

HOT issues

A publication of the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal's Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program

Oregon Fire Bridge™: Youth Fire Incident Data System Goes On-line

The Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) launched Fire Bridge™, the new internet-based incident reporting system for Oregon fire departments, on January 1, 2010. Fire Bridge™ provides a centralized data repository utilizing modern technology, is user-friendly, and has numerous features that advance the accuracy, consistency, and completeness of Oregon fire data.

Fire Bridge™ not only has automated forms to record and report incident information, but also provides record-keeping and tracking of staff, equipment, inspections, pre-planning, activities, training, compensation and incidents involving youth with fire. In addition, the system allows users to generate reports to help individual fire departments and the OSFM evaluate data collected.

FireBridge™ houses a Juvenile with Fire (JFSI) Walk-In/Referral Module to record all youth with fire incidents whether or not they set a fire that resulted in a response from the fire department. Incident information, including address, date, time, location, ignition source, item first ignited, department response, etc. is collected.

The following data elements are collected for each youth involved:

- referral source (*social services, fire department, parent, etc.*),

- gender,
- race and ethnicity,
- family type (*single-parent family, foster parents, two-parent family, etc.*),
- whether an accelerant was used and type,
- number of previous fires set,
- parent/youth screening interview score*, and
- disposition (*provided education, referred to treatment, arrested, etc.*).

OSFM is confident Fire Bridge™ will increase reporting and improve the reliability and validity of data collected. Oregon's Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program is driven by the following key principles:

- Data increases the working knowledge of the youth firesetting problem and leads to best practices for prevention and intervention.
- Data drives decisions of funding sources at the local, state, and federal level that support prevention and intervention programs for youth firesetting.
- Data drives the development of program goals and objectives, activity and project planning, and policy at the local, state, federal and international levels.

Fire Bridge™ will be showcased at Cultivating Partnerships III: Juveniles with Fire and the Impact of Media conference, August 17th and 18th, 2010 in Eugene, Oregon.

* Screening scores are collected from the Oregon Juvenile with Fire Screening Tool designed for use by fire service personnel to screen youth referred to them for a fire-related offense. For more information, contact the OSFM's Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention program at firesetter@state.or.us.

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by **Judith S. Okulitch, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal**

The United States fire service has reduced fire deaths by 50% since 1974 and fire fatalities are continuing a downward trend. Yet, the U.S. still has a fire death rate 2 ½ times higher than several European nations and the fifth highest fire death rate in the world. Prevention efforts, while valued in Europe, tend to take second place to suppression in the United States. (FEMA, October 2009).

So how do we change this trend?

Fire educators should be credited with informing citizens on the importance of having a working smoke alarm, making home escape plans, and practicing stop, drop and roll. Nearly every fire department in this country has a community education program that relies on at least these three survival messages and delivers them to schools and community groups. These messages alone have brought down fire fatality statistics. Still something is missing in our educational messaging.

To reduce the number of fire fatalities, the number of burn injuries, and the amount of property loss, society's attitudes about fire must change. Unrealistic fire scenes and explosions seen on electronic and print media have desensitized both youth and adults to the inherent dangers of fire.

For years, intervention programs have studied the reasons why youths set fires. The number one reason youth give for setting intentional fires is because it is fun (OSFM, 2001; Fireplay Report, 2000).

Fire education must teach more than fire survival skills and prevention behaviors. Fire education in the 21st century must include something more basic and fundamental to fire... RESPECT for it.

Fire education should empower youth with the knowledge and skills needed to understand how media techniques, cultural perspectives, technology, peers and family values influence their attitude and decisions that lead to fire-safe behavior.

Fire education in the 21st century must include something more basic and fundamental to fire... RESPECT for it.

We must teach the value of fire in our society today and how fire has been used throughout history to advance civilization. When developing fire education programs for lessons on the positive uses of fire from prehistoric times to the present need to be included. Students need to understand how the use of fire has evolved over time resulting in some of the most significant advances in our civilization. These include the making of pottery and glass, steel manufacturing, the evolution of cooking and heating appliances, and solar cell technology, to name a few.

Students should be able to identify the use of fire in their own culture and how family traditions, community celebrations, and religious rituals have demonstrated respect for fire for generations. Native Americans are a good example of a people that have developed a respect and appreciation for fire and have woven fire into their stories, songs and dance.

We need youth to understand how fire was used to manage the environment whether to increase food production, to create safety zones around villages, to create animal habitats, to rid the land of insects and disease, or to develop alternative use of energy by using the sun.

Lessons must teach youth critical analytical skills with which to view movies, video games, television shows and to listen to music that glorify fire and explosions so they understand how media is influencing their perception and behavior about fire.

In reframing the content of fire education, we need to reconsider our delivery model by looking to prevention models that have demonstrated results of reducing other risky behaviors. Fire safety education fits perfectly into the community wellness model and should be taught in conjunction with health education.

Fire educators, in partnership with health teachers, can advocate for an effective school-based curriculum that supports comprehensive, evidence-based health programs. Research demonstrates such programs emphasize functional information, nurture values and shape norms that support healthy and safe behaviors, and promote the development of skills necessary to adopt, practice and maintain health and safety-enhancing behaviors.

