

PREPARE. PRACTICE. PREVENT THE UNTHINKABLE.
A Fire Safety Campaign for Babies and Toddlers



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

FEMA

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**FEMA KICKS OFF PUBLIC SAFETY CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE
FIRE DEATHS OF BABIES AND TODDLERS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced today a campaign to raise awareness about the increased risk of fire death for young children, and to teach parents and caregivers how they can avoid the tragedy. The campaign’s message emphasizes installing smoke alarms, securing lighters and matches, and developing a fire evacuation plan under the theme: “Prepare. Practice. Prevent the Unthinkable.”

“A baby or toddler under age five dies nearly every day in a residential fire,” said Homeland Security Under Secretary Michael D. Brown. “These young children have a disproportionately higher risk of fire death than the rest of the population. They depend on their parents and caregivers to keep them safe, to prevent residential fires from starting, and to increase the chances that the entire family can escape a fire quickly and safely.”

From 1989 through 1998, U.S. children younger than age five were twice as likely as the rest of the population to die in a residential fire; in that decade 5,712 children died in fires in this country, according to the U.S. Fire Administration, part of FEMA and the initiator of the campaign.

“No child —not a single one— should suffer such an awful death, a death that can be prevented by parents who take the necessary precautions,” said Fire Administrator R. David Paulison. “Every parent and every caregiver with young children depending on them must take a few simple but important steps to prevent this tragedy. Even toddlers can be taught how to quickly respond in case of fire and adults need to know how they will escape with infants.”

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In partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics, NIFPA, National SAFE KIDS Campaign and ZERO TO THREE

The Fire Safety Campaign for Babies and Toddlers includes four national partner organizations that have pledged to spread the message to parents and caregivers, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, National SAFE KIDS Campaign, the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association), and ZERO TO THREE.

The campaign materials include a print public service announcement, an educational video on fire safety for babies and toddlers, posters, brochures and fact sheets. The media, parents and caregivers can access the information, in both English and Spanish, at www.usfaparents.gov or can order materials through the U.S. Fire Administration's Publications Online Catalog, at www.usfa.fema.gov/applications/publications/.

The U.S. Fire Administration has a mission to reduce life and economic losses due to fire and related emergencies through leadership, advocacy, coordination and support. It is the federal leader in public fire education and awareness, fire service training, fire-related technology and data collection.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages Citizen Corps, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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