



# HOT • ISSUES



## Novelty lighter campaign

**Kids get it! Even children are signing on to the novelty lighter campaign asking Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to reconsider the standards for novelty lighters.**

Doug Bonstrom, the public fire educator for Lincoln County Fire District and Airway Heights Fire Department in eastern Washington, forwarded copies of student letters to Stephanie Mills, Investigator, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The letters, written by third and fourth grade students, pointed out the dangers of novelty lighters in the hands of children.

Bonstrom said the letters were part of a safety lesson he presented: "I had the students vote on what type of lighter is more dangerous — a novelty lighter in the shape of a car that had flashing lights and played music or a standard butane lighter (Bic). In most classes the students voted the novelty lighter was the most dangerous; but in two of the fourth grade classes, the votes were almost evenly divided.

"I had the third and fourth grade students write a letter which the teacher could use for a writing assignment. The letter could be on one of the

following topics: to novelty lighter manufacturers asking them to quit producing novelty lighters, to their parents asking them not to purchase novelty lighters, and to their parents asking them to please put lighters in some safe place out of the reach of little children."

CPSC mailed copies of the letters to *Hot Issues* and we are reproducing a few of them on page 7. The children proved they clearly understand that a lighter should not look like a toy.

Kudos to Doug for sharing this thought-provoking lesson.



# Case study of a success

by Timothy Kopet, Ph.D.

The Fire Safe Children and Families Program started with a USFA Assistance to Firefighter Grant in 2006. The program provides fire safety and social skill development to children and youths ages six to eighteen in an area covering three urban counties in Oregon. An alliance of fire service, mental health and juvenile justice programs is key to providing the services. This collaboration works because we have good working relationships with providers and an advisory board comprised of directors and chiefs from the respective agencies. What follows is a brief example of one of the boys who graduated from the program.

Jacob is a ten-year-old boy who set a fire outside his home, causing a grass fire. A neighbor called the fire department, which successfully extinguished the fire before extensive damage or injury occurred.

The fire investigator quickly learned that Jacob and a friend had been using a lighter to light different objects on fire. Jacob and his friend were cited for reckless burning and referred to the juvenile court. The fire investigator was unaware that this was the second time that Jacob had been misusing fire.

Jacob was referred to the local fire department and he and his father were interviewed using the *Oregon Screening Tool for Juveniles with Fire*. The results of the interviews indicated the need for referral to the Fire Safe Children and Family Program.

The juvenile court counselor set up a formal accountability agreement — Jacob and his father would successfully complete the Fire Safe Children and Family Program and abide by all other rules in the agreement. The agreement also included a contract signed by Jacob and his father indicating he would have no contact with fire and his father's agreement that he would be closely supervised.

Jacob's parents do not live together and he lives part of the week with his father and part of the week with his mother, so she also needed to agree to abide by the contract.

Jacob and his father attended all six sessions of the Fire Safety Academy for youth ages six to

twelve and their caregivers. During these sessions, Jacob learned about fire safety and fire science, and also about expressing feelings, anger management and problem solving. These were crucial in helping Jacob learn better skills and decision making.

His father learned about fire safety and science too, but he had a chance to gain a better understanding of how to improve the relationship between Jacob and himself, get ideas on parenting, and learn the legal responsibilities for parents and young people in regard to laws about misuse of fire, fireworks, and explosives.

While Jacob was eager to learn the material in the program, he appeared sad to group facilitators. He was upset about his parents breaking up, even after a year of separation. This disclosure prompted his parents to work on family issues and discuss Jacob's needs. At last check, Jacob was less depressed and doing better in school. There have been no new fire incidents.

The Fire Safe Children and Families Program has many stories such as the one about Jacob. While the parents and families are sometimes unhappy about having to attend the Fire Safety Academy (ages six to twelve) or the Safety Program (ages thirteen to eighteen), they quickly learn that this free program offers a lot to their families.

In addition to the groups, we have set up rapid access funds to provide for assessment and short term therapy with mental health professionals familiar with working with youths misusing fire.