The next edition of *Hot Issues* will look at the characteristics of effective health education curricula and how these can be incorporated into fire education programs for elementary and middle school students.

by **Jim Nanamkin, Daria Day, and Soledad Holguin** with contributions from **Captain Aaron Franco**

In 2009, Captain Aaron Franco of the Tule River Fire Department investigated thirteen fires that had been set by seven children between the ages of 8 and 15 years old in the grassy fields surrounding Painted Rock, a culturally important site for the Tule River Band of Yukot Indians. The Painted Rock site, located along the Tule River, includes bedrock mortars, pitted boulders, midden and pictographs. The pictographs are painted on the ceiling and walls of a rock shelter and include paintings of a male, female, and child Bigfoot (known as the family), and many other animals and shapes. This rock art site is unique; not only because it contains a Bigfoot pictograph,

but also because of the traditional Native American stories that accompany it. There are no other known creation stories involving a Bigfoot-like creature in California or anywhere else in the west.

“It takes a lot of people; taking a small bite; to make a Youth Fire Prevention Program a community effort.”

- Jim Nanamkin, Regional Fire Prevention Officer, Bureau of Indian Affairs

Prior to this incident, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) at the Pacific Region initiated a wildland fire investigation focusing on ignition sources and intentional human involvement. Jay Hinshaw, BIA Wildland Fire Investigator and Jim Nanamkin, BIA Regional Fire Prevention Officer, discovered youth between the ages of 5 and 17 who were misusing fire represented the

highest group of human-caused wildland fires. A string of wildland fires set on the Tule River Reservation in 2007, investigated by Mr. Hinshaw, had been set by four children; ages 4, 5, and 9.

Most of the fires set by children on the Tule River Reservation occur in wildland areas. This presents a very real threat to the Tule River community. The reservation is located in a remote, rural area approximately 20 miles from the

nearest town of Porterville. The reservation is accessible only by a winding road that follows the meandering South Fork of the Tule River. The nature of the vegetation and shape of the Tule River Valley make this area particularly susceptible to fast-moving wildfires with catastrophic potential.

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Youth from the Tule River Indian Reservation dressed in traditional Native American Regalia.

Oregon's Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program: A Growing Program with a New Name

For over 20 years, the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program has been an integral part of the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal's service array. During this time, the program has evolved as our knowledge of firesetting behavior and effective intervention practices for youth has increased.

In the Winter of 2008, *Hot Issues* published an article entitled, "Words...choose carefully" encouraging readers to use the term "juvenile with fire" in place of "firesetter" and remove the word "fireplay" from our vocabulary. The article explained the reasoning behind these suggestions, "... labeling the youth as a firesetter may have negative unintended consequences. The label obscures a clear-eyed look at the youth and may result in a one-size-fits-all intervention...underlying problems may go unrecognized...the label may make treatment providers wary of providing services."

Firesetting is a high-risk behavior with the potential to result in catastrophic loss of property and life. The term "fireplay" minimizes the behavior and contributes to a societal desensitization resulting in unreported fires and fewer youth receiving necessary prevention & intervention resources.

As the article noted, language is a difficult thing to change. This is evidenced by the lapse in time from when the article was written to the recent adoption of our new program name.

In April, State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson formally changed the name of the program to the *Youth Fire*

Prevention and Intervention Program. "This name change better reflects Oregon's program initiatives and our beliefs about youth and their fire behavior. At the state level, we have moved away from labeling youth as "firesetters" and their behavior as "fireplay." Our programming has expanded to serve all youth at all levels." stated SFM Simpson.

Oregon's *Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program* now encompasses an array of services from prevention education to intervention and provides resources for youth, ages 3 to 17 years of age. These include, but are not limited to:

- Development and distribution of prevention education, intervention and treatment resources for families and community agencies
- Comprehensive elementary and middle school curriculum and training for Oregon schools
- Coordination and support of

statewide networks representing multidisciplinary teams serving youth who misuse fire

- Maintenance and oversight of statewide collection of juvenile-set fire data
- Provides training and technical assistance to the fire service and community agencies to identify, screen, and assess the severity of a child's or adolescent's firesetting behavior
- Cooperates with local, state, and national organizations to support trainings, workshops, and conferences on youth firesetting and related topics

