

TEACHING PRESCHOOLERS ABOUT FIRE SAFETY

December 2009

INJURY PREVENTION TRAINING

Injury Prevention Daily
Quick Drills - Easy Access to
Training Topics

Do you know how to effectively teach fire safety to 3-5 year olds?

References:

NC FLSE Education I,
Characteristics of the
Audience

NFPA 1035 Standard for
Professional Qualifications for
Public Fire and Life Safety
Educator

Firefighters have opportunities to educate preschoolers about fire safety. Being able to identify basic learning characteristics and having knowledge of how a preschooler learns is critical.

1. The learning characteristics of 3-5 year olds:
 - a) They learn by seeing and doing.
 - b) They model parents and adults in their life.
 - c) They have predictable fears.
 - d) They cannot distinguish fantasy from reality (that's why Sparky is so successful in helping teach fire safety.)

2. Instructional methods to use when working with 3-5 year olds:
 - a) Get down on their level (sit on floor or in chair.)
 - b) Use only positive behaviors (do not use fear.)
 - c) Active repetition.
 - d) Teach 1 behavior and NO MORE than 20 minutes.
 - e) Use words that are on the child's level. Example: hot, hurt, burn, not words like apparatus, gear and dispatch.

3. Examples of appropriate activities for preschoolers:
 - a) Flannel board activity for exit drills at the school.
 - b) Puppet or clown show about fire safety.
 - c) A "Follow the Leader" game that teaches crawling low in smoke.
 - d) Using a picture game to identify burn hazards.
 - e) Using toys and objects to represent potential burn hazards.
 - f) Using music and songs to convey a burn safety message.
 - g) Demonstrate "Stop, drop, and roll" and have kids repeat.