

# The ABC's of Fire

***An Encyclopedia and Practical Family Guide to  
FIRE SAFETY, PREVENTION and RECOVERY***

**Safeguarding and Providing Mental Health Resources for  
Adults, Adolescents and Children Impacted by Fires**

*with*

*Virginia Tech's*

# REAACT

**Recovery Efforts After Adult & Child Trauma**

# How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to be an interactive reference tool. We hope that parents will encourage their children to explore the fun activities and will sit down and examine them together.



## Our Goals and Objectives

- Provide a basic understanding of fires and how they might occur
- Give guidelines to help make your home less vulnerable to fires
- Provide an understanding of evacuation skills for any type of fire
- Support individuals who share a sense of loss or trauma
- Be a part of a team of counseling and psychological services
- Help identify service needs and connect families with resources

## Helping Children Prepare for Emergencies

When disaster strikes, it is important to be aware of who can assist you and where you can go for support. It is also important to remember that help can grow not only from mental health providers, but also from your priest/preacher/clergy, extended family, friends, trusted medical doctor(s), and other parents/guardians.

Be patient with your child. Learning takes time and positive encouragement is one of the best routes to ensure success. Ask your child to recite the information that has been learned so you can check for understanding. Allow your child to ask questions. Give the answers to the best of your ability.



*Throughout this guide you will see Zip, a friendly Dalmatian puppy. He will remind you of things that are very important. A summary of all of his tips can be found under the letter Z.*

# The ABCs of Fire

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## **Recovery Efforts After Adult & Child Trauma**

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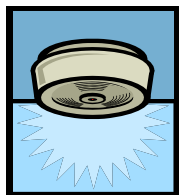
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# Alarms and Smoke Safety



Having smoke alarms in your home is a great way to be prepared for an unexpected home fire. Not only are alarms easy to install and require little maintenance, they are also an affordable way to keep your home equipped with a warning system to evacuate your loved ones.

## Checking Your Smoke Alarm

Standard smoke alarms are good for approximately 8-10 years with the proper maintenance. After the ten year mark, it is best to buy new models for your home.

On a **monthly** basis, you should check your alarm to see if it is still working by pressing the “test” button. This is a great way to see if your system needs a new battery, or if you need to upgrade the alarm itself. This also provides an opportunity to ensure that there is no dust or residue on your alarm, which can prevent it from working properly. On a **yearly** basis, you should change the battery in your alarm. A good way of making sure you keep up with this routine is to pick a birthday, holiday, or special day marked on your calendar with a reminder so you are prepared to change the battery in your system. This would be a great project for your children so that each year, they can help and learn about fire safety around the home.



## Comparing Types of Smoke Alarms

There are three main types of smoke alarms that you can purchase for your home: Ionization, Photoelectric, and Dual Sensor Alarms. The Dual Sensor alarm is the most recommended by the United States Fire Administration. Also, when shopping for any type of smoke alarm, look for the Underwriters Laboratories symbol to ensure a safe product will be installed.

**Ionization Smoke Alarm:** These smoke alarms are highly sensitive. This allows them to detect small bits of burning material, such as those that come from flickering paper or dangerous splashes from grease fires. They are quick to sound an alert after any type of fast, flaming fires.

**Photoelectric Smoke Alarm:** These smoke alarms are the opposite of ionization smoke alarms. Instead, photoelectric alarms are highly sensitive to large amounts of smoke that can come from items that sit a long time before catching a flame, such as a dropped cigarette on a carpet that slowly burns before catching fire. They are quick to sound an alert after any types of slow, smoldering fires.

**Dual Sensor Smoke Alarm:** Overall, these are the most cost effective smoke alarms to install in your home because they are wired with **ionization AND photoelectric** capabilities. This means that the dual sensor alarms can do the job of both in one device. Also, since fires are unpredictable, these alarms can warn your family of either fast or slow moving fires. It is best to prepare for each in your home and it is for this reason that the U.S. Fire Administration recommends installing dual sensor smoke alarms in your home OR both ionization & photoelectric alarms side by side.

The pricing for ionization, photoelectric, and dual sensor smoke alarms can run from as low as \$20 at a local department store to over \$100 at home security and monitoring sites. The important thing to remember is, no matter your budget, the investment will be well worth the time and money for your family's safety.



## Installing Smoke Alarms

When purchasing smoke alarms, it is best to remember how many levels you have in your home, as well as the number of bedrooms. Alarms are the first step in letting you know when to evacuate, so putting them in and outside of immediate areas where you may fall asleep is recommended.

Most systems that are available in department stores come with the proper instructions for setting them up and usually only require a screwdriver and the proper battery (or batteries). Smoke rises, so alarms should be set up on ceilings or at the tops of walls with at least four inches of distance from the nearest wall(s).

Keep in mind that steam can set off alarms unnecessarily so try to avoid setting them up near your bathrooms. However, if an alarm is already set up in the area around a bathroom or kitchen, and it sounds because of steam or cooking smoke, **DO NOT** take out the battery to stop the warning system. Instead, you can either look for alarms that have a "nuisance" or "hush" button for these occasions, OR you can fan the area surrounding the alarm until the alarm stops beeping. **People often forget to put the batteries back in their systems, which renders the alarm useless during an emergency.**

If you have trouble installing your alarm, call the manufacturer's troubleshooting line, a friend, relative or your local fire department on the NON-emergency line to help you set it up.

## Smoke Safety

During a fire, smoke can often be just as dangerous to your health and survival as the fire itself. Smoke offers more than a visibility challenge. It can be extremely hazardous to the lungs. Smoke, for the most part, consists of the chemical carbon dioxide. Although carbon dioxide is not dangerous in small doses, in the case of fires, it can occupy large amounts of your breathing air. Breathing in too much carbon dioxide is like breathing in too much water. When doing so, you do not get the amount of oxygen your body needs to operate, resulting in slow movement, unconsciousness, or even death.

Smoke also poses another risk to your health in the form of temperature. The air is never quite as hot as the actual fire, but the air temperatures of smoke can still be high enough to cause burn injuries to the lungs.

Overall, smoke is responsible for 50-80% of deaths caused by fire (EmedicineHealth.com). That is why it is important to take the necessary precautions to improve your chances of getting out of your home safely.

In an evacuation one of the most important rules is to stay low. Warm air rises and smoke can be warm or even hot, so by staying down low, you are attempting to avoid the greatest dangers of the smoke. Also, by covering your face with a wet cloth or rag, you can filter out some of the smoke.

In the process of evacuation, crawl to safety. Once out of the building, make your way to a safe location that is far from the immediate area of any flames and/or smoke. In most cases, after safely evacuating from a fire, you want to seek medical attention, especially if you have encountered any type of smoke inhalation.

The amount of damage caused by smoke is usually underestimated in the early minutes after leaving a fire. A professional is needed to examine your lungs, but there are many inhalation symptoms that you can look out for. These symptoms are heavy coughing, shortness of breath (any trouble breathing), hoarseness, headache, or a state of confusion.

### Smoke Safety

[http://www.emedicinehealth.com/smoke\\_inhalation/article](http://www.emedicinehealth.com/smoke_inhalation/article)

*Keep in mind that a smoke alarm is only one part of the safety process.*



# Babysitter Basics

House fires are the second leading cause of death in the home. To ensure your children are safe when you hire a babysitter, follow these simple guidelines.

## Things you should do ahead of time:

- Inform your babysitter about fire safety.
- Give them an escape plan to memorize before they come over to babysit.
- Give your babysitter a tour of the house, pointing out all doors and windows.
- Make sure your babysitter knows and practices getting out of each room in your home.
- Show your babysitter where the fire alarm(s) and extinguisher(s) are located.
- Test your fire alarm to make sure it is working.
- Tell your babysitter where your meeting place is if a fire occurs.
- Keep all matches, lighters, or other fire devices out of children's reach.

## Tips to share with your babysitter:

- Do not smoke or use candles while babysitting.
- Space heaters should have 3 feet of open space surrounding them, so do not put anything that can burn near them.
- Do not let children play near space heaters.
- If you are cooking, declare a "kid-free zone" 3 feet around the stove or microwave.
- Do not let children or their toys near the stove/oven.
- Never leave the kitchen unattended while cooking.
- Keep all pot and pan handles facing inward so children cannot grab them.
- Always use microwave friendly containers and do not leave food in the microwave longer than the directions say.

### **If a fire does occur your babysitter should:**

- Get the children out of the home safely and quickly.
- Once everyone is out of the home, call 911 from a neighbor's home or cell phone.
- Never go back into the home for anything!
- If the children cannot escape the home, call 911 and tell them exactly where they are located in the home.
- Give the dispatcher the exact address, phone number, and any other information in a clear voice.
- Call the adults who hired you AFTER you call 911.
- Once you are outside keep all of the children with you at all times, and do not let them go back into the home for anything!

### **Evacuation tips for your babysitter:**

- If the primary escape plan is impossible due to smoke or fire, use the backup plan.
- If smoke is unavoidable, crawl low on the floor with your head close to the ground.
- Check all doors for heat before opening them. If there is fire on the other side, it will feel warm around the cracks.
- Kneel down, reach up as high as you can, and touch the door knob and door frame with the back of your hand.
- If the door is cool, then open it with caution. If it is warm or hot then try another escape route.

## **Babysitters' Fire Safety Websites**

[http://www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/docs/babysitter\\_fstips.pdf](http://www.firecomm.gov.mb.ca/docs/babysitter_fstips.pdf)

<http://www.vafire.com>



*Make sure that your babysitter knows who to call and what to do in an emergency, especially if there is a fire.*



# Babysitter Evacuation Plan

Be sure to have 2 ways out of each room in your home.

Location of Fire Alarm(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Fire Extinguisher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Family Meeting Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Evacuation Route for Living Room: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Kitchen: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Dining Room: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Bedroom 1: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Bedroom 2: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Bedroom 3: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Evacuation Route for Other Rooms: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Dial 911 first in the event of an emergency.**

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Parent Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address of the Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Family's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Where the Parents Can Be Reached: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Time Parents Will Arrive Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Children's Names and Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Emergency Contacts:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Poison Control: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

# Communities and Firefighters

Firefighters are there to help. It is very important to them to save as many lives as possible, and get the fire out as soon as possible.



The best way to help your local firefighter is by being safe. And if they ever come to your home, remember to listen to them – they want what's best for everyone.

Keep a look out in your local newspaper or community event calendar for Fire Safety Open-House events in your area.



*Respect firefighters because they are trained professionals who think and respond with safety in mind first.*

## FIREFIGHTER PROJECT

During a fire, a firefighter's clothing is one of the most important tools that he uses.

- The jacket, pants, boots, and gloves protect a firefighter from getting burned when he is dealing with fire.
- The helmet helps protect the firefighter from anything that may fall during a fire.
- The mask helps the firefighter breathe and see better in the smoke.

Have fun with the project on the next page!

## HELPING FIREFIGHTER CHARLIE GET DRESSED FOR THE FIRE

Instructions: Color Firefighter Charlie and his clothes. Cut out the pieces of clothing that Firefighter Charlie will need to help put out a fire. Please remember to be safe with scissors during this project.



# Do's and Don'ts

## Do. . .

Familiarize yourself and your family with your school and workplace emergency plans. This allows you to check the effectiveness of your plans.

Have children learn their address and full names of their family members.

Have a family contact plan.

Create an emergency kit that includes basic necessities.

Give someone the responsibility of assisting any household member who has trouble moving.

Save receipts for any money that you spend related to a disaster. (These may be needed later for insurance and income tax purposes).

Contact local disaster-relief groups for temporary assistance.

Contact your mortgage and insurance company if property damage occurs.

## Don't...

Do **NOT** attempt to turn off utilities after a fire. Let the fire department do this.

Do **NOT** go back into a burning building.

Do **NOT** leave burning candles unattended.

Do **NOT** leave on decorative lights when leaving the house or going to sleep.

### Online Resource

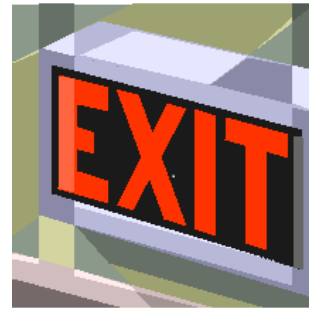
National Fire Protection Association [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)



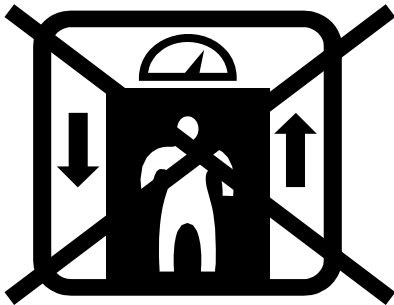
*Do not smoke. Not only is it bad for your health, it can cause a fire!*

# Exit Signs

When entering a building, look around and locate all doors labeled "EXIT." Each exit in a building must be clearly visible and marked with illuminated, easily legible exit signs. Doors that look like exits, but do not provide throughways to safe places will be marked according to their function or as "NOT AN EXIT."



If it is unclear how to get to an exit, look around for signs that illustrate exit strategies for that particular facility.



In case of a fire, never use elevators!  
Instead, look for the stairwells!

## *Windows & Doors*

Having two ways out of every room is a good idea. A door can be one way out, but a window can be a second way. Look for windows that could be used in case of an emergency. Make sure that they are not painted shut and that the screen is easily removable.

Any windows and doors that have safety bars on them must have emergency quick-release hatches. This will allow access out of them when needed.



