

Your child could change their lives and the lives of everyone around them with a single strike of a match.



Fire setting behavior is a growing problem in the United States, with thousands of fires set by children each year. These children range in age from toddlers through late adolescence.

Children who exhibit fire setting behavior come from all socioeconomic groups, all cultures, and all family structures.

The Firefighters Burn Institute's Youth Firesetter Program (FFBI YFP) is comprised of fire, probation, burn and healthcare professionals. As a team, the group provides a coordinated effort in helping child fire setters and their families receive the assistance they need through assessments, psychological referrals and education.

Prevention Tips

Children 5 Years Old and Under:

- Matches, lighters and any heat-producing appliances should be locked up.
- Teach young children to tell an adult if they find matches or a lighter. Reward them for doing so.
- Take the mystery out of fire play and teach your children that fire is a tool, not a toy.

Children 6–12 Years Old:

- Make time for regular communication.
- Set the example for fire safety.
- Take the time to teach your children about the potential destruction of fire.
- Have your children watch the way you light the fireplace, barbecue, and candles.
- Teach your children to turn handles away from the front of the stove and to never leave a burner unattended while cooking.
- Take a moment to teach them that these tasks must be performed only by adults or under adult supervision.

Youth 13–17 Years Old:

- Involve your adolescent in decisions that affect her or him.
- Encourage positive relationships with peers and adults and be available for regular communication.
- Teach and model conflict and stress management skills.
- Provide healthy activities (sports, youth groups or church).



Youth Firesetter Program



(916) 739-8525
ffburn.org

Firesetters: Who and Why?

CURIOSITY FIRESETTER

A Curious Firesetter is likely an active child that is a hands-on (tactile) learner. The child may try to experiment with matches and lighters, but is rarely aware of fire's destructive nature.

CRISIS FIRESETTER

A psychologically-stressed child may experience feelings of powerlessness. Lacking the appropriate coping or problem-solving skills, the Crisis Firesetter may set fires to act out their anger or as a cry for help, perhaps even wanting to be caught.

THRILL-SEEKING FIRESETTER

A risk-taking youth whom sets fires, often under peer influence. Enjoys attention-getting behavior that may copy video games or internet videos.

DELINQUENT FIRESETTER

The child is old enough to know the danger of fire, and may even have the intent to injure or kill. Fires set at this stage are often considered a criminal act, so the youth may already be in the juvenile justice system, but overall still regards such consequences as a joke.

DISTURBED FIRESETTER

Most likely has a high IQ but suffers from academic and behavioral problems, and possibly a history of medical and/or psychological disorders. Often times this firesetter has been victim of physical/sexual abuse, and is typically a loner with a lifelong fascination with fire.

The Program

**Fire safety is a family matter.
Let us help.**

FFBI YFP provides an academy structured course offered at various times throughout the year. Children attend age-appropriate classes, while parents/guardians attend informational training seminars.

Families will learn safe and responsible behaviors related to fire use as well as financial, emotional and social consequences of firesetting.

Topics include:

- Fire safety education
- Fire hazard recognition
- Home escape planning
- Responsibility and leadership skills
- Problem solving skills
 - Consequences
 - Communication
 - Thinking errors
 - Peer pressure
- Dealing with and sharing feelings



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Facts of Fireplay

Each year, fires started by youths account for an average of:

30,460 Fires
50 Civilian Deaths
510 Civilian Injuries
\$205,000,000 Direct Property Damage



More young children set fires in homes, while teens are more likely to set fires outside.

34% of child-set home fires happen in a bedroom.

55% of child-set fires in homes were started by lighters.



Source: National Fire Protection Association, www.nfpa.org.
Statistics drawn on 2014–2018 data.