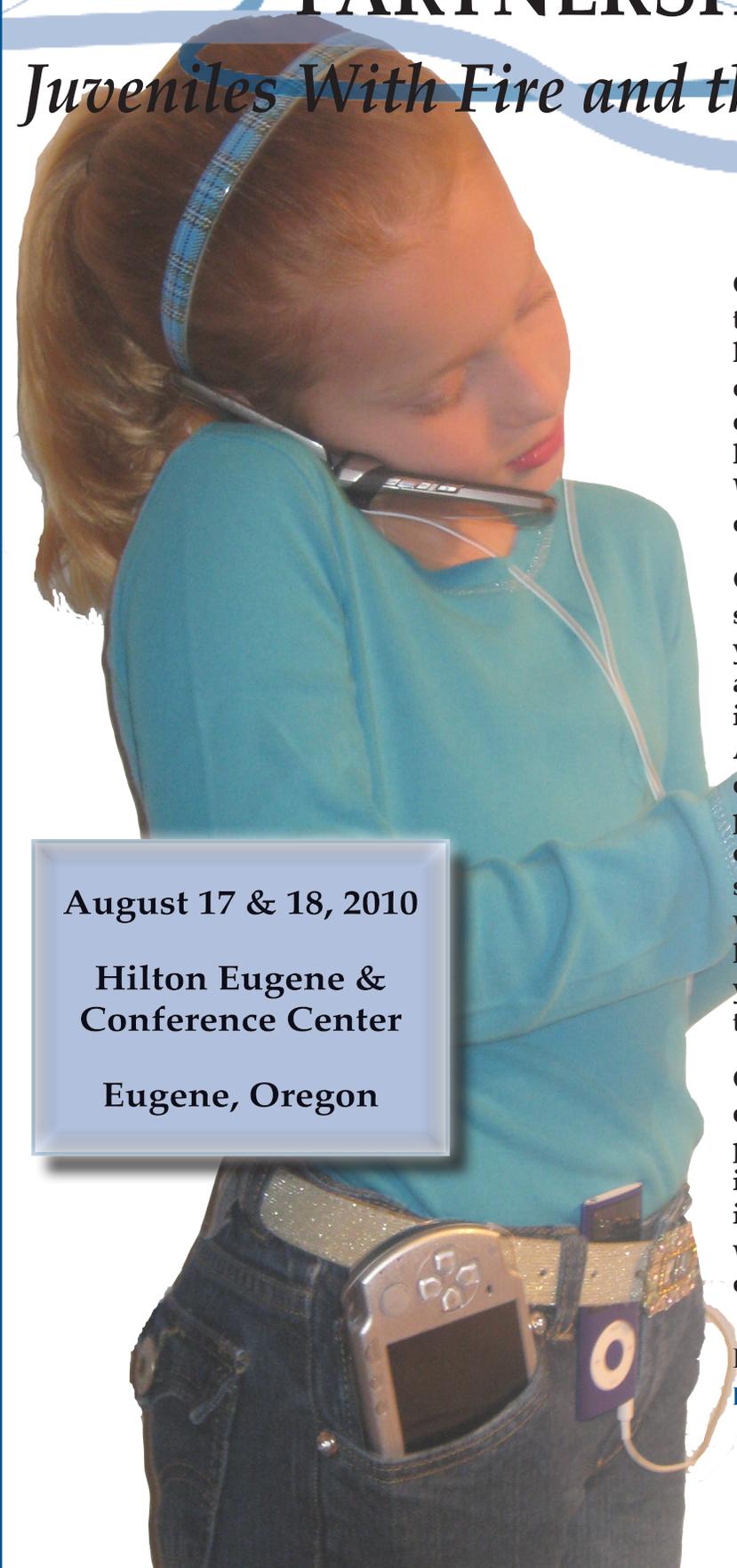
"In the last few years, we've taken a closer look at the reasons youth say they misuse fire or use fire in dangerous or risky ways. We are addressing how media effects their decisions about fire and other risky behaviors. We are revisiting how we deliver fire safety education in schools and in our communities. It makes sense that we expand our continuum of care to begin with prevention education" said Program Coordinator Judy Okulitch.



State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson and Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal Jim Walker with fellow graduates of NFPA 1035 Training and instructor, Judy Okulitch in February 2010.

CULTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS III:

Juveniles With Fire and the Impact of Media



Cultivating Partnerships III will provide the opportunity to network with and learn from a multidisciplinary staff of experts representing the fire service, education, mental health, social service, law enforcement and juvenile justice. Workshops and presentations represent the continuum from prevention to intervention.

Given the increasing number of media sources and ease of accessing media by youth, it is essential for fire prevention and intervention programs to consider the impact of media on firesetting behavior. Additionally, the use of media to inform, educate, and intervene with youth can be a powerful tool to help them develop skills, express themselves, and engage in positive social and civic activities. Workshops will allow participants to expand their knowledge about the impact of media on youth and develop new ways to use media to connect with children and adolescents.

Cultivating Partnerships III is excited to offer workshops focusing on youth fire prevention and intervention strategies in Indian Country. This special program is designed for professionals working with youth and families from native communities and tribal nations.

August 17 & 18, 2010

Hilton Eugene &
Conference Center

Eugene, Oregon

Register online at:

<https://www.regonline.com/cultivatingpartnerships>

OPEN PLENARY: FROM THE INTERNET TO THE COURTROOM: HOW YOUTUBE™ BROKE THE CASE

Presented by: Arson Task Force, Grants Pass, Oregon

The Arson Task Force representing the fire service, law enforcement, social services, juvenile justice and the district attorney will present a youth arson case involving more than 50 arson fires which resulted in criminal charges against 9 youths ranging in age from 13 to 18 years. The youth were apprehended after investigators discovered video of their fires on YouTube™.

ARSON & RECKLESS BURN: TEACHING 8TH GRADERS THE LAW

Presented by: Traci Cooper, Fire Marshal, Redmond Fire and Rescue, Oregon

Participants in this workshop will be given a scenario and play the role of judge, police officer and the "accused" for fire offenses. This lesson is part of the middle school fire awareness curriculum and teaches 8th graders the legal consequences of setting intentional fires. This lesson can also be adapted to be an intervention lesson for youth cited into the juvenile justice system.

