

JUVENILE FIRESETTERS



Why Do Children Set Fires?

- There are two types of Firesetters:
 - Curious Firesetters
 - Problem Firesetters
- It is important to understand the difference in the two types to understand why children set fires.
- Fires by children is a growing problem that needs the attention of teachers, parents, counselors, and community leaders.

Curious Firesetters

- Range from ages 2 to 7 years old.
- Fascination with fire will cause them to play with fire to see how it burns, what it feels like, and what it does.
- Curiosity is normal during a child's growth and development, however it should be taken seriously if a child is playing with fire.



Problem Firesetters

- Range from ages 5 to 17 years old.
- Severe firesetting problem beyond curiosity.
- Light fires due to emotional or mental distress
 - Mild distress
 - Severe distress
- Examples that could trigger the behavior are:
 - Moving to a new area
 - Divorce
 - Death in the family
- Other associated behaviors with firesetting in severe cases are cruelty to animals, poor relationships with other children, or extreme mood changes.

What Can You Do?

- Teach Your Child About the Dangers of Fire
- Control Your Child's Access to Fire
- Set a Good Example
- Take Responsibility for Fire Safety



WEST VIRGINIA STATE MARSHAL'S OFFICE
PUBLIC EDUCATION DIVISION
1207 QUARRIER STREET, 2ND FLOOR
CHARLESTON, WV 25301
304-552-8759 EXT. 53223
304-558-2537 - FAX

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FIRE SAFETY VISIT:

www.firemarshal.wv.gov