Waterloo Fire Rescue
Fire PALS Injury Prevention Program

Consequences of Fire Setting

Grades 4 – 5
To educate the students on the consequences of setting an intentional fire.

Learning Objectives:
At the completion of this unit, 100% of the students will be able to:
   1. identify the good uses of fire
   2. differentiate between a fire starter and a fire setter
   3. describe what arson is

Time Element
Knowledge/Attitude: 20 minutes

Introduction/Content: 15 minutes
Begin by introducing yourself and briefly describe a couple of job functions to the students of what a firefighter’s job entails. Tell the students that they all know that one of the jobs of a firefighter is to put out fires, but then ask the students if they know that firefighters also start fires? Be very clear here. Check for understanding.

I. DESCRIBE THE POSITIVE USES OF FIRE
   • candles
   • campfires
   • fireplace
   ✓ Check for understanding.
     • Have students raise hand if they or any of their family members have started any of these fires.
     • Describe the positive uses of fire
       ○ as a tool – cooking, heating, metalwork
       ○ for pleasure- campfire, fireplace

II. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FIRE STARTER/SETTER
Explain:

- most of us have natural curiosity about fire
- Ends typically by age three
- Sometimes pretend – fire fighter, toy fire trucks, play cooking

A. Fire Starter

- Learns appropriate use of fire
- Learns appropriate technique in starting
- Usually parents/adults help us learn by demonstration and supervised practice
  - birthday candles, campfires
- Through this, proper fire safety behavior is learned
- Sometimes we have learned how bad fire can be by those who have played with fire unsupervised
- War story: FD Lt. who played fireman as a kid and started a small fire in a field that unexpectedly grew out of control and required real FD response. Though no property damage, the result was shame, embarrassment, and punishment to him.
- We can learn our lesson from stories like that and avoid similar circumstance

B. Fire Setter

- Repeatedly plays with fire unsupervised
- Deliberately sets fires
- Most fire setters don’t intend to cause a problem. They are just curious
- Doesn’t understand possible consequences
  - Fire can grow rapidly from small, seemingly manageable size
  - Give example of size quadrupling every minute
  - Unable to extinguish, smoke overcomes before escape
  - Property – house, favorite items, smoke damage
  - Physical – Pain, disfigurement, death
  - Requires FD response that may be needed for different emergency
  - But if problem occurs and you’re responsible, you’re guilty of the crime of arson

War story - 2nd Ave., Evansdale

Devastating effects of fire (Pictures or video.)

Check for understanding

III. ARSON

- Arson defined
  - Fire that causes damage that was recklessly or intentionally set
- Criminal offense
  - Arrest
  - Jail
Fines
- Embarrassment (friends think you’re dumb)
- Lost opportunity
  - Other consequences same as fire setter (i.e. property and bodily damage)

IV. CONCLUSION
- Most fire setters aren’t bad people but they do make bad choices.
- Q. & A.

V. JOURNAL
- When the students return to their classrooms after attending the Consequences of Fire setting assembly, they should spend some time reflecting on and writing about what they learned.