These services have also expedited referral of youths

who need more intensive intervention, such as residential treatment, as well as providing a bridge for youths who don't have adequate health insurance and need therapeutic support to avoid out-of-home placement because of their mental health and fire intervention needs.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, please go to our Web site at [www.firesafechildrenandfamilies.com](http://www.firesafechildrenandfamilies.com)

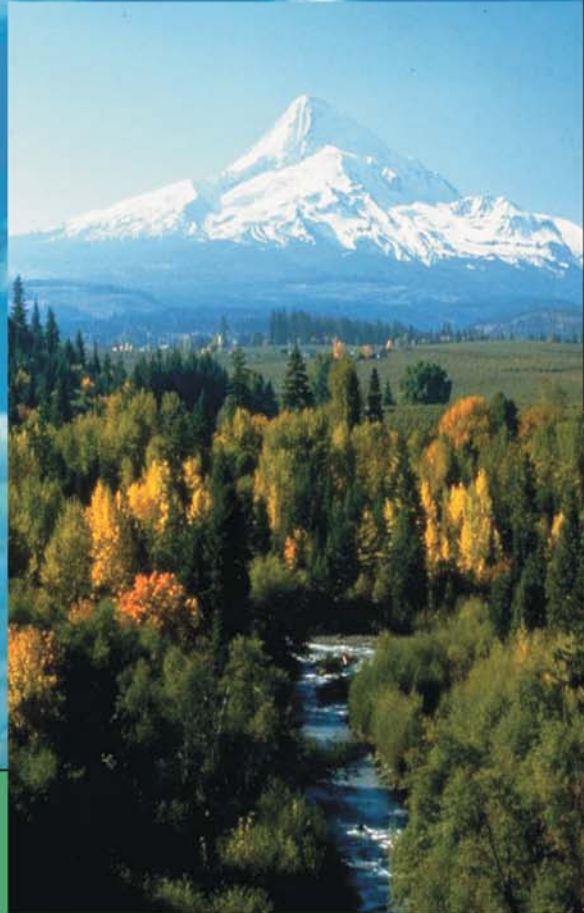
**About the author:** Dr. Kopet is the grant administrator of the Fire Safe Children and Families Program and chairs the program's fifteen-member advisory board.



SEPTEMBER  
17-18  
2007



PORTLAND  
OREGON



# CULTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS II:

In Juvenile Firesetter Intervention

Sponsored by:  
Fire Safe Children and Families Program  
Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal  
Oregon Burn Center

And in Coalition With  
San Diego Burn Institute and Denver Children's Hospital



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 17, 2007 8:15-9:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
TIM BIRR, TUALATIN VALLEY FIRE AND RESCUE, RET.

## MORNING SESSIONS 9:15-12:00

### EARLY INTERVENTION AND FIRE EDUCATION CLASSES: TWO APPROACHES

The Children's Hospital in Denver will present intervention strategies for 4-8 year olds. The second half will feature a 10 week fire education program presented by the Lynn, Massachusetts Fire Department.

### CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

The Burn Institute in San Diego will present ways to work effectively with the Hispanic population, including communication techniques, learning about family structure and dynamics.

### DETECTING DECEPTION

This is an entertaining and educational presentation on knowing how to detect lying from truthful behavior. This class, taught by an arson investigator, involves practical exercises and use of video clips.

### MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT PANEL

Three psychologists will team together to present mental health providers with strategies for assessing firesetting behavior.

### THERAPEUTIC GAMES

A fun session on learning how games can be used to teach children and their parents about fire safety. Games that are both educational and therapeutic will be showcased.

## AFTERNOON SESSIONS 1:15-4:30

### COURT MANDATED & COMMUNITY BASED INTERVENTIONS

Staff from Oregon's SAFETY class will present how this program holds youth accountable for their behaviors with a 13 session intervention program and how this program compares to approaches on the East Coast.

### JUVENILE FIRE SCREENING TOOL

Participants will have practice in using Oregon's *Juvenile with Fire* screening tool. (Limited to 24 participants)

### BULLYING

Fire is sometimes used to harass others and as a tool for revenge. This presentation will review the motivations of youth firesetters, bullying and research that shows the relationship of bullying to school fires.

### HOW BURN CENTERS AND BURN FOUNDATIONS CAN BE INVOLVED

See how the Oregon Burn Center, Children's Hospital in Denver, and the San Diego Burn Institute have worked to be partners with the fire service in educating those who misuse fire. Information will be included on firesetters who have attended burn camp.

### EVALUATING OUTCOMES AND GOALS FOR INTERVENTION

Evaluating outcomes does more than let us know we are doing a good job it also helps to ensure that we are meeting the needs of those we serve. Learn how to evaluate outcomes and see how one program has changed over time, through this process.

## LUNCH SESSION:

NOVELTY LIGHTER LEGISLATION: HOW SAN DIEGO HAS WORKED TO BAN THE SALE OF NOVELTY LIGHTERS IN THEIR AREA.



