

# Fire Misuse Systems Overview:

## Part of the Salem-Keizer School District's Safety & Support Response Systems

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# First, a quick word about semantics . . .



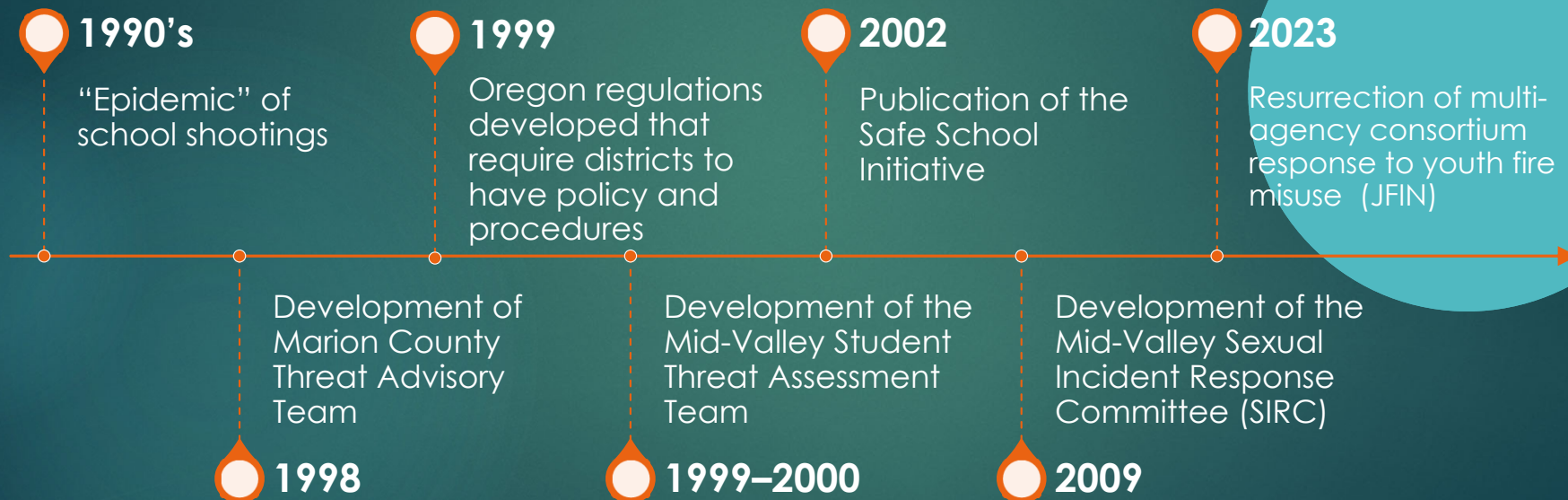
- Fire setting behavior
- Fire misuse
- Fire play



## Overview of Safety & Support Response Teams (SSRT) in the Salem Keizer SD

- Student Behavioral Threat Assessment (STAT)
- Sexual Incident Response (SIRC)
- Suicide Prevention Protocol (SPP)
- Fire Misuse Assessment (FMA)
- Partner with city-wide Adult Threat Assessment (TAT)

# Evolution of Salem-Keizer's Safety & Support Response System Paradigm



# “Playing with Fire” statistics: a conservative estimate, 2014-2018

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30,450 structure fires, 22,350 non-structure fires

50 deaths, 570 injuries

\$268 million in property damage

Source: National Fire Protection Association, May 2021



# More on the scope of the problem . . .

53% of all  
arson arrests  
in the US  
were  
juveniles

Leans heavily  
towards  
males, ages  
12-14

Mostly at  
home,  
between  
4-8 pm

June through  
September

Source:  
National Fire  
Protection  
Association,  
May 2021

# Overview of SKSD's Fire Misuse Assessment System

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- Multi-disciplinary/Multi-agency
- Two-tiered model
  - Tier 1: Information Gathering & Safety Planning (School-site based Team)
  - Tier 2: Outside Expertise & Resources (JFIN)
- Focuses on incident & context
- Centers on safety
- Emphasizes collaboration on both tiers
- Manages information and calibrates response





