

CBT and FSE were also better at reducing other activities associated with firesetting, such as playing with matches and being seen with matches or lighters. Whereas 57 percent of the children in a group being counseled with HVF for playing with matches repeated within a year, 35 percent of the CBT group and only 7 percent of FSE group did. Significantly, while all three types of interventions showed at least some decrease in the number of children seen with matches or a lighter a year after treatment, none of the 12 children in the CBT group was seen with them.

“In light of this study, it is our hope that CBT and FSE can become a more integral part of the standard services available for child firesetters,” said Dr. Kolko. “These results also give us a base upon which to expand our research to find out what types of alterations can be made to CBT and FSE to make those interventions more effective.”

Statistics from the National Fire Prevention Association indicate that children playing with fire were responsible for more than 98,000 fires in the United States that cost 408 civilian deaths, 3,130 injuries and more than \$300.7 million in direct property damages in one year (1994). Research conducted by Dr. Kolko over the past 15 years shows that, in some cases, more than half of all child firesetters will repeat the activity over a two-year period.

Some form of home visit from a firefighter, according to Dr. Kolko, is a common method of helping child firesetters and was never meant to be a long-term service. It usually involves a firefighter going to the home of a child who has set a fire, reviewing with the child and parents some ways to avoid using fire, and handing out some educational materials. Even though this brief home visit may not have been as effective as the other two, more intensive interventions, it was associated with a significant reduction in the number of fires that were set by those children and may be a cost-effective alternative service.

Cognitive-behavioral therapy for child firesetters involves the application of psychological strategies to enhance the child's self-control, assertion, and problem-solving and parents' use of effective discipline and communication, whereas fire safety education involves training in several fire safety principles and prevention activities.

# **APPENDIX E**

## **SUGGESTED MESSAGES**



JFIS  
Suggested Messages

**Pre-K**

Fire Prevention

- What's Hot / What's Not
  - What makes fire?
  - Good fire / Bad Fire
  - What is fire like?
  - Fire is hard to put out
  - Fire tools...what are they?
  - Rules for fire tools (tools vs. toys)
  - Go tell a grownup when you find matches or lighters
- 
- Fire is a tool
  - Rules for fire tools
  - What is fire like?
  - How fast is real fire?
  - Go tell a grownup when you find matches or lighters
  - Tell a grownup if your friends are using fire
  - Physical consequences of fire (injury, death, property)
  - Make the right choice about using fire (use with supervision)
  - Have a working smoke alarm

Fire Survival

- Know the sound of a smoke alarm
- Know where to go if the smoke alarm goes off
- Know two ways out of every room
- Crawl low under smoke
- Stop, Drop, Roll and cover your face if your clothes catch on fire
- Cool a burn
- When to call the fire department (What is an emergency?)
- Know your emergency phone number

**1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade**

- Know and practice a home escape plan
- Cool a burn
- Stop, Drop, Roll and Cover your face if your clothes catch fire
- Crawl low under smoke
- Get out and stay out if your house is on fire
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's house

Notes

Curriculum resources include, but are not limited to, NFPA Learn Not to Burn Curriculum and Resource Books, NFPA Risk Watch, Fireproof Children – Handbook for Firefighters, Fire Stoppers of Washington – A Family's Response to Firesetting, A Kid's Fire Safety Workbook, A workbook for Kids about Fire

Curriculum resources include, but are not limited to, NFPA Learn Not to Burn Curriculum and Resource Books, NFPA Risk Watch, Fireproof Children – Handbook for Firefighters, Fire Stoppers of Washington – A Family's Response to Firesetting, A Kid's Fire Safety Workbook, A workbook for Kids about Fire

JFIS  
Suggested Messages

3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Fire is a tool
- Rule for fire tools
- What is real fire like?
- How fast is real fire?
- Go tell an adult when you find matches or lighters
- Tell an adult if your friends are using fire
- Physical consequences of fire (injury, death, property)
- What are the legal consequences of using fire inappropriately?
- Make the right choice about using fire (use with supervision)
- Identify and correct fire hazards in the home
- Have a working smoke alarm

- Know and practice a home escape plan
- Know how to respond to a cooking fire on the stove or in the oven
- Cool a burn
- Stop, Drop, Roll & Cover your face if your clothes catch fire
- Get out and stay out if your house is on fire
- Call the fire department from a neighbor's house

Curriculum resources include, but are not limited to, NFPA Learn Not to Burn Curriculum and Resource Books, NFPA Risk Watch, Fireproof Children – Handbook for Firefighters, Fire Stoppers of Washington – A Family's Response to Firesetting, A Kid's Fire Safety Workbook, A workbook for Kids about Fire

JFIS  
Suggested Messages

5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fire is a tool</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rule for fire tools</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is real fire like?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How fast is real fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How fast is real fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure (evcryonc else does it) ...how to say no, tell an adult.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tell an adult if your friends are using fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical consequences of fire (injury, death, property)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the legal consequences of using fire inappropriately?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make the right choice about using fire (use with supervision)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and correct fire hazards in the home</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have a working smoke alarm</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where do we get our ideas about fire? What's real and not real? (TV / Movies / Video Games / Parents / School / Fire Department)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can you (child / teen) control fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility of using a fire tool</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do the right thing (moral reasoning)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Know and practice a home escape plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Know how to respond to a cooking fire on the stove or in the oven</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cool a burn</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stop, Drop, Roll &amp; Cover your face if your clothes catch fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get out and stay out if your house is on fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call the fire department from a neighbor's house</li> </ul> | <p>Curriculum resources include, but are not limited to, NFPA Learn Not to Burn Curriculum and Resource Books, NFPA Risk Watch, Fireproof Children – Handbook for Firefighters, Fire Stoppers of Washington – A Family's Response to Firesetting, A Kid's Fire Safety Workbook, A workbook for Kids about Fire</p> |
|--|--|--|

Source: Niki Pereira - Alaska Injury Prevention Center

JFIS  
Suggested Messages

7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fire is a tool</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Rule for fire tools</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is real fire like?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How fast is real fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How fast is real fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Peer pressure (everyone else does it) ...how to say no, tell an adult.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tell an adult if your friends are using fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Physical consequences of fire (injury, death, property)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the legal consequences of using fire inappropriately?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make the right choice about using fire (use with supervision)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and correct fire hazards in the home</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have a working smoke alarm</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where do we get our ideas about fire? What's real and not real? (TV / Movies / Video Games / Parents / School / Fire Department)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Can you (child / teen) control fire?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Responsibility of using a fire tool</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do the right thing (moral reasoning)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fire behavior / dynamics</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Flammable liquids / vapors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Legal consequences of arson</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consequences for family and friends</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Know and practice a home escape plan</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Know how to respond to a cooking fire on the stove or in the oven</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cool a burn</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Stop, Drop, Roll &amp; Cover your face if your clothes catch fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Get out and stay out if your house is on fire</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Call the fire department from a neighbor's house</li> </ul> | <p>Curriculum resources include, but are not limited to, NFPA Learn Not to Burn Curriculum and Resource Books, NFPA Risk Watch, Fireproof Children – Handbook for Firefighters, Fire Stoppers of Washington – A Family's Response to Firesetting, A Kid's Fire Safety Workbook, A workbook for Kids about Fire</p> |
|--|--|--|

Source: Niki Pereira - Alaska Injury Prevention Center

**APPENDIX F**

**ORANGE COUNTY FIRE**  
**F.R.I.E.N.D.S.**



ORANGE COUNTY  
FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.

