

How to Create a Family Fire Escape Plan

From Dennis Goebel, Vice President, Liberty Mutual Insurance



According to the National Fire Protection Association, U.S. fire departments respond to a fire call every 23 seconds. Nobody expects it to happen to their home, but it might. Electrical wiring, fireplaces, candles, and clothes dryers are all potential fire risks.

Discussing fire safety could save the lives of your family members. Here are four steps to prepare your family for safe evacuation in the event of a fire:

Hold a family meeting. Discuss the danger of fire and create a family fire escape plan. Involving the whole family will ensure everyone feels safe and prepared.

Select a meeting spot. Every household needs an outdoor meeting location in case of fire. If everyone goes to the same place, you won't have to wonder whether someone is still in the house or located somewhere else outside. Your mailbox or a swing set may be good options.

Use visuals. Draw a map of your house and yard depicting each room and the different ways people could exit in case of fire.

Role-play. Walk through the steps each person should take during an evacuation. Show children how to get out of bed when they hear the smoke alarm; crawl with them through the room to stay below the smoke; show them how to test the doors before opening. If doors are warm, children should learn to use other routes to get out to the family meeting spot safely.

Discussing and practicing a home fire escape plan and teaching children what to do in case of an emergency will help your family feel prepared and safe.