ASSESSING YOUTH WHO MISUSE FIRE: BEST PRACTICES

Presented by: TBA

This workshop is designed for the mental health provider. It will provide a framework to assess a youth's firesetting behavior. In addition to evaluating the stressors and strengths in a youth's life, the assessment focuses on taking a complete fire history and gives fire safety recommendations to keep the youth safe at home, in school, and in the community.

WHY JUVENILES FALSELY CONFESS

Presented by: Detective Mathieu LaCrosse, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Oregon

This presentation will use written, audio, and video formats to delve into the reasons children will falsely confess to crimes they did not commit. Participants will be taught to recognize the common threads in false child confessions, receive tools to create an environment for receiving a "clean" statement and learn strategies to improve their interviewing and interrogation skills.

OREGON FIREBRIDGE

Presented by: Claire McGrew, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal Data Unit

This workshop will showcase Oregon Fire Bridge™, a new internet-based incident reporting system for Oregon fire departments. Special focus will be given to the programs' Walk-In/Referral Module that houses all fire incidents involving youth. This real-time data will support both the prevention and intervention program for youths misusing fire in Oregon.

SAFETY CLASS (2 SESSIONS)

Presented by: FireSafe Children and Families

SAFETY is a 13-session educational and cognitive skill building curriculum for youth ages 12 – 17 who misuse fire and are mandated into the program by the juvenile court. Participants will receive a complete copy of the curriculum (\$35.00 fee) and be taught how to implement the curriculum in a group setting with youth who misuse fire.

FIRE ACADEMY (2 SESSIONS)

Presented by: Timothy Kopet, Ph.D., and Christine Krause, Psy.D., FireSafe Children and Families

Fire Academy is a six-session curriculum for children ages 6 to 12 years and their parents/caregivers led by a mental health practitioner and a firefighter. Participants will receive a complete copy of the curriculum (\$35.00 fee) and gain an understanding of the

topics covered by the curriculum as well as skills needed to work with parents of youth misusing fire.

A MULTIAGENCY MODEL FOR RESPONDING TO FIRESETTING INCIDENTS IN SCHOOL: IDENTIFYING CONCERNS AND MITIGATING RISK

Presented by: Dr. Wilson Whittaker, Salem-Keizer School District, Oregon

This workshop will introduce a school-based multiagency approach designed to help schools to appropriately triage students with firesetting behaviors, develop comprehensive supervision plans for students with problematic firesetting behavior and increase communication between schools, law enforcement, mental health resources, juvenile justice, and the fire department.

PREPARING FOR SCHOOL BOMB THREATS

Presented by: Gaylon Couch, Oregon State Police-Arson and Explosives Section

This workshop will showcase a bomb incident in an Oregon school that resulted in the evacuation of 1500 students. Immediately following the incident, students were exchanging messages and photos via text messages and emails from their cell phones as well as posting information and photos on social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook.

GENERAL SESSION: THE INTRANET: A PLAYGROUND FOR FIRESETTING BEHAVIOR

Presented by: Detective Micah Smith, Linn County Sheriff's Office, Oregon

Digital cameras, mobile devices, social networking, and streaming video websites are changing the way firesetters learn, plan and share. This presentation will explain the impact technology and the Internet has on youth; what technologies, devices and sites they are frequenting; how these are impacting youths' firesetting behavior; and what evidence is available for investigators to obtain from these sites and technologies to use in their cases. Sample legal process for dozens of sites and services will be made available to attendees.

SOCIAL NETWORKING FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: THE GOOD SIDE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Presented by: Gwen Lammers & Jim Floros, Burn Institute, San Diego

Social networking for non-profit organizations will be an informative session on how to build, expand, and/or effectively utilize various social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to promote prevention messages, advertise events and potentially raise funds. Participants will be able to see the positive side of social networking.

START SAFE: A FIRE AND BURN SAFETY PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN AGES 3-6

Presented by: TBA

The Home Safety Council created age-appropriate fire safety messages for preschoolers in English and Spanish. Participants will receive an overview of the Start Safe program including a review of the program materials which include bilingual activities, a bilingual big book, mini versions of the big book, a DVD, and bilingual fire and burn safety booklets for parents.

WORKING WITH HISPANIC/LATINO YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Presented by: Linda Castenada and Joe Troncoso, Portland Fire & Rescue/FireSafe Children and Families

This workshop will demonstrate how an early intervention program reaches out, connects and intervenes with Spanish-speaking

children and their families. Participants will learn strategies in working with Hispanic/Latino youth and families who have been involved with misusing fire and will provide resources that have been translated into Spanish.

INTEGRATED FIRE PREVENTION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Presented by: Martin Sunderland, DipEd, and Lt. Ted A. Main, Abbotsford Fire Rescue Service, Abbotsford, BC

AFRS developed a multi-media fire prevention program targeting middle school students. This program brings together the concepts of actions and consequences for risky behavior and encourages students to consider their motivations and assess risks for their behaviors. They will gain an understanding of how their actions can affect others at home, school, and community.

PARTNERING WITH SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Presented by: Micki Trost, West Metro Fire Rescue Life Safety Educator and Stefanie Curry, LCSW, The Children's Hospital Burn Programs, Denver, Colorado

How do you get school staff members to report all of those "insignificant" fires to the fire service and hospital-based JFS evaluation and treatment programs? Tips on creating relationships with school staff at all levels will be provided. A multi-tiered approach will focus on those professionals who work with children and make referrals to youth fire education and intervention programs.