*FIRESETTER REGIONAL INTERVENTION  
EDUCATION NETWORK AND DELIVERY  
SYSTEM*

*Pre-K Through 3rd Grade  
FIRE SERVICE LEVEL EDUCATION  
MODULE - LESSON PLAN*



FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

I. Preparation

***Instructor Note: Parental participation is mandatory. Interviews and the delivery of the education component should only be provided in the presence of the juvenile's parent or guardian.***

1. Confirm meeting time and location.  
***Instructor Note: Participants who are referred into the program will be instructed to call and confirm the date and time.***
2. Prepare meeting room/area.  
***Instructor Note: It is desirable to hold the session in an area that is relatively free from distractions.***
3. Assemble equipment and supplies.
  - A. Television & VCR
  - B. Video tape
  - C. Printed material & handouts

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

II. Welcome

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook*

1. Greet the participants and invite them into the facility.
2. If the class is conducted at the fire station, brief the participants on proper procedure should the alarm sound and units have to leave the station. Options may include:
  - A. If security is not a problem you may allow the participants to wait inside the station.
  - B. The participants may wait outside the station in anticipation of a prompt return of station personnel.
  - C. If you anticipate a long absence, advise the participants that you will contact them at a later date to reschedule the program.
3. Identify the location of the restrooms, drinking fountains, and other available facilities.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

### III. Screening Interview

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. The screening interview is conducted with the parent or guardian of the Juvenile Firesetter. Depending on how the participant entered into the system the screening interview may be completed prior to this program. If it has not been done use the Data Retrieval and Risk Survey Form provided.*

1. The screening interview is our first attempt at determining the seriousness of the fireplay or firesetting behavior. This allows us to recommend the best intervention possible.
2. The firesetter categories are general classifications. This provides a starting point for the evaluation and treatment of the juvenile firesetter. The three categories are:
  - A. Simple - Children in this category may have a history of fireplay/ firesetting or this fire may be their first. Pre-school and the younger elementary grade students may not have had any formal fire safety instruction. Curiosity is a common motive. Older elementary grade children usually know that fireplay/ firesetting is not acceptable. Often the most destructive and deadly fires are set by kids in this category.
  - B. Complex - Children in this category are likely to have a history of fireplay/ firesetting. The fire becomes a means to express feelings of anger, abandonment, sadness, and disappointment. With older elementary grade children vandalism and gang activity may be a factor. Underlying problems are often identified and require further evaluation. Education is beneficial but should be followed up with professional counseling.
  - C. Emergent - Children in this group require specialized evaluation and therapy. Firesetting is often repetitive and may be without an apparent motive. The fires are planned and often extraordinary measures are taken to light the fire. Children in this category require professional evaluation and treatment. Education is beneficial as part of the total comprehensive treatment plan.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

IV. Video

Be Cool About Fire Safety

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to child's workbook. This video is selected as the primary video for pre-school through third grade.*

1. Time: 15 minutes
2. Content: This video teaches children about several different fire safety issues. Topics discussed in the video are:
  - 1). Don't play with matches
  - 2). Smoke detectors
  - 3). Don't hide, go outside
  - 4). Have an escape plan
  - 5). To escape fall and crawl
  - 6). Stop, drop and roll
  - 7). Know your local emergency number.
3. Delivery: Tell the child that they should watch the video very carefully. You will be asking them questions after the video.
4. Review: You may review any of the lessons covered in the video. For instance, you may ask them to demonstrate the technique for stop, drop and roll or how to crawl low under smoke.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

V. Follow-up Questions

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE:** *Corresponds to the workbook. These questions are to be used with the most common juvenile fire setting or fire play behaviors. Document the participant's answers in the space provided. It is not possible to write questions that fit every possible scenario on every age child you may encounter. These questions are provided as a model. As the facilitator you should familiarize yourself with these questions and modify or eliminate, or add to them as appropriate.*

*Ask the parent(s) or guardian to complete the "Parent Reaction Survey" while you are talking with the child.*

1. I have received some information about the incident that you were involved with, I would like to hear your version. Please tell me what happened in as much detail as you remember.

**Instructor Note:** *Allow the participant sufficient time to tell their story. If you become aware of discrepancies in the story allow them an opportunity to make corrections.*

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2. Have you ever done anything like this before? If so, when did these events happen?

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3. Where did you get the matches, lighter, candle or fireworks that you played with or used to light the fire?

**Instructor Note:** *Ask the parent(s) if they knew matches or lighters were accessible to their child. Do they take special precautions to keep these items out of the child's reach?*

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4. What did you first light on fire? Was this something you had with you or did you find it in the area where the fire was set? Why did you choose this particular object? Did the fire spread to other material, if so what burned? If you used fireworks did they cause a fire? If you pulled an automatic alarm did you know that the fire department would respond?

**Instructor Note:** *It is important to determine if the child gathered material with the intent of setting it on fire or if they burned material that was lying around.*

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FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

V. Follow-up Questions

5. Had you thought about lighting this fire or did it just happen? Did you tell anyone that you were going to do this?

*Instructor Note: Older children may often brag about their activity. This may provide some insight into their motive.*

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6. Did you or anyone else get hurt as a result of this activity? If yes, who was hurt and how did it happen?

*Instructor Note: Discuss the seriousness of burn injuries, if there were no injuries talk with them about the potential for burn injuries to have occurred. If a malicious false alarm discuss the potential for injury to firefighters and others during the response.*

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7. After the incident occurred, did you tell your parents or another adult?

*Instructor Note: Try to determine why they did not tell anyone about the incident.*

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8. Did you think you would get caught? What did you think would happen to you?

