

Fall 2010

Maryland SCFRT Members

Akin Akintola, MD

A. LaToya Bates, LCSW-C

Julie Drake, Esq.

Lt. Joseph Gamble

Mary Gentile, LCSW-C

Roger J. Lerner, Esq.

Richard Lichenstein, MD

Chairperson

Ling Li, MD

Jennifer Maehr, MD

Donna Mazyck, RN, MS

Vernice McKee, MSW

Laurel Moody, RN, MS

David Putsche

Amanda Scott, JD

Marsha Smith, MD, MPH

Hal Sommers, MA

Anntinette Williams, LICSW

DHMH Advisors

Bonnie Birkel, CRNP, MPH

Lee Hurt, MS, MPH

Joan Stine, MHS, MS, CHES

S. Lee Woods, MD, PhD

DHMH Staff Support

Joan Patterson, LCSW-C
(410-767-6727)

Maryland State Child Fatality Review Team (SCFRT)



Maryland SCFRT Newsletter Fall 2010

Fire-Related Safety Awareness and Preparedness

By: Karen O'Connell, MD, FAAP, Attending Physician, Pediatric Emergency Medicine Children's National Medical Center, Washington, DC, Associate Pediatric Medical Director, Region V Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems Baltimore, MD

The season is upon us where family and friends gather around to celebrate and give thanks. The colder weather of the fall and upcoming winter months will cause our families to spend more time inside. It's time to prepare our homes and families for a safe holiday season. The majority of residential fires occur during the late fall and winter months, making fire-related safety awareness and preparedness a critical part of every family's *cold weather season* preparation.

Each year, more than 100,000 children, age 14 and younger, are treated for fire and burn related injuries, many of these being preventable. Deaths from fires and burns are the third leading cause of fatal home injury with cooking being the leading cause of house fires and smoking the leading cause of fire-related deaths. Last year, approximately 4 out of 10 house-fire deaths occurred in homes without smoke alarms and alcohol use contributed to an estimated 40% of these fires (2009 CDC).

Most victims of fire die from smoke and toxic gas inhalation. Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas formed from the burning of carbon-based fuels, such as gasoline, wood, charcoal, natural gas, propane and oil. Any fuel-burning appliance that is malfunctioning, improperly installed or vented can cause carbon monoxide buildup in the home. Some of the more common scenarios include: using portable generators and kerosene or gas heaters inside the home or garage, operating a grill indoors, leaving a car running in an attached garage, having a corroded or a disconnected water heater or furnace vent pipe, or having an improperly installed kitchen range or vent. CO poisoning is the leading cause of accidental poisoning deaths in the United States, claiming approximately 2,000 lives each year. Children less than 5 years of age and persons older than 65 years of age have the highest rates of CO-related deaths and Emergency Department visits. Almost half of CO-related poisonings occur in the winter months, thus the need for education and increased awareness as the winter months approach. CO interferes with the body's delivery of oxygen to vital organs and causes cell death. Symptoms of exposure may be as mild as vague "flu-like" symptoms of fatigue, headache and vomiting to severe symptoms of confusion, seizures, heart and lung failure, and death.

Each day hundreds of children are treated in emergency departments for burn-related injuries. Younger children are most likely to sustain scald injuries caused by hot liquids or steam, followed by contact burns from hot surfaces and flame burns. Last year, the burn centers of Maryland and Washington, DC (Children's National Medical Center, Johns Hopkins Pediatric Burn Center, and Johns Hopkins Burn Center at Bayview) treated 360 children. Over 80% of these burns were sustained in the home.

Fire and Carbon Monoxide Safety

- ◆ Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on every level of your home near sleeping areas.
- ◆ Carbon monoxide alarms should be placed at least 15 feet from a Carbon Monoxide source.
- ◆ Test alarms every month and replace batteries once a year, even if alarms are hardwired.
- ◆ Plan to change batteries before the winter season.
- ◆ Never use charcoal grills or generators inside the house.
- ◆ Use only approved space heaters when necessary, and place them at least 3 feet from any flammable material.
- ◆ Be sure to turn them off when going to bed or leaving the room.
- ◆ Never smoke in bed or leave burning cigarettes unattended.
- ◆ Never leave lighted candles unattended and never sleep with candles burning.
- ◆ Have a fire escape plan for your family.
- ◆ Choose a meeting place outside the house.





Upcoming State CRF Mtgs:

March 2011

May 2011

September 2011

November 2011



Dates -TBA

Our sincere thanks to:

Nerita Estampador-Ulep, MD
and former **Vice Chair** of our State CFR Team. Nerita made many valuable contributions to SCFRT work, including the planning of several Annual Conferences. Best Wishes to Nerita as she retires from State service!



The Annual State CFR Meeting -

Held on November 16th at MDOT Headquarters was very informative. Our thanks to all of our presenters and attendees from across the entire State of Maryland for their contributions to another success meeting!



Fire Safety Awareness and Prevention (cont.)

Burn Injury Prevention:

In the kitchen:

- Keep all lighters and matches in a locked storage space away from the reach of children.
- Children do love to help in the kitchen, but never leave a child unattended in the kitchen area.
- Do not allow children to take hot liquids or soup out of microwaves.
- Place hot foods and liquids away from tabletop and counter edges.
- Use the back burners of the stove when cooking and keep pot handles turned towards to rear of the stove.



In the bathroom:

- Set hot water heater gauge to no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Use anti-scald devices on all faucets.
- Always test the bath water with your wrist before placing a child in the tub.



Throughout the home:

- Keep a protective screen in front of a wood-burning stove or glass fire place screen, which can be come very hot when in use.
- Place safety covers over all unused electrical outlets.

This information provided with appreciation from: 2008 Safe Kids USA, Washington, DC; 2010 CDC Fire deaths and injuries fact sheet; and the 2008-2009 Annual Report, Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems.

Sleep Safety Resources:

“Focus on Infant Mortality” is developed by the Maternal and Child Health Library (MCH) in collaboration with the National Sudden and Unexpected Infant/Child Death and Pregnancy Loss Resource Center at Georgetown University. This and past issues are available online at <http://www.mchlibrary.info/alert/archives.html> and <http://www.sidscenter.org/alert/archives.html>.

The Juvenile Products Manufacturing Association (JPMA), in collaboration with medical, media, and manufacturer partners, has launched a new campaign to educate parents and caregivers about the importance of creating a safe sleep environment for infants and young children. The campaign web site contains a series of videos demonstrating safe sleep practices; safety tips; news; and brochures and other campaign partner resources on juvenile product safety. Information on crib parts, hardware, and assembly instructions; a list of sleep-related infant product recalls; and recommendations for preventing sudden infant death syndrome and sudden unexpected infant death are included. The web site is available at <http://www.cribsafety.org>.



If you have news to share, please contact the newsletter editors:
Donna Mazyck at dmazyck@msde.state.md.us or Laurel Moody at lmoody@bcps.org

Visit Our State Child Fatality Review website:

http://fha.maryland.gov/mch/cfr_home.cfm

For more information contact Joan Patterson

(410) 767-6727 or

jpatterson@dnhm.state.md.us

