

BANANAS HANDOUT

Family Fire Safety

Be prepared to act quickly and safely in the event of a fire. Begin by gathering your family to develop an escape plan which everyone understands. Make sure to practice the plan.

- Remind everyone of the California fire and medical emergency number – 911.
- Plan two different exits for everyone: a normal route through a hall or stairway to use when fire isn't blocking the exit and a second emergency escape route (usually out a window) when the normal route is blocked by fire.
- Always sleep with bedroom or hall doors closed. A closed door can keep out a fire long enough to allow escape through your emergency escape route. It may be hard for your children to get used to sleeping with the doors closed, but help them understand the reasons and assure them that you are still there to protect them. Parents of infants who worry that they won't hear the baby cry if the doors are shut should consider buying a baby intercom system. These devices allow parents to hear the noises being made in the baby's room.
- Install working smoke alarms on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms. Make sure to replace batteries at least once a year. Set off the smoke alarm to familiarize your children with the sound.
- Plan your emergency escape routes with care. Take any necessary steps – storing a rope ladder in a bedroom closet or keeping a baby carrier close to an infant's bed – to make sure that you can actually use a planned route. Parents with young children may have to avoid a fire in a hall or stairwell by going out their emergency exit and entering the child's room through that room's emergency escape route. For example: go out the parents' bedroom window, around the house and enter the child's bedroom through a window.
- Don't waste time getting dressed or gathering valuables in the event of a fire. Every second counts!
- Crawl to the door. Tell your children to crawl because smoke rises and the air will be fresher near the floor.
- Test doors before opening. Intense heat and deadly smoke may be on the other side. Are the door panels hot? Is smoke leaking in around the edges? If you suspect fire on the other side, **DON'T OPEN THE DOOR**. But if you think it's safe, open the door slowly, just a crack. Brace your shoulder against the door, ready to slam it if heat and smoke rush in.
- Designate an outside meeting place to quickly check if everyone is safe – **ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!**

- Notify the Fire Department (911) quickly, as soon as everyone is out. Speak slowly, plainly; give your name and address, then answer questions. Remember to escape first, then call the fire department.

Family Fire Drill

Your home fire drill should not be scary. Make it a game for your children so that in an emergency, they will follow instructions. To be more realistic, pick a time when it's dark or at least dusk.

All Set? Drill Begins:

1. Everyone in the bedrooms with doors closed.
2. Sound the alarm.
3. Everyone swings into action. Out of bed: crawl to the door. Test the door for heat and/or smoke.



First Drill: Everyone should escape through their normal exits (hall, stairway, etc.).

Second Drill: Pretend the doors are hot – blocked by fire. Now, everyone must test their emergency fire escape exits. If you have very young children and your family's escape routes require going out on a roof or exiting out a second story window, you may not want to actually practice using these routes. Having a young child come to a window and talking about the next step may be enough.

Be sure that even very young children know what might be necessary in the event of a real fire. Teach children not to hide from firefighters. Make sure windows and screens can be opened easily. Tell children that in the event of a fire it's OK to break windows, but only if the door to the room is closed to avoid creating a cross current. Also make sure that an emergency escape ladder is quickly available.

4. Everyone gather at the outside meeting spot. All accounted for? **A JOB WELL DONE!!**

Special Note: Make sure everyone in your family knows the Stop, Drop & Roll safety procedure in case clothing catches on fire. **(See poster on the reverse side.)**

For more information, visit the U.S. Fire Administration website: www.usfa.dhs.gov/.

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IF YOUR CLOTHES CATCH ON FIRE

STOP



DROP

(COVER FACE)



& ROLL!