*Instructor Note: Determine if the child had to formulate lies or stories to cover their actions. The second question helps to identify if the child has a concept of consequences and discipline. Be alert to descriptions of unusual or extreme punishment. You do not have to address these issues, but you should record your observations.*

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9. If there was a fire did you try to put it out? If yes, what did you use? Did it work?

*Instructor Note: Determine if the child had prepared to extinguish the fire before it was set.*

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10. What consequences have you experienced since the incident?

*Instructor Note: Clarify and discuss the concept of choices and consequences.*

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FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

V. Follow-up Questions

11. If you broke something that does not belong to you who should pay to fix it? How can you help pay for any damage you cause?

*Instructor Note: The goal is to discuss the concept of restitution. Suggestions include: Extra chores at home, give up their allowance for a period of time, volunteer to give up an activity that the parent pays for. Discuss options with the participants.*

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12. Are you sorry this event occurred? Have you told your parents you are sorry?

*Instructor Note: This question is for the specific purpose of discussing the child's feelings or lack of feelings of remorse.*

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13. Do you think you will become involved in this type of activity again?

*Instructor Note: Provide the child an opportunity to tell you what they have learned and why they will not take part in this type of activity in the future.*

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14. Is there anything else about this incident that you would like to share with me?
- 
-

QUESTIONS  
FACILITATOR NOTE SHEET

*Instructor Note: Use this form for note taking as you discuss the questions.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

QUESTIONS  
FACILITATOR NOTE SHEET

- 11. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 12. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 13. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 14. \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 15. \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 16. \_\_\_\_\_  
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- 17. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 18. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 19. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 20. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

VI. Fire Behavior

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to child's workbook*

1. Objectives

At the end of this session the child should be able to:

- A. Explain the three properties needed to have a fire.
- B. Identify the best way to prevent a fire.
- C. Discuss the proper use of fire.

2. Can you explain what "Fire" is? We can explain fire this way.

**"When we combine something that will burn, the right amount of air and a heat source, we get what we call fire."**

3. What happens when the small flame from a match, lighter or candle is applied to something that will burn? **Answer: The fire will get bigger and may spread very fast. Sometimes it is so fast we cannot put the fire out.**

4. Firefighters use the "Fire Triangle" to describe the burning process (refer to the elementary fire triangle diagram). The three parts of the fire triangle are:

- A. Fuel (gas, liquids, and solids)
- B. Heat
- C. Oxygen

5. What was the fuel for the fire you were involved with? Was it a gas, solid or a liquid? What are some examples of fuels that you can find around your house? Were any of the fuels on this drawing involved in your fire?

6. What heat source did you use to light the fire? Was it a match, lighter, candle, stove burner, or something else?

7. The third thing a fire needs to burn is oxygen. Where does oxygen come from? **Answer: It is in the air we breathe.** In fact, there is more oxygen in the air than a fire needs. The more air that the fire gets the hotter and faster the fire will burn. If there is a wind, then even the smallest fire can get out of control very fast.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

VI. Fire Behavior

8. If you were a firefighter, how would you put a fire out?

*Instructor Note: The child will probably list actions (put water on it, blow it out, stomp on it, etc.). Acknowledge each action given. When the child finishes explain to him/ her that each of those actions remove one side of the fire triangle putting the fire out.*

9. How do firefighters remove the heat from a fire? **Answer: Put water on it.**

10. How is the fuel removed? **Answer: Cut a fire break, turn off the flow of liquid, keep burning material from other exposed material.**

11. How can oxygen be kept from the fire? **Answer: Cover the fire with dirt, a bucket, a pan lid, or some other material that will not burn.**

12. Now that you know what a fire is and how it burns, what do you think is the best way to control fire. **Answer: The best way to control a fire is never to let it start. Preventing fires is always easier than putting them out.**

13. What can you do to help us keep fires from starting? **Answer: Listen to your parents and teachers, follow all safety rules and never play with matches or lighters.**

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## INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

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### TOOLS AND TOYS WORKSHEET

Directions: Fill in the blank with the appropriate word from the word list provided.

Word List: TOOL MATCH TORCH BIKE CANDLES SAW ANIMAL  
FLASHLIGHT BARBECUE PLAN TOY ADULT FIRE LIGHTERS  
SMOKE BALL 911 STOVE

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1. Some tools are very sharp. A sharp tool that is used to cut wood is a   A  .
2. Many games are played with a   L  .
3. A long wooden   A     H   is a good tool to use to light the fireplace. This should only be done when an adult is with me.
4. A telephone is a tool. To use it to get help I can dial       .
5. One fast way to get from place to place is to ride my   B  . I always wear my helmet.
6. Tools are used for many different jobs. A   O   is a tool that may be found in the garage. It is used to heat things up.
7. A   L     L   is a safe tool to help me see in the dark. We always keep one ready for use in an emergency.
8.   C     S   should only be lit when an adult is with me. The ones I like best are the those on my birthday cake.
9. Sometimes there is no one to play with. A stuffed   I     M   is a good friend to have when you are alone.
10. You can cook hamburgers and hot dogs on a   B     B  . I stay away from it to avoid getting burned.
11.   G     H   are dangerous. If I should find one, I will tell an   U   where it is and will not touch it.
12. A special tool used to cook our food is the   O  . I will not use this tool to light paper or other things.
13. A tool that warns us of fire is a   S     O   Detector. The battery should be replaced annually.
14. To get out of the house in an emergency use a Home Escape   P  .
15.   F   is a   L   not a   O  .

VI. Good Fire or Bad Fire  
Tools and Toys Safety Worksheet

## GOOD FIRE or BAD FIRE

Directions: List five examples of good (useful) fire and five examples of bad (destructive) fire in the columns below.

---

### GOOD FIRE

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

### BAD FIRE

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

VII. Good Fire or Bad Fire?

1. Fire is one of the oldest tools that man has ever used. What are some of the productive or 'good' things we use fire for?

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the child's workbook. Have the child (parent) write their response to this question on the Good Fire - Bad Fire Worksheet. Answers might include: to cook/bake our food, warm our homes, heat our bath water, give us light (candles), camp/ bon fires, manufacturing (making things), create energy/power, generate chemical reactions.*

2. Now name some destructive or 'bad' things that fire can cause or is used for?

*Instructor Note: Have the child (parent) write these responses opposite the previous ones. Answers might include: Forest/ brush fires, house/ building fires, car/ vehicle fires, fires to toys or personal property, burn injuries can occur, destructive devices and weapons (bombs).*

3. Just because a fire can cause damage and injuries do you think we should stop using it? If we did stop using fire how would your life be different? Can we use fire safely? What can you do to help your family, friends and the community stay fire safe?