*Collapsible ladders may make escaping out of a window easier.*

# Fire Extinguishers

## Maintenance of Fire Extinguishers

You should check your fire extinguisher every 30 days. According to codes and regulations, a fire extinguisher should be checked annually to make sure that all parts are properly functioning.

**You should be continuously checking to see if your fire extinguisher has enough pressure to work.**



## How to Operate Your Fire Extinguisher

With proper supervision, practice handling the fire extinguisher so that you can get a feel for how to carry it. Be familiar with all instructions usually located on the side of the extinguisher. Most common fire extinguishers contain a nozzle, a pull pin, a squeeze handle, and a gauge (which informs you how much pressure is left within the tank).

**ALWAYS REMEMBER: DO NOT USE EXTINGUISHERS UNLESS IN A FIRE.**

Fire extinguishers work by maintaining pressure. If you pull the pin and squeeze the handle without the presence of an actual fire, you run the risk of losing the extinguisher's ability to fight fires later on.

If there is a case of a fire happening, and you have your fire extinguisher in hand, please follow these steps.

1. READ THE LABEL. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT YOUR EXTINGUISHER WILL BE ABLE TO PUT OUT THE FIRE.
2. PULL THE PIN LOCATED ON THE EXTINGUISHER'S HANDLE.
3. AIM THE NOZZLE TOWARDS THE BASE OF THE FIRE, WHILE STANDING BACK AT A SAFE DISTANCE.
4. SQUEEZE THE HANDLE. THIS WILL START THE SPRAYING PROCESS.
5. SWEEP THE FIRE. MAKE SURE YOU APPROPRIATELY COVER THE ENTIRE FIRE UNTIL IT IS COMPLETELY OUT.
6. RECHARGE & DISCHARGE THE EXTINGUISHER IMMEDIATELY AFTER USE.

## Fire Extinguisher Short Cut—The “**PASS**” Technique

**Pull the pin.**



**Aim the nozzle at the base of fire.**



**Squeeze the handle.**



**Sweep side to side.**



Make your shot count. With small fire extinguishers you do not have a lot of time to put out a fire. Be sure to use the extinguisher wisely by aiming at the base of the fire instead of at the furthest edge.



There will be cases where you will not be able to put out the entire fire. A fire extinguisher can still slow the fire, giving you and your family a better chance to safely evacuate.

## Types of Fires

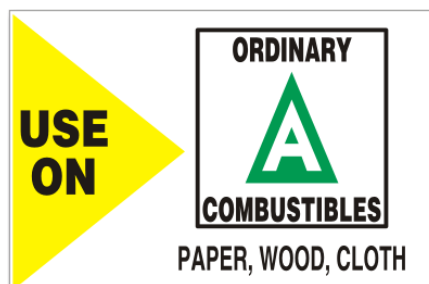
There are several different types of fires, each with unique characteristics. This is important because different fires require different materials to put them out. Below is a brief overview of fires and what is important to know about them.

Class	Brief Description
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fires ignited from paper, wood, trash, cloth, rubber, and plastic</li></ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any type of flammable liquid: gasoline, paint, petroleum oil, kerosene, tar, butane, and propane (does NOT include animal fat or vegetable oil)</li><li>• Ignite extremely fast, spread rapidly, and can be explosive</li></ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any type of electrical fire: energized electrical equipment, power tools, motors, transformers, circuit boxes, power switches, and anything that can put off an electrical discharge</li><li>• Unique because you are dealing with a fire and electricity simultaneously, and electricity can be just as deadly as the fire itself</li></ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any combustible metals: magnesium, titanium, potassium, sodium, and aluminum</li><li>• These types of fires are extremely rare.</li></ul>
<b>K</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Any kitchen-based fire involving animal fat, grease, or vegetable oil</li><li>• Often occur in the kitchen, common in the home</li><li>• Occur under high temperatures, and should not be put out with water</li><li>• Respond to a fire extinguisher that has been approved for grease fires</li><li>• Can be suffocated (removing the oxygen that it needs to continue burning) by placing a metal top over the source of the fire</li></ul>

**Fire extinguishers are not guaranteed to be capable of putting out a fire.**

It is always important to realize that getting out safely is the most important thing. The following information will help you make a decision about the type of fire extinguisher you need.

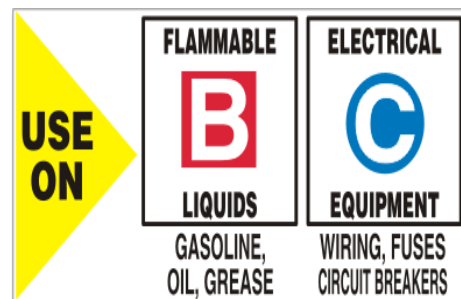
## Types of Fire Extinguishers



**Water Extinguishers:** These extinguishers spray water over the fire, getting the area wet enough for the fire to go out. Water extinguishers are simple, but they are not the best. Water can only be used on **Class A** fires. Using water on other classes of fires can be dangerous and can often make this situation worse.

**Water Mist Fire Extinguishers:** These extinguishers are only different from the water extinguishers in how the water is dispensed. They work by removing the heat from the fire and can be useful on **Class A** fires and have also been shown to be safe to use on **Class C** fires.

**Carbon Dioxide Extinguishers:** Fires need oxygen to exist. The carbon dioxide extinguisher works by taking away the oxygen the fire is breathing, reducing the fire's ability to burn until it is completely extinguished. The extinguisher also helps decrease the overall heat of the fire. These types of extinguishers work best on **Class B** and **Class C** fires.



**Dry Chemical Extinguishers:** There are several types of dry chemical extinguishers, and knowing which type you have can be very useful in certain fire situations. These extinguishers work by dispensing a blanket of non-flammable material that puts a barrier between the oxygen and the fuel, making it so that the chemical REAACTION can no longer occur. Always read the label on these types of extinguishers. Ones using Sodium or Potassium Bicarbonate are only effective on **Class B and C** fires. While ones using Ammonium Phosphate can work on fire **Classes A, B, and C**. These types of extinguishers can be corrosive after being used on certain materials. Be sure to follow up on which environments a dry chemical extinguisher can best be used.

**Wet Chemical Extinguishers:** These extinguishers work by spraying out a wet chemical that absorbs the heat from the fire and puts a barrier between the oxygen and the fuel, destroying the chemical REAACTION between the two. These extinguishers have been termed the kitchen extinguishers, and they are specialized in dealing with **Class K** fires. Some have also been shown to work on **Class A** fires.



***Metal and Sand Extinguishers:*** These extinguishers have best been designed to put out **Class D** fires. In most instances when you need a metal or sand extinguisher, you are working with a particular type of metal where a fire may be a risk. Be sure you get the fire extinguisher most appropriate for your particular environment. Information about each specific type, and what metal fires they are best used on should be on the label.

***Clean Agent or Halogenated Fire Extinguishers:*** These fire extinguishers work by using either halon agents or

**HALONGENATED**

halocarbon agents in destroying the chemical REAACTion existing within a fire. The halocarbon agents have shown to be more eco-friendly, decreasing the amount of ozone depleting chemical in the atmosphere. These types of extinguishers have been designed to work on both **Class B** and **Class C** fires. In some cases, these extinguishers can be useful against **Class A** fires if the tank is large enough.

## Storage of Fire Extinguishers

Make sure that you store your fire extinguisher in a safe easy-to-reach location. You should keep your fire extinguisher visible. Do not allow anything to block access to your fire extinguisher.



*Try to have fire extinguisher(s) that can put out Class A, B, and C fires because these are the most common type of household fires.*

# General Information about Fires

## Components

Fires can occur in just about any location. They only need a few key elements: oxygen, heat, fuel, and the chemical REAACTION that combines them. Oxygen is part of the air we breathe. Fuel can be thought of as anything that can catch fire. Since oxygen and fuel are everywhere, when the right heat element is introduced, the possibility of a fire exists.

## Statistics

On average in the United States in 2003, someone died in a fire about every 2 hours (134 minutes), and someone was injured every 29 minutes (Karter 2004).

In 2003, fire departments responded to 402,000 home fires in the United States, which claimed the lives of 3,145 people (not including firefighters) and 14,075 were injured (Karter 2004).

Approximately half of home fire deaths occur in homes without smoke alarms (Ahrens 2001).

Children 4 years old and under are one of the populations who are considered at increased risk for fire-related injuries and death (CDC 1998).

Following a residential fire, 7% of children develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, 9% develop depression, and two-thirds suffer from high distress. Also, most children who have experienced a residential fire say that the fire was the worst thing that has ever happened to them (Jones and Ollendick, 2002).

## A Surprising Fact

It takes less than 5 minutes for a fire to be out of control.



*Understand the basic facts about fires so that you can know what to do if a fire happens. Respond immediately because every single second counts.*






# Home Safety

There are many things in a home that can start a fire. Outlined below are suggestions that could help reduce the risk of fire.







## PRIME AREAS

Because a great deal of heat is produced at all of these areas they can be key places for fires to start. To keep these areas safe, be sure to do the following:








### *Stoves, Ovens, and Grills*

-  Always keep the surfaces clean.
-  Avoid long sleeves that can easily catch fire when using these appliances.
-  Do not leave the appliances unattended while they are being used.
-  Keep loose, flammable items away from the heat source.
-  When finished, remember to turn off the appliance and keep things away from it for several hours until you are sure it has cooled down.

### *Heaters*

-  Make sure that the heater is properly plugged in, and the settings are at a safe level.
-  Keep loose, flammable items several feet away from the heater.
-  If heater is portable, make sure to read the instruction manual.
-  Make sure the heater is kept a safe distance away from the wall.
-  Do not use the heaters around a water source, such as a bathtub or sink.
-  Make sure heaters are properly maintained.

### *Fireplaces*



-  Never leave a fire unattended.
-  Always use a fireplace cover to reduce chances of hot ash escaping.
-  When using a gas fireplace, be sure to completely turn off the source of the gas after usage.
-  When putting out a fire, be sure that the fire is completely extinguished.
-  Avoid having any loose debris near the fireplace.
-  Keep all carpet and rugs a few feet back from the mouth of the fireplace.
-  Make sure that the chimney is properly cleaned. Soot build up can lead to dangerous fire situations.

## SECONDARY AREAS





Because the following liquids, items, and areas usually need human interaction in order to ignite a fire and cause potential harm, these are easily prevented by following a few safety guidelines:






### *Flammable Liquids*

-  Check to make sure that containers holding flammable liquids are approved and do not have any cracks or damage that could cause the liquid to leak out.
-  Make sure that flammable liquids are kept a safe distance away from a potential fire source.




### *Cigarettes, Cigars, and Pipes*

-  Make sure these items are properly extinguished and discarded after use.
-  Do not smoke in bed.

### *Candles*



-  Do not leave candles unattended; be sure to put candles out before you leave the room.
-  Do not leave candles lit overnight.
-  Place candles on a safe, sturdy surface.
-  Do not set candles under or near anything that can catch fire.
-  Keep candles out of reach of children.

### *Lighters and Matches*


-  Keep out of the reach of children.
-  When done using matches, make sure that they are properly extinguished before disposal.
-  Use flashlights if possible in attics, closets, and basements.

## OTHER AREAS


### *Electrical Appliances*

-  Replace damaged electrical cords.
-  Repair appliances that smell, smoke, or overheat.

### *Microwaves*

-  Make sure to use containers that are safe for the microwave. Read instructions. Wait for cooked foods to cool before opening containers.

### *Electronic Equipment*


-  Make sure the air flow around all your equipment is adequate.

### *Clutter*

-  Keep areas clear of oily rags, newspapers, and trash.

## EXTRA SUPPORT




### *Sprinklers*

-  Consider the installation of an automatic home sprinkler system.

### *Ladders*

-  Fire escape ladders near the windows of upstairs bedrooms have saved lives.

### *Smoke Alarm Installation/Check*

-  It is recommended that you have a smoke alarm on each floor level.
-  Smoke alarms must have working batteries. Resist the urge to borrow the batteries for other items.
-  Check your alarm monthly to see if it is working.



See "Kids' Preparation for Emergencies" to practice the escape plan outlined in this manual.

## **Checking for Safety (Room-by-Room)**

### **Living Room**

- ☐ Open the flue or damper before starting a fire in your fireplace.
- ☐ Have your chimney cleaned and inspected by a professional yearly.
- ☐ Don't run electrical cords under rugs.
- ☐ Don't staple or nail electrical cords.

### **Bedroom**

- ☐ Install a carbon monoxide alarm near bedrooms.
- ☐ Never smoke in bed.
- ☐ Never leave heavy objects on the bed when an electric blanket is in use.
- ☐ Never use candles in your bedroom.
- ☐ Don't allow permanent use of extension cords.

### **Bathroom**

- ☐ Don't overload outlets with cords from too many appliances.
- ☐ If an outlet or switch feels unusually warm, stop using it and call an electrician.
- ☐ Unplug all appliances when done using them.
- ☐ Don't use appliances near water in the sink or tub.

### **Hallway**

- ☐ Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors or ducts.
- ☐ Clean/dust your smoke alarms every six months.
- ☐ Change your smoke alarm batteries at least once a year.

### **Kitchen**

- ☐ Make sure your fire extinguisher is for multipurpose use.
- ☐ Maintain a three-foot kid-free and pet-free zone around the stove.
- ☐ Avoid wearing loose-fitting clothing while you are cooking.



