

# Be Safe With Fire



GCF  
Safety  
Books

## *BE SAFE WITH FIRE*

This book is a part of our child safety prevention program, developed and published by Global Children's Fund.

Every year, house fires claim the lives of as many as 800 children in the United States. They seriously injure several thousand more. This book is designed to give children valuable information on how to escape a house fire, in a fun manner that kids will remember.

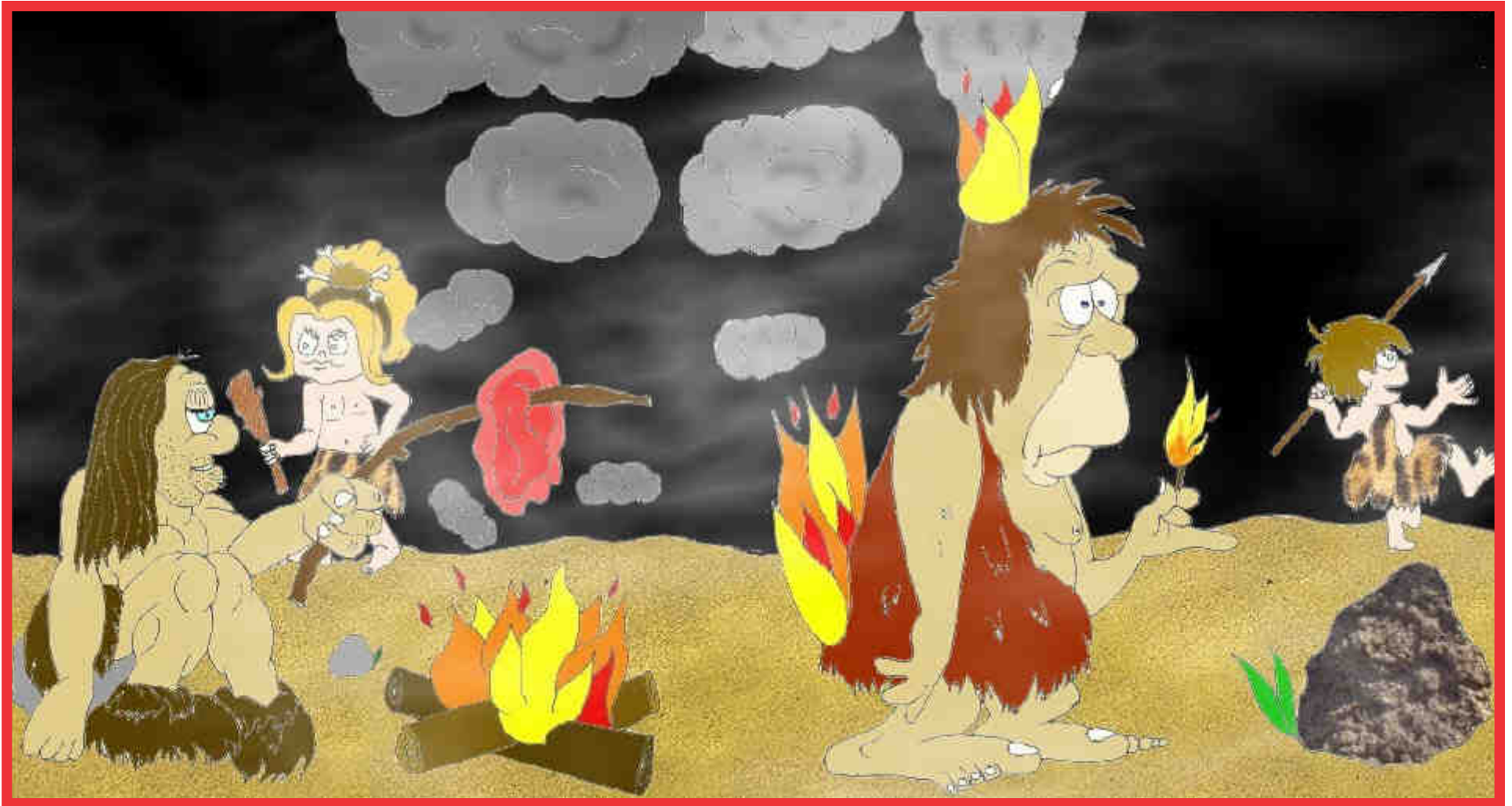
For more information on this or other books in our child safety and sexual abuse prevention series, please visit:

[www.KeepYourChildSafe.org](http://www.KeepYourChildSafe.org)

Thank you for taking the time to make safety a priority in your household.



