

A National Action Plan for Child Injury Prevention

Reducing Fire and Burn Injuries

Fire and burn injuries are one of the leading causes of child injury deaths in the United States. In 2010, more than 300 children aged 14 and younger died from fire or burn injuries and nearly 100,000 were treated in a hospital or emergency department¹.

Most of these injuries and deaths are predictable and preventable.

A National Action Plan

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is committed to preventing child injury by supporting solutions that will save lives. The National Action Plan for Child Injury Prevention (NAP) was developed by CDC and more than 60 stakeholders to spark action across the nation. The overall goals of the NAP are to raise awareness about the problem of child injury and the effects on our nation, offer solutions by uniting stakeholders around a common set of goals and strategies, and mobilize action to reduce child injury and death.

The NAP contains six domains that include goals and actions based on what we know, where we need to go, and how we can get there. See below for examples of what we, as a field, can do to further reduce fire-related injuries among children.

Data and Surveillance—includes the ongoing and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of child health data for planning, implementing, and evaluating injury prevention efforts.

- Expand capacity to analyze existing data about fire and burn injuries, including trends by age and cause of fire-related injury.
- Improve coding and classification on how fires are started and information on how parents and children respond when a fire occurs.

Research—includes research gaps and priorities in risk factor identification, interventions, and program evaluation, and dissemination strategies needed to reduce injuries.

- Gather and analyze data on the reasons why rural populations have the highest fire-related death rates in the nation. It is critical to understand these risk factors in order to develop successful interventions.



- Explore methods for reducing the intensity of burn injuries through the development and use of safety features and products. These can include anti-scald faucets or packaging of microwaveable foods.
- Research new technology that could prevent fires from occurring. For example, continue research and development of technologies to prevent stove top fires

Communication—includes effective strategies to promote injury prevention to target audiences, through designing messages and information, and delivering them through relevant channels.

- Disseminate fire and burn safety messages. These can include information on the importance of properly using smoke alarms, practicing a fire escape plan, safe cooking practices, and reducing the thermostat on hot water heaters to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Encourage widespread use of public information campaigns to reduce fire-related injuries, such as CDC’s Protect the Ones You Love. This initiative is an effort to raise parents’ awareness about the leading causes of child injury in the United States and how they can be prevented. For more information, please visit www.cdc.gov/safechild.

Education and training—includes organized learning experiences for increasing knowledge, attitudes, and behavior change conducive to preventing injuries.

- Develop and evaluate fire and burn prevention education activities.
- Encourage parents to test smoke alarms monthly and practice fire escape plans with their children.

Health systems and health care—includes the health infrastructure required to deliver quality care and clinical and community preventive services.

- Work with health care providers to find efficient and effective means of incorporating age-appropriate burn prevention recommendations into well child visits.
- Build capacity through community preventive services and local health departments to integrate assessment of fire and burn hazards into other ongoing home assessments.

Policy—includes laws, regulations, incentives, administrative actions, and voluntary practices that enable safer environments and decision making.

- Increase the use of protective devices, such as smoke alarms and home fire sprinklers, in all homes by developing model building codes and standards.

Moving Forward Together

Everyone—including parents, health care providers, educators, and community members—can take steps to prevent injury where they live, work, and play. We all have a part to play in the NAP and in protecting our children—America’s future.

To learn more about CDC’s work in child injury prevention, find references, or get your copy of the National Action Plan, [visit www.cdc.gov/safechild/NAP](http://www.cdc.gov/safechild/NAP).