## **Checking for Safety (cont'd)**

### **Basement**

- ☐ Have your heating system serviced once a year before cold weather begins.
- ☐ Clean the lint tray in your dryer before each use and check around the drum for any accumulated lint.
- ☐ Do not let your dryer continue running when you leave your home.

### **Outdoors**

- ☐ Keep your grill at least three feet away from your home.
- ☐ Keep all exhaust vents from your home clear, and shovel out hydrants near your home.

# Injuries from Burns

Research shows that those most likely to be injured by fire are children and the elderly, and burn injuries are the third leading cause of death in children each year.

## Types of Burns

There are three main types of burns: first-degree, second-degree, and third-degree, with third-degree burns being the most severe. One is at risk of receiving any of these three types of burns when dealing with a fire.

First-degree burns are what you would receive from sunburn. Although these burns do hurt, they are not life threatening and do not normally require medical attention; however, both second and third-degree burns involve damage beyond your visible layer of skin and require immediate medical attention.

## Medical and Chemical Burns

Medical and chemical burns can hurt too! They may come from household cleaners or devices. Calling a poison control center may be helpful in treatment.

## First Aid for Burns

There are some simple tips that one can follow to respond to both minor and major burns. One should remember that although this information is important for simple first aid of burns, it is not meant to serve as a long-term medical solution. Individuals who are burned stand high risks of getting infections amongst other things. Also, always make it a priority to get medical attention after receiving a second or third-degree burn, but keep in mind that this information can be useful when medical help is not yet available.

**NOTE:** Second-degree burns that cover an area of two inches or more on the hands, feet, face, groin, buttocks, or at a joint on the body should **NOT** be treated as a minor burn, but instead as a major burn.

**Minor Burns:** Those that do not break the skin and can usually heal without much treatment

- Be calm, since it will help to comfort the person who is injured.
- Ask the individual if they have had a tetanus shot within the last 10 years. (This health care information can be very helpful to emergency personnel when they respond to the individual's burn).
- Run cool water over the burned area or, if possible, soak the burn in cool water for a period of at least five minutes. Using a clean, cool, damp to wet towel on the burn can also help to relieve the immediate pain of the burn. Do **NOT** use an ice bath of water, only cool water.
- After the skin has cooled, you may apply a **moisturizing lotion** to the minor burn, but it is not necessary. **Ibuprofen** and any type of pain relieving medicines with **acetaminophen** (examples: Tylenol, Excedrin, FeverAll for Children & Infants) can aid with pain and any swelling to the site of, or around, the burn. Do **NOT** give aspirin to children under the age of 12.
- Use a dry, clean & sterile dressing as a bandage over the burn. Keep pressure and immediate contact off the burned area.

**Major Burns:** Those that do break the skin and are overall more severe

- Use a dry, clean, sterile bandage to cover the burned area. If this is not available, a clean cloth will do. If the burned area is large and covers a great portion of the injured person's body, use a clean sheet to cover the burn.
- Do **NOT** break any blistered areas on the skin and do **NOT** put any type of ointments on the major burn.
- For burns on fingers or toes, it is important to separate each with clean, dry, and sterile gauze. Do **NOT** use dressings with adhesives, such as band aids or hospital tape.
- If the person has burns to their eyelids, eyes, or surrounding area, do **NOT** attempt to open their eyelids. Apply a damp, sterile cloth to both eyes and/or the area in need.

- Keep pressure and immediate contact off the burned area. Also, to prevent more swelling to the areas that are burned, make sure to elevate the burn above the level of the heart.
- Do **NOT** give any oral medications (such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol) to those with major burns. They should **NEVER** be given anything by the mouth.
- To prevent shock (which is when the body starts to shut down because of the trauma), lay the person flat, or on the side without the most severe injuries, and elevate their feet about a foot (12 inches) off of the ground. Cover the individual with a coat or blanket. **NOTE:** If they have a head, neck, back or leg injury, do **NOT** move them from their original position, as this may cause discomfort.
- If trained, begin CPR if they cannot breathe on their own while waiting for medical help. Also, you can monitor their pulse and blood pressure as you wait. When the EMTs (or emergency personnel) arrive, they will be able to take over the rescue and start the recovery process.

## Things to Remember When Responding to Major OR Minor Burns:

- DON'T use sprays, butter, ice, or other types of home remedies on a burn.
- DON'T blow on the burn. You want to keep the burned area as sterile and clean as possible.
- DON'T break blistered areas of the skin.
- DON'T remove clothing stuck to the burned skin.
- DON'T use ice cold water on a burn. It can cause the individual's body to go into shock.
- DON'T elevate the individual's head if they have a burn to their throat or if you have cause to believe they have experienced smoke inhalation. Doing so can close their airway and prevent them from breathing.

## Infections

If any signs of infection arise, get back in touch with your doctor immediately. Signs of potential infections are pain, redness or swelling at the site, pus or drainage coming from the burned site, streaks of redness on the burn, a fever or some serious symptoms of infection that require medical attention. It is important to remember that a medical professional knows the best way to help you get better, so keeping in contact with your doctor at the signs of pain, infection, and/or dehydration will help on your path to recovery.

## Negative Symptoms

If after a two-day period in the recovery process you are still in pain, call your doctor. If you experience levels of thirst, dry skin, dizziness, lightheadedness, or you find that you are not using the bathroom regularly, it could signal dehydration. This is another reason to get in touch with your doctor as soon as possible.

## Skin Grafts

In the recovery stage following the occurrence of a severe burn, people are often presented with an option to receive a skin graft. As in all medical cases, it would be wise to ask your doctor, pediatrician, or surgeon further questions about skin grafts to see if you qualify for one.

## Community Resources

It is important to be prepared by taking a closer look at your community's resources. Local American Red Cross Chapters usually offer certification classes in First Aid. These can be lifesaving in the case that you ever encounter someone with severe or major burns.



*Know the types of burns and the proper treatment so you can keep an injury from getting worse.*

# Joining the Cause

## American Red Cross

- Volunteers are 96% of the total work force used for humanitarian work.
- The Red Cross responds to over 70,000 disasters—including approximately 150 home fires every day.

### Donate...

- **Monetarily**
  - \$25 provides five blankets at an emergency shelter.
  - \$75 provides a doctor's visit for a person injured during a disaster.
  - Money can be donated to provide food, shelter and resources for individuals affected by fires.
- **Time**
  - Use the Red Cross website to find your local Red Cross Center.
  - Use a search engine or Volunteer Match on the Red Cross website to find opportunities in your community.
  - Possible Opportunities include:
    - **Homeless Shelter Volunteer**—Assists and interacts with people in the shelter
    - **Disaster Action Team Volunteer**—Responds to single-family fires with a supervisor
    - **Disaster Services Volunteer**—Responds to larger disasters, both state and national
- **Blood**
  - Half the nation's blood supply, about six million pints annually, is collected by over 155,000 Red Cross volunteers.
  - People can sponsor or volunteer at Blood Drives in their local community or place of work.

## Kids Can Help Too!

- Volunteer with a Disaster Action Team or Youth Disaster Corps.
- Volunteer your time to help at a blood drive or to help sponsor a drive at your school.
- Fundraise at your school for disasters.
- Educate your peers about disaster preparedness and prevention.



*Show appreciation for volunteers because they help make needed services available to others for little to no cost.*

# Kids' Preparation for Fire Emergencies

Research shows that those most likely to be injured by fire are children and the elderly, and burn injuries are the third leading cause of death in children each year.

Children need to be able to quickly recall and calmly use an action plan in the middle of a problem.



*A calm action plan gets children ready in advance  
so they know how to respond properly if an  
emergency happens.*

## Emergency Dialing (911)



**A note for parent/instructor:** This emergency dialing teaching technique has proven to be very successful. Please be patient with your child. Provide your child with positive encouragement to make sure they feel confident with the newly learned procedure.

**Directions:** It may take some time for your child to perform the task successfully. For each correct response praise your child, and mark a "+" for the trial. For each incorrect response, in a kind way tell your child that the task wasn't completed correctly and place a "-" for the trial. Then have your child repeat the task until you get a correct response.



## Fire Emergency Practice Chart

Steps Learned	Trials 1-10									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Safety First										
Using the Phone										
Dialing 911										
Answering the Questions Clearly										
Name										
Emergency										
Full Address										

## ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ Script ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆

**Parent:** (Child's Name), today we are going to practice how to make an emergency phone call. Dialing 911 is **very serious**. An emergency phone call should only be made from a safe place (for example, the neighbor's house) and only in an emergency situation.

**Child:** (Names things that could be an emergency)

**Parent:** Let's make sure you know where all the phones in the home are located. Place the phone to your ear and listen for the dial tone.

**Child:** (Places phone to ear and listens).

**Parent:** Now hang up. Let's pretend to dial 911 so I can make sure you do them in the right order. I will pretend to be the emergency operator. "911—State your emergency."

**Child:** "There is a fire".

**Parent:** (Make sure your child knows that words like location and address mean the same as "Tell me where you are/live. "Where are you located? (Pause)

**Child:** (Street name, house or apartment number, city and zip code).

**Parent:** "What is your name? (Pause for the child to say first and last name).

**Child:** (First and Last Name)

**Parent:** (Also, teach them how to give the first and last name of their mother and father.) Always make sure you are **speaking loudly and clearly** so that the operator can be as helpful as possible.



**Good Job**



## Fires and Evacuation

The information provided here will help you and your family take all of the necessary precautions to get out of your home safely.

It is important to realize that the easiest escape route will not always be accessible. If possible, you should plan on finding at least **two** ways you can escape from each room, as well as a meeting location once you get out of the home. Doing this beforehand allows less confusion during the evacuation and reduces the chance of losing a family member in the moment.

You should evacuate if the fire alarm sounds, or if you smell smoke or see fire. Smoke rises, so the first thing you should plan on doing is getting down on the floor or as low as you can to avoid the smoke. Smoke itself can be just as dangerous as fire.

Also, remember to always be careful with doors because there can be a fire on the other side. A way to help you know whether a fire is on the other side of a door is to feel the back of the door with the back of your hand to see if the door is hot. **DO NOT GRAB THE DOOR HANDLE** until you know the door is **NOT** hot. **DO NOT** open the door if it is hot, there is a greater chance there is a fire outside your door which means you run the risk of being burned.

When exiting your home, it is safer to close all doors behind you. Do not forget to meet at the location you and your family planned to gather once everyone has safely exited the burning home; this will provide a clear, safe place to make sure everyone is accounted for.

When the firefighters arrive, remember to respect them because they are trained professionals who have your best interest in hand and perform their job with the utmost safety in mind.

### A Few General Rules for Fire Evacuation

- Never use an elevator during an evacuation.
- Once you get out, stay out.
- Getting out should be the **FIRST** item on your agenda. **SECOND**, as soon as you are safely out of the burning building, call 9-1-1. **REMEMBER:** It takes less than 30 seconds for a small flame to turn into a major fire.
- If you are in an apartment complex or any type of building, while evacuating you should activate the fire alarm, so that everyone can start a safe evacuation.
- Always know where your fire extinguishers are located.

## ■ ■ ■ Evacuation Education for Children ■ ■ ■

These teaching techniques have been successful in helping children remember safety material if a fire does occur.

- Read the instructions to the child.
- Perform the safety skill for the child so that he or she can see how each step is properly accomplished.
- Praise & reward the child when a step is completed correctly. Some examples are: stickers, high five, and hugs.
- Allow the child to try again if he or she does not perform the steps correctly. Repeat the instructions as necessary if the child does not perform the step correctly.
- Be patient with your child. Learning takes time, a cool head, and positive encouragement. These are the best tips to ensure success.
- Ask the child to recite the information they have learned to ensure that they fully understand.
- Allow the child to ask questions. Then answer them to the best of your ability.

### Note of Instruction

You may have to change the instructions for them to match the specific layout of your home. Then, explain the steps that your child can take to safely evacuate in this situation. Afterwards, practice and rehearse these steps with your child. It is very important that your child actually carries out each of these steps to help him or her become comfortable, relaxed, and familiar with the process.

### Additional Information for Caregivers



There is a check box for every comic picture that displays a fire evacuation step. In addition to the comic strip check boxes, we recommend you try to practice each situation about once a month. That way, the information will remain fresh in the child's mind in case a fire occurs.

# SITUATION #1: Nothing Blocking Your Path



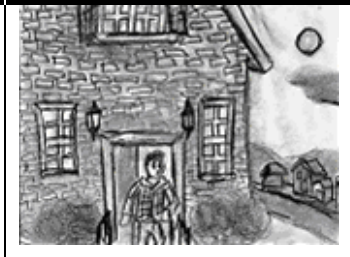
*The child is in bed, there is a fire in the house but there is a clear path to the front door. The child must carefully exit the house and arrive safely to the agreed upon meeting place.*

**Modeling:** "Now I am going to show and tell you what to do when there is just a little smoke in your room. When there is a little smoke it *might* be safe to leave through your bedroom door. But you have to check the door for rushing hot air before leaving your room and going outside."

☒ Check off each action after it is performed correctly in the box provided above the appropriate picture.

<p>You are sleeping.</p>	<p>Smoke comes through the door.</p>	<p>The fire alarm goes off.</p>	<p>You wake up. You are not coughing and your eyes are not burning.</p>
			
<p>First roll out of bed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Crawl to the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Use the back of your hand to feel for heat. Check the bottom and the top.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Only stand up to check the top of the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
			
<p>Crouch down. Open the door no more than 2". Brace it with your foot.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Use your hand to feel for hot air coming in. No heat is coming into the room.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Slowly open the door. Stay crouched.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Crawl outside your bedroom. Close the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>← No more than 2 inches.</p>			

*Situation 1 Continued...*

<p>Crawl to the stairs.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Crawl down the stairs backwards.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Crawl to the exit. Get outside.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>■</p>
			<p>Draw your meeting place in the space provided.</p>

**MY MEETING PLACE**

Don't forget me!



