



play safe! be safe!®



B U L L E T I N



Designing a workshop with state-wide appeal!



Becki White, Deputy State Fire Marshal and Fire Safety Educator for the State of Minnesota, was the key organizer of a recent train-the-trainer workshop on the *play safe! be safe!®* curriculum. Due to her efforts, 93 educators gathered in Bloomington, MN for Dr. Robert Cole's workshop in early March.

The *play safe! be safe!* workshops train educators who can, in turn, reach hundreds of other fire service, daycare and health professionals. The events commonly impact entire communities — but the recent workshop in a Minneapolis/St. Paul suburb has the potential of spreading the juvenile fire-safety message statewide.

Designing a workshop with state-wide appeal! (continued)

White is quick to point out that she tapped a number of resources to ensure a well-attended workshop. “I reached out to the State Fire Chiefs Association Public Education Committee, of which I am member, as well as the Early Childhood Resource and Training Center, Safe Kids Minnesota, Minnesota Head Start and Hennepin County Trauma Center to spread the word to all sectors.” The resulting attendance was a great mix of educators from across Minnesota; there were 38 fire personnel, 40 childcare educators and a variety of healthcare professionals, including the head of injury prevention at the Mayo Clinic.

Following each workshop, participants present implementation plans for the kits they receive. “Fire-service educators use materials like the *play safe! be safe!* kits to introduce our curriculum to a school and establish a relationship. Having high-quality, research-based materials like these makes a fire educator’s job that much easier,” says White.

White, a former elementary school teacher, knows a lot about classroom demands. “I taught for 12 years in grades, 2, 3, 4 and 6, and I’ve been a firefighter for eight years in my community, so this job is a perfect fit.”

White’s first assignment when she joined the State Fire Marshal Division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety almost two years ago was to create a program that fire educators could take into classrooms. She explains, “I didn’t have to create new materials. What I did was frame or script our fire-safety messages into the state standards and benchmarks, which helped teachers meet their educational mandates.”

While White has connections all around the state, she was pleased to make new contacts as a result of the workshop, and she’s already taking advantage of those. “We made a connection with pre-school educators that will be helpful in planning future programs. They’ve approached me about the possibility of designing a summer training program to focus on outdoor-related fire hazards, such as fireworks and grills — and campfires, which are a big thing here in Minnesota.”

Readers might also enjoy Becki White’s article entitled: Developing a Fire Prevention Program for Your Community, which she wrote for Firehouse.com.

<http://www.firehouse.com/topic/fire-prevention-and-investigation/developing-fire-prevention-program-your-community>

ASK DR COLE



In this month's column, Dr. Robert Cole shares the results from a report issued by the Washington State Association of Fire Marshals in March 2011. It summarizes data from home visits to high-risk homes in five cities: Portland, OR; Tucson, AZ; Vancouver, WA; Wilmington, NC; and Dallas, TX. The research was made possible by a grant from FEMA's Assistance to Firefighters Grant program.

This report from the Washington State Association of Fire Marshals is important and groundbreaking for several reasons. It covers more than 3,800 households in different geographic areas, interviews were held at the homes, not via the telephone, and the survey covered urban single-family dwellings and mobile homes.

At least one fire professional and one community volunteer conducted each visit. During their visit, they either tested an existing alarm or installed a new one and provided general fire-safety education for the household.

The findings were striking: "51% of the homes visited had no working smoke alarms—not a single one. And of the alarms present in the homes, over a third (35%) were not working. Almost two-thirds of the homes admitted they had no escape plan." Until the publication of this research, it was generally reported that almost 100% of all U.S. households had at least one smoke alarm.

The vast differences in these percentages and those previously reported using telephone surveys can be attributed to each of the participating cities identifying high-risk dwellings—those with children under 5, elderly, smokers, people with disabilities—and then conducting in-person canvassing with fire service personnel and community volunteers. This formula, which is used extensively in the UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, also could be adopted in cities across the country.

The important fact to remember is that working smoke alarms save lives. Accordingly, it's imperative for educators to continually reinforce that message with children and their caregivers. Also, it's helpful to check with your local fire departments to see what their policy is about home risk-assessing visits, providing alarms at no charge and installing them.

