

1255 Juvenile Firesetter Program

Purpose:

To reduce the incidence of fires set by Juveniles within the Township of Florence.

Definitions:

Level 1 - indicates a category of Little Concern. A child identified as a Level 1 is typically one who is curious about fire but does not understand the dangers. Typically fire safety education will stop the child's firesetting behavior.

Level 2 - indicates a category of Definite Concern. A child identified as a Level 2 is one where a problem might exist that goes beyond common curiosity. Psychological counseling is usually suggested and is followed up with fire safety education.

Level 3 - indicates a category of Extreme Concern. A child identified as a Level 3 is one where a definite problem may exist. These children can create a serious risk to themselves and/or others, and quick intervention is required. Immediate notified to the County Fire Marshal and/or other agencies as recognized by the "Phoenix" program is critical.

"Phoenix" Program - A Fire-Safety Program for Children and Adolescents that was created and is recognized as the standard fire safety program in Burlington County, NJ.

Overview:

This program is intended to supplement the "Phoenix" Fire-Safety program, which was created and is recognized as the standard program for Burlington County. It is not intended to replace, but to enhance the Burlington County "Phoenix" program by serving as a referral point for parents, guardians, relatives, neighbors, and school principals/facility of Florence Township. Thus, allowing for a quicker response by trained personnel following a juvenile's firesetting behavior and by making a proper evaluation and recommendation in a quick an expedient manner.

General Procedure:

A request for action by the Bureau of Fire Prevention, related to a juvenile's firesetting, can be made by calling 499-1393 or by notification of the Fire Official during non-business hours, if the situation warrants immediate intervention.

Once a request has been made to the Bureau, an evaluation will be scheduled and conducted by the Fire Official and/or his/her representative. The purpose of this evaluation will be to determine the severity of the child's firesetting behavior. If this evaluation results in identifying a child as a "Level 2" or "Level 3", that child will be automatically referred to the Burlington County Fire Marshal for enrollment into the County "Phoenix" program. All evaluation results and/or other pertinent information collected by the evaluator will then be sent to the County Fire Marshal for use by "Phoenix" representatives.

If an evaluation results in identifying a child as a “Level 1”, that child will be scheduled for a minimum of two (2) sessions of Fire Prevention Education. Lesson plans for these sessions will follow the appropriate teaching outlines recognized by the Florence Township Bureau of Fire Prevention. These outlines include but are not limited to: the New Jersey Fire Safety Skills Program; the NFPA Learn not to Burn Program; and the Phoenix Fire Departments Urban Survival Program.

Once all necessary educational sessions are completed, all of the records and reports pertaining to the child will be secured and sealed so that confidentiality issues will not be compromised.

Administrative Procedure:

In order to work in conjunction with the County “Phoenix” requirements, all evaluations conducted by evaluators representing the Florence Township Bureau of Fire Prevention will follow the standard guidelines recognized and outlined in the “Phoenix” program booklet and case booklet. In addition the “Survey Form on Juvenile Firesetting” which is included in the “Phoenix” Fire-Safety program booklet will be completed on a monthly basis (or as needed) and forwarded to the Burlington County Fire Marshal so that accurate statistics can be collected.

In addition, since the information collected as a result of this program is considered private and confidential, at no time will information related to a particular case be released without a sign release of information form being filed. All records will be kept in a locked file in order to prevent confidential information from being viewed by unauthorized personnel.

Training:

Since this local program is designed to work in conjunction with the county program, all evaluators and/or educators representing the Florence Township Bureau of Fire Prevention, must meet those qualifications recognized by the Burlington County “Phoenix” Program.

Forms:

Evaluations will be conducted and forms filled out as outlined in the “Phoenix” program. A “Case Booklet” will be issued for each individual case and all forms within the case booklet will be completed as required by the Florence Township Bureau of Fire Prevention and the Burlington County Phoenix Program.

FLOW CHART:

