

Fire Prevention Week ♦ October 9-15, 2005

"Use Candles with Care!"

Dear Parent or Caregiver:

If you're like most families, you probably enjoy burning candles occasionally—what would a birthday be without candles, after all?

But candles are a major cause of home fires. In fact, candle fires have tripled over the last decade. Worst of all, small children are more likely than the rest of the population to die in a fire caused by candles.

That's why the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has chosen the theme "Use Candles with Care" for Fire Prevention Week 2005. During that week, our class is going to be learning about how and why candles can start fires, and what kids and families can do to prevent these home fires.

By teaching kids about fire safety we can make sure that they know just what to do in the event of a home fire, knowledge that could very well save their lives. As your child's primary caregiver, you can support this effort by following a few of the simple fire safety lessons included with this letter. Your son or daughter can help with some of these; others should only be performed by an adult.

As a teacher, I'm committed to helping my students live up to their full potential. Keeping them safe is an important first step. Home fires can be deadly, but by following these safety tips, you'll be helping to make your family safer.

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Candle safety checklist

Checking off these candle safety tips will make your home safer—for the whole family.

- Candles are never left burning unattended. When we leave the room or go to bed, we make sure that all candles are extinguished.
- We never burn candles in the bedroom (because that's where more than 40% of home fires started by candles begin).
- Candles are always placed at least a foot away from any materials that can burn, including curtains and blinds, wallpaper or clothing.
- Lit candles are never placed in windows or near doorways where drafts could bring combustibles in contact with the flame.
- Kids are never left alone in a room with a burning candle.
- Kids and teens aren't allowed to burn candles in their bedrooms.
- Kids aren't allowed to play with candles or dripping wax – or with materials that could catch fire near candles.
- Matches and lighters are stored up high and out of kids' sight and reach, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Candles are placed in holders that are sturdy, won't tip over easily, are made from a material that can't burn, and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Candle holders are placed on sturdy, uncluttered surfaces—away from edges and any place where they could be knocked over by kids or pets.
- We are careful when we light candles, keeping hair and any loose clothing away from the flame.
- When candles burn down to within two inches of their holder or any decorative material, we extinguish them.
- We extinguish candles carefully, using a long-handled candle snuffer or a soft, directed breath, and never leave the room until wicks have stopped glowing.
- We are careful not to splatter wax when blowing out candles because the wax is very hot and can cause a burn.
- We do not use candles during a power outage. We have flashlights and extra batteries on hand in case we lose power.



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