



R B F & R S

news release

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MAKE TIME FOR SAFETY THIS CHILD SAFETY WEEK

Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) is supporting Child Safety Week (21-27 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 'make time for safety.' The week is a great opportunity for parents and carers to ensure they have working smoke alarms, and to teach children about fire safety.

Make time for safety 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 a fire escape plan**
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.
- **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.

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- **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.

Firefighters from Caversham Road fire station will be outside Mothercare at Vastern Court, Reading from 10.30am - 12.30pm every day during Child Safety Week. They will be offering fire safety advice to shoppers, including how to prevent a fire in the home and how to make a potentially lifesaving fire escape plan. Parents and carers will also have the opportunity to book a free Home Fire Safety Check, during which RBFRS staff will visit them in their own homes at a pre-arranged time, check the home thoroughly and give advice on how to keep themselves safe from fire and other hazards. Free ten-year battery smoke alarms will also be installed where necessary.

Selina Sheikh, RBFRS Community Safety Co-ordinator for Reading, said: “It is really important to make time to talk to children about fire safety. You can get your children involved by asking them to help you test your smoke alarms every week and helping you to make an emergency fire escape plan. We all hope it will never happen to us but teaching children what to do if a fire breaks out in the home can save lives if the worst should happen.

“Parents and carers can also find lots of fun and interactive safety information on StayWise, our educational website – just log on to www.staywise.co.uk”

ENDS.