YOUTUBE™ VIDEO PROGRAM FOR FIRE SAFETY & BURN PREVENTION

Presented by: Tony Rodkey, MS, Countryside Fire Protection District, Vernon Hills, Illinois

This workshop features a fire safety & burn prevention program to promote and encourage students in middle and high school

to create videos demonstrating non-risky safe behavior to peers. Participants will receive a copy of videos and rubric designed by following state curriculum guidelines used for judging videos.

SCARED, SCARRED, OR INDIFFERENT? DOES FEAR WORK TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR?

Presented by: Timothy Kopet, Ph.D., FireSafe Children and Families and Kirsten Balding, RN, Oregon Burn Center

Is it appropriate to show pictures of burn victims or tour burn treatment centers as an intervention strategy for youth who misuse fire? Fear has been used as an educational tool for years with mixed results. This class will discuss when to use fear messages and when to avoid them. Learn when fear messages work and when using fear tactics causes more harm than good.

IT'S UP TO YOU! FIRE AWARENESS AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CURRICULUM FOR MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Presented by: Judy Okulitch, MS, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal

It's Up to You! takes a proactive approach to teaching middle school youth the reality of fire, how the media influences their attitudes and behaviors towards fire, the physical and legal consequences of misusing fire and how to make responsible and safe decisions in fire prevention and survival. The curriculum is aligned to meet state and national health education standards.

CLOSING PLENARY: YOUTH FIRE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

For more than 20 years, intervention services in Oregon have continued to evolve to meet the ever-changing social, emotional, and cultural needs of youth with firesetting behaviors. This presentation provides strategies to align networks and coalitions with a community wellness model.

Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention in Indian Country

BUILDING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT YOUTH IN INDIAN COUNTRY

Presented by: Daria Day and Special Agent Jonathon Whitefoot, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

The use of fire as a management tool, community resource and integral part of ceremonies is a time honored tradition in tribal communities. The misuse of fire by tribal youth represents not only a threat to themselves and their communities but their cultural heritage as well. The BIA is developing a Youth Fire Intervention Program to assist tribes in intervening with, supporting, and educating their youth as they navigate the consequences of their fire setting behaviors. The program will focus on intervention strategies that are adaptable to various tribal communities.

PEACEGIVING COURTS

Presented by Susan Thornton, Coquille Indian Tribe

This workshop will showcase the PeaceGiving Court, born out of the potlatch tradition and spirit of giving common to the Native inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest. The presenters will discuss how youth cited for misusing fireworks were held accountable for their behavior through the process of mentoring, mediation, talking circles, and ceremony.

EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTIONS USING NATIVE AMERICAN MYTHS

Presented by: Soledad Holguin, Fire Prevention Specialist, Bureau of Indian Affairs; Jack Lawson, Tribal Liaison/Native American Coordinator with Oregon Youth Authority; and Linda Nickerson, FireSafe Children and Families

The wisdom of the past has positive lessons to teach about fire safety and personal responsibility for today. Participants will be shown how a Native American Cherokee story and a Yurok Indian myth are used in prevention and in intervention. A prevention specialist will demonstrate a decision making activity to teach youth the consequences of misusing fireworks on the reservation.

OREGON SCREENING TOOL (2 SESSIONS)

Presented by: Judy Okulitch, MS, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal

The Oregon Juvenile with Fire screening tool gives the fire service professional or community partner a "broad brush" approach to understanding the firesetting behavior of a youth. Participants will understand the role of a screening in an assessment process, be given practice in using Oregon's screening tool and be able to identify risk factors based on data and research.

CULTIVATING PARTNERSHIPS III is sponsored by *Fire Safe Children and Families,*
Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, & Oregon Burn Center in coalition with
The Denver Children's Hospital and The San Diego Burn Institute

Registration:

The registration fee is **\$199.00 (+ processing fee)** which covers tuition, workshop materials (unless otherwise noted), two continental breakfasts, two networking luncheons, and snacks throughout the day.

Registration must be completed online at: <https://www.regonline.com/cultivatingpartnerships> (Note: Online registration will allow for payment by credit card, check, or purchase order.)

Space is limited - Register Early!

Registration Questions? Please contact Helen Feroli at (503) 934-8240 or helen.feroli@state.or.us

Accommodations:

Hilton Eugene & Conference Center, 66 East 6th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97401

A block of rooms has been reserved for conference participants at special conference rates for August 16th and August 17th. Please inform the reservations clerk that you will be attending the Cultivating Partnerships Juvenile with Fire Conference. This room rate is limited and you are encouraged to reserve your accommodations early to get the best room at the best rate. Room rates: Single, \$103.00 or Double, \$118.00. To make your reservations, visit www.hilton.com, 1-800-HIL-TONS, or the hotel directly at (800) 937-6660.

