

City of Tonawanda Fire Department Fire Safety Video - Guide for Parents

Lesson 1: Know how to call for help

- All students should know that the “universal” phone number for emergencies is 9-1-1.
- Students should understand what an emergency is. Some examples are:
 - A house or other type of building or vehicle on fire (flames, smoke is visible).
 - Someone is sick or injured:
 - Someone passed out/unconscious.
 - Someone is bleeding.
 - Choking (universal sign is when someone is grabbing their throat and can’t speak).
 - A person was struck by a vehicle.
 - Someone fell and can’t get up.
 - A vehicle collision.
 - A situation where the police may be needed:
 - If something looks wrong or suspicious.
 - “Stranger Danger” (a stranger approaches you or is in your neighborhood or trying to get into your house or a neighbor’s house).
 - If something is wrong at home.
- When you dial 9-1-1, an Operator or Dispatcher will answer and ask some questions. Students should know how to answer these questions:
 - Address or location (if unable to remember number or street name, describe a nearby landmark such as a business name, a nearby park or waterway, railroad tracks, bike path etc.). Ask each student to say their address.
 - Type of emergency or situation. Students should be able to describe to the dispatcher, what the emergency is or why they need help. This will ensure that the right type of help is sent.
- The 9-1-1 dispatcher may also provide the caller special instructions on what they should need to do such as: *get out of the house quickly, turn on a porch light, make sure an injured person lies still, stand ready to wave to the first responders as they approach to show them where to go.*
- Depending on age, students should know how to use a “land-line” and cell phone to call for emergencies. If possible, show students how they can use a locked cell phone to call 9-1-1.

Lesson 2: Smoke Alarms and Escape Plans

- Stress to students that while maintaining smoke alarms is mainly a grownup’s responsibility, it’s always a good idea for children to ask their parents if they have smoke alarms in place.
- Students should be taught that if they hear a smoke alarm ringing, they should never ignore the warning (in some homes, repeated alarms may be caused by smoke from cooking and may lead to a false sense of security).
- Just like at school, where everyone knows what to do if the fire alarm goes off, all students should have a similar plan for their home in case a fire should break out there.
 - *Explain to students that if a fire occurs at home, it would be a very scary experience and when you are scared, it can be very difficult to think clearly about what you should do, and that is why it is important to practice. By practicing, you better prepare yourself to do the right thing when it counts most. (just the same as when you play a sport or a musical instrument or take part in dancing lessons).*

- When creating a fire safety plan for home, the most important lesson is to know that if the house is on fire, you need to get out fast!
- Smoke caused by fire will always rise to the ceiling first, leaving some clear air near the floor.
 - o *If awakened at night by a smoke alarm, children should “roll” out of bed to a crawling position so that if there is an actual fire, their face will be lower than the smoke.*
 - o *Whenever smoke is present, you should crawl with your mouth and nose close to the floor.*
- Know two or more ways to get out of your house. The typical way (front, side or back door) is always best but if you can’t get to the door because the smoke is too thick or there are visible flames or there is too much heat between you and door, a window is your next best choice.

**** If trapped in a bedroom (fire is not in the bedroom, it is burning somewhere else in the house), always, always, always close the bedroom door first then try to get out of the window. (even if the door is made of wood, it can hold back most of the smoke and heat for a very long time).***

About Windows

Suggest to students that they should ask their parents to show them how to open a window in case they should ever need to escape from a fire. Opening windows can be tricky (especially when storm windows or screens are in place or if they are the very old type). We even recommend that as a last resort, children be taught how to break the windowpane safely using a hard object that they can throw or swing at the window.

Tell students that if they sleep in a bedroom on the first floor and they can’t get to the door, they should be able to exit the window and drop to the ground safely.

Tell students that if they sleep in a bedroom located on the second floor or higher, they should open the window and yell for help as loud as they can so that a firefighter, other 1st responder or neighbor, can climb a ladder to get them. *In this type of situation, it is vitally important that they close their bedroom door to protect from heat and smoke.*

- All plans should include an “meeting place” located outside where all family members can meet up. (The driveway or front sidewalk would be a good example.)
- Once outside, never go back in even if there is someone else still inside. Use a cell phone or neighbor’s home to call 9-1-1.

Lesson 3: What to do if clothes catch fire

- Never get too close to fires (stove, fireplace, outdoor grill). Prevention, prevention, prevention!!!
- DO NOT RUN - Stop, Drop & Roll, cover your face.
- Use water to put out fire (nearby garden hose, pool, pond) or smother fire with towel or blanket.

Lesson 4: Matches & Lighters

- Explain that matches and lighters are tools, not toys and should only be used by adults. Just like any other tool, it can cause injury if used by a child.
- If matches or lighter is found lying in reach of children, you should tell an adult and/or put them out of reach of younger children. This is especially important if the student has younger siblings.