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Fire. Since the beginning of time, it has been both a helper and a hazard. Fire is an important tool. It helps us to do many things. It keeps us warm, it cooks things, it is used to make stuff and power engines, plus it makes camping tons of fun.

However, fire can also be dangerous. It can be deadly. Since the beginning of time, it's also caused problems. It burns down houses, it burns down forests, and if you aren't careful, it can also burn down people. It all depends on how it is used.



It is important for children to understand how dangerous fire can be. It is not a toy for kids to play with. It is a tool for adults to use very carefully. It is one of the most dangerous tools around. Many children do not realize just how dangerous it is. But did you know, it is more dangerous than a gun? Did you know, more children die every year because they were playing with matches than are accidentally shot with a gun? Fire can be extremely dangerous, and children need to stay away from it. Let's see just how dangerous it can be ...



Fire is so dangerous because it multiplies in such a hurry, and it burns almost EVERYTHING. It only takes one little accident, one little flame to catch everything on fire. Because of this, it is something that kids never use.

Did you know, that every single year, there are around 19,000 houses that get burned down, because kids just like you make a bad choice and play around with fire! That's like as many houses as are in a whole city! They burn up their houses. They burn up all their toys. Even worse, many times, they burn themselves all up. Just because they made a bad choice and played with fire.





Even adults who are careless with fire will sometimes pay the price. Do you know what happened to all these trees? That's right, they caught on fire. Do you know why they caught on fire? Because some grown-ups were not being careful with fire.



If an adult could make a mistake to be careless with fire, just think how easy it would be for a kid to make a mistake if they tried to use fire! If such a small flame could get so big and burn down a whole forest, just imagine how dangerous it could be for kids!



It's OK to be curious about things. That's what kids are. They are curious. Fire can be interesting to look at. But when it comes to fire, curiosity is looking and not touching. You might be curious about a rattlesnake. But that doesn't mean you would play with one.



You might be curious about a grizzly bear. But that certainly doesn't mean you would invite one over for dinner. Because uh-oh, I think Grizzly has a different idea about dinner.



Fire is the same way, and you shouldn't play with it any more than you would play with a rattlesnake. You can certainly ask your parents about fire if you are curious. You can even see fire in lot's of ways that aren't dangerous; like on T.V., or when your parents are using it very carefully. You can ask mom

and dad to get you books about fire from the library and you can read more about it. You can sit carefully around your fireplace. But playing with it on our own because we are curious is a big no no. I like fire too. I enjoy a good campfire. But it is important to only enjoy fire when adults are using it carefully.

Yep, no doubt about it. Kids playing with fire is a bad combination. It's important that if we see a friend or someone else playing with fire, we don't just stay around and watch them. We don't participate with them, because if they start a fire, they could burn us up too! If you ever see a friend or someone else playing



with fire, you tell them to stop that and leave the room right away. You leave and you tell the first adult you can find what they are doing. Or, if it's a younger kid, you take away their matches or lighter and let your parents know. This isn't tattling, this is being a good friend. It's keeping them safe because you love them. You would be very sad if you didn't tell and your friend burned themselves all up.



People who fight fire for a living can tell you just how dangerous it is. These are firefighters.



Now, you may think being a firefighter is all fun and games, but it isn't. Sure, they do get to ride in a cool truck. Yes, they do get to do fire horns and sirens. And sure, they do have wild parties with chocolate chickens and get to ride on the gelatin slide. But they also see first hand exactly how destructive fire can be.



Firefighters sure do know a lot about fires. They have to study how fire works, they have to learn to operate all the gadgets on the fire truck.



Firefighters spend half their life living in a firehouse. They have beds to sleep in, a kitchen to cook meals, and even weights so that they can stay in shape and exercise, because you have to be very strong to be a firefighter. They live at the fire house because they always have to be around in case they get a call on the horn that there is a fire somewhere. Let's follow along with some firefighters while they show us what we need to know about fire.