*Instructor Note: The child should be able to tell the difference from good and bad fire. They should know they play an important role in keeping the community fire safe by making good choices and following the rules of fire safety.*

4. Sometimes we do make bad choices. These bad choices often cause things to occur that we do not like. We sometimes refer to an unpleasant response as a consequence. Can you think of any consequences for setting or playing with fires?

- Some children are arrested for setting fires.
- Some children are sent to juvenile probation.
- Some children must perform community service.
- If the fire is at school, children may be suspended or expelled.
- There may be a loss of privileges at home.
- Some children are required to attend a special education program.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

VII. Good Fire or Bad Fire?

5. Now is the time to apply what you have learned. Complete the assigned worksheet. Follow the directions on each worksheet.

***Instructor Note: If time becomes an issue, these worksheets may be done as a take home assignment.***

A. For Pre-school through Kindergarten complete the:

1. What's Hot and What's Not Worksheet (*in child's workbook*)

B. For Grade 1 through Grade 3 complete the:

1. Tools and Toys Safety Worksheet (*in child's workbook*)
2. It's Safe You See or Not For Me Worksheet (*in child's workbook*)

## Fire Safe or Fire Risk

Instructions: Read each scenario and decide if it is “Fire Safe” or “Fire Risk.” Mark your answer in the correct box.

1. Dad’s car runs out of gasoline. He does not have an approved gasoline container. Dad uses an empty one gallon plastic milk container to carry his gasoline.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
2. Mom loves candles. Her favorite candle is burning on the kitchen counter. She goes to the store but does not put out the candle before leaving home.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
3. You are in your favorite hiding place underneath some large bushes. Your friend has some matches. He wants to build a small fire so you can pretend you are camping.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
4. On the way home from school you find a cigarette lighter on the sidewalk. You want to know if it works. You pick it up and try to light it.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
5. Your family is having a 4<sup>th</sup> of July bar-b-que. At the end of the day Dad dumps the ashes in the trash can against the side of the house.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
6. Mom and Dad left their matches and cigarettes lying on the table in the backyard. Your little brother and two of his friends are playing with their toys in the backyard. There are no adults in the yard with them.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
7. A neighbor is shooting illegal fireworks into the air. There is a field of grass nearby.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
8. As you walk to school you see some kids throwing lit matches at each other.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
9. No one is home when you arrive from school. You are hungry so you heat-up leftovers from last night’s dinner on the stove. Your best friend calls you on the telephone. You go into another room to talk.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_
10. You see two kids lighting pieces of paper on fire and then stomping on the lit paper to put it out. They call you over to play with them. You go home instead and tell your mom.  
**Fire Safe** \_\_\_ **Fire Risk** \_\_\_

VII. Good Fire or Bad Fire?

## It's Safe You See Or Not For Me

Instructions: Look at each picture. Decide if it is "Safe" or "Not Safe". Circle your response and then write the reason for your answer on the lines provided.



1. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



2. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



3. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

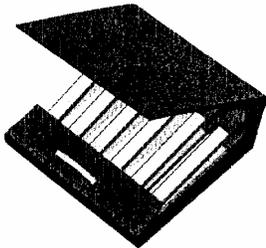
\_\_\_\_\_



4. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

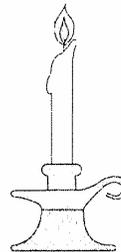
\_\_\_\_\_



5. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

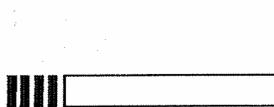
\_\_\_\_\_



6. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

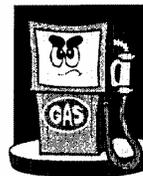
\_\_\_\_\_



7. Safe Not Safe

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



8. Safe Not Safe

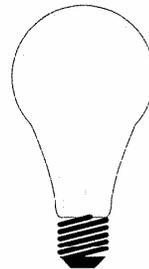
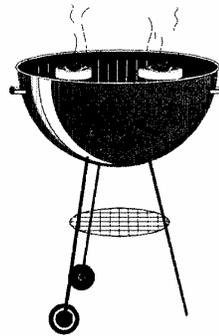
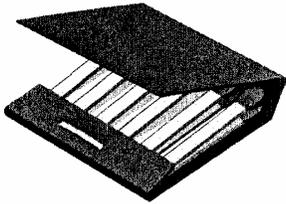
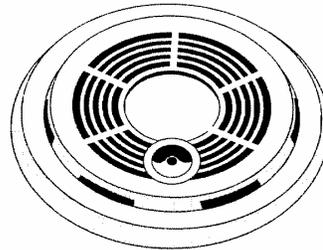
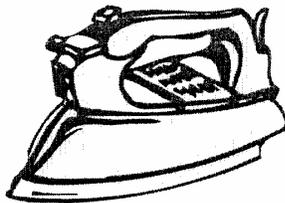
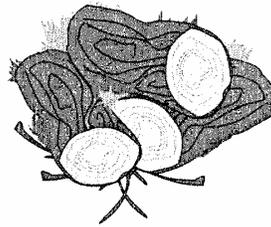
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

VII. Good Fire / Bad Fire

## WHAT'S HOT & WHAT'S NOT

Directions: Circle the items that are HOT, draw an X through the items that are not.



VII. Good Fire or Bad Fire

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

VIII. Putting It All Together

***Instructor Note: Corresponds to child's workbook. This is your opportunity to recap and to add to the information provided in this lesson. Use any appropriate additional lesson plans. If a question was not adequately answered or another issue not adequately addressed, you as the facilitator may respond to that issue.***

1. We have covered many topics in this session. Tell me three things that you have learned.

***Instructor Note: You do not have to take detailed notes on these points. There is no right or wrong response but rather a subjective evaluation on the part of the participant. Younger children may have some difficulty and will need prompting.***

2. You came here today so that we could talk about an inappropriate behavior that you were involved in. This behavior presented risks to you, your family and the community. Do you think being here today has helped you understand the danger of your behavior?
3. Children sometime act inappropriately because they are mad, afraid or even sad. How did you feel before this incident? Did you feel better after this incident? What will you do next time you feel this way?

***Instructor Note: Encourage the participant to think this through. You may have to offer alternatives. Alternatives may include: talk to a friend, doctor or counselor, keep a diary, draw pictures of how they feel, play games, start a hobby, talk to a parent or teacher.***

4. We have talked about many things today. Now it is your turn to give me some information. In order to successfully complete this program I am going to give you a homework assignment. You have \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) to complete this assignment. You must return the assignment to me as scheduled or you will be reported as not having completed the program. Should you have a problem you must telephone me at \_\_\_\_\_ before the due date.
5. Before I give you your assignment is there anything that you would like to talk about?

