

interventions for adolescents who misuse fire

Adolescents with Fire



*An
accountability
model with an
emphasis on
community
impact*

Published by the Oregon Office of State Fire Marshal
Youth Fire Prevention and Intervention Program

Introduction

Adolescents with Fire represents a multidisciplinary collaboration between professionals from the fire service, juvenile justice system, mental health services, social services and the Red Cross . *Adolescents with Fire* is designed as a comprehensive intervention program to be used with adolescents between the ages of twelve and seventeen years referred on first-time fire related offenses. The program educates the youth on the social, emotional, and financial impact of their firesetting behavior and holds them accountable.

Objectives:

- to educate the youth about the consequences of their firesetting behavior on other people in the community
- to assist youth to identify the financial, legal, and the social/emotional ‘costs’ of their firesetting behavior
- to educate youth about the effect of fire on a community
- to give the youth opportunity to take responsibility for their behavior by establishing consequences which may include performing community service

Procedure:

- A fire professional, in consultation with the juvenile court counselor, assigns homework tasks to be completed by the youth who has been adjudicated or has signed a formal accountability agreement.
- The academic ability of the youth needs to be determined so that youth can successfully meet the requirements of the program.
- A contract between the youth, fire service professional, juvenile court counselor and the youth’s parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) is signed prior to beginning the program.
- A timeline for completion of the homework tasks needs to be established.
- Whenever possible, parents should view the recommended educational videos to help them understand the seriousness of the youth’s fire behavior and their responsibilities.

Acknowledgements: Adolescents with Fire represents a revision of the work originally developed by the Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network and Jessica Sanson, M.S. in their development of a restitution program with an emphasis on fire. The Clackamas County Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Network is a multi-agency team which provides evaluation, education, referral and treatment for children with firesetting behaviors.

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(TO BE COPIED ON DEPARTMENT LETTERHEAD)

CONTRACT

I, _____, understand that firesetting is a serious behavior and that my behavior affected other people in the community. I will complete the following assignments to learn about the financial and social consequences of my actions.

I agree to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Signatures:

Youth Date

Parent Date

Fire Department Official Date

Probation Counselor Date

Project Plan

1

Community Impact Report



Project Plan 1: Community Impact Report

Objective:

To educate the youth about the consequences of their firesetting behavior on other people in the community.

Materials needed:

- letter of introduction
- interview questions
- report format/notebook or journal



Procedure:

Have youth identify and interview all parties affected by their fire. Have youth report on the costs incurred and the emotional effects and potential injuries to these parties. Have youth report on how this crime affected him/her, and the potential ramifications of his/her actions. The Victim-Offender Mediation Program may be part of the Community Impact Report. Check with juvenile counselor.

Step One- Youth completes Community Impact Report Matrix Form

Step Two- Youth schedules an appointment with three to five interviews they identified on matrix form.

Step Three- Youth prepares a report. Depending on youth's skills, this may be a written report, an art project or some other audiovisual project. *Optional: Coordinate with parent and school for child to receive credit work.*

Step Four: Present findings to court, juvenile counselor, youth services team or firesetter network.

Tips of the Trade: Place a call to the child's juvenile court counselor before meeting with the youth. This lesson is not appropriate for the youth who would be empowered by recognizing the emotional and financial cost of his actions. This project should be completed over a period of three to four weeks. Have youth report in each week with at least one interview completed; this alleviates the problem of the youth doing a last minute project and not being successful.

Community Impact Report Matrix

Name: _____

Instructions: To be completed by youth. Have youth identify the agencies or people affected by their fire. Select three to five agencies and/or people affected by their fire.

fire department which responded	
insurance company involved	
EMS responders	
school/business administrator	
funeral home	
apartment manager	
police	
Oregon Burn Center	
Red Cross	
church leader	
fire restoration service	
replacement of important documents (clerk's office, record keeping, credit union, etc...)	
Oregon Department of Forestry	
Bureau of Land Management	
US Forest Service	
Parks and Recreation Department	
city services	
Chamber of Commerce	
neighborhood association	
911 center	
alarm services	
emergency room	
firesetter's family	
santitation department	
other:	
other:	

Interview Questions

Instructions: The following list of questions is designed to elicit the kinds of information the youth needs to complete the community impact report. Youth will select 3 - 5 agencies/people to interview from those identified on the community impact report matrix. Assist the youth to identify other questions that he/she should add to this list for each interviewee. The list should be copied for each interview and given to the student.

