



# R B F & R S

## news release

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### STAY SAFER TOGETHER THIS CHILD SAFETY WEEK

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is supporting Child Safety Week (22-28 June) by giving parents and carers advice on how to keep their children safe from fire.

Child Safety Week is a national initiative run by the Child Accident Prevention Trust and the theme for this year is 'safer together'. The week is a great opportunity for parents and carers to ensure they have working smoke alarms and to teach children about fire safety in the home.

In 2006, 1,100 children were injured in accidental house fires in the UK<sup>1</sup>, many of them in the kitchen. You can help your family stay safer together by following these simple tips:

- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children
- Never leave children alone in the kitchen when the oven or hob is on
- Don't let children play with electrical appliances or sockets
- Never let children play near a fire or heater

It is also essential to teach children what to do in the event of a fire. Don't avoid the subject for fear of frightening them – children need to know the basics of how to react in an emergency. Follow these tips as a guide:

- **Teach them how to raise the alarm**  
Make sure they understand that they need to tell an adult if they see smoke or flames and that they must *never* hide.
- **Plan and practise an escape route**  
Make sure children know the easiest way to get out of your home and practise it regularly.
- **Show children where the keys are kept**  
Always keep them in the same place and make sure everyone in the house knows where it is.

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<sup>1</sup> Communities and Local Government Fire Statistics

- **Explain what to do if they can't get out**

Show them the best room to take refuge in - for example, one with a window.

- **Discuss how to make a 999 call**

Make sure they know the number and their address off by heart. Explain the dangers of making hoax calls.

Fitting and maintaining smoke alarms can be a lifesaver, giving you precious extra time to get out of the house in the event of a fire. RBFRS offers free Home Fire Safety Checks to everyone in Berkshire, providing advice on how to make an escape plan and the installation of free smoke alarms where necessary. To book yours, call freephone **0800 587 6679** or email [community.safety@rbfrs.co.uk](mailto:community.safety@rbfrs.co.uk), quoting reference number 210 (please note that priority will be given to those identified by us to be most at risk).

Jane Weller, Community Safety Officer, said: "It's really important that you talk to your children about fire safety and set a good example to help them stay safer together. Explaining the importance of having a smoke alarm and testing it weekly, for example, can significantly reduce the devastating consequences of having an accidental house fire.

"Parents and children can also find a wealth of safety information on StayWise, our interactive educational website – visit us at [www.staywise.co.uk](http://www.staywise.co.uk)"

**ENDS.**