## SITUATION #2: Hot Air & Smoke Rush in Your Bedroom

*The child is in bed, there is a fire in the house that is blocking the path to the front door. Therefore, the child must remain in the bedroom and call for help out of a window.*

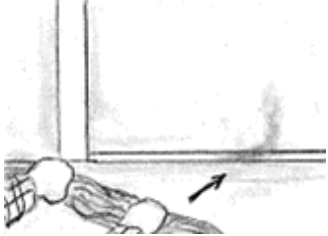
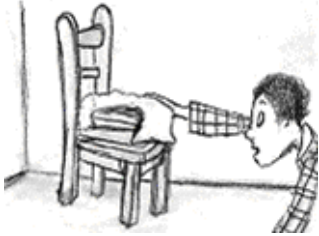


**Materials:** Hair Dryer (optional), Picture of Fire, Small Rug, Tee-Shirt & Access to a Window

**Modeling:** "Now I am going to show and tell you what to do when there is just a little smoke in your room. When there is a little smoke, it *might* be safe to leave through your bedroom door, but this time hot air will rush in when you open the door to check the air. This is a sign that the path to the stairs or the door may contain fire, and it would be unsafe to leave your room or open your door further."

☒ Check off each action after it is performed correctly in the box provided above the appropriate picture.

<p>You are sleeping.</p>	<p>Smoke comes through the door.</p>	<p>The fire alarm goes off.</p>	<p>You wake up. You are not coughing. Your eyes are not burning.</p>
			
<p>First roll out of bed.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Crawl to the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Use the back of your hand to feel for heat. Check the bottom and the top.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Only stand up to check the top of the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
			
<p>Crouch down. Open the door no more than 2". Brace it with your foot.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Use your hand to feel for hot air coming in.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>You feel heat. Close the door.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Go grab the rug in the room.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
 <p>← No more than 2 inches.</p>			

*Situation 2 Continued...*

<p>Place the rug over the crack at the bottom of the door.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Go grab a white tee shirt off the chair.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Go to the window and open it.</p> <p>■</p>	<p>Yell for help. Wave the shirt.</p> <p>■</p>
			



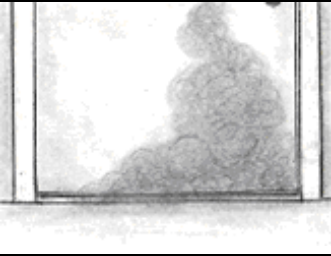



## SITUATION #3: Fire Blocks Your Path

*The child is in bed and there is a fire. The child does not feel hot air when the bedroom door is opened, so the child will try to leave by going to the front door. On the way to the front door, the child encounters the fire and must return to the bedroom to yell for help out of the window.*





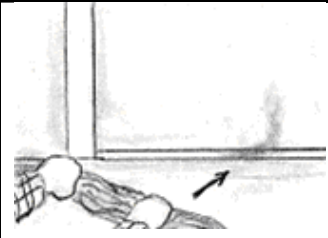
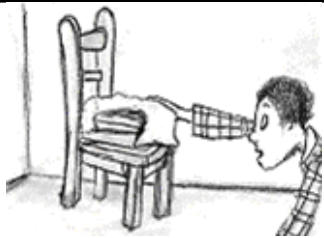


**Materials:** Hair dryer (optional), picture of fire (to be placed at the top of the stairs), small rug, tee-shirt & access to a window

**Modeling:** "Now I am going to show and tell you what to do when there is just a little smoke in your room. When there is a little smoke, it *might* be safe to leave through your bedroom door, but this time there will be fire in your path. You are not coughing and your eyes are not burning."

☒ Check off each action after it is performed correctly in the box provided above the appropriate picture.

You are sleeping.	Smoke comes through the door.	The fire alarm goes off.	You wake up. You are not coughing. Your eyes are not burning.
			
First roll out of bed. <input type="checkbox"/>	Crawl to the door. <input type="checkbox"/>	Use the back of your hand to feel for heat. Check the bottom and the top. <input type="checkbox"/>	Only stand up to check the top of the door. <input type="checkbox"/>
			
Crouch down. Open the door no more than 2". Brace it with your foot. <input type="checkbox"/>	Use your hand to feel for hot air coming in. No heat is coming into the room. <input type="checkbox"/>	Slowly open the door. Stay crouched. <input type="checkbox"/>	Crawl to the stairs. <input type="checkbox"/>
 <div data-bbox="251 1732 406 1837"> <p>← No more than 2 inches.</p> </div>			

### Situation 3 Continued...

<p>You see fire!</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Crawl back to your bedroom.</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Go inside and close the door behind you.</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Go grab the rug in the room.</p> <p>■</p> 
<p>Place the rug over the crack at the bottom of the door.</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Go grab a white tee shirt off the chair.</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Go to the window and open it.</p> <p>■</p> 	<p>Yell for help. Wave the shirt.</p> <p>■</p> 

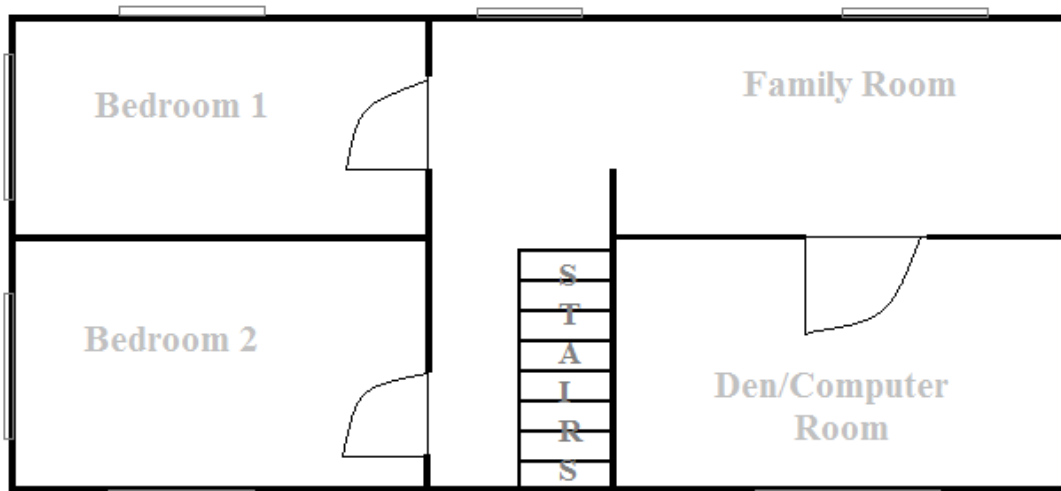




## FIRE EVACUATION FLOOR PLAN

It is important to make an escape plan for your house or apartment. Shown below is an example of how a floor plan should be drawn in order to show children where to go in case of a fire. It is also important to point out where fire extinguishers and fire alarms are located. Be sure to label all the rooms and, most importantly, label all the exits. You should do a floor plan for each floor of your home.

Example of a Top Floor plan with 4 bedrooms:



**NOW, it's *YOUR* turn...**

Draw a floor plan for your own fire escape in the box provided below.  
(You should get an adult to help.)

# STOP, DROP, AND ROLL

The Stop, Drop, and Roll technique was developed to help any individual who has caught on fire. By dropping to the ground and rolling on the ground, the fire can be smothered until the fire is put out. This is important for any individual to know about. Please take time to go over the procedure, and share it with others you may know.



**Step 1. STOP.** If you or your clothing catches fire, the best way to handle it is by not panicking. Remain calm, stop moving.

**Step 2. DROP.** After you have stopped moving, crouch on your hands and knees all the way down to the ground.



**Step 3. ROLL.** Quickly lie down on your side and start rolling back and forth with your hands covering your face. Focus on rolling the areas of skin and clothing that are on fire against the ground. Continue this until you are certain the fire is completely out.

**Please Note**—The Stop, Drop, and Roll technique is one of the best ways to put out a fire. However, it is not guaranteed to work in all cases. There are situations that require more. Please take steps to ensure fire safety when working with a fire.

# Learning about Pet Safety

## Evacuation Plan

1

Involve your pet in your evacuation plan.

Practice with your pet.

2

Have an emergency kit for each pet. Include the following:

- Vet records
- An extra leash, storage crate, or aquarium
- A few days worth of food
- Medications the pet(s) may need
- Names and numbers of neighbors, friends, kennels, etc. who will house your pet

3

Think of a good place to keep this information (for example in your car).

These items may be needed on other occasions as well.

## During a Fire

In some cases, once a fire has occurred, you may not know where your pet is located in your house. It could be that the pet safely made it out on its own, it is hiding from the fire and smoke, or it is trapped by the fire.

The safest thing anyone can do after successfully evacuating would be to stay in a safe location and try to coordinate with any emergency responders. It is important to remember not to reenter the building.

## To Help Find Your Pet

- Place a Pet Alert rescue sticker on the outside of your front door or windows. This lets firefighters know whether or not to look for pets once they enter the building.
- ID tags can be placed on collars as well as micro-chip versions that are able to be safely implanted in your pet by a trained technician.

*Not all shelters or hotels allow animals or pets, so planning ahead in this way will work out best for everyone.*



*Keep your pet in mind. They are a member of your family and an important part of helping you with your recovery.*

# Mental Health

One important thing to realize regarding fire injury or traumatic experience is that not all injuries obtained will be visible. Mental injuries are sometimes harder to see, but just as important to treat as any wound. Mental Health Care is designed to help you, not hurt you. In fact, mental health injuries and behavioral disorders have affected over a fourth of the population, which means you are not alone. Treatment is an option that produces positive outcomes and solutions.

Second, it is very important that you address any negative feelings for the benefit of yourself and the people around you. Due to the unpredictable nature of a disaster, we can often be overwhelmed by everything that is happening around us. With these new worries, some of us may be more at risk of feeling down, anxious or hopeless.

A healthy mind gives us the ability to concentrate, keep our bodies healthy, and keep us at our best. So stress that may overlap from a disaster would be important to remedy. However, stress from a disaster is different from the stress of paying bills, making sure the family is fed, and/or getting to work on time.

**Note:** Some individuals may experience some or possibly all of the symptoms, but this does not mean you necessarily have the described mental health injury.

If you feel you may have any symptoms related to what is described below, then it is recommended to seek advice from an individual in the mental health community, which also includes your primary care and family doctors.



*Talk with an experienced professional such as a REAACT Clinician to help you through the recovery process when there is a traumatic event.*

## Depression

What is it?	There is a noticeable change in your physical and/or mental performance after an event, feeling hopeless, sad or empty. You find less enjoyment in activities you used to participate in or experience depression symptoms.
What are the symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Weight loss/gain: (Note: in children, not at the proper weight for age) <input type="checkbox"/> Insomnia—the inability to fall asleep or stay asleep. <input type="checkbox"/> Hypersomnia—falling asleep for longer periods of time and taking naps at inappropriate times. <input type="checkbox"/> Over-activity/ Under-activity: It can be apparent to those around you that you are either really active or really inactive <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of energy <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling worthless and/or guilty <input type="checkbox"/> Can't concentrate <input type="checkbox"/> Think often about death &/or suicide
How long before I should seek help?	Usually if you experience any of these symptoms for longer than <b>two weeks</b> , it is important to address the symptoms you are experiencing.

## Panic Disorder

What is it?	<p>You constantly feel concerned about panic attacks, worry how you will be able to handle the next panic attack, or see a change in your behavior because of the attacks. This happens when you experience a degree of panic over and over again. These are unpredictable &amp; unpleasant and add a great degree of stress to an individual's life.</p> <p>A panic attack is a 10 minute period of intense fear or discomfort where you experience 4 or more of the following:</p>
What are the symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Rapid heart beat <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling dizzy or light-headed <input type="checkbox"/> Sweating, feeling chilly/hot <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling like you are detached from yourself <input type="checkbox"/> Trembling <input type="checkbox"/> Shortness of breath <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of "going crazy" <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling choked <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of dying <input type="checkbox"/> Chest pain <input type="checkbox"/> Tingling sensations <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling nausea
How long before I should seek help?	If panic attacks keep occurring over one month, it is important to address the symptoms you are experiencing. You can contact <b>REAACT</b> at The Stress and Coping Lab: Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA.

