

Matches and Lighters are Tools for Adults

Children will do what you do, so use fire wisely and put away the matches and lighters. Eliminate access to ignition devices and teach them to notify an adult if they find lighters or matches.

Ignition devices need to be locked up and out of sight; children will find



**Keep these away
from children**

them in a drawer or on a shelf. Do not leave the grill lighter on the grill, or store matches in the junk drawer. Kids who see matches and lighters may want to start a fire just out of curiosity, or try to

light a candle to see what will happen. These activities can have tragic results. So play it safe. Know where your fire-starting tools are and make sure that children can't get to them. Talk to kids about the proper use of fire, and explain that they must never use it without adult supervision. And very importantly ~ use fire responsibly yourself.

Firesetting Prevention



**Fire is part of American
Culture**

It is undeniable that fire is a part of American culture. On a child's first birthday, we put fire on the cake and celebrate ~ and how do we celebrate big events like the 4th of July?

Adults must be mindful of telltale signs of child set fires: small burn marks in the carpet, spent matches in the toilet or wastebasket, burned toys or clothing, or burn marks in the yard. If you see these signs call the helpline at **1-800-500-8897**.

Sometimes children start fires because they are curious about what will happen or because they are bored. But firesetting can be a call for help; perhaps there is a crisis in their life. The helpline can refer families to appropriate intervention strategies for the child. Without intervention, the behavior will likely continue ~ and escalate.

Be Responsible for Fire Safety

Talk with your children about fire safety and let them see you being responsible. Install smoke alarms and test them monthly, and change the batteries once a year. (Replace your smoke alarm every 10 years.) If you should have a false alarm, fan the smoke away with a towel ~ but always leave the batteries in the device.

And remember, children will copy you. Go to a public fireworks show rather than using fireworks at home. If you choose to use fireworks at home, make sure they are legal in the state of Minnesota and dispose of them in a pail of water or sand.



**Sparklers bum at 1200
degrees**

Use battery operated candles in your home. Be sure your kids know that fire is a tool, not a toy. And have a safe escape plan with a family meeting place in case your best intentions fail. Practice it with your children.

**For more information contact Kathi Osmonson at:
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Set a Good Example with Outdoor Fires

Not all fires are bad fires; your children learn fire safety from you when you're enjoying s'mores around a campfire or a backyard fire pit. Always use a fire ring or other non-combustible break between the fire and surrounding vegetation. Keep water handy in case the fire gets too large. And when you're finished, put the fire out completely. (When you think it's out, put more water on it. (The first person to say "better safe than sorry" was probably talking about extinguishing a fire)



Enjoy Fire Responsibly



*State Fire Marshal
Division*

For Parents & Caregivers

Understand and Prevent Youth Firesetting



State Fire Marshal Division

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Youth Firesetting Helpline

1-800-500-8897