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 18, 2007 8:15-9:00 KEYNOTE ADDRESS  
TIMOTHY O'DOWD, UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION

## MORNING SESSIONS 9:15-12:00

### MIDDLE SCHOOL PREVENTION CURRICULUM

"It's Up to You!" is a fire awareness curriculum designed for middle school youth. It is one of the first curricula that strives to "prevent" juvenile firesetting.

### WORKING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS

Many children who set fires have special needs, whether developmental delays, autism, ADHD or other disabilities. Learn some hands on practical tools to communicate and work with this audience.

INVESTIGATION OF YOUTH SET FIRES  
A fire investigator and an arson detective will review the steps of collaboration needed to effectively investigate and take to prosecution a youth who has set fires.

CLOSED CUSTODY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES  
This workshop will give the history and development of a treatment program for youth who have been adjudicated on arson offenses.

HOW THE DENVER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL JFS PROGRAM HAS EVOLVED OVER TIME  
The changes one long standing hospital based juvenile firesetting program has made over time and lessons they have learned will be the focus of this workshop.

## AFTERNOON SESSIONS 1:15-4:30

### FIRESETTER EARLY INTERVENTION MEETS CULTURAL DIVERSITY

This session will focus on three innovative early intervention programs that demonstrate how to reach out, connect, and intervene with English and Spanish speaking children and their families.

### BULLYING

Fire is sometimes used to harass others and as a tool for revenge. This presentation will review the motivations of youth firesetters, bullying and research that shows the relationship of bullying to school fires. A repeat of Monday's class.

INTERVIEWING TECHNIQUES FOR INVESTIGATORS INCLUDING RECOGNIZING CHILD ABUSE BY BURNING  
This workshop will focus on investigation and communication techniques to be used at the scene of a fire when interviewing children as well as recognizing child abuse situations that occur by burning.

WORKING WITH CAREGIVERS OF CHILDREN  
More and more firesetting children are being raised by grandparents, foster parents, or other family members. This workshop will discuss ways to communicate with these caregivers.

JUVENILE FIRE SCREENING TOOL  
Participants will have practice in using Oregon's *Juvenile with Fire* screening tool. (limited to 24 participants)

FACULTY: David Wilcox, EdD, Paul Schwartzman, MS, Paul Zipper, PhD, Janet Cusick Jost, RN, MS, Marion Doctor, LCSW and Staff from Denver Children's Hospital, Linda Nishi-Strattner, PhD, Jim Floros and Staff from San Diego Burn Institute, Judy Okulitch, MS, Timothy Kopet, PhD, Kirsten Balding, RN, BSN and Staff from Oregon Burn Center, Robert Hernandez, Tim Birr, TVFR Ret., Timothy O'Dowd, USFA, Janet Boberg, Robert Gitelson, LCSW, Karen Johnston, LCSW, Christine Krause, PsyD, Karen Brown, MA, Shirley Didier, BA, Connie King, MS, Judge Deanna Darling, Jessica Sansone, MS, Joseph Zukas, FF, Chuck Chaffin, FF, Linda Castaneda, MA, Janae Jurkowski, Marieka Farrenkopf, EdM, LCSW



## CULTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS II: IN JUVENILE FIRESETTING INTERVENTION

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2007, SHERATON AIRPORT HOTEL, PORTLAND, OREGON

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
KIRSTEN BALDING: KBALDING@LHS.ORG

**FEEs:** The registration fee is \$250 until August 15, 2007 and \$275 after that date. This fee covers your tuition, workshop materials, two continental breakfasts, two networking luncheons, and all snacks throughout the day. Refunds will be given until August 15th with a \$15 service charge. Plans are underway to offer CEU's to conference participants. **ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED TO THE FIRST 200 PEOPLE TO REGISTER.**

**HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:** Participants needing hotel reservations can visit the Sheraton website [Cultivating Partnerships www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=0703291979&key=EE309](http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/booking/reservation?id=0703291979&key=EE309). Or call (503) 281-2500

**PAYMENT:** To pay with credit card please use online registration at [www.firesafechildrenandfamilies.com](http://www.firesafechildrenandfamilies.com)  
Checks made payable to: Fire Safe Children and Families Mail to: 4420 SE 64<sup>th</sup> Street, Portland, OR 97206.

### ATTENDEE INFORMATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US FOR A DESSERT BUFFET AND EARLY NETWORKING SESSION SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 2007 6-8PM.

