

Children and Fire Safety



Any time parents can take a moment to discuss safety with their children is time well spent. To get you started with teaching your child fire safety, consider the following tips:

Control Kid's Access to Fire

- Keep all matches and lighters out of the hands of children. If possible, keep these sources of fire in locked drawers. Consider buying only "child-proof" lighters, but be aware that no product is completely child-proof.
- Children as young as two years old can strike matches and start fires.
- Never leave children unattended near operating stoves or burning candles, even for a short time.
- Teach children not to pick up matches or lighters they may find. Instead, they should tell an adult immediately.

Fire Safety at Home

- Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home, especially near sleeping areas.
- Smoke alarms should be kept clean of dust by regularly vacuuming over and around them.
- Replace batteries in smoke alarms at least twice a year. And replace the entire unit after ten years of service, or as the manufacturer recommends.
- Families should plan and practice two escape routes from each room of their home.
- Regularly inspect the home for fire hazards.

Control Curiosity

- Talk to your child or students in a calm, assured manner about fire safety.
- Consider visiting a fire station if children are interested in firefighting and/or fire trucks or contact your local fire department's public education office to coordinate a firefighter visit to your classroom.
- For parents: Create opportunities for learning about fire safety at home. For example, when you cook, let your child get the pot holder for you; when you use the fireplace, let your child bring you the wood or tools; if you use candles, let the child check to make sure the candle holder fits snugly; and when you change or test the batteries in your smoke alarms, ask the child to help you.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FIRE PROGRAMS

For more fire safety information visit us online at www.vafire.com