General Information:

Eugene is located in the heart of the Willamette Valley between the beautiful Oregon coast and the majestic Cascade Mountains. You'll appreciate the warm welcome of the community, the spectacular natural setting, abundant recreational opportunities, and the professional yet personalized service for which Eugene is known. We think you'll find such a wide variety of activities and adventures that you'll want to spend a few extra days and bring family along! As you make travel plans, we encourage you to explore more of what Eugene and the surrounding area has to offer at:

www.TravelLaneCounty.org/firesetter.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Tuesday, August 17, 2010					
8:30 - 10:00	Open Plenary: From the Internet to the Courtroom: How YouTube™ Broke the Case				
10:30 - 12:00	Arson & Reckless Burn: Teaching 8th graders the LAW	It's Up To You! Middle School Curriculum	Building Programs to Support Youth in Indian Country	Why Juveniles Falsely Confess	Oregon FireBridge™
1:00 - 2:30	SAFETY Curriculum (2 Sessions)	Fire Academy Curriculum (2 Sessions)	Educational Interventions Using Native American Myths	A Multiagency Model for Responding to Fire Incidents in Schools	
3:00 - 4:30			Peacegiving Courts	Preparing for School Bomb Threats	
Wednesday, August 18, 2010					
8:30 - 10:00	General Session: Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention for the 21st Century				
10:30 - 12:00	Social Networking for Non-Profit Organizations	Start Safe: A Fire and Burn Safety Program for Children Ages 3-6	Assessing Youth Who Misuse Fire: Best Practices	Integrated Fire Prevention for Middle Schools	Oregon Screening Tool (2 Sessions)
1:00 - 2:30	Working with Hispanic/Latino Youth & Families	YouTube™ Video Program for Fire Safety and Burn Prevention	Scared, Scarred, or Indifferent? Does Fear Work to Change Behavior?	Collaboration and Intervention in Schools	
3:00 - 4:30	General Session: Reshaping the Future of Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention				

Tule River

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These fire incidents not only posed risks to the youth involved and their community but also their cultural heritage. The loss of the pictographs at Painted Rock would have been a great loss for the Yukot Indians who, along with other tribal communities, have historically used fire as a highly honored tool, community resource and integral part of ceremonies for centuries. Shame upon fire which is bestowed with great respect and honor would also have been a great tragedy to Indian Country.

The Tule River Tribal Council and Fire Department recognized the need for a strong, intervention-based program to help the youth who were misusing fire. This recognition set into motion the development of the *Youth with Fire Intervention Program*. The program would incorporate the strengths and challenges unique to Indian Country with the goal of helping youth regain their self-respect and the trust of their community by learning about the responsibility they have to protect their families, communities, and natural and cultural resources.

The Council tasked the Tule River Fire Department to develop the program. Through education and community service, the program would teach youth how unsafe fire affects their community and reintroduce youth to the cultural values, tradition, and the ceremonial uses of fire. The focal point is through community service and education, youth who misuse fire can regain their status as 'tribal members in good standing.'

Chief Shane Santos and Captain

Aaron Franco partnered with Mr. Nanamkin, who had recently developed a program to support tribes in just such efforts, to bring the fledgling BIA program to Tule River to put into practice. The BIA contracted with Daria Day to develop the Youth Fire Prevention Program for the Tule River Tribe.

Captain Franco took on the role of program coordinator and brought together partners from tribal programs and within the community (Tule River Clinic, Recreation, Mental Health, Social Services) to create a coalition to provide input for the program operation, to support the youth and their families through program services, and to represent the backbone of the program. The coalition consulted with Soledad Holguin, BIA, and Judy Okulitch, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, to incorporate aspects of Oregon's model and train coalition members on the *Oregon Juvenile with Fire Screening Tool*.

The program is consequence-based and creates community support for the youth involved. Youth are required to sign a behavior contract that includes 200 hours of community service and a commitment to never again set fires on the reservation before the age of eighteen. Service hours are completed within the coalitions' partner programs and include:

- Tule River Fire Department: focused on fire prevention, safety, and survival education.
- Tule River Department of Public Safety: community restoration and learning the role of public safety within the community.
- Future Generations Program: receive guidance from peers

serving on Youth Council on what they might do to regain their trust.

- Tule River Recreation Department: various tasks at community recreation center, equipment/facility maintenance
- The youth return to the Tule River Fire Department for completion of the program.

The program incorporates parent accountability and requires parents and/or guardians to sign the contract. They must complete at least 40 hours of the community service with their child. The hope is that by doing so, they can reconnect with their children and perhaps heal their family.

If the child or parent fail to complete the program or violate the contract by setting another fire, they face the consequence of being held financially liable for all fire suppression costs as well as all damage costs that occurred as the result of the fire-setting behavior.

Strong support from the Tribal Council has allowed the program to grow quickly. The program is ongoing and continues to evolve as coalition partners expand their understanding of fire and their ability to work together to support the youth through the program. As of May 6, 2010, two of the seven children involved in the fire at Painted Rock have graduated from the program. The youth are looking forward to going before their Tribal Council again, this time as true members of their community who respect and understand the responsibility they have to protect their people, their resources and their cultural heritage.



Hot Issues Winter 2010 Reader's Poll asked our readers:

In an attempt to make learning about fire safety fun during an open house or fire station tour, some have allowed preschool children to put out a live fire with a garden hose or hold a booster line to squirt water on a fire or use a fire extinguisher. What is your opinion of this educational approach for this age group? for any age group?

The Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal, in partnership with fire educators and child development specialists from across the state, will be using survey results to develop guidelines for community-based fire prevention activities and fire station tours. The guidelines will be published in a future edition of *Hot Issues*.

The following are comments from our readers and do not necessarily reflect the attitudes or opinions of *Hot Issues'* staff:

"Difficulty in decision making, and mixed messages could lead to catastrophe if, in a fire, teens and children have to choose between "Get Out - Stay Out," or "Should I try to put this fire out?"

"Inappropriate because the children might enjoy putting out live fires and attempt to duplicate the activity by themselves or with their peers which could lead to increased fires with this age group."

"Your articles on this subject were the best I've seen by some of the most trusted professionals in this field. Thank you! It irritates me beyond measure when I see firefighting made into a game at open houses, etc. by people who should know better, such as the fire chiefs and officers! By the way,

I responded that I don't think this educational approach (at an open house or station tour) is the appropriate venue for any age group. I do believe that adults and older teens, such as those in a vocational school, may be taught this in a proper setting - that "proper setting" being a classroom or other controlled setting."

"Too often fire safety education is left to firefighters with little training in how to educate people of any age group. This is another example of how these people end up entertaining instead of educating and the only message their audience takes home is 'fire is cool'."

"It goes without saying that allowing these activities should be combined with some classroom training on the proper use of extinguishers and in what situations a person should attempt to extinguish a fire."

"We do extinguisher training with a simulator for businesses when requested; and then only if the adult is comfortable and only after classroom instruction that stresses the safety issues and limitations."

"Developments in the brain of processing and reasoning aren't complete for most people until sometime in the early twenties. By allowing such interaction with fire aren't we showing them how they can control and conquer fire? There are better ways to show extinguishment of fire than using real fire. "

"I checked a box above but only because the choices were limited. I think I understand the thinking to some degree of letting kids put out a fire with the hose but I still have to disagree with it. The very young

ones will gain a false impression of power over fire. The somewhat older ones may see it as something fun to do and try it at home. I think that an educational format without hands-on is the better approach. If you want to do hands-on then I suggest doing it for older teens of at least the age where they are legally allowed to be part of a volunteer fire department in the state where they reside. That may mean kids 16 and older in most states. But, I would not do that until they have had sufficient classroom time. If we start showing kids at a young age how to use a hose or extinguisher we may be setting ourselves up for trouble. Consider this; seven year old child is at home with his parents. It is night and the family is in bed sleeping. The seven-year-old is awakened by a fire in the house. The rest of the family is unaware of it because the parents did not bother to put new batteries in the smoke detector (if they even have one). The child, with his new power to put out fire with a garden hose does not wake up his family. Instead he goes outside, gets the garden hose and drags it in. He tries to put the fire out but is soon overcome by smoke. He dies and so does the rest of the family. Young children just don't see things in perspective the way most adults do."

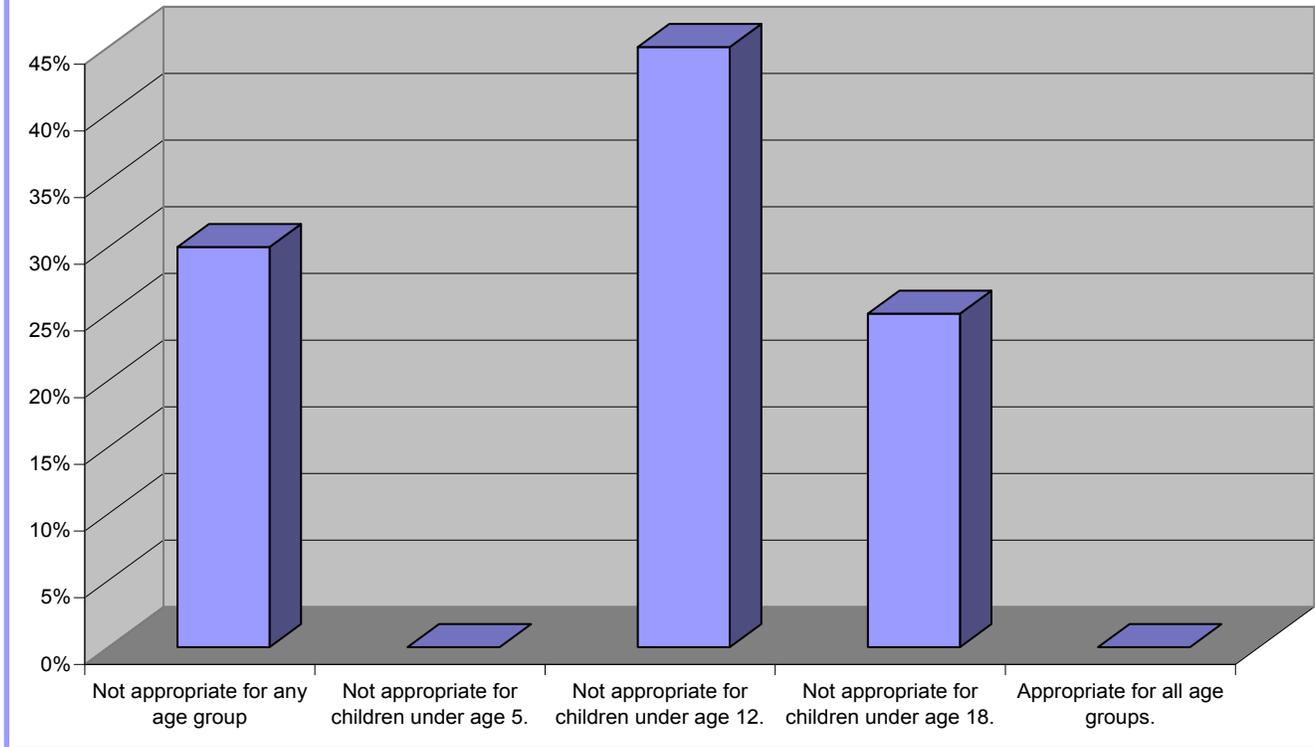
"Whatever you are smoking it has made you null and void. "

