

Teaching your child(ren) about fire safety, the dangers of fire and what to do if there is a fire helps prevent emergencies and, most importantly, keeps them out of harms way.

The below tips will help keep your family safe and teach fire safety:

- ▶ Make a home fire escape plan, which details how your family will escape your home if there is an emergency. This includes two ways out of every room and a meeting place outside where everyone will meet after escaping. Use our [home fire escape plan tip sheet](#) to create your plan.
- ▶ Practice your home fire escape plan with everyone in the family at least twice per year during the day and at night. This helps ensure all family members know what they need to do in case of an emergency. Teach your children to escape on their own if you aren't able to help them.
- ▶ Smoke alarms can be scary to young children; be sure your children know what the smoke alarm sounds like and that they need to get outside and stay outside when they hear the smoke alarm.
- ▶ Put your home address and emergency phone numbers up in our home so children can find them in an emergency.
- ▶ It is natural for young children to be curious and ask questions about fire, play with fire trucks or pretend to cook. Use these opportunities to teach them about fire safety.
- ▶ Be a good example. Always use fire sources – matches, lighters, candles, fireplaces and campfires – in a safe manner. Never treat them as toys, as children may imitate you.
- ▶ Teach children the dangers of lighters and matches. Learn more in the “Lighters and matches” section of this tip sheet.
- ▶ Closely supervise children and make sure they keep their distance from fire sources, including lit candles, cigarettes, firepits and stoves. Explain that fire moves very fast and can hurt as soon as it touches them, which is why they need to keep their distance from fire sources.
- ▶ Establish clear rules and consequences about unsupervised and unauthorized uses of fire.
- ▶ Talk with children about what their friends or other children are doing with fire. What are they seeing online in video games, on TV, in movies, and on social media? Teach them specific ways to resist peer pressure to misuse fire.
- ▶ Give praise for showing respect and age-appropriate, responsible behaviour towards fire.

Lighters and matches

Children who have access to lighters and matches risk causing fires that could lead to injuries and death. According to [Alberta fire statistics](#), 20 per cent of child fire victims died in fires started by children under the age of 11.

Follow the below tips to reduce the risk to you and your family.

- ▶ Teach children to never touch lighters or matches.
- ▶ Keep lighters and matches out of sight and reach of children at all times. Keep lighters and matches up high in a locked cabinet, if possible.
- ▶ Teach children to tell a grown-up when they find matches or lighters, and reward them when they come to you.
- ▶ Check under beds and in closets for burnt matches. Burnt matches may be evidence that your child is playing with fire.
- ▶ Keep in mind that:
 - ▶ not all lighters are child-resistant
 - ▶ child-resistant does not mean child-proof
 - ▶ lighters that look like toys are appealing to children

Staying away from hot things

Children younger than five are at the highest risk for burn injuries. Burn injuries in young children occur most frequently from touching a hot object (contact burns), like a stovetop or an iron. Burns can also occur from hot liquids (scalds), including tap and bath water, and chemical or electrical burns.

Follow the below tips to reduce the risk to you and your family.

- ▶ Teach children the difference between hot and cool, and teach them common items that could be hot, including the following:
 - ▶ tap and bath water
 - ▶ curling and flat irons
 - ▶ lighters
 - ▶ stoves and ovens
 - ▶ fireplaces and firepits
 - ▶ candles
 - ▶ soup
 - ▶ mugs filled with liquid
- ▶ Teach children the risks of touching hot items and teach them to stay away from hot items and to ask a grown-up for help.
- ▶ Teach children not to turn on the water without grown-up supervision, as the water could be hot.

Stop, drop and roll

Teach your child(ren) what they need to do if their hair or clothes catch on fire. They need to STOP, DROP and ROLL.

- ▶ **STOP** immediately! Do not run or attempt to remove your clothing
- ▶ **DROP** to the ground as quickly and safely as possible. Use your hands to cover your face.
- ▶ **ROLL** back and forth or over on the ground until the fire is out.

Visit sparkyschoolhouse.org for more age-appropriate tips to teach children about fire safety.

*Information contained in this tip sheet was sourced from the **National Fire Protection Association**, the **Government of Canada** and **St. John Ambulance**.*

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