Person Interviewed: _____

Agency: _____

Date of Interview: _____

1. What do you do in your job?
2. How did my fire affect you?
3. What were the costs incurred by your organization as a result of my fire?
4. What kind of injuries have or could have resulted from my fire?
5. How much paperwork did you have to do because of my fire?
6. In what other ways did my fire affect you or the community?
7. What could have happened if my fire got out of control?
8. What kind of legal trouble could I get in because I set a fire?
9. _____
10. _____

Project Plan

2

What did my fire cost?
Pay Up!



Project Plan 2: What did my fire cost? Pay Up!

Note: This curriculum is designed to be used as a single-session class with youth that have engaged in firesetting behavior and have been determined to be appropriate for this level of intervention.

Objective:

Upon completion of class, participants will be able to identify the financial “costs” of their firesetting behavior.

Materials needed:

- Dry-erase white board or easel tablet
- \$1000 in play money for each participant, variety of denominations (may be prepackaged for each participant in a “payday” envelope)
- Blank paper and pen
- Calculators (optional)

Part I: “PAY UP!”

(Adapted from “Playing Monopoly”, Barb Spurlin, Indianapolis Fire Department.)

Without much introduction, distribute \$1000 in play money (variety of denominations) to each youth. These can be pre-packaged in a “payday” envelope with youth’s name on envelope. Coax the inevitable “whoa... cash!” comments into a discussion of all the things \$1000 can buy. Use this as an opportunity to build rapport with participants. Remember, this is “THEIR” money. Continue with discussion until you can sense they have significantly attached to “their” money.

Some average “costs” that can be used to further their discussion (these may vary, and you might be corrected!):

Music CD: \$16 (62 CDs!)

Video game: \$30 (33 games!)

DVD: \$20 (50 DVD’s)

Flight and hotel for 4 to Disneyland (no admission): \$1130

Air Jordan Shoes: \$100 (10 pairs)

iPod Nano 2 GB: \$150 (6 iPods!)

Blazers Season Tickets: medium seats, all 44 games, one person \$1100

Groceries for a family of 4 for one month: \$480 (2 months groceries)

Take note of the participant's responses regarding their "purchases", as it can be a glimpse into their values and family's situation.

"Okay, put your money away! Today we will focus on the cost of your firesetting. We're not just going to be talking about money as the 'cost.' 'Cost' can mean a lot of things besides money, such as... (elicit responses relating to things such as legal, victims, social, emotional, etc.). For right now, though, let's focus on the MONEY. The FINANCIAL cost of your firesetting. You better get your money out!"

Knowing ahead of time the offenses/situations of involved youth will determine the first question asked here. It is strongly advised that your first question is one that will elicit a "yes" response. Refer to attached reference sheets for figures/dollar amounts... these figures may need to be periodically updated. The following script may or may not be applicable depending on participant population. Modify as necessary.

Did a fire engine report to the scene of their fire? The cost to send out a fire engine is roughly \$100 an hour. The engine holds 4 firefighters, at \$20 an hour for each of them. So if they were there one hour, the cost for the engine and firefighters is \$180. So, PAY UP! (Take money where applicable after each exclamation of "PAY UP!")

You had an interview or evaluation before coming to this class, right? Depending on who you saw, the cost for that is roughly \$50 an hour, let's say 2 hours to meet with you, write up the report, etc., that would be \$100. PAY UP! Did you meet with a juvenile counselor before coming here? How many times? That is roughly \$20 an hour, per however many hours, so PAY UP!

Continue on along these lines, with the "PAY UP!", collecting money from each participant where applicable. As they run out of money, have them write on a blank paper their additional expenses... this can become their "bill." (Brainstorm all possibilities here as it relates to your participants.) Continue to emphasize that these might not be anything they ever do have to really pay for, but that these are costs associated with their firesetting behavior.

Some ideas of questions to include, all using the "PAY UP!"

- Did the police respond?
- Did you go to detention?
- Did you go to Court?
- Did you use an attorney?
- What was the damage done to any property? Do you have restitution?
- If the fire was at a public place, were people unable to work? Was there lost wages/income?

- Was anyone injured? What were their medical expenses?
- Was there any insurance payment for damages? Was there a deductible?
- Did your parents have to take time off work for any of your appointments?
- Do you know what this class would cost if you had to pay for it? PAY UP!