This is fireman Dave, and he's going to tell us some fire safety rules. Dave says that we always need to be extra careful around fire places or campfires. Is it because we think you're going to just do jump into there and have a bath? No, of course not. But kids have accidents. Heck, adults have accidents. They trip and fall into the fire. They play games too close and accidentally end up in it. And those coals are hot! Hot enough to burn the skin right off you. So whenever we're around the fireplace, **NO HORSEPLAY**. We also need to walk very carefully so we don't trip. If you are camping you can help your mom and dad by clearing things away from the fire that you might trip over. We also need to be careful around the stove. No playing near it, and we need to make sure we never set anything on top of a stove, even if we think it is off.





Beep!

Beep!

Beep!

Beep!

Beep!

Beep!



So how do we know if there's a fire in our house? Well, two ways: If you see or smell smoke, or if you turn around and there are flames burning up your backside, then that probably means there is a fire. But usually, we listen to the sound of our smoke detectors to know if there is a fire. You should ask your parents to set off your smoke alarm so you can hear what it sounds like. This way, if it ever goes off, you'll know exactly what to do. Dave tells us that it's important to know what to do if we were ever in a fire. You stay low, and get out quick! You see, in a fire, smoke goes up. So you need to go down. And in a fire, it spreads fast, so you need to get out even



faster. You should hurry out of your house using your escape route. But wait, if a door is closed, check it first. Put your hand up to it. If it feels really hot, there is a fire behind that door. Find another way out. Once you're outside, stay out, and go to your meeting place. If your family doesn't have a meeting place, you should decide on one.



Dave tells us that if you ever see a fire, **no matter how that fire got there**, don't try to hide from it. There are some things you can hide from. You can hide from a burglar. You can hide from a grizzly bear. You can even hide from a slimy alien. But you can't hide from fire. Fire doesn't work like that.

The only safe place to be from a fire is out of your house in the open. If you try to hide from a fire, it will always get you. So whenever you see a fire, you need to scream: **"Fire!"** at the top of your lungs and get out right away. Let's try that now.



Dave tells us that it's important to never be scared of firefighters. If you ever see a firefighter, don't hide from them, go to them. They are your friend, and they are there to save you. When firefighters get dressed up to go fight a fire, they can look pretty scary. They have to put on a special suit that protects them from the fire. They often times carry an axe so they can break down doors or walls and

get to people to save them. They wear an oxygen tank which makes them breathe funny and sound like Darth Vader. But all of that just helps keep them safe and allows them to do their job better, and underneath all that stuff is just a normal person, who is very nice, and is there to save you.



Dave also tells us that it's important to know what to do if we catch on fire ourselves. Sometimes, our clothes might catch on fire for some reason. If this happens there is something we can do to keep from burning all up. It's called, stop, drop, and roll. First you stop. Running around only makes the fire bigger, so you don't run around. You drop to the ground,

gently putting your knees down and then laying down to the ground. Then you roll around. This puts the fire out. It squishes it against the ground and it goes out. If you have the room right now, why don't you try. Just stop, drop to your knees, then lay down, and roll around on the ground. Simple. You can also rip your cloths off if they come off easy.



Well, that's it. I think you know what you need to know. Now you are officially an honorary fire safety marshal. Perhaps when you are all grown up, you can become a firefighter yourself and help save lives. But in the mean time, **BE SAFE!**



## Fire Prevention Tips for Parents

1. Teach kids how to stop, drop, and roll. Practice it regularly.
2. Clearly explain the dangers of playing with fire, and check underneath your child's mattresses, under couch cushions, or in the closet for burnt matches or other signs that your little one might be experimenting.
3. A small amount of planning goes a long ways. Practice fire drills in your house at least once a year. Show kids as many ways out of the house as you can, and come up with a meeting spot outside of your house. This is not only for you, but to save the lives of fire-fighters who have been killed looking for a child that has long since been out of the house.
4. Make a game out of fire drills. You can blindfold your kids to symbolize what they might see in a fire, and have them practice that way.
5. Teach your kids to do the fire crawl. Just drop on all fours, put your nose to the ground, and crawl around like a bloodhound sniffing at something. Keep your face low.



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