### MARK YOUR FIRST AND SECOND CHOICES FOR EACH SESSION BELOW

Monday AM	Monday PM	Tuesday AM	Tuesday PM
<input type="checkbox"/> EARLY INTERVENTION	<input type="checkbox"/> COURT AND COMMUNITY INTERVENTION	<input type="checkbox"/> MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM	<input type="checkbox"/> FIRESETTER CULTURAL DIVERSITY
<input type="checkbox"/> CULTURAL DIFFERENCES	<input type="checkbox"/> JFS SCREENING TOOL	<input type="checkbox"/> KIDS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS	<input type="checkbox"/> BULLYING
<input type="checkbox"/> DETECTING DECEPTION	<input type="checkbox"/> BULLYING	<input type="checkbox"/> INVESTIGATION OF YOUTH SET FIRES	<input type="checkbox"/> INTERVIEWING FOR INVESTIGATORS
<input type="checkbox"/> MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> BURN CENTER PROGRAMS	<input type="checkbox"/> CLOSED CUSTODY INTERVENTION	<input type="checkbox"/> WORKING WITH CAREGIVERS
<input type="checkbox"/> THERAPEUTIC GAMES	<input type="checkbox"/> EVALUATING OUTCOMES	<input type="checkbox"/> DENVER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL	<input type="checkbox"/> JFS SCREENING TOOL

# Letters from kids ...

written with conviction,  
passion and common sense.

Dear Toy lighter company,  
Stop making toy lighters.  
Little kids can take them and  
play with them, get burned and  
mabey even die. This is my advice,  
you either kill people, or you let  
them live. So stop making them.  
We don't need them.

Sincerley,  
Mikavla  
School

I am concended that you  
have started to make toy lighters. We really  
don't want you guys to make them, because  
babies could get in to it and they'll think it's  
a toy. It's not funny it's dangerous. You guys  
shouldn't do it for the money, as it for safety.  
So I advice you guys not to make ther  
any more. PLEASE!

P.S. it's not a threat, It's serious.

Sincerely,  
Vassa

Dear People who sell lighters,

Will you stop selling lighters  
that look like toys because  
children could accidentally  
mistake them for toys  
and make a fire.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey

By Emily

Dear Company,

Please stop making lighters  
that look like candy and toys. If it's  
hurting kids and burning down houses you  
should stop making them attractive to little  
kids. This is not a game this is  
serious. I hate having to hear about  
poor kids not nowing that there doing  
something wrong. It's fine and dandy  
that you're making lighters just  
**STOP** making them look like  
toys and candy.



Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal  
Department of State Police  
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program  
4760 Portland Road NE  
Salem, OR 97305-1760

## Snapshot of juveniles with fire in Oregon – 2006

The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) released its 2006 annual report in June. The report includes four pages of data detailing juveniles and fire in Oregon during 2006 and is available on the agency's Web site.

Overall, data show a downward trend in the number of juvenile incidents reported to OSFM during the years 2003 to 2006.

Over the last five years:

- Males accounted for 86 to 88 percent of the incidents
- Youths nine and under accounted for 29 to 37 percent of the fires reported, with 2005 being an exception (49 percent).
- Youths ten and older accounted for 63 to 71 percent, with 2004 being an exception (51 percent).

Other data:

- Of the 553 fires involving juveniles in 2006, 67 percent occurred outside.
- These fires resulted in twenty-two civilian injuries, one firefighter injury and an estimated \$2.98 million in property loss.

Data show a growing preference for lighters over matches. A match was used in 16 percent of the fire incidents and a lighter was used in 42 percent.

Although OSFM is unable at this time to separate data on novelty lighters from lighter data overall, the data validate the importance of the novelty lighter campaign.

### Ignition source

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Matches	228	142	132	104
Lighters	367	288	282	269
Fireworks	194	134	76	93
Explosives	13	12	7	19
Smoking materials	29	21	35	37
Other (misc.)	119	126	135	114
Total incidents	950	723	667	636

*Hot Issues* is a quarterly newsletter of information and ideas for those concerned about juvenile firesetting. It is published by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal. Please submit news, announcements, articles, suggestions or resources for review to *Hot Issues*. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this publication is available in alternate formats by calling 503.373.1540, ext. 240. Subscriptions are free of charge. Also available on the Office of State Fire Marshal Web site: [www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/](http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/)

State Fire Marshal: Nancy Orr

Program Coordinator: Judith S. Okulitch

Editor: Carol Baumann