***Instructor Note: The parents should be asked if they have any questions, comments or concerns.***

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

IX. Homework

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. In addition to the home escape plan, the child should complete the assignment listed under each grade level. If the child was referred to the program by their parent or is classified as a simple firesetter with no event, a return visit is not required. The parent may review the homework assignment.*

1. All participants must draw and submit a home fire escape plan. On the plan show the location of all smoke detectors, exits, fire extinguishers, and meeting places.

*Instructor Note: Provide the participant a Home Escape Plan Worksheet.*

2. Homework assignment recommendations for children in Pre-school through Kindergarten.

Simple fire safety coloring book of your choice  
Completion of activity pages in workbook

3. Homework assignment recommendations for children in grades 1 through 3.

Fire safety activity book, such as Be Cool About Fire Safety or Exty and Hydro  
Completion of activity pages in workbook

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

X. Evaluation

***Instructor Note: Corresponds to child's workbook. Provide the following information to the parent.***

1. It is our desire to provide your child the most up to date and effective education possible. In order to meet this goal we need your feedback. Please complete the Parent Reaction Survey so that we may continue to meet your needs.
2. To ensure the effectiveness of our program you will be contacted in three months. At that time we will want to know if there has been any further firesetting activity. Prior to that time, should you discover that the firesetting behavior has not ceased you are encouraged to contact us immediately. Call 9-1-1 in emergency situations.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
PRE-K THROUGH 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

XI. Return Visit (Optional)

***Instructor Note: The return visit allows you to check the child's work for completeness. You are also provided a second opportunity reinforce previous learning. If the child has completed their homework assignment you may offer them a station tour or some other appropriate reward.***

1. Schedule return visit with the participants.
2. This visit usually takes only a few minutes.
3. Review the finished homework assignment with the child. Check the assignment for completeness and for adherence to the given criteria. You should make any comments or correct any errors with the child and return to them.
4. If appropriate provide the child with a certificate of completion.

Orange County  
Fire *F.R.I.E.N.D.S.*

*Firesetter Regional Intervention Education Network and  
Delivery System*

**4<sup>th</sup> – 12th Grade  
Lesson Plans**



FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
4<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

I. Preparation

*Instructor Note: Parental participation is mandatory. All interviews and the delivery of the education component should only be provided in the presence of the juvenile's parent or guardian.*

1. Confirm meeting time and location.

*Instructor Note: Participants which are referred into the program will be instructed to call to confirm the date and time.*

2. Prepare meeting room/area.

*Instructor Note: It is desirable to hold the session in an area that is relatively free from distractions. If common areas of the facility are to be used, ask personnel to minimize distractions during the class.*

3. Assemble equipment and supplies.

- A. Television & VCR
- B. Video tape
- C. Printed material & handouts

4. Review lesson plans prior to program delivery.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
4<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

II. Welcome

*Instructor's Note: Corresponds to the workbook.*

1. Invite the participants into the fire station or meeting location.
2. If appropriate demonstrate the station emergency alarm. Discuss evacuation procedures the participants should take if you leave on an emergency response. Options include:
  - A. If security is not a problem you may allow the participants to wait inside the station.
  - B. The participants may wait outside the station in anticipation of a prompt return of station personnel.
  - C. If you anticipate a long absence, advise the participants that you will contact them at a later date to reschedule the program.
3. Identify the location of the restrooms, drinking fountains, and other available facilities.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
4<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>TH</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

III. Screening Interview

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. The screening interview is conducted with the parent or guardian of the Juvenile Firesetter. Depending on how the participant entered into the system, the screening interview may have been completed prior to the individual intervention program. If the screening interview has not been done, use the Data Retrieval and Risk Survey Form provided. The Risk Survey forms are divided by age. Be sure to use the proper form for the age of the child you are seeing.*

1. The screening interview is our first attempt at determining the seriousness of the fireplay or firesetting behavior. This allows us to recommend the best intervention possible.
2. The firesetter categories are general classifications. This provides a starting point for the evaluation and treatment of the juvenile firesetter. The three categories are:
  - A. Simple - Children in this category may have a history of fireplay/ firesetting or this fire may be their first. Curiosity is a common motive. Most children, fourth grade and above, know that fireplay/ firesetting is not acceptable. Often the most destructive and deadly fires are set by children in this category.
  - B. Complex - Children in this category are likely to have a history of fireplay/ firesetting. The fire becomes a means to express feelings of anger, abandonment, sadness, and disappointment. With older children, vandalism and gang (peer pressure) activity may be a factor. Underlying problems are often identified and require further evaluation. Education is beneficial but should be followed up with professional counseling.
  - C. Emergent - Children in this group require specialized evaluation and therapy. Firesetting is often repetitive and may be without an apparent motive. The fires are planned and often extraordinary measures are taken to light the fire. Children in this category require professional evaluation and treatment. Education is beneficial as part of the total comprehensive treatment plan.

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III. Screening Interview

3. Assess the behavior, determine the most appropriate category; Simple, Complex, or Emergent. Once a determination is made, provide the appropriate intervention strategy. Follow up interviews and surveys will be handled through the Fire FRIENDS program office.
  - A. Simple
    1. No Event - Fire Station Module no second visit required.
    2. With Event - Juvenile Justice Module by Investigators and Fire Station Education Module with return visit.
  - B. Complex
    1. No Event - Behavioral Health Referral and Fire Station Education Module with return visit.
    2. With Event - Juvenile Justice Module by Investigators, Behavioral Health Referral, and Group Diversion Program Referral.
  - C. Emergent
    1. No Event - Notify Orange County Fire F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Program Office, Behavioral Health Referral, and Group Diversion Program Referral
    2. With Event - Juvenile Justice Module by Investigators, Behavioral Health Referral, and Group Diversion Program Referral.

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IV. Video

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

***Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. This video is the primary video for the secondary grade level program.***

1. Time: 12 minutes
2. Content: The video, In Their Own Words, is the story of three juvenile firesetters. They each have different backgrounds, circumstances, and motives. One of them used illegal fireworks and the others set multiple fires. Each of them explains their individual situation, the impact it has had on their life, and the consequences that resulted from their activity.
3. Delivery: Prior to showing the video, inform the participants that they should look for any similarities to their situation. They should pay particular attention to the emotions, motives and consequences in each event described in the video. Provide the participant with pen/pencil for note taking during the video.
4. Learning: After watching the video use the Questions in Section V to help the participant apply the principles discussed in the video to their situation.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
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V. Questions

***INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Corresponds to the workbook. It is not possible to write questions for every situation encountered. These questions are provided as a model. The instructor may modify, eliminate or add questions as appropriate. Ask the parent(s) or guardian to complete the "Parent Reaction Survey" while you are talking with the participant.***

1. Who do you identify with in the video?

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2. Tell me about your event. Have you ever done anything like this before? How do you feel about being here?

