



play safe! be safe!®



B U L L E T I N



Train-the-Trainer Participants Spread the Word

Recently *play safe! be safe!*® Bulletin editors spoke to a number of past participants in Train-the-Trainer *play safe! be safe!* workshops to ask how they are using workshop materials to train others and their reaction to the program.

Daycare providers and teachers alike responded positively to the *play safe! be safe!* kits. Dr. Sheila R. Thomas, a licensed trainer with Bright from the Start, the state agency that administers Georgia's Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, attended the Macon, GA workshop last year and commented about the two training sessions she's conducted to date: "The participants were excited about the kits because materials are so well designed. They commented that the 'box had everything they needed' to take back to their classrooms."



Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Thomas' training sessions reached approximately 50 daycare providers throughout southwest Georgia. To capture daycare providers' attention in a training session, she starts by telling them they are the reason children are not fearful of fire. Just as Dr. Robert Cole explains in his workshops, Thomas counsels: "I begin discussing all of the happy occasions in which young children experience fire for the first time — birthday candles, backyard barbecues, etc. You can see the light bulbs going on! It was a real educational experience for participants."

Train-the-Trainer Participants Spread the Word (cont'd)

The importance of the Spanish-language components of the *play safe! be safe!* kit were pointed out by Rosalie Yanacheck, education coordinator for the Council for the Spanish Speaking, which oversees the Guadalupe Head Start schools in Milwaukee, Wis. “We serve 700 children through our 35 classrooms and most of the children are Spanish speaking. Fire safety is a subject that is near and dear to my heart. We serve mostly low-income families, and rarely does a season go by without one of our families experiencing a fire either due to a faulty space heater or some other cause.”

Yanacheck completed training at all of the Head Start centers shortly after she attended the Train-the-Trainer workshop in Madison last year. Like other educators, she pointed out that providers were delighted with the ease that they could introduce the program. They especially appreciated how the program involved the parents, and as a result a special *play safe! be safe!* parents’ presentation was organized.

For Judith Samuels, public fire life safety educator for the Crawford County Fire Department Prevention and Drug Education, Roberta, GA, the *play safe! be safe!* training sessions she conducted were just one more opportunity for her to visit the pre-K and kindergarten grades in this rural community. Samuels is in schools so frequently that she is affectionately known as “the fire department lady.”

“Teachers responded favorably to the *play safe! be safe!* training sessions that I conducted right after taking the Train-the-Trainer workshop in Macon last fall,” explains Samuels. “They planned to introduce *play safe! be safe!* on a bi-weekly basis and with our frequent visits the message will be reinforced year-round.” Samuels and her colleagues teach fire safety using clowning, music and puppetry and participate in community events, such as the local “Safety Blitz” to reinforce the importance of juvenile fire safety.

Samuels knows the juvenile fire safety education is working because children in the community have been responsible for saving members of their families. “Just recently,” she explains, “there was a youngster who saw smoke coming from a closet door in his home. He touched the door knob, felt it was hot, got down low and crawled to alert a sibling and his parents to get out of the house. They exited via window without injury.”

This young boy and two other youngsters from Peach County have been honored as “Hometown Heroes” by the fire department. In ceremonies with local officials, the “heroes” receive certificates, a special dinner, and lots of local publicity for themselves and juvenile fire safety initiatives.

Ask Dr. Cole

In most of Dr. Robert Cole’s columns, he shares and expands on the information that he discusses in his *play safe! be safe!*® workshops. This month he talks about another project in which his company, Fireproof Children/Prevention First, is involved. The program still focuses on juvenile fire safety but involves a coalition of community professionals.