"Having children putting out live fires is not a good idea. Positive influence by education is the best way."

"We live in a society that reinforces to children that they can put out a fire. We condition children to like and feel in control of fire. Every

Hot Issues Winter 2010 Reader's Poll Results

What is your opinion of allowing children to put out live fires with a garden hose, booster line or fire extinguisher as an educational approach to fire safety?



birthday is like the annual rite of passage about fire, when we permit children to blow out birthday candles, which demonstrate to all present the child's command over fire and our congratulation with clapping and cheering once the candles are out. At age one, children are fearful of the candle on the birthday cake. Young children are cajoled and maneuvered into getting near the candle and blowing. I have asked parents continuously over the years how their one-year old acted at her/his first birthday party. Parents tell me jokingly how their child cried or made to sit in front of the cake with the lit candle and how they (the parent) blew out the candle and told their child what a good job he/she did in blowing out the candle. When I asked parents about scaring their child with the

lit candle, most parents felt it was okay because eventually their child got over their fear. Some parents felt it made their child tougher, some just felt their child's tearful reaction was normal. Children learn by what they experience. If you add in the 4-yr. olds cognitive inability to figure out what they are physically able to do, meaning a 4-yr. old is willing to try what is modeled before them, and believes they can copy the actions of the adult and get the same results. Our culture primes young children through cultural practices, media and misguided education to feel in control of fire. Better time and effort should be spent on attacking the misconception that children have about fire by changing the cultural norm of children's interactions with candles, specifically birthday candles."

"When very young children see a firefighter light a fire so they can extinguish it, they will get the message "I can start fires to put them out." Do the children wear PPE? A plywood target and imitation hose (toys) may be a better way to approach this. Have you noticed that prevention and safety are boring (when you're successful, nothing happens and no one notices). It's the mistakes and failures that are exciting and attract attention (when things go wrong, they are on the news!)"

"Children under age 12 do not have a full concept of danger and reality. They see it as something fun to do, and it fosters a feeling of control over fire."

Hot Issues thanks our readers who participated in the reader's poll and provided comments. Thank you!

Novelty/Toylike Lighters

Lobby display prompts resident to surrender more than 900 novelty lighters

by Anita Phillips, License and Permit Services Manager, Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal

Having a display board of prohibited novelty lighters really paid off last week. A Keizer resident attending a meeting at the Office of State Fire Marshal (OSFM) in Salem, Oregon saw the display and requested to speak with the manager of the Novelty/Toylike Lighter Program. The resident shared that she had a number of novelty lighters in her garage given to her by a friend who was the former owner of a convenient store. She inquired how she should dispose of them



OSFM lobby display that prompted resident to surrender more than 900 novelty/toylike lighters

given legislation banning the sale and distribution of the lighters in Oregon. She expressed concern about keeping them in her garage since she had young children. The resident was relieved to learn that she could turn the lighters over to OSFM to be disposed of properly.

Later that day, the resident returned with a trunk load of small boxes to our office. After unloading the lighters, she stated she needed to go back home and get the rest and arrived later with a second load.

OSFM staff inventoried all the lighters, counting more than 900 novelty/toylike lighters. All lighters were stored in the evidence locker of the Oregon State Police and will be properly disposed of at a later date.

Legislative Updates

Mississippi

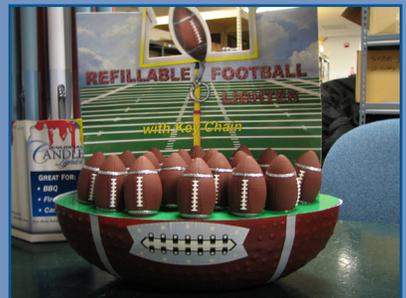
Governor Haley Barbour signed legislation (HB 232 and SB 2859) prohibiting the sale and distribution of novelty lighters effective July 1, 2010.

Utah

Governor Gary Herbert signed legislation (HB 201S01) regulating the storage, sale, and distribution of novelty lighters on March 30, 2010.

Mississippi and Utah join the following states that have passed similar legislation:

- Arkansas,
- Louisiana,
- Maine,
- New Jersey,
- Nevada,
- North Carolina,
- Oregon,
- Tennessee,
- Virginia, and
- Washington.



Over 900 novelty/toylike lighters stored in the evidence locker at Oregon State Police pending disposal

The following states have pending legislation: Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina.

Hot Issues encourages you to visit The U.S. Fire Administration's website for up-to-date information about novelty lighter legislation.:

www.usfa.dhs.gov/noveltylighters