For more helpful teaching tools, visit: www.homefiredrill.org. In my next column, I'll review additional findings from the report, which discuss how each of the participating cities approached the study.

Key Points to Reinforce About Smoke Alarms

- Keep alarms away from kitchen and bathroom smoke and steam
- Locate smoke alarms near sleeping areas and install one on every level of your home
- Test batteries every month
- Replace batteries twice a year: When you change your clocks, change your alarm batteries

Healthcare Workers: An Important Link in Fire-Safety Education

Bulletin editors recently spoke to two healthcare professionals who attended *play safe! be safe!*® workshops about how fire-safety education fits into their busy teaching schedules.

Joyce Reynolds RN, BSN



Joyce Reynolds RN, BSN, who is a Child Care Health Consultant at the Child Care Resource Center of Tulsa, attended a *play safe! be safe!* Train-the-Trainer Workshop last year in Oklahoma City. She shared how she integrates fire safety into her programs.

“My job consists of visiting childcare centers in four counties to address health and safety issues. I work with 12 childcare centers a year, enrolling six childcare centers every six months into my program, which is called the Health and Safety Enhancement Project.

I provide health and safety training and technical assistance for the childcare community. I also teach health and safety classes for children. Each class I teach has between 8-12 children and I teach about 10-12 classes a year. In addition, I assist centers not enrolled in my program.

Before attending the *play safe! be safe!* workshop in Oklahoma City, I was already using part of the program to teach fire safety to children and as a model for teachers on how they could teach fire safety in their classes. The kit was one of the resources at our Child Care Resource Center lending library. I especially like using the story cards.

Fire Safety is one of the training sessions that I offer to both teachers and children. Most of my 12 centers will receive this training. I really like having the kits to leave with the teachers because when I do the training for the children you cannot cover every aspect of fire safety without confusing them. They are 3, 4 and 5 year olds! I've enjoyed teaching the *play safe! be safe!* program and the children and teachers seem to enjoy attending it. Teachers love receiving the kit.”

Barbara Conrad, Trauma Outreach Injury Prevention Education Coordinator



Barbara Conrad is Trauma Outreach Injury Prevention Education Coordinator at The Reading Hospital and Medical Center in Pennsylvania. She is also an Emergency Medical Technician Instructor and involved in many state-wide injury prevention initiatives. She participated in a Train-the-Trainer workshop in Camp Hill, PA, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Safe Kids.

“I am a member of Safe Kids Berks County because the organization shares the same goal as me: injury prevention for kids. Through Safe Kids Berks, I was able to integrate the *play safe! be safe!*® program into my educational plans.

I organized a *play safe! be safe!* program with the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU). Within this BCIU program, I trained 101 teachers and aides to be able to instruct all of their children in the Program. By training these teachers and aides, we were able to reach 700+ children.

Barbara Conrad, Trauma Outreach Injury Prevention Education Coordinator (continued)

I think it is a fabulous program and workshop. It reminded me of several different aspects of fire prevention including:

- How we as a culture reinforce bad fire-safety habits such as blowing out candles on birthday cakes;
- How we as adults do not set good examples for our children, and
- How a child's mind thinks about fire and prevention.

It would be ideal to develop a fire-prevention program for elementary school children (6-10 years old) in correlation with the *play safe! be safe!* program. A program such as that would reinforce the seriousness of fire and fire injuries with the children.

I love my job. If I can prevent even one child from injury or teach one child to be safe, I'm doing my job!"

Did You Know?

More fires are reported on July 4th than on any other day of the year according to the Public Education Division of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and more than half of those fires are caused by fireworks.

In 2009, U.S. hospital emergency rooms treated an estimated **8,800** people for fireworks related injuries. **Two of five (39%)** people injured by fireworks were under the age of 15. These figures are from an NFPA Fire Analysis and Research study and are substantiated by research conducted by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Included in the fireworks category are sparklers, which have great appeal to children. The tip of the sparkler burns at a temperature of more than 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit, which can cause third-degree burns.