## Phobia

What is it?	After an event, you begin to have a constant fear of objects or situations that remind you of the event, which causes you to avoid the objects or situations. (Note: In children, anxiety can be seen in the form of crying, tantrums, or clinginess.) Fears can be cued by animals/insects (most common type for kids), storms, heights, water, or other objects in your natural environment, blood/ injury, tunnels, elevators, flying, or other situations, choking, loud sounds, getting sick, etc.
What are the symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowing that your fear is unreasonable (Note: Children may not recognize their fear as being unreasonable.) <input type="checkbox"/> The object/situation causes avoidance or anxiety <input type="checkbox"/> Stress from the object/situation interferes with your normal routine
How long before I should seek help?	It is important to realize that there are many types of Phobias. If you notice you are experiencing any of the symptoms that are interfering with your life for 6 months or longer, you should address those symptoms as soon as possible. <a href="#">The REAACT program is here to help you.</a>

## Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

What is it?	Any type of situation involving a traumatic event (such as a disaster or residential fire) in which you have either witnessed or have been involved in. Individuals are at a greater risk after witnessing death or injury. Also, you experienced intense fear, a helpless feeling, or horror in response to the event. (Note: In children, the response can be an agitated or uneasy manner.)
What are the symptoms?	(Note: Children can display stress by feeling as though they need to act out/or bring focus to the event.) <input type="checkbox"/> Stressful, reoccurring dreams/ nightmares of the event, or night terrors (Night terrors are when you wake up suddenly with a panicked scream, caused by an intense fear. Your breath is rapid, you find yourself in a heavy sweat, you cannot be comforted and you cannot remember the dream itself.) <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling as though you're reliving part or all of the event <input type="checkbox"/> Certain items related to an event trigger a degree of stress (such as verbal cues or even random everyday items) <input type="checkbox"/> Actively avoid thinking, feeling or talking about the event <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid activities, places, or people related to any aspect of the event <input type="checkbox"/> Unable to remember important parts of the event <input type="checkbox"/> Finding less enjoyment in activities you used to participate in <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling detached from people <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings towards others, yourself or life in general has decreased) <input type="checkbox"/> No longer optimistic (such as the glass is no longer half-full) <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty falling/staying asleep <input type="checkbox"/> Irritable manner and/or outbursts of anger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <input type="checkbox"/> Can't concentrate</li> <li>o <input type="checkbox"/> Get startled easily</li> <li>o <input type="checkbox"/> Hypervigilant (being uneasy, agitated, fidgety and knowing that it is irrational)</li> </ul>
How long before I should seek help?	If you experience some or all of these symptoms within a <b>one-month</b> period, <a href="#">REAACT clinicians are available to assist you.</a>

# Names and Numbers to Know

***Be sure to have the following important numbers on hand.***

The **American Red Cross** and the **Salvation Army** are good resources for temporary Housing, food, medications, eyeglasses and clothing during the recovery process.

## IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 9-1-1

	Names	Phone Number
<i>Accountant</i>		
<i>American Red Cross</i>		
<i>Banks</i>		
<i>Doctors</i>		
<i>Family</i>		
<i>Fire Department</i>		
<i>Gas/Fuel Company</i>		
<i>Insurance Company</i>		
<i>Municipality</i>		
<i>Neighbors</i>		
<i>Pharmacy</i>		
<i>Police Department</i>		
<i>Poison Control</i>		
<i>Salvation Army</i>		
<i>Shelter/Assistance</i>		
<i>Work Numbers</i>		

Call 9-1-1 **first** when there is an emergency.





# Online Resources—Prevention and Recovery

*The American Red Cross*

<http://www.redcross.org/>

*Be Fire Smart* "The Safe Home Guide", State Farm Fire and Casualty Company Home Office: Bloomington, Illinois

<http://www.befiresmart.com/children/>

*Community Volunteers*

<http://www.serve.gov/>

*Consumer Product Safety Commission – Home Fire Safety Checklist*

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/556.html>

*The Home Safety Council*

<http://www.homesafetycouncil.org>

*National Center for PTSD*

<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

*National Child Traumatic Stress Network*

[http://www.nctsnct.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=hom\\_main](http://www.nctsnct.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=hom_main)

*National Fire Protection Association*

<http://www.nfpa.org>

<http://www.nfpa.org/riskwatch/kids.html#>

<http://www.nfpa4kids.org/> The Uh-Ohs

*New York State Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control*

<http://www.dos.state.ny.us/kidsroom/firesafe/firesafe.html>

*US Department of Health & Human Services*

<http://www.hhs.gov/>

*Virginia Department of Fire* Program's Web site:

<http://www.vafire.com>

[http://www.vafire.com/fire\\_safety\\_education/fire\\_and\\_life\\_safety\\_lessons\\_activities\\_for\\_kids.htm](http://www.vafire.com/fire_safety_education/fire_and_life_safety_lessons_activities_for_kids.htm)



Find useful home fire safety information and resources online.

# Post-Fire Information

- **Do not** re-enter the fire site. Fires can sometimes start up again from smoldering remains that you might not be able to see.
- **Do not** consume any food, beverages, or medications that were exposed to heat, smoke, soot, or water.
- **Do not** attempt to turn off your utilities yourself (water, electricity, natural gas). Before the fire department leaves, they will usually see that these utilities are either disconnected or safe to use.
- Watch to make sure that structures, such as the roof and the floors, do not show any damage.
- Contact your insurance agent, your mortgage company, and your lawyer.
- Conduct an inventory of damaged property and items. Do not throw anything away until after the inventory is made.
- Try to locate important documents and records.
- If you have to leave your home, contact the local police department and inform them that your house will not be occupied.
- Begin saving receipts for any money that you spend related to the fire. (These may be needed later for insurance and income tax purposes).
- Check with your accountant or a representative from the IRS to discuss special benefits for people needing help with recovery from fire loss.



*Keep important documents in a safe place that is protected from fires such as a fire proof box or cabinet.*

## *Contacts for Important Document Replacement*

Important Documents/Records A-Z	Who to Contact for Replacements
<b>Animal Registration Papers</b>	Humane Society (web page: <a href="http://www.hsus.org/">http://www.hsus.org/</a> Phone: 1-202-452-1100)
<b>Bank Books (Checking, Savings, etc.)</b>	Your bank
<b>Birth, Death, &amp; Marriage Certificates</b>	Bureau of Records in that state
<b>Citizenship Papers</b>	U.S. Immigration & Naturalization Service      Web Page: <a href="http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm">http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/index.htm</a> National Custom Service Center—Phone: 1-800-375-5283)
<b>Credit Cards</b>	The issuing companies, such as: -Visa – 1-800-847-2911 -Mastercard—1-800-622-7747 -Discover—1-800-347-2683 -American Express—1-800-528-4800
<b>Divorce Papers</b>	Circuit Court where the decree was issued
<b>Driver's License &amp; Auto Registration</b>	Department of Motor Vehicles
<b>Income Tax Records</b>	IRS Center / Accountant Phone: 1-800-829-1040) (Web Page: <a href="http://www.irs.gov/">http://www.irs.gov/</a>
<b>Insurance Policies</b>	Your Insurance Agent
<b>Medical Records</b>	Your doctor
<b>Military Discharge Papers</b>	Department of Veterans Affairs
<b>Mortgage Papers</b>	Lending Institution
<b>Passports</b>	Passport Service (Web Page: <a href="http://travel.state.gov/passport/about/npic/npic898.html">http://travel.state.gov/passport/about/npic/npic898.html</a> Phone: 1-877-487-2778
<b>Prepaid Burial Contract</b>	Issuing Company
<b>Social Security or Medicare Cards</b>	Local Social Security Office      Phone: 1-800-772-1213) (Web Page: <a href="http://www.ssa.gov/">http://www.ssa.gov/</a>
<b>Stocks and Bonds</b>	Issuing company or your broker
<b>Titles to Deeds</b>	Records Department of the area where the property is located
<b>Warranties</b>	Issuing company
<b>Wills</b>	Your lawyer

# Quick Questions & Answers

Below are questions that your child should be able to answer.

1. What is the emergency telephone number to dial? What is the fire department's number?

*Answer: The answer is 9-1-1. For more information, see "Kids' Preparation for Fire Emergencies" in this manual.*

2. What do you do if your clothes catch on fire?

*Answer: Stop, Drop, and Roll.*

3. What is the best kind of fire extinguisher?

*Answer: An extinguisher that is for A, B, and C fires. For more information see the "Extinguishers" section in this manual.*

4. How often should you check your smoke alarms?

*Answer: Every 6 months. See more details in the "Smoke Alarm" section of this manual.*

5. Who can you talk to after a fire?

*Answer: A trained mental health professional, as well as The REAACT Team at Virginia Tech. For more information see the "Mental Health" section of the manual.*

*Practice asking your child key questions so that they can better remember what to do before and after fires.*



# Recovery at Burn Camps

There are options for burned individuals, especially youth to help them cope with skin damage obtained from burns as well as their experiences. Most of these programs are presented in forms of “burn camps.” These camps are designed to allow burned individuals to interact with others that have been through similar experiences while also incorporating key elements of self-confidence, individual motivation, and social skills.

A lot of these camps make the experience more than just an educational one, offering a fun assortment of entertaining activities. Keep in mind that burn camps are just one of many recovery options in the mental health care community.

Information about burn camps in your state can be found at the following web site:

<http://www.veryspecialcamps.com/Virginia/Special-Needs-Summer-Camps.shtml>

## Coping with Burns

Those who have been burned continuously deal with the memory of the experience. There are also physical and mental scars. Fortunately, things can be done to help individuals in these situations. Counseling, support groups, and burn camps are all good choices to help a person recover and cope.



*It's OK to ask for help.*

# Spiritual and Religious Coping

When people are asked how they cope with stressful situations, many make mention of religion or spirituality. This can be with a pastor, rabbi, priest, or any religious individual. Among some groups religious coping is more frequently used than any other resource. Religious coping is defined as the use of religious beliefs or behaviors (e.g., prayer, seeking strength from God) to aid problem solving and prevent or get rid of the negative emotions of stressful life circumstances.

Religious coping is usually divided into two groups, positive and negative. Positive coping methods tend to be related to more secure relationships with God and a sense of spiritual connection with other persons. A negative coping pattern reflects a less secure relationship with God, an insecure and upsetting view of the world, and a religious conflict in finding purpose and meaning.

Research indicates that positive religious coping strategies relate to better mental health status and spiritual growth, whereas negative religious coping methods are associated with poorer physical health, worse quality of life, and more depressive symptoms.

(Koenig, Pargament, & Nielsen, 1998).

(Ano & Vasconcelles, 2005; Pargament et al., 1998).

The REAACT Team is dedicated to providing solutions with a comprehensive approach for helping people have a quick recovery from trauma.



# Trauma Effects Across Age Groups

Many times when individuals cannot express themselves with words, their actions will do the talking. Here are some behaviors that may be seen in different age groups when dealing with stress or trauma.

## ***Infants (Birth – 18 months)***

- Sleep and eating disturbances
- Irritability
- Inconsolable crying
- Delayed development, or even regressed development

## ***Toddlers (18 months – 3 ½ years)***

- Less of a desire to explore and learn about their world
- Loss of self-confidence
- Irritability
- Clingy and anxious tendencies
- More frequent temper tantrums
- Bathroom difficulties
- Sleeping problems
- Defiance and protests
- Regressed development

## ***Preschool Children (3 ½ - 6 years)***

- Struggles with differentiating between reality and fantasy
- Worries about damage to their bodies
- Toilet training difficulties
- Regressed development and loss of previously achieved developmental milestones
- Regressed coping strategies such as temper tantrums and irritability
- Becoming fearful and avoidant
- Withdrawing from others
- Refusing to separate from caregiver
- Demanding increased attention and affection

### ***School Age Children (6 -10 years)***

- Alternating between a false bravado and being vulnerable with an increased reliance on their caregiver
- Feelings of helplessness and attempts to regain control
- Difficulty with academics or school activities
- Starting to lie, steal and fight
- Sleeping and eating disturbances due to underlying thoughts and distressed feelings
- Becoming clingy and anxious about separations from the child's caregiver
- New excitement or awe about the magnitude of violence or the power of weapons (which can be misconstrued as evidence the child is not distressed, disturbed, or affected by what happened)

### ***Adolescents (11-18 years)***

- Fighting, vandalism, harassment or other disturbances of peace
- Increased level of depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts & behaviors, as well as nightmares.
  - Males tend to *externalize* reactions and express their emotions by their behavior
  - Females tend to internalize their reactions and may isolate themselves, show signs of depression, or even develop an eating disorder in an attempt to regain control
- Chronic difficulties with academics
- Feelings of inadequacy or unrealistic feelings of guilt



*Use the FREE resources provided by REAACT for all ages for prevention and recovery strategies in traumatic situations.*



# Understanding How to Handle Stress

*"Pause for PAWS"*



## Positive Actions When Stressed

**A Note to Parents/Guardians:** Children have stressful moments too. You can talk about ways to deal with stress as you use the **REACT** approach below. These activities were adapted for children from "Psychological First Aid". Each step uses a letter from the word **REACT**.

### **R**emember, it's OK to ask for help.

- People who seek help recover faster than those who do not.

### **E**xplain how you feel.

- Talking about the hurts helps to ease the pain.
- Finding someone you trust is very important.
- Keeping in touch with friends is much better than spending a lot of time alone.

### **A**llow good thoughts to replace the fears.

- Force yourself to think and talk about the good things that are still in place.
- Avoid negative conversations.

### **A**lways look for something nice to say or do each day.

- Stop and smell the roses. Look for the beauty in simple things.
- Do at least one thing you enjoy every single day.

### **C**are about your health and other people.

- Get enough sleep. The body heals faster if it is not exhausted.
- Find ways to relax. Ask other people how they do it.
- Drink plenty of pure water, exercise, and eat healthy foods for extra energy.
- While you are recovering, find someone else who has a need and help them out. You will notice how much faster you reach your goals.

### **T**ake one step at a time to move forward.

- Set goals that have positive rewards.
- Resist the urge to make choices that have negative consequences.
- Give yourself time to heal. Recovery is usually more than an overnight process.