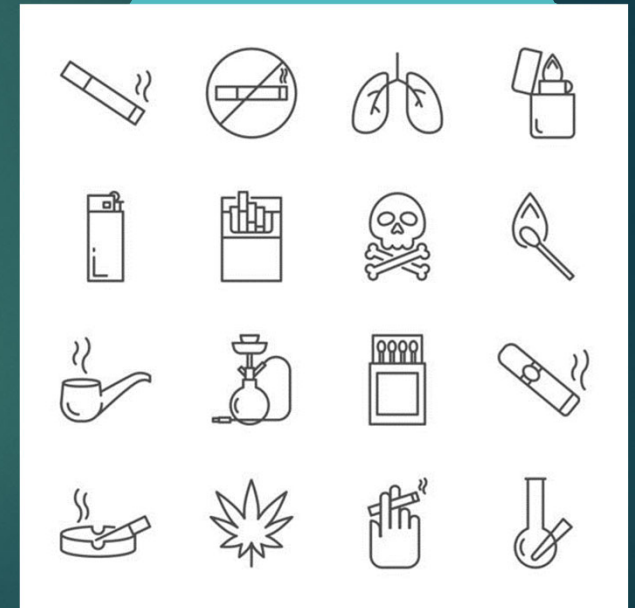
# Reasons to Consider a Level 1 Assessment

- Fire misuse occurs at school
- School staff is informed about concerning fire misuse, excessive fire curiosity, or explosive-device research done at school or in the community
- Fire misuse or threats of fire setting are causing disruption to school activity
- There is a history of fire misuse
- Administrator is unsure if fire misuse poses a risk to the school community

# Fire Assessment Level 1: Initial Questions

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- Who, what, where, how?
- First time? History of repeated fire play?
- Peers involved?
- Poor understanding of fire?
- Access to matches & lighters? Accelerants?
- Supervision?
- Damage done? Harm to others?
- Did they call for help or try to stop the fire?
- Drugs and alcohol involved?



# Reasons to Consider a Level 2 Assessment

- School team has concerns and aren't confident in their Level 1 investigation
- Student has a pattern of repeated fire misuse and is not responding to intervention attempts
- School team believes that fire misuse is motivated by something more complex than the simple mix of impulsivity + curiosity
- Fire misuse event was severe and/or remarkable
- School team has exhausted their building resources and needs more support
- The youth is charged with a fire related crime

# Fire Assessment Level 2: Going Deeper

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- Fascination or fixation with fire and fire personnel? What does their internet history/social media indicate?
- Meaning behind what was lit on fire?
- Communication about desire to set fires for burn something or a structure?
- History of suicidality, threats of violence, harm to animals, or sexual harming behavior?
- Disabling condition?
- Educational history?
- Family systems? DHS involvement?





Level 2 Fire Misuse Assessment:

# Mid-Valley Juvenile Fire Setting Intervention Network

(JFIN) for short



# Who are the Members of Our Team?

- Salem-Keizer School District
- Willamette Education Service District
- Salem and Keizer Fire Departments
- Marion and Polk County Juvenile Departments
- Oregon Youth Authority
- Salem Police Department
- Keizer Police Department
- Marion and Polk County Health Departments
- Polk County Fire District #1
- Marion County Fire District #1
- Oregon State Fire Marshal
- Oregon State Police

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## JFIN: Better Together

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- Shared responsibility
- Multi-discipline, multi-agency
- Equity lens
- Expeditious but methodical
- Silo breakdown
- Keeps skill set supple
- Strategies fitting risk
- Focus on physical & psychological safety

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# Memorandum of Understanding

- Creates safe space to share
- Allows for an exchange of information within “rules of play”
- Honors each agency’s confidentiality obligations
- Outlines expectations for participation
- Getting folks to the table and meeting regularly



# Fire Misuse Management Paradigm

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- Focus on safety, support and *accountability*
- Attention to inclusion and IDEA
- Foster relationships
- Fidelity to court conditions
- Not overly restrictive
- Notify others on need-to-know basis: *not more, not less*
- Encourage pro-social engagement
- Partner *with and support* parents/caregivers
- Connection, connection, connection
- Communicate, communicate, communicate



# Goal: Management Strategies, Prevention & Intervention

- Increase accountability for student of concern
- Increase supervision
- Limit access to fire setting materials
- Fire Education with fire service personnel?
- Build relationships
- Increase inhibitors
- Community resources:
  - Mental health support, mentoring, faith community, juvenile justice, etc.





# Questions?

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