

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Fire play has tragic consequences

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

After a recent series of fires linked to children playing with fire, the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) is reminding parents and carers that help is available.

The MFS runs a special **Juvenile Firefighters Intervention Program (JFLIP)** – to assist families in solving the problem of children playing with fire.

Parents or guardians who are concerned about their child's or children's interest or activity with fire should ring the MFS on 1300 737 637 to enquire about the program.

In the past fortnight, the MFS and Country Fire Service (CFS) have responded to three fires linked to children playing with fire. Tragically, a young child perished in one of the fires in the state's South-East. Two subsequent house fires at Seaford and Nairne had a collective damage bill of \$250,000.

MFS District Officer of Community Safety, Allan Foster said **JFLIP** is run by operational MFS firefighters who have been trained to work in the specialised area known as 'child fire play'.

"The Juvenile Firefighters Intervention Program aims to reduce death, injury and property damage caused by children playing with fire and fire lighting.

"The MFS encourages parents or carers, whether they live in metropolitan Adelaide or regional South Australia, to contact the MFS if they're concerned. **JFLIP is free and completely confidential**," he said.

The MFS recommends the following home fire safety tips for parents, carers, friends and relatives who may look after children or have children in their home over the school holidays:

- Keep matches, lighters and fire starters well out of reach of children. Storage above adult shoulder height and out of sight is recommended.
- Teach young children that they must never touch matches and lighters. They must notify an adult if they see them lying around. Praise your children when they do so.
- Wherever possible avoid using candles if you have young children. Torches and battery powered fake candles are recommended as a safer option.
- If you have to use candles, keep candles up high, out of reach of children. Never leave a child in a room with a candle burning. A child should not sleep in a room with a lit candle.
- Ensure your family has a Home Fire Escape Plan. Practise the plan to ensure everyone understands what to do in the event of a fire.

The MFS urges families to combine the above safety tips with working smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old.

For more home fire safety information, visit www.mfs.sa.gov.au or call the MFS on 1300 737 637.

For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

Further information for the public:

Call the MFS Community Education Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours.
Country callers 1300 737 637.

www.mfs.sa.gov.au