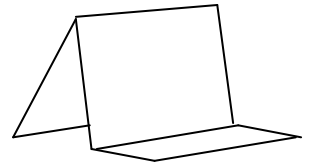
*Give your mind a chance to regroup in the middle of a difficult situation by taking a deep breath and pausing for just a moment. This will help you think calmly and make better choices.*

# MOVING FORWARD GAME











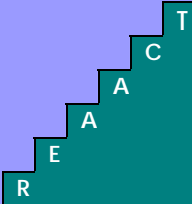
Goals: To help you get your thoughts out of the past  
To reinforce how progress is made one step at a time

Directions:

1. Make the dice and fold the game board on the bold lines.
2. Cut out playing pieces and fold each across the bottom.
3. Choose a piece.
4. Roll the dice.
5. Move forward only when you roll a one (1).
6. Practice the positive REAACT thoughts on the board each time you wait.



## M O V I N G F O R W A R D

R	E	A	A	C	T
Remember, it's OK to ask for help.	Explain how you feel to someone you trust.	Allow good thoughts to replace fears.	Always look for something nice to say or do each day.	Care for your health and for other people.	Take one step at a time to move forward.
					
→ START 	① 😊 or ☹️ 	① "I can do it!" <i>Some good things are still in place.</i>	① 	①  <i>When you help someone else it helps you, too.</i>	<i>Sing the</i>  <b>REAACT Song. FINISH</b>

 *ne Step at a Time*

# Personalized Paper Dice

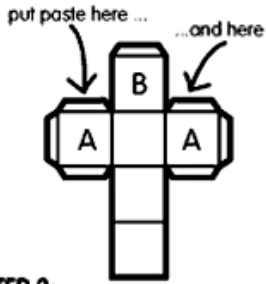
MOVING  FORWARD  
GAME PIECES

Color and decorate these dice cutouts. In the squares on the blank die, draw or write anything you want (faces, friends' names, or shapes are some ideas). Glue the dice to a piece of thin cardboard (such as an empty cereal box). Cut out the shapes along the solid lines.

## Making the dice:

### STEP 1:

Make creases (folds) along all the dotted lines. Flip the shape over so the decorated side is facing away from you.

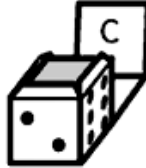


### STEP 2:

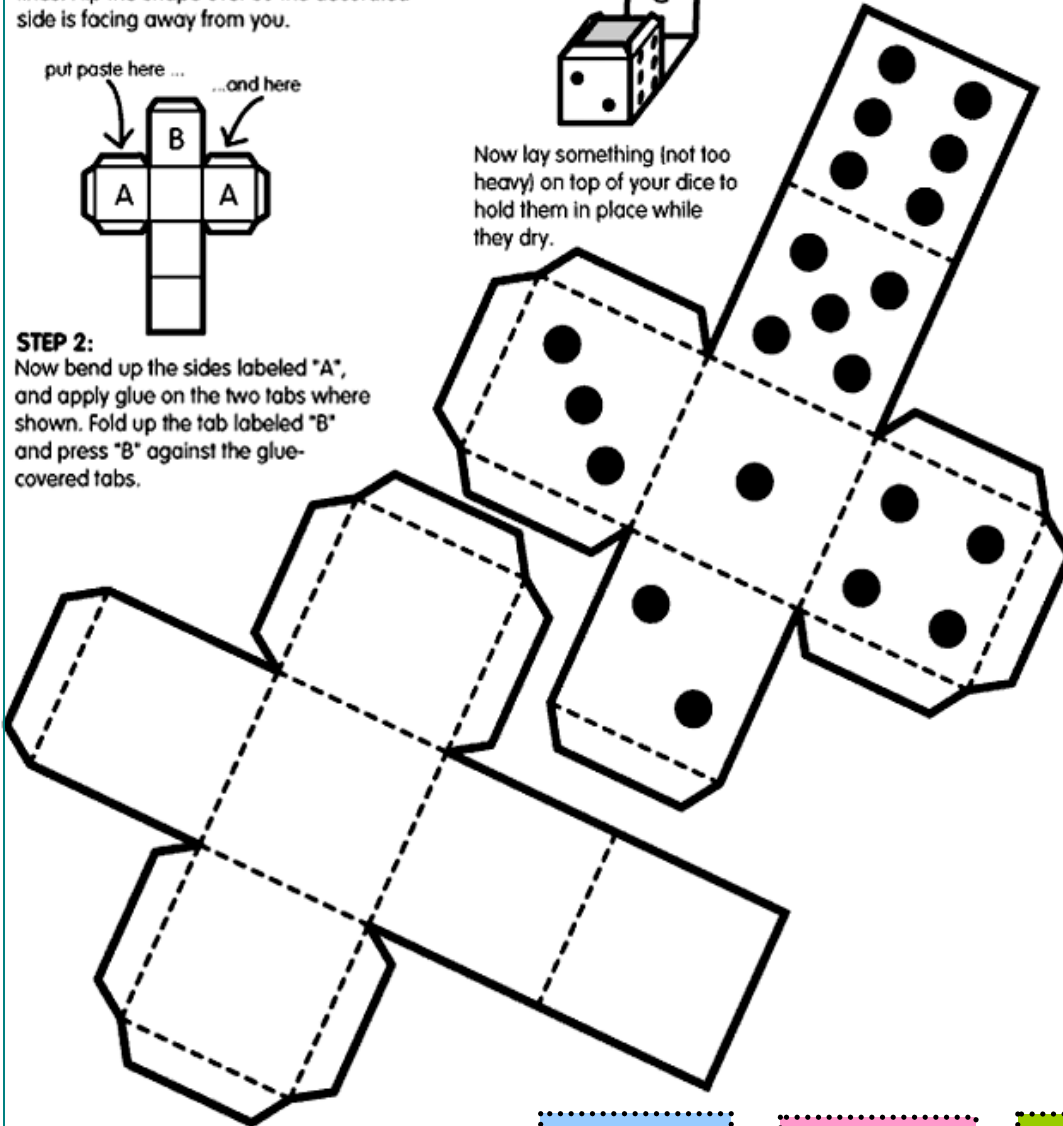
Now bend up the sides labeled "A", and apply glue on the two tabs where shown. Fold up the tab labeled "B" and press "B" against the glue-covered tabs.

### STEP 3:

Put some glue on all remaining tabs. Fold tab "C" over the top of the die, and press against the glue-covered tabs




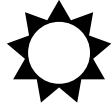














Now lay something (not too heavy) on top of your dice to hold them in place while they dry.



Dice Pattern from: <http://www.crayola.com/free-coloring-pages/print/personalized-paper-dice-coloring-page/>

# THE NEW FOCUS GAME

Cut out cards. Place mixed cards face down. Match each "From" card with the "To" card.

<p>FROM:</p>  <p>NIGHT</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>DAY</p>	<p>FROM:</p>  <p>SAD THOUGHTS</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>HAPPY THOUGHTS</p>
<p>FROM:</p>  <p>PARTIAL RECOVERY</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>FULL RECOVERY</p>	<p>FROM:</p> <p><b>LOSING</b></p>	<p>TO:</p> <p><b>WINNING</b></p>
<p>FROM:</p>  <p>LOOKING BACK</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>LOOKING AHEAD</p>	<p>FROM:</p> <p><i>AGITATED</i></p> <p><i>UPSET</i></p> <p><i>FEARFUL</i></p>	<p>TO:</p> <p><i>PEACEFUL</i></p> <p><i>CALM</i></p> <p><i>CONTENT</i></p>
<p>FROM:</p>  <p>NEGATIVE FEELINGS</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>POSITIVE FEELINGS</p>	<p>FROM:</p>  <p>ATTITUDES</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>ATTITUDES</p>
<p>FROM:</p>  <p>CLOSED IDEAS</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>OPEN IDEAS</p>	<p>FROM:</p>  <p>WRONG ANSWERS</p>	<p>TO:</p>  <p>RIGHT ANSWERS</p>

# THE REAACT SONG

Sing to the tune of "London Bridge".


**R-E-A-A-C-T helps**

**To be stress free**

**To be stress free**

**R-E-A-A-C-T helps**




**To solve tough problems**

 START→			Pick a card.				Move ahead 1 space.		
---	--	--	--------------	--	--	--	------------------------	--	--

Materials: Moving Forward Game Pieces

Directions: Make a back-to-back copy of the REAACT cards and cut them out. Shuffle them and place them face down on the big paw print. Roll the dice. The highest number goes first. Move the number of spaces shown on the dice. Continue taking turns clockwise. Follow the directions on the board and the cards.


	Pick a card.			Pick a card.	Move ahead 1 space				Pick a card.
--	--------------	--	--	--------------	-----------------------	--	--	--	--------------

	  							
Move ahead 2 spaces								

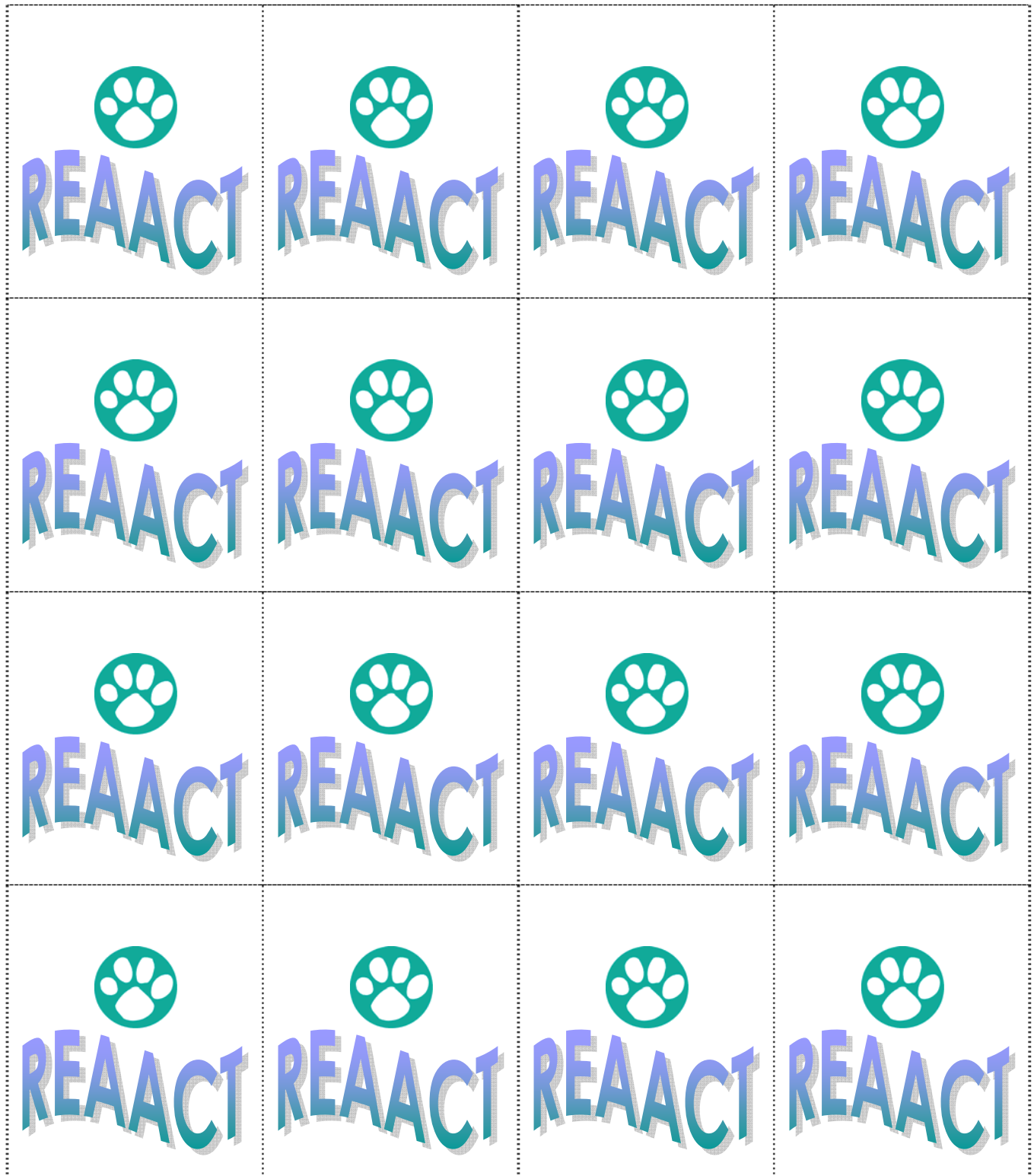
	Pick a card.				Pick a card.				Pick a card.
--	--------------	--	--	--	--------------	--	--	--	--------------

Place REAACT cards here.



 FINISH		Move ahead 2 spaces			Pick a card				
---	--	------------------------	--	--	-------------	--	--	--	--





(COPY BACK-TO-BACK WITH PAGE 64)

Say something nice about yourself.

*Take another turn.*

Calm yourself with positive self talk.

"I can do it!"  
"I'm a winner."  
"I am loved."

Name 3 good things still in place.

*Move ahead 2 spaces.*

When you help someone with their problem, you feel better.



You have recovered.

*Move ahead two spaces.*

*Sleep Tip*



Sleep next to a running water sound.

Name 3 people who help you.

*Take another turn.*

Name a friend.



*Move ahead 1 space.*

Sing the

**REAACT** song.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath.

*Pick another REAACT card.*

Give yourself time to heal.



You talked to someone you trust when you were feeling sad.

GOOD JOB!  
*Move ahead 3 spaces.*

*Sleep Tip*



Play peaceful music at bedtime.

Think of

**3**

goals.

