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Fire warning from child safety specialist

Published: 29-10-2009

Families across the country are being warned to take extra precautions when it comes to home fire safety following the release of new Government statistics.

The figures from the Communities and Local Government Department show that the number of accidental household fires in the UK totalled 43,400 in 2007*, with cooking and electrical appliances being the most common cause.

These worryingly high figures have prompted child safety specialist Clippasafe to offer advice to parents in an attempt to reduce the number of fires, especially as the weather gets colder and families spend more time indoors, turning on the fire and making greater use of electrical items.

"We all know how dangerous fires can be," commented Roger Cheetham, managing director of Clippasafe. "Sadly many lives are lost every year as a result of fires, which are often easily preventable."

"Parents with young children really do need to take extra precautions around the home as youngsters often don't realise that what they are doing could have potentially disastrous results. Therefore, we've produced the following tips to help make sure precautions are up to scratch:"

- If you light a fire, whether it's wood, gas or electric, it's essential that you use a fireguard to deter inquisitive youngsters and playful older children from getting close.
- **Plug socket covers will prevent children from plugging in electrical items such as heaters and hair straighteners, which can prove dangerous if left unattended.**
- Use oven guards to cover the controls as a way of stopping youngsters turning on the oven or hob without you knowing.
- Keep things like matches and lighters safely out of your child's reach. For peace of mind, shut them away in a lockable cupboard or drawer to make sure they can't get hold of them.
- Don't light candles, fragrant oils or incense sticks when your child is around, and be alert at birthday parties when your child blows out the candles.
- Finally, fit smoke alarms and test them at least once a week to ensure that the battery is working properly.

"Hopefully, by taking extra care and raising awareness of the risk of accidental house fires, we'll see a much lower number when future statistics are released," concluded Roger.

Clippasafe's Twitter feed provides daily child safety tips and advice for parents. Keep yourself informed by following www.twitter.com/clippasafe.

*Fire Statistics, United Kingdom, 2007 -

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/firestatisticsuk2007>

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