



S.A.F.E. Program

FIRE EMS DEPARTMENT **Aaron Goodale -Chief**

What Is S.A.F.E.?

The Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) Program is a state initiative to provide resources to local fire departments to conduct fire and life safety education programs in grades K-12. The mission is to enable students to recognize the dangers of fire and more specifically the fire hazards tobacco products pose.

Key Fire Safety Behaviors

There are 23 Key Fire Safety Behaviors that should be taught in age and developmentally appropriate ways, such as:

- Stop, Drop, and Roll
- Making and Practicing Home Escape Plans
- Reporting Fires and Emergencies
- Crawl Low Under Smoke
- Smoke Detector Maintenance
- Kitchen Safety
- Holiday Safety and more

Fire and life safety is easily combined with math, science, language arts, health, and physical education lessons. Integration into the existing curriculum topics is essential.

Benefits

- Training children reduces anxiety levels so they are able to react to stressful situations
- Fire, School, Health and Police Departments working together to help children survive
- Family medical and health care cost reductions
- Firefighter as a role model
- Fires, burns and deaths reduced.

Proven Success

Since the S.A.F.E. Program was initially funded, there have been 259 documented [YOUNG HEROES](#) - children who put into practice the fire and life safety lessons they learned in the classroom during a real life emergency to save themselves or others. Many families claim they are alive today because their youngsters "made" them install smoke alarms and practice a home escape plan, or reported an emergency, or persuaded a grandmother to 'stop, drop, and roll'. Some success stories are:

- A 3-year old notices a neighbor's house in flames and tells mother to call 9-1-1.
- A 9-year old leads 4-year old brother to the family meeting place.
- An 8-year old makes family develop and practice escape plan as part of S.A.F.E. Program homework. Family of five uses the escape plan to get out alive a few weeks later.
- A 12-year old boy blocks smoke by closing the door and covering the crack with a blanket to save four younger siblings and himself.
- A girl leads her brother to safety by crawling low under smoke in the house to outdoors.
- A boy calls 9-1-1 to save his sister from choking.
- A first grader senses his mother is not well and saves her from a life threatening blood clot by calling 9-1-1 despite her protestations that "she's fine".

Child Fire Deaths Drop 66% Since S.A.F.E. Started

The average annual number of fire deaths of children under age 18 has fallen by two-thirds, **66%**, since the start of the S.A.F.E. Program in the fall of 1995. Since fire death numbers fluctuate quite a bit from year to year, it is helpful to look both at the trend line in the graph below and at averages over several years.

During the 15 full years that the S.A.F.E. Program has been in effect, from 1996 to 2011, the average number of child fire deaths per year is 6. In the 14 years prior to the S.A.F.E. Program, 1981-1994, the average number of child fire deaths per year was 18.