*Move ahead 1 space for each one you say.*

Think about your favorite healthy food.

*If you ate a healthy food today, move ahead 3 spaces.*

*Sleep Tip*



Read a story with a happy ending at bedtime.

(COPY BACK-TO-BACK WITH PAGE 63)



# Virginia Tech Stress and Coping Lab



STRESS & COPING LAB  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
 VirginiaTech

Dr. Russell T. Jones is a Professor of Psychology at Virginia Tech University and a Clinical Psychologist who specializes in child psychology, trauma psychology, and issues related to disaster and terrorism ([www.firetrauma.com](http://www.firetrauma.com)). He is also an expert in the behavior sciences. His research concerns the topic of childhood stress and coping with common stressful life events as well as major traumas.

## The REACT Project - Recovery Efforts After Adult & Child Trauma

The REACT Project's evacuation skills have scientific merit, and this program is the only one currently accredited in this manner. We teach evacuation skills that range from residential fire settings to wildfire disaster settings. Our evacuation program is proudly extending into other disaster areas such as evacuation skills during a hurricane and tornado. Our facility also provides leading-edge treatment in a welcoming and stable environment.

For over 20 years, the Recovery Efforts After Adult & Child Trauma (REACT) team has been committed to understanding and helping families flourish following residential fires. The REACT program is a non-profit organization adopted from the Yale Child Study Center's Child Development Community Policing Program (CD-CP). This model helps involved firefighters contact REACT clinicians who can respond at the scene of a fire.

Our REACT program and team are very excited about our recent developments with various fire departments in Virginia. The Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the City of Roanoke Fire Department, and Tiffany Bradbury have provided us with great experiences and contacts. Members of the team have been part of Ride Alongs with the Roanoke Fire Department. We have been able to gain first-hand experience with families and residential fires, as well as applying all the work we have done behind the scenes. This has also been a great method to test the applicability of our program.

## The Stress & Coping Lab

In the Stress and Coping Lab, we provide a wide range of therapeutic services for individuals impacted by *anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that may or may not be related to fire.*

In order to treat these stressful feelings, [grief counseling](#) with a mental health provider is an option that can help you to prepare and recover from reminders of a disaster.

You receive positive teaching techniques from a licensed professional, free of charge.

Our services help people through the recovery process.

We keep in mind that of those who are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), half will make a full recovery with treatment following a three-month period.

Also, those people that have PTSD and are in treatment after at least three-months, have higher improvement rates than those who do not seek assistance or treatment (Alexander, A., Amsel, L., Benight, C. C., et al., 2006).

### What We Do

Coping, Processing, and Expressing after a Traumatic Situation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide Stress Reduction Strategies</li><li>• Connect Resources for Returning to Health</li><li>• Offer Treatment at the Virginia Tech Psychological Services Center</li><li>• Supply Resources to Help Recover Losses</li><li>• Provide Positive Self-Concept Information</li><li>• Deal with Fear</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support Local Agencies with Evacuation/Sheltering Procedures</li><li>• Provide Coping Skills</li><li>• Understand Stages of Grief</li><li>• Process Events</li><li>• Administer Stress Evaluations</li><li>• Address Safe Haven Issues</li></ul>

For more information, check [www.firetrauma.com](http://www.firetrauma.com) or contact REAACT at The Stress and Coping Lab of Virginia Tech located in Blacksburg, VA.

137 Williams Hall  
Blacksburg, VA 24061  
Phone: 540-231-5934  
Fax: 540-231-3652



*Remember that you are not alone. You can contact REAACT. They help people by talking about and processing their fears and memories of a traumatic event.*

# Wildfires

Wildfires are a very common and destructive form of natural disasters. Wildfires can be called forest fires, vegetation fires, grass fires, brush or bush fires. They can start through a natural cause such as lightning, volcanic activity, and extreme temperatures, or through human carelessness. Wildfires can grow rapidly and grow in dry areas with dense vegetation. Wildfires can be very difficult to put out and cause destruction of entire forest regions and communities.

**A Note on Mudslides:** Wildfires can strip the land of all vegetation making all of the soil loose. When it rains after a wildfire, the rain can pick up mud and dangerous mudslides can be formed. It is important to know that this is a risk after a fire. Mudslides are capable of destroying entire houses.

## Preparing for a Wildfire

- Create a 30-foot safety zone around your house. Clear any vegetation that would allow the fire to spread to your home.
- Identify areas that may be safer if you become trapped during a wildfire. Patios and swimming pools may be safer and stone walls can shield you from heat.
- Fireproof your home. Store all combustibles at least 30 feet away from your home. Cover your house vents with wire mesh. Install fire-resistant siding, safety glass in windows/doors and a spark arrestor in your chimney. You should have a fire extinguisher, a ladder that will reach your roof, and a garden hose that will reach any area of your home.
- Install and maintain smoke detectors on each level of your residence.
- Make sure family members know they should turn off gas and fill any large containers (pools, tubs, garbage cans, etc.) with water.

## Evacuating from a Wildfire

- Have multiple safe routes for evacuation.
- Keep at least a half tank of gas in your vehicle to ensure a timely evacuation from the region.
- Put facemasks in your travel emergency kit to avoid smoke inhalation during evacuation.
- Wear clothing that will protect your skin from the flames and heat.
- To help you evacuate quickly, have your vehicle backed into your garage or at the front of your residence. Make sure the doors and windows are closed in your vehicle.

## During a Wildfire

- Turn on all the lights inside your home so it is more visible to emergency workers.
- Listen to your radio and evacuate immediately if told to do so.

## After a Wildfire

- Determine the structural integrity of your home by checking any areas that appear to have suffered fire or heat damage. If you find your home to be at risk for deterioration, you should evacuate immediately.
- Check your home for smoldering items that may reignite, paying particular attention to your roof.
- Utilize the containers of water you filled to put out existing flames.
- Refer to the Post-Fire Information section of this manual to help with recovery.

## Special Circumstances

Here is specific information to help you deal with wildfires when put in different situations.

### If you are stuck...

***In your home***—Stay calm and stay inside your home. Stay near the water that you collected before the fire approached, in case the fire enters your home.

***In your vehicle***—Close all windows and air vents. Turn headlights on and the ignition off after parking away from brush and trees. Lie on the floor and cover yourself with a blanket. Stay calm and wait inside the vehicle. The temperature will increase in the vehicle and embers may enter, but you are much safer here than on foot.

***In the open***—Try to reach an area a safe distance away from potentially combustible items. Lie down and cover yourself with something to protect from the heat and flames. Ideally it should be a fire blanket or thick clothing.

### Wildfires

at <http://www.smokeybear.com/wildfires.asp>, or visit FEMA's wildfire website at <http://www.fema.gov/hazard/wildfire/index.shtml>

*Stay as calm as you can when you're exposed to a fire. It will help you and others remain safe.*



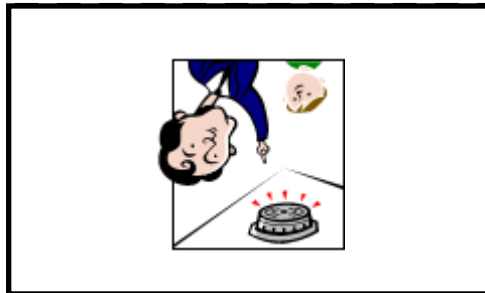
# “X”-tra Activities for Children

Materials Needed: Scissors, glue or tape, and string. Directions: Cut out each piece, fold in half, insert string and assemble like the picture in the shaded box.

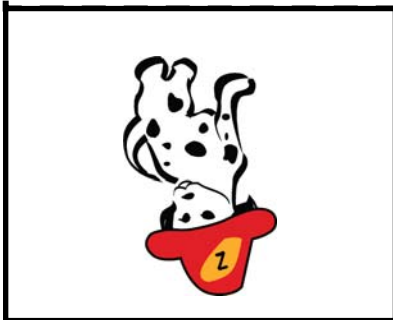
Never play  
with  
matches.



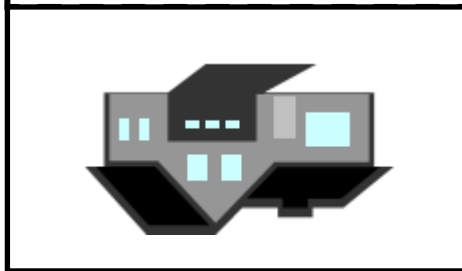
Check smoke  
detectors once  
a month.



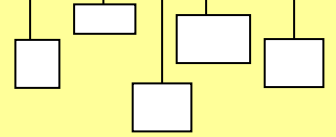
Practice  
STOP, DROP,  
and ROLL.



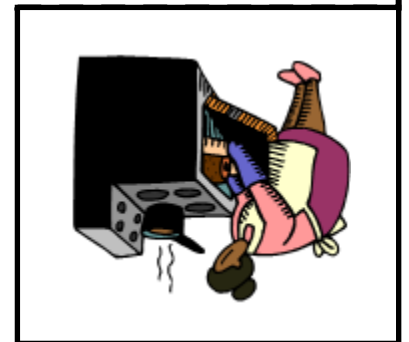
Practice a  
home fire  
escape plan.



Home Fire Safety Mobile



Use the  
safety zone  
in your home  
kitchen.



## Home Fire Safety Mobile

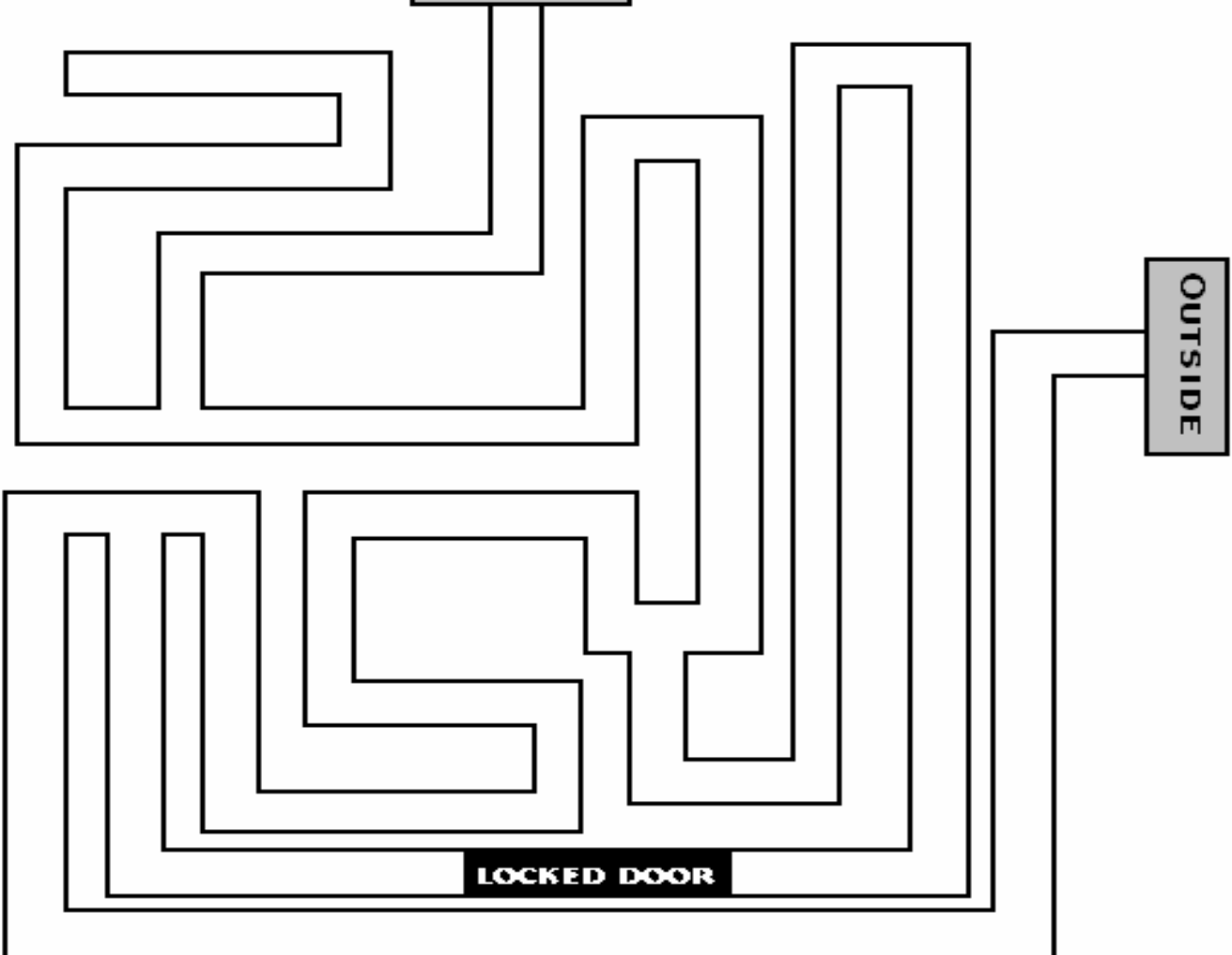
Fold Line

# FIRE ESCAPE MAZE

This is Spot, Firefighter Charlie's trusty Dalmatian. Spot wants to practice his fire escape plan, and needs you to help guide him outside.



## START



## OUTSIDE

## LOCKED DOOR

# WORD SEARCH

This is an activity that challenges you to find and circle Fire Safety related words. (Hint: Use the Word Bank provided below.)

