



Fire Safety *is* Fire Prevention

When a fire starts, children and adults can become very afraid and confused. They may not understand what is happening or how to react.

That's why it's important for child care providers to create and maintain a fire safety plan. Start by teaching children what to do in case of a fire, and regularly practice a fire escape plan.



SC Child Care

EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

www.scchildcare.org



The Division of Early Care and Education is a division of the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

Happy. Healthy. *Safe.*



Fire Prevention Brochure

South Carolina Department of Social Services
Division of Early Care and Education

Did You Know?



You have no more than 3 minutes to escape a burning building



More people die from smoke inhalation than from fire itself



Fire creates so much smoke that a room turns pitch black in minutes



The toxic fumes created by a fire can kill you within a few breaths



Heat produced by a fire can exceed temperatures of more than 1,000°F, yet temperatures of more than 150°F can cause your body to shut down

Given the above information, can you get your family or the children at your child care facility out safely on a moment's notice? If you are telling yourself you "think so", that isn't good enough. You have to "know so" and without a shadow of a doubt.



Keeping Safe

The first step in any fire prevention plan is to ensure all fire alarms, sprinkler systems and extinguishers are fully operational. Follow this with a detailed escape route from every room in your home or facility. By practicing your escape routes and fire drills monthly you will ensure everyone knows exactly what to do should a fire occur.

It is also equally important to teach children fire safety. Some simple tips include:

- » Teaching them to alert an adult if they see smoke or fire.
- » Showing them the safe spot (where to go) once they are outside a burning building.
- » Borrowing books from the library that explain fire safety.
- » Visiting your local fire station or contacting your DSS Fire Marshal.

And of course, saving lives begins by preventing fires. You need to always:

- » Keep all matches and flammables away from a child's reach.
- » Keep exits, doorways and stairwells free of clutter at all times.
- » Ensure curtains, blankets and bedspreads are not close to heat sources such as the stove, space heater, radiators, heat vents, etc.

As with anything, how much you know is not as important as what you do with what you know. Please take a moment and call your local fire department or DSS Fire Marshal for more lifesaving fire tips.

How Child Care Programs Can Prepare/Prevent Fires

- 1. Always have a plan.**
- 2. Communicate the plan.** Make sure staff, parents, and children know the plan.
- 3. Practice the plan.** Conduct a fire drill each month. Make it realistic. Use the actual fire alarm and always keep record of your drills.
- 4. Check your smoke alarms.** Be sure you test them regularly (a great reminder to change your batteries in your smoke alarms is during Daylight Saving Time).
- 5. Check your fire extinguishers.** Know where they are and check regularly to ensure they have pressure and are not expired.
- 6. Keep exits clear.** Do not block exits with furniture, clutter, etc.
- 7. Check your furnace room if applicable.** This is not the place for storage. Keep clutter away from the furnace.