***Instructor Note: Encourage a full and truthful disclosure of the event. Record dates of previous events.***

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3. In the video, Amy, Jason and Domingo identify victims of their acts. Write down all those whom you consider a victim of your incident.

***Instructor Note: Have the participant list all of the victims he/she can think of in their workbook. This may include the participant, parents, siblings, teachers, friends, neighbors, the community, the fire and/or police department, business and property owners, schools, any injured persons or almost anyone else that they may identify. Take a moment to review the completed list. Have the participant work on the list until you believe it is complete.***

4. In the video, both Amy and Jason must pay restitution to the fire victims. How do you feel about paying the victims back for the damage caused?

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FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
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LESSON PLAN

V. Questions

5. In the video Jason thought he would just get a warning. What did you think would happen to you if you got caught?

*Instructor Note: This question allows you to lead into the topic of choices and consequences.*

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6. There are consequences for illegal and/or dangerous activities. What consequences have you experienced? Do you feel these consequences are appropriate for your actions?

*Instructor Note: List the consequences and discuss the impact each of them has had on the participant.*

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7. Do you think Jason has accepted responsibility for his actions? Who do you think is responsible for you being here today?

*Instructor Note: The participant may answer this in a variety of ways. The goal is to get the participant to acknowledge their personal responsibility. It is not uncommon for blame shifting to occur. It is ok to acknowledge the actions of others but personal responsibility must also be acknowledged.*

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8. Domingo wished for a second chance. If you could have a second chance, what would you do differently?
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9. Was anyone with you when this incident occurred? If yes, who was it?

*Instructor Note: This is a good opportunity to talk about peer pressure and decision making.*

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FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
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V. Questions

10. Did you try to extinguish the fire or go for help?

*Instructor Note: Determine if the participant had thought about and prepared to extinguish the fire prior to the event. This helps to identify the overall intent of the act.*

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11. Do you agree with Domingo that “in life we must live with results of the decisions we make?” Can we lessen the impact that bad decisions have on our lives?

*Instructor Note: Talk about taking personal responsibility for our actions. Bad choices often result in unpleasant consequences. Learning from these experiences may turn an unpleasant experience into a positive one.*

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12. What has been the most difficult part of this whole experience? Do you think you have been treated fairly? Why or why not?

*Instructor Note: Provide and encourage the participant to share what they have learned and how they will apply it.*

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13. Is there anything that you want to add or to talk about that I may have overlooked?

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VICTIM IDENTIFICATION WORKSHEET

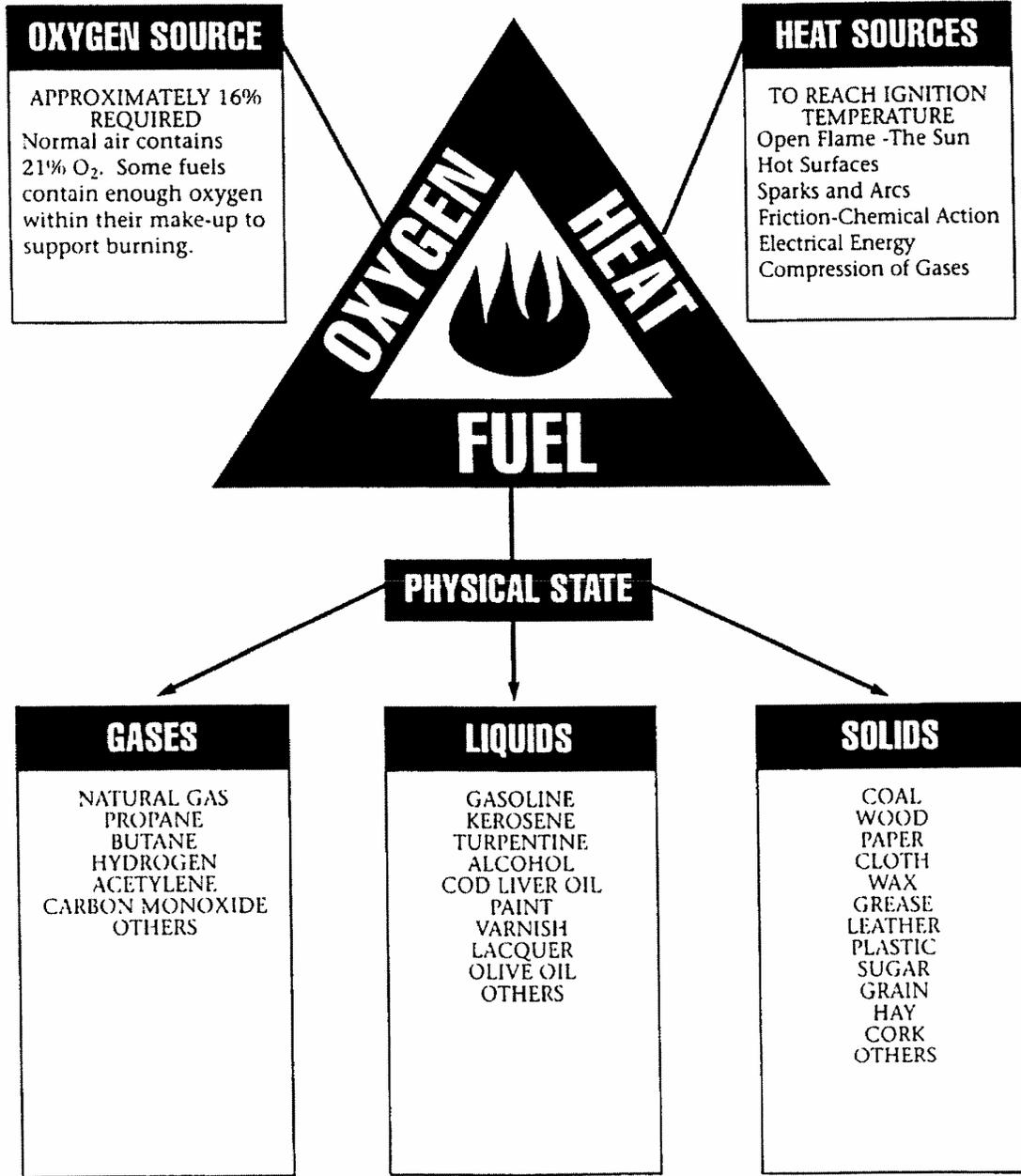
**Instructions:** On this form identify the victims of your firesetting activity. Next write down reason(s) they are considered a victim. You may list names, relationship or titles. Example: Joe or Mrs. Smith / friend, cousin / store manager or firefighter.