G K H P S J Y U O W D K I T Y  
U R E E Z E N G I N E L L T X  
N O X J L W Q D A M W O I K Z  
A T T E B G Z S T O P M F P R  
K C I E F M G S A F E T Y F E  
N E N R I A H E L P T M Z B T  
S T G I C V S Z O Z P O R D H  
A E U F O A P B A R O L L A G  
V D I D W X L L L S K B H R I  
H E S L I A Y M A L T B Z M F  
B K H I S Y T P R Z O Y K O E  
J O E W B E C E M Y P G H D R  
B M R I A S A L R D S S X Y I  
C S T C V F E F X E P M P R F  
P T C A A E R R Z U L J N F M

## Word Bank

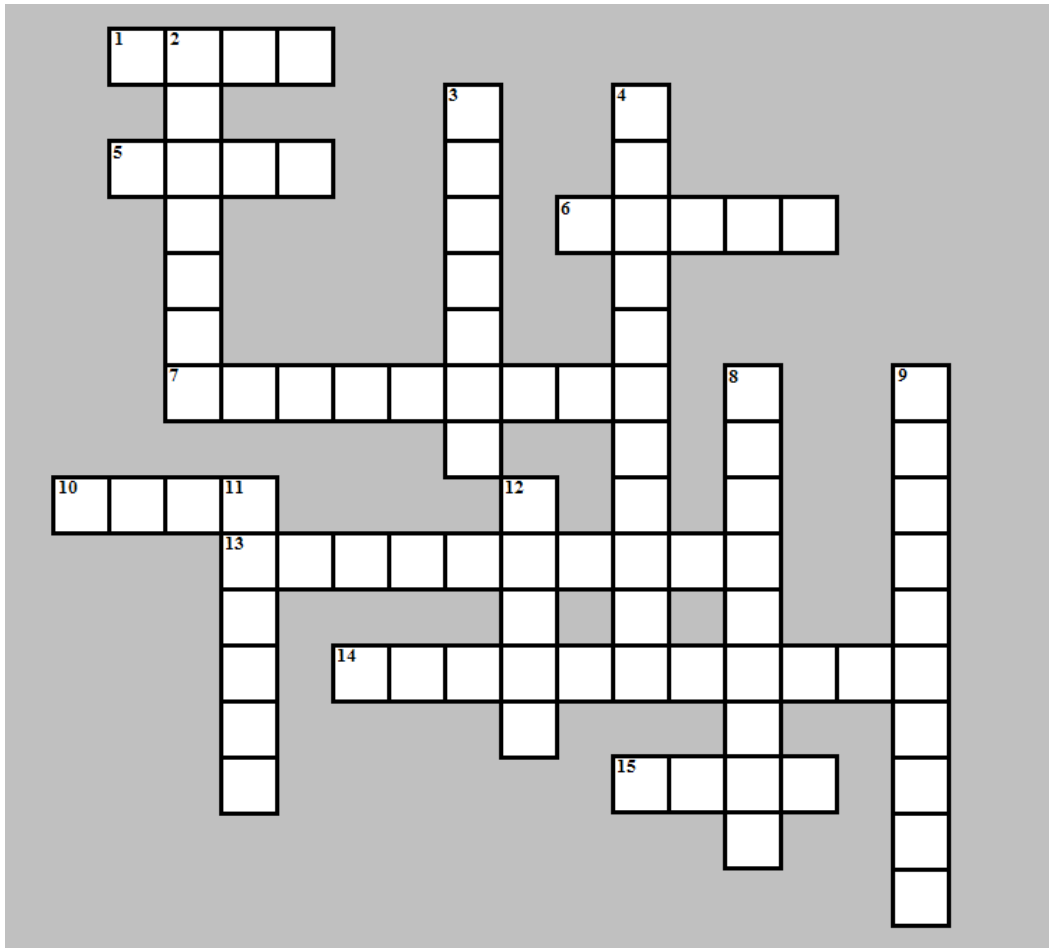
Alarm  
Roll  
Calm  
Safety  
Drop

Smoke Detector  
Engine  
Spot  
Extinguisher  
Stop

Firefighter  
Water  
Help  
Wildfire  
REACT

# CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Let's test your knowledge! See if you can fill in the blanks with the provided clues. (Hint: If you need some help, just look back through the packet to refresh your memory.)



## ACROSS

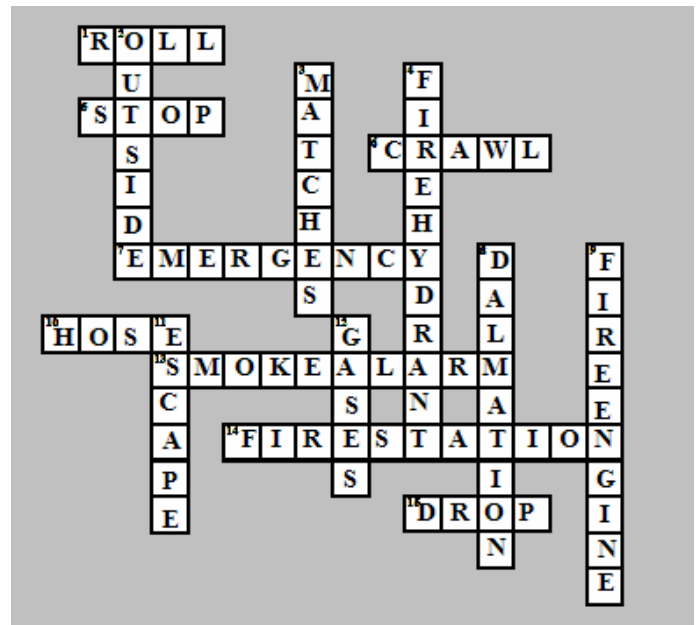
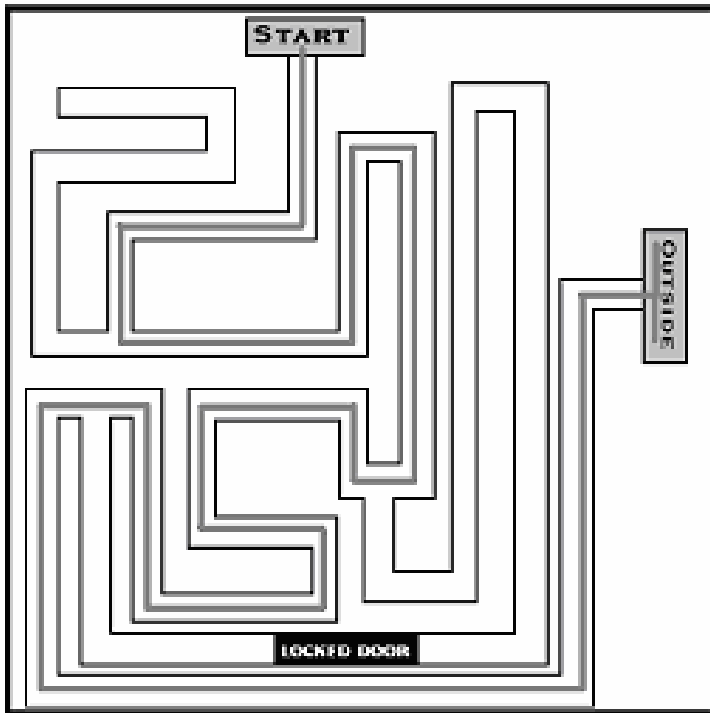
- 1** The third fire safety step if your clothes catch on fire.
- 5** The first fire safety step if your clothes catch on fire.
- 6** To stay below smoke, you should \_\_\_\_ on your hands and knees.
- 7** A window is an \_\_\_\_ exit.
- 10** Fire fighters use a \_\_\_\_ to put out fires.
- 13** A \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ detects a fire in your home.
- 14** A \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ is where fire fighters stay and practice fire drills.
- 15** The second fire safety step if your clothes catch on fire.

## DOWN

- 2** You should choose a safe place \_\_\_\_ of your home to meet if a fire were to occur.
- 3** Never play with \_\_\_\_.
- 4** Fire fighters get their water supply from a \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_.
- 8** The type of dog that can be found at a fire station.
- 9** Fire fighters drive a \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ to the scene of a disaster.
- 11** Your family should make an \_\_\_\_ plan together before a fire.
- 12** Fires give off poisonous \_\_\_\_.



# ANSWERS



*Finding fun  
and relaxing  
things to do  
helps to  
relieve stress.*



# Yale Child Study Center



The REAACT (Recovery Efforts After Adult & Child Trauma) team was developed in order to provide a more comprehensive approach to treat fire survivors. The REAACT team was based on work done at the Yale Child Study Center. The Center's **Child Development-Community Policing Program** (CD-CP) is a community-based approach to helping children and their families recover

following a fire or other traumatic events. The CD-CP program trains police officers to collaborate with local clinicians in order to provide more effective interventions.

The CDCP program served as the model for the REAACT team. Instead of training policeman, we trained firefighters. We obtained information from local fire departments and had local clinicians participate in "ride-alongs" with firefighters while they were on-call to assist in crisis intervention. We also engaged in community outreach efforts by reaching out to teachers, pastors, policeman, and other members of the community.

## REFERENCES

Picture from Google images:

[http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.centerbrook.com/media/projects/yale\\_university\\_child\\_study\\_center/large/1.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.centerbrook.com/project/yale\\_university\\_child\\_study\\_center&usq=\\_\\_HZToFnjz4llfE8UEL8rCPxvogXw=&h=432&w=800&sz=100&hl=en&start=7&um=1&tbnid=vFbZVrnp1xZLM:&tbnh=77&tbnw=143&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dyale%2Bchild%2Bstudy%2Bcenter%2Bimage%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsafari%26rls%3Den-us%26sa%3DN%26um%3D1](http://images.google.com/imgres?imgurl=http://www.centerbrook.com/media/projects/yale_university_child_study_center/large/1.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.centerbrook.com/project/yale_university_child_study_center&usq=__HZToFnjz4llfE8UEL8rCPxvogXw=&h=432&w=800&sz=100&hl=en&start=7&um=1&tbnid=vFbZVrnp1xZLM:&tbnh=77&tbnw=143&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dyale%2Bchild%2Bstudy%2Bcenter%2Bimage%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsafari%26rls%3Den-us%26sa%3DN%26um%3D1)

Source:

[http://www.centerbrook.com/media/projects/yale\\_university\\_child\\_study\\_center/large/1.jpg](http://www.centerbrook.com/media/projects/yale_university_child_study_center/large/1.jpg)



*Work in a TEAM instead of trying to do things all by yourself because Together, Everyone Achieves More.*

# Zip's Tips (A-M)

## Tip

## Pg

A— Keep in mind that a smoke alarm is only one part of the safety process.

6



B— Make sure that your babysitter knows who to call and what to do in an emergency, especially if there is a fire.

8

C— Respect firefighters because they are trained professionals who think and respond with safety in mind first.

11



D— Do not smoke. Not only is it bad for your health, it can cause a fire!

13

E— Collapsible ladders may make escaping out of a window easier.

14

F— Try to have fire extinguishers that can put out Class A, B, and C fires because these are the most common type of household fires.

19

G— Understand the basic facts about fires so that you can know what to do if a fire happens. Respond immediately because every single second counts.

20



H— See "Kids' Preparation for Emergencies" to practice the escape plan outlined in this manual.

23

I— Know the types of burns and the proper treatment so you can keep an injury from getting worse.

29

J— Show appreciation for volunteers because they help make needed services available to others for little to no cost.

30



K— A calm action plan gets children ready in advance so they know how to respond properly if an emergency happens.

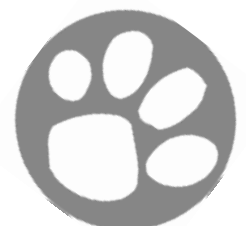
31

L— Keep your pet in mind. They are a member of your family and an important part of helping you with your recovery.

44

M— Talk with an experienced professional such as a REAACT Clinician to help you through the recovery process when there is a traumatic event.

45



# Zip's Tips (N-Y)

*N— Call 9-1-1 **first** when there is an emergency.* 48

*O— Find useful home fire safety information and resources online.* 49

*P— Keep important documents in a safe place that is protected from fires such as a fire proof box or cabinet.* 50

*Q— Practice asking your child key questions so that they can better remember what to do before and after fires.* 52

*R— It's OK to ask for help.* 53

*S— The REAACT Team is dedicated to providing solutions with a comprehensive approach for helping people have a quick recovery from trauma.* 54

*T— Use the FREE resources provided by REAACT for all ages for prevention and recovery strategies in traumatic situations.* 56

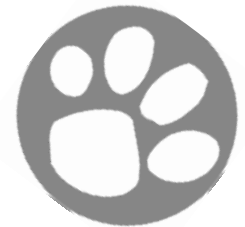
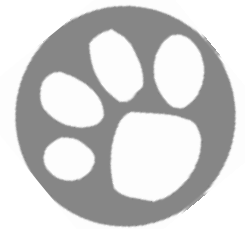
*U— Give your mind a chance to regroup in the middle of a difficult situation by taking a deep breath and pausing for just a moment. This will help you think calmly and make better choices.* 57

*V— Remember that you are not alone. You can contact REAACT. They help people by talking about and processing their fears and memories of a traumatic event.* 66

*W— Stay as calm as you can when you're exposed to a fire. It will help you and others remain safe.* 68

*X— Finding fun and relaxing things to do helps to relieve stress.* 73

*Y— Work in a TEAM instead of trying to do things all by yourself because **T**ogether, **E**veryone **A**chieves **M**ore.* 74



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