

## About Fires and Fire Safety

- Fire is dangerous and can be deadly
- Even small fires spread quickly
- Never leave stoves or candles unattended
- Install and maintain smoke detectors
- Plan and practice home fire escape drills
- Inspect your home for fire hazards

### Parents and caregivers, please...

- Teach children fire & fire tools are for grown-ups
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach, preferably locked up
- Praise your child for responsible, respectful behavior towards fire

**CALL FIREmatch** if you have questions or concerns regarding your child's interest or use of fire **1-866-314-1116**



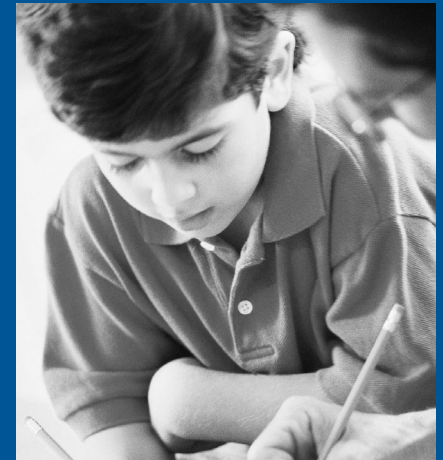
WEST MICHIGAN  
**FIREmatch**  
JUVENILE • FIRESETTER • INTERVENTION • REFERRAL • EDUCATION

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

1840 Wealthy SE  
Grand Rapids Michigan 49506  
Phone (866) 314-1116

# West Michigan FIREmatch

Dedicated to Intervention,  
Referral & Education for  
Juvenile firesetters



# West Michigan FIREmatch

Dedicated to Intervention, Referral & Education for juvenile firesetters

- **Intervention-** for children who have already experimented with fire
- **Referral-** for children who need additional education or mental health treatment
- **Education-** for children of all ages to increase understanding of the dangers associated with fire

**IN MICHIGAN,** 239 children have died in fires over the past five years. A significant number of them were due to fires started by children.

**The NFPA reports trends in fires set by young children in the US annually result in:**

- 95,000 fires
- Over 300 deaths
- 3,000 injuries
- \$300 million in property damage

**The FBI Crime Index reports that juvenile and adult arson cause an annual average of 560,000 fires, 750 deaths, 3,700 injuries, & \$1.5 billion in property damage**

- 55% of all arson arrests in the US are children under age 18
- Nearly half of these are children under 15
- 6.8% are under age 10
- The crime of arson has the highest rate of juvenile involvement

## Understanding Who & Why children set fires

### Curiosity/Experimental

- Low Risk
- Boys & Girls 2-10
- Lack understanding of the destructive nature of Fire
- Access to matches & lighters
- Unsupervised

### Troubled/Crisis

- Extreme risk
- Mostly boys- all ages
- Have set 2 or more fires
- Use fire to express emotions
- May not understand destructiveness of fires
- Will set fires until needs are met

### Delinquent/Criminal

- Often teens with a history of firesetting, skipping school, antisocial behavior or drug/alcohol abuse
- Fires are set with intent to destroy, as acts of vandalism. Or malicious mischief

- Targets include schools, open fields, abandoned buildings

### Emotionally Impaired

- Fires may be random, ritualized or with intent to destroy property
- Chronic history of behavioral, social, emotional or physical problems
- Boys or Girls of all ages
- Set many fires

**WEST MICHIGAN FIREMATCH** is a coalition of firefighters, mental health professionals, healthcare workers, juvenile court officers, schools, churches and other concerned members of the community dedicated to the intervention, referral and education of juvenile firesetters.

Our program offers both “Learn Not To Burn” and “Safe at Home” curriculums free of charge to preschools, daycares & schools free of charge. LNTB is teacher- taught, while “Safe at Home” is presented by fire service personnel.

If a child does engage in firesetting, call 1-866-314-1116. After completing a brief phone interview a determination will be made whether the parent desires basic fire safety education or if a mental health referral is warranted. If so the child will be referred to Pediatric Behavioral Specialists, PLC.