



## How parents and caregivers can prevent burns and scalds

Parents and caregivers need to know that very young children think and behave in a different way to adults. For example, if there is a fire, they are more likely to hide than to flee. It is the responsibility of the adult to foresee danger.

### Supervise children at all times

Most injuries occur during normal everyday activities around the home. Many accidents happen when children are unsupervised. Parents should be present during any situation wherever and whenever there is potential for burns and scalds.

### Fire safe behavior is reliant on:

- Awareness of risk and knowing what to do to reduce the risk
- Adequate supervision of children
- Positive role modelling by parents / caregivers
- Parents / caregivers controlling or removing the hazard

### Understanding children's interest in fire

Many children show an interest in fire at an early age. They may ask questions about fire, play games like 'pretend cooking', or role play as firefighters. The most common indicators of fire interest are sitting close to and watching fires, poking at fires or asking to help build or light a fire or candles.

For some children, this interest can lead to fire play (lighting matches or flicking lighters) or fire setting. Such activity places the child and his / her family at great risk. Many residential fires causing the death of children under five are lit by children.

*By being alert to the dangers of burns, scalds and fires you can take action to prevent them and prevent injuries.*

For more information:

Kidsafe  
[www.kidsafevic.com.au](http://www.kidsafevic.com.au)

Royal Children's Hospital  
[www.rch.org.au](http://www.rch.org.au)



For further information contact:



[www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)



[www.mfb.vic.gov.au](http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au)