VICTIM

WHY THEY ARE A VICTIM

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

# THE FIRE TRIANGLE



FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
4<sup>th</sup> THROUGH 12<sup>th</sup> GRADE  
LESSON PLAN

## VI. Fire Behavior

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to workbook.*

Section Objectives:

- A. Explain the three properties of fire
  - B. Discuss the potential for destruction and unpredictability of fire
  - C. Discuss the proper use of fire
1. We use fire everyday, but can you define “fire” for me? One simple definition we may use is:  
**“Fire is a chemical reaction that produces both heat and light. Once started, a fire will continue to burn as long as there is a sufficient fuel, heat, and oxygen source available.”**
  2. When fuel, heat, and oxygen are brought together, a potentially dangerous and lethal situation exist. We refer to these three components as the “Fire Triangle” (refer to the fire triangle diagram).
  3. Identify and discuss the different types of fuels and the physical state (solid, liquid and gas) that we most often find them.
    - A. Did your incident involve any of the fuels listed on the diagram?
    - B. Did you know how they would react once they were set on fire?
  4. Identify the different heat sources and give examples of each (match, lighter, candle, a hot surface, or electrical arc).
  5. A fire needs oxygen for the chemical reaction to take place. There is enough oxygen in the air we breathe to support burning. Increased air movement, such as wind, may intensify the burning process.
  6. Extinguishing a fire is theoretically simple. If we are able to remove any part of the fire triangle the fire will go out.
    - A. How can the heat of a fire be removed? **Answer: Putting water on it is the most common method.**
    - B. How can the fuel be removed? **Answer: Make a fire break, turn off the flow of liquid, or pull unburned material out of the fire.**
    - C. How can oxygen be removed from the fire? **Answer: Cover the fire with dirt, a bucket, a pan lid, or some other material that will not burn.**

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VI. Fire Behavior

7. Knowing these facts about fire, what do you think is the best method of controlling fires? **Answer: The best way to control fires is to never let them start. Preventing fires is always easier than extinguishing them.**

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
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LESSON PLAN

## VII. Legal Responsibilities

*Instructor's Note: Corresponds to the workbook.*

### Section Objectives:

- A. Define what a law is and why we have them.
- B. Compare and contrast the juvenile and adult legal systems.
- C. Identify three legal responsibilities for parents and juvenile.

### 1. The Legal System

- A. With few exceptions, juvenile offenders have no **special rights** under the law. Procedural differences are plentiful, but in general, juveniles are held to an equal standard to obey the law. Under certain conditions, juveniles may be tried in the adult court system.
- B. What is a law? **Answer: A law is a rule or standard established to protect its citizens or to regulate behavior which is deemed dangerous, inappropriate, offensive or damaging to the society at large.**
- C. Why do we have laws? **Answer: Laws establish order, provide for safety, and establish guidelines for individual and corporate behavior in society.**

2. The Juvenile Justice System enforces the law and protects people under the age of eighteen. One goal of this system is to keep juveniles from becoming adult offenders. The procedures found in juvenile and adult court are similar but the terminology may differ. For instance an adult is a 'criminal' and juvenile is a 'delinquent offender'. Juveniles are taken into custody and adults are arrested. Adults commit crimes and juveniles commit delinquent acts. Adults go to jail and juvenile offenders go to a detention facility.

3. The law requires that we follow a given standard of conduct. When we fail to meet that standard and others are harmed we are said to be liable. The juvenile justice system calls these liabilities "sanctions".

Parents can be held responsible for their child's behavior. They may have one or all of the following sanctions imposed on them:

- A. Criminal and/ or civil prosecution
- B. Restitution (parents are financially liable)
- C. Loss of custody of the child

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VII. Legal Responsibilities

Children also can have sanctions imposed upon them. Some of these might include:

- A. Establishment of criminal record
  - B. Community service of 20 hours
  - C. Financial restitution
4. Juvenile Crimes Do Count - Recent court rulings allow for violent felonies committed by juveniles to be considered as a “strike” in subsequent adult criminal trials. Two points to remember are:
- A. Arson is a Felony. This is in the same category as homicide, rape, aggravated assault and other violent crimes.
  - B. Fires set by juveniles may be considered felony arson regardless of their motive.
5. Informal Probation (654 WIC) - If you are on informal probation, it is **your** responsibility to complete all sanctions and to violate no other laws. Failure to do so puts you in jeopardy of formal probation hearings and or incarceration. If you have signed a Fire F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Firesetter Agreement and fail to complete all of the requirements you will be referred to Juvenile Probation.
6. Can your juvenile record be sealed? This is a question that is often a concern for both parents and juveniles. The answer is, maybe. Sealing a juvenile record is a formal process. The juvenile court is petitioned and asked to seal a juvenile’s criminal record. If the petition is granted, all activity within the record is sealed and cannot be opened or reviewed without a court order.
7. The legal process can sometimes be confusing. One important point to remember is that our legal system is based on fairness to all without prejudice to any. Do you have any questions or comments about your experience with the legal process?
- Instructor Note: Should there be questions about the legal system that you are unable to answer you may refer the participants to the Fire F.R.I.E.N.D.S. office for assistance.***

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VIII. Putting It All Together/ Four Years Later Video

*Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. This is your opportunity to recap and to add to the information provided in this lesson. As the facilitator, may respond to any issue that was not adequately addressed or to any question that the participants may have. The video Four Years Later is provided as a follow-up to the video In Their Own Words. Should you use the video please refer to the Instructor's Guide for discussion points.*

1. We have covered many topics in this session. Tell me three things that you have learned.  
*Instructor Note: You do not have to take detailed notes on these points. There is no right or wrong response but rather a subjective evaluation on the part of the participant.*
2. As we saw in the video(s), fires are sometimes set in response to a particular event or emotion. This may include boredom, anger, fear, revenge, sadness, peer pressure and a number of others. What are some alternate behaviors that may be used in place of firesetting to express these emotions?  
*Instructor Note: Encourage the participant to list as many alternatives as possible. Alternatives may include: Talk to a friend or counselor, keep a diary, sports, hobbies, change friends, talk to a parent or teacher.*
3. In order to successfully complete this program you must complete a homework assignment. You have \_\_\_\_\_ week(s) to complete this assignment. You must return the assignment to me as scheduled or you will be reported as not having completed the program. Should you be unable to complete this assignment as scheduled you must telephone me at \_\_\_\_\_ before the due date.
4. Before I give you your assignment is there anything that you would like to talk about?  
*Instructor Note: The parents should be asked if they have any questions, comments or concerns.*

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LESSON PLAN

IX. Homework

***Instructor Note: Corresponds to workbook. Choose the most appropriate assignment for each participant. All written assignments shall be double spaced, one inch margins and no larger than 12 point font.***

1. All participants must draw and submit a home escape plan. On the plan show the location of all exits, working smoke detectors, and fire extinguishers. The quality of the plan should increase with the grade level of the participant.

