

Fire Safety



True Story

A 2-year-old was asleep in her bed while her mother worked nearby. The mother lit a candle for religious purposes and left the room with the candle unattended. Some time later, the mother and other occupants of the house awoke to loud noises and screams from the child's bedroom. Though they tried to save the child, they were unsuccessful because of the heavy smoke and flames. The cause of death was smoke inhalation and thermal burns.

-From the files of MECAP
(Medical Examiners and Coroners Alert Project)

The Facts

- Each year nearly 500 children ages 14 and younger die and 40,000 are injured in residential fires.
- More than 70% of all fire-related deaths are from smoke inhalation.
- A working smoke alarm is not present in 2/3 of the residential fires in which a child is injured or killed.
- Home fires and home fire-related deaths are more likely to occur during cold-weather months, December through March.
- Fires in the home are often caused by cooking equipment, smoking materials and child fire play.

What You Can Do

- Keep matches, gasoline, lighters and all other flammable materials locked away and out of children's reach.
- Install smoke alarms in your home on every level and in every sleeping area. Test them once a month, and replace the batteries yearly.
- Plan and practice several fire escape routes from each room of the home, and identify an outside meeting place.



Led By

**BLANK CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**
IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM

Safe Kids Greater Des Moines, led by Blank Children's Hospital, is a grassroots organization dedicated to preventing unintentional injury in children ages 0-14.

For more information call (515) 241-6293 or visit www.dsmsafekids.org.

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