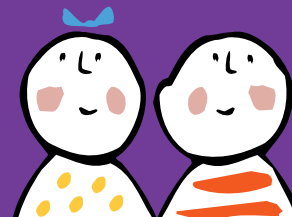




# for Parents



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A PROGRAM OF CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

Safe Kids Connecticut Coalition  
Injury Prevention Center

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## Fire Safety

Is your home fire safe? A recent study revealed that while 97% of households have installed smoke alarms, home fires continue to be the third leading cause of unintentional home injury-related deaths. A Home Safety Council (now part of Safe Kids Worldwide) study showed that although the majority of Americans report having smoke alarms installed within their homes, only 20% actually test their smoke alarms on a regular basis. Additional research shows that 64% of families polled have *never* planned or practiced a fire escape plan. A dual approach of installing/testing smoke detectors while also creating/practicing a fire escape plan is best.

### Installing and Testing Smoke Alarms

- ⊗ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement and in or near all sleeping areas.
- ⊗ Test smoke alarms at least once a month. Replace batteries at least once a year.
- ⊗ Never disable smoke alarms, even temporarily—you may forget to replace the battery.
- ⊗ Smoke alarms don't last forever—replace once every ten years.
- ⊗ Consider installing an automatic home fire sprinkling system. Smoke alarms provide an early warning of the fire, while sprinklers suppress and may even extinguish the fire.

### Creating a Fire Escape Plan

- ⊗ Find two ways out of every room – the door and maybe the window.
- ⊗ Children and older people will need help escaping a fire. Make this part of the plan.
- ⊗ Make sure windows and doors open easily.
- ⊗ Practice your plan two times a year with your family. Practice when everyone else is asleep at least one time.
- ⊗ Have a place to meet in front of your house.
- ⊗ Get out and stay out. Never go back inside a burning building.

# Beware Button Batteries!

Button batteries—small, coin-sized batteries—can be found in a variety of holiday items from toys to battery operated candles to holiday cards. Many button batteries can appear “invisible” to parents because devices come with the batteries already installed. These batteries pose a great risk to children four years and under as they can be easily swallowed. Symptoms of button battery ingestion may be similar to other childhood illnesses, such as coughing, drooling, and discomfort. Once burning begins, damage can continue **even after** the battery is removed.

We urge parents to keep kids safe with these 4 tips:

- 1.** Look in your home for any items that may contain coin-sized button batteries.
- 2.** Place devices out of sight and out of reach of small children.
- 3.** Keep loose or spare batteries locked away.
- 4.** Share this life-saving information with caregivers, friends, family members and sitters.

Please visit [thebatterycontrolled.com](http://thebatterycontrolled.com) for more information. •



PHOTO COURTESY OF THEBATTERYCONTROLLED.COM

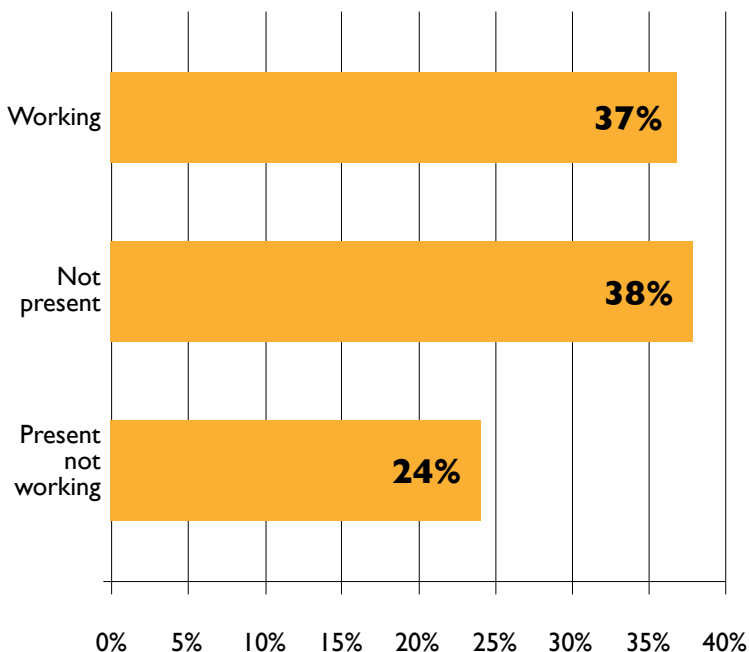


## REPORTING ON CHILDHOOD INJURY

# Smoke Alarm Presence and Performance

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**House fire deaths  
by smoke alarm performance,  
2005-2009, U.S.**



Each year, there are approximately 373,900 house fires in the U.S. resulting in 2,650 civilian deaths, 12,890 civilian injuries, and \$7, 147 million in direct property damage.

Smoke alarms sounded in 37% of the house fire deaths reported to U.S. fire departments. However, 38% of all house fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms, and in 24% of homes smoke alarms were present but did not operate. The death rate per 100 reported fires was twice as high in homes without a working smoke alarm as it was in home fires with this protection.

In reported home fires in which the smoke alarms were present but did not operate, half of the smoke alarms had missing or disconnected batteries. Nuisance alarms were the leading reason for disconnected smoke alarms. Almost one-quarter (23%) of the smoke alarm failures were due to dead batteries. Hardwired smoke alarms are more reliable than those powered solely by batteries. •

Source: Aherns, M. Smoke alarms in U.S. House Fires. National Fire Protection Association, Fire Analysis and Research Division. September 2011. Available at <http://www.nfpa.org/assets/files/PDF/OS.SmokeAlarms.pdf>