***Instructor Note: Provide the participant a Home Escape Plan Worksheet.***

2. Homework Assignments for Grades 4 through 6.
  - A. Design a poster with the theme, “Firesetting is Dangerous.” You may use original drawings, photographs, newspaper clippings, and text to get your message across  
OR
  - B. Write a fictional story (two pages minimum) telling how a juvenile set fire affected a person, family, school, or town.
3. Homework Assignments for Grades 7 - 8.
  - A. Write an essay (two page minimum) on the topic: The History of Fire In the essay discuss the history of fire and how it is used by society. Identify both the good and bad aspects of fire. Conclude the report with your opinion as to whether or not the benefits of using fire outweigh the risks  
OR
  - B. Conduct a survey. Question a minimum of ten adults. You may include friends, family, teachers and neighbors. Ask the following questions:
    1. Would you consider a fire started by juveniles to be a crime?
    2. If your property was damaged by a juvenile set fire would you expect to be reimbursed for your loss?
    3. Should parents be held responsible for their children’s behavior?
    4. At what age should a child be held responsible for their actions?
    5. What consequences should be served for setting fires?

Record each person’s answer. Write a summary of your findings. Answer these questions: 1.) What did you learn from this survey? 2.) Did any of the answers surprise you? 3.) Did the survey change your opinion or attitude about firesetting? In what way?

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IX. Homework

4. Homework Assignments for High School Grades 9 - 10.

- A. Write an essay (two page minimum) on any major fire that has occurred in the United States. Provide a summary of the fire. Identify the victims and discuss the impact of this fire to the community (local, state and/ or national). You must also answer this question in your essay; "Could this fire have been prevented?"

***Instructor Note:*** You may provide the participant with some fires to be researched and written about. Suggested topics include the Great Chicago Fire, Beverly Hills Supper Club, the Station Nightclub West Warwick Road Island.

OR

- B. You are a candidate for the President of the United States. You are running on a "Stop Juvenile Firesetting" platform. Write a three to five minute speech on "Why the National Juvenile Firesetting Education Budget should be increased. Include ideas on how you will reduce the incidence of juvenile firesetting.

***Instructor Note:*** Tell the participant that they should be prepared to deliver the speech to you on their return visit.

5. Homework Assignments for High School Grade 11 - 12.

- A. For this assignment you have been found guilty of setting a fire which costs \$10,000 to extinguish and investigate. You have been ordered to pay restitution to the fire department for the full \$10,000 amount. You cannot borrow the money to pay this debt. The debt must be paid back in five years or less. Identify how you will pay this debt. Include the type of work you will do to earn the money. How much can you earn in a week and how much can you afford to pay toward the debt each week? How long will it take you to pay off the debt? This assignment requires you to develop a budget based on accurate potential earning figures. As you develop the budget keep in mind future debts you may have as you get older. This may include a car, insurance payments, college expenses, work tools, food, rent, etc.

After completing the budget process write a one page paper describing the impact that this hypothetical situation might have had on your future. Are the risks of bad decision making worth the potential consequences? How can negative consequences be prevented?

OR

- B. Write an essay (minimum of three pages plus bibliography) on the topic of How the Issue of Juvenile Firesetting Should be Addressed on a Local, State,

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IX. Homework

and Federal Level. You may include any facts or information received in this class.

6. Homework Assignment for Juveniles Involved With Fireworks.

All juveniles, grades 7 - 12, seen for the possession and discharge fireworks shall be assigned to answer the following questions. Research material on this subject is available at many public libraries.

1. Are fireworks dangerous? Why or why not? What special hazards do aerial fireworks present?
2. What does the term "Safe and Sane" mean? Are all fireworks "Safe and Sane?" Why or why not?
3. What physical injuries may occur from the improper use, handling or storage of fireworks?
4. What special knowledge is required for those who put on pyrotechnic displays?
5. In your opinion should the sale of fireworks be banned in California?
6. Should there be any restrictions placed on the use of fireworks? Why?
7. In areas where fireworks are allowed, what can make their use safe?
8. How would you inform the public about the dangers of fireworks?

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IX. Homework

7. Homework Assignment for Juveniles Involved With Malicious False Alarms.

All juveniles, grades 7 - 12, seen for involvement with malicious false alarms shall write a research paper (two page minimum) that answers the following questions.

1. What are some types of alarms systems and where are they found?
2. What is the primary purpose of an automatic alarm system?
3. What impacts do false alarms have on:
  - a. The building occupants and owners
  - b. Emergency personnel
  - c. Insurance companies
  - d. The community and/or your family
4. What can be done to lessen the number of false alarms?

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X. Return Visit (Optional)

*Instructor Note: This is an optional visit at the discretion of the program facilitator. Use this time to ensure that the assigned work was completed appropriately. This session may be used as an option to the Group Intervention session if it is not available.*

1. Schedule return visit with the participants.
2. This visit usually takes only a few minutes.
3. Review the finished homework assignment with the participant. Check the assignment for completeness and adherence to the criteria given. Discuss any corrections or errors with the participant.
4. Certificates of Completion should be awarded at the time or mailed to the participant as soon as possible.
6. If not already done, have the parent complete the Parent Reaction Survey.

FIRE F.R.I.E.N.D.S.  
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LESSON PLAN

XI. Evaluation

***Instructor Note: Corresponds to the workbook. The Parent Reaction Survey should be completed by the parent.***

1. It is our desire to provide the most up to date and effective education possible. In order to meet this goal we need your feedback. Please complete the Parent Reaction Survey form before you leave.
2. To ensure the effectiveness of our program you will be contacted in three months. At that time we will want to know if there has been any further firesetting activity. Prior to that time, should you discover that the firesetting behavior has not ceased you are encouraged to contact us immediately.
3. Thank you for your cooperation and participation with the Fire F.R.I.E.N.D.S. program.

