

*Proudly Serving
Delaware's Youth
Since 1981*

Headquarters Division
1537 Chestnut Grove Rd
Dover, DE 19904

New Castle Division
2307 MacArthur Rd
New Castle, DE 19720

Sussex Division
22705 Park Avenue
Georgetown, DE 19947

1-800-432-8500

DELAWARE JUVENILE FIRESETTER INTERVENTION PROGRAM
Office of the State Fire Marshal
1537 Chestnut Grove Road
Dover, DE 19904



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INTERVENTION
PROGRAM

1-800-432-8500



Background

Many people think that firesetting is a phase children will outgrow. Firesetting is not a phase. If a child is not taught fire safety, the firesetting behaviors can get out of control very quickly and lead to severe injuries. Others believe that it is normal for children to play with fire. This is not true. Curiosity about fire is normal. However, the use of fire without an adult's knowledge, approval, and/or supervision is an extremely dangerous behavior.

Because Delaware is a small state, our office takes pride in being the only state in which a Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program (JFIP) is administered to the entire state through one agency. This includes the four municipalities of Wilmington, New Castle, Newark, and Dover.

Referral Process

When a child is referred to our program, our trained staff interviews and educates the child. In most cases, these interviews take place in the client's home with his/her primary caretaker present, at a time most convenient to the family. After the interview, recommendations are made to the child's caretaker as to the appropriate service or combination of services indicated. Any assistance with these referrals is provided upon the family's request.

The program is strictly ***confidential*** and the information obtained from the interview cannot be shared with anyone without the written consent of the caregiver.

JFIP Mission Statement

"To provide the youth of our communities, and their families, a fire safe environment, be it in the home, the school, or wherever they pursue their varied interests, through identification, education, and referrals, in an effort to deter future firesetting among our youth."

Danger Signals

- Hyperactivity
- Playing with Fire / Previous Fire Play
- Impulsivity / Acts Before Thinking of Consequences
- Conduct Problems
- Lack of Social Skills / Loner
- Fascination with Fire / Stares
- Setting Fires In and Around the Home
- Learning and Behavioral Problems
- Extreme Mood Swings / Violence
- Have Friends That Play with Fire
- Compulsive Lying
- Easily Led by Others / Follower
- Bullying Others / Victims of Bullying

Motives

- To Create Excitement / Bored
- Curiosity
- Revenge Against Sibling or Peer
- Coercion by a Sibling / Peer / Friend
- Response to a Fantasy
- Call Attention to a Problem / Cry for Help
- Revenge Against Parent / Guardian
- Response to a Family Problem
- Response to Media Influence

"Our children may only be 25% of our population, but they are 100% of our future"

Educational Intervention

When interviewing a child who has exhibited firesetting behaviors, it is so important that we address more than just fire safety. Fire safety education is an essential component of any educational intervention program and it is vital that every child know what to do if there is a fire. However, it is also equally important to address other topics to deter these firesetting behaviors from occurring again in the future.

In addition to general fire safety, the educational intervention component of our program includes:

- Consequences of Fire Play
- Hurting Themselves and Others
- A High Price to Pay (Legal/Financial)
- Media Influence
- Media Portrayal of Fire vs. Reality of Fire
- Good Choices vs. Bad Choices
- Peer Pressure Influence

This combination of educational topics has provided for the success of the program over the past three decades, as we have been able to consistently maintain a 6% recidivism rate since the program's inception in 1981.

***For further information,
or to refer a child,***

(Ages 3-17)

Call Toll Free:

1-800-432-8500