



The Missouri State Fire Marshal's Office in cooperation with the National Association of State Fire Marshals is working to assist in establishing youth fire prevention coalitions throughout the state. An intervention training program on how to implement and establish area coalitions was developed by the Missouri Youth Fire Safety Coalition and the Division of Fire Safety.

This program was modeled after a number of existing local programs, the most prevalent of which being a program utilized by the St. Louis-based Burns Recovered Support Group.

The State Fire Marshal's Office would like to recognize the Missouri Youth Fire Safety Coalition for their dedication and hard work in the development of this program.

The Youth Firesetter Intervention training program is available through the Missouri Youth Fire Safety Coalition and the Division of Fire Safety. For further information or to set up a training program, please contact:



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YOUTH FIRESSETTER INTERVENTION



Nationwide more than half of all intentionally set fires are started by youths and this trend continues to be an alarming problem. Missouri is not immune. Although it may be true many children start fires out of curiosity, they may not understand the true danger of fire, both emotionally and physically if an injury or death is the result of their actions. A parent of such a child should not simply believe this is a phase and ignore the situation.



Parents are encouraged to learn key danger signs if their child has shown an interest in starting fires. If your child is exhibiting fire setting behavior, you and your family are at a higher risk. The odds double that you will experience a fire in your home if this situation exists.

What to look for....

- ◆ Child has “accidentally” started more than one fire
- ◆ Child lacks the understanding of fire’s destructiveness
- ◆ Child shows an interest in matches or lighters
- ◆ Child has trouble making friends
- ◆ Child has difficulty adjusting to traumatic life changes
- ◆ Conflict within the family
- ◆ Child has fighting and other behavior problems at school/home
- ◆ Child has temper tantrums resulting in property damage or harm to people or animals
- ◆ Child has a hard time feeling or expressing guilt

In and of itself, one such behavior or sign does not necessarily mean a firesetting behavior problems exists.

The National Fire Protection Association reports fires set by children yearly result in:

- 🔥 95,000 Fires
- 🔥 300 Deaths
- 🔥 3,000 Injuries
- 🔥 \$300,000,000 in loss

Children themselves are usually the victims of these fires, accounting for 85 of every 100 lives lost.

- 🔥 40% of all set fires are caused by children
- 🔥 Most children who set fires are between the ages of 5 and 9
- 🔥 95% of those fires are set at home

Parents of children who may be exhibiting firesetting behaviors must put aside embarrassment or the perceived negative connotation associated with this type of behavior and seek assistance. Parents may be reluctant to seek assistance for a variety of reasons, but the goal of a fire prevention coalition is to decrease firesetting behaviors through prevention education and is not designed or intended to discipline a child or to place a child into the courts system.



The Missouri State Fire Marshal’s Office is striving to establish several trained teams throughout the state to ensure parents have accessibility to such a valuable resource. Team members from various disciplines such as mental health, social services, juvenile justice, family services, law enforcement and of course, fire service would be available depending upon the situation.