Once you get to a place where all participants are “broke” and perhaps have “bills”, begin discussion on how even a “small” fire can have long-lasting BIG consequences, and how much it impacts the surrounding community. Point out that even if these are all not true expenses for them, SOMEBODY does have to pay for them, whether it be a burden on their caregiver, or the taxpayers.

To further drive home the point, you can illustrate the math on a \$10/hour job and how long it would take to pay large amounts of restitution. \$10/hour seems to many youth to be a really good wage; this figure can be adjusted depending on your participants.

If you worked for \$10 an hour at a full-time job 40 hours per week, that would be \$400 a week, or \$1600 a month, BEFORE TAXES, so let's conservatively estimate a monthly take-home pay of \$1440 a month. If you didn't spend a single penny on rent, food, car, gas, insurance, clothes, entertainment, etc., how long would it take you to pay back what your financial costs amounted to?

Part II: Financial Worksheet

Instructions: Like the “Pay Up’ Activity in class, instruct youth to calculate the financial cost of their firesetting. Round numbers and hours up. Youth should be assisted by fire professional and/or parents when calculating costs.

Note: this is a worksheet to help youth understand the impact of their behavior, it is NOT necessarily what they or their family will be required to pay. Facilitators are available to help complete this form.

Cost of Fire Service Vehicles

Vehicle	Did this vehicle respond to your fire?	Cost per hour	x	Number of hours	=	TOTAL
Fire Engine		\$100	x		=	
Ladder Truck		\$150	x		=	
Rescue Vehicle		\$45	x		=	
Brush Engine		\$60	x		=	
Command Vehicle		\$15	x		=	
Water Tender		\$70	x		=	
Fire Investigator		\$20	x		=	
BOX 1- Total Cost of Fire Service Vehicles:						\$

The following are the number of firefighters that are usually on the vehicles listed:

Fire Engine	4 firefighters	Ladder Truck	4 firefighters
Rescue Vehicle	2 firefighters	Brush Engine	2 firefighters
Command Vehicle	1 Chief officer	Water Tender	2 firefighters
Staff Vehicle	1 firefighter		

Cost of Firefighters/Fire Service professionals

How many firefighters total responded to your fire? (use chart based on which vehicles responded)	Hourly cost (x \$20)	=	Cost per hour (multiply the first box by \$20.00)	x	Number of Hours at fire	=	Total
	x \$20	=		x		=	
BOX 2- Total Cost of Fire Fighters/Fire Service professionals:							\$

Cost of Other Community Agencies

Agency	Was this agency involved in your fire?	Cost per hour	x	Number of Hours	=	Total
Police		\$35	x		=	
Counselor (Meeting/Assessment)		\$50	x		=	
Juvenile Department Counselor		\$25	x		=	
Juvenile Court		\$200	x		=	
Court Appointed Attorney		\$250	x		=	
Hired Attorney		\$	x		=	
Detention		\$300 per day	x	(# of days)	=	
BOX 3- Total Cost to other community agencies:						\$

Other Costs To Consider

Things to Consider	Does this apply to you?	Total
Property Damage: Court ordered restitution		
Property Damage: Civil restitution		
Property Damage: Insurance payments and/or deductible		
Was the fire at a public place? Were people unable to work? What is the amount of lost wages/income? (This one will likely be a rough estimate.)		
Were there medical expenses for anyone injured?		
Did your parents have to take time off work for any of your appointments or classes? (Ask them to help you figure out how much income was lost.)		
Cost of this class (Someone has to pay for it!)		
BOX 4 -Total other costs:		\$

Can you think of ANYTHING else? BOX 5- Write it down and enter the total here:	\$
---	----

Now ... add up all the numbers in Boxes 1-5 and enter that amount below.

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

Project Plan

3

Collage



Project Plan 3: Collage

Objective:

To educate the youth about the effect of fire on a community.

Materials needed:

- daily newspapers
- art supplies such as poster board, glue and scissors

Procedure:

- research the local paper for fire incidents and make a collage;
- make visual aids for fire safety program;
- make safety posters for school or parents' work environment

Instructions for collage:

1. Have the youth research the local newspaper daily and look for any articles relating to fire or explosions. Have the youth cut the complete articles out of the paper. Limit the research to the headline and local news section.
2. Have the youth make a collage on poster board that includes all the articles found.
3. Have the youth write a report identifying the details of each article on the collage. The report should be on 8 1/2 x 11 inch paper, single spaced and typed, and a minimum of three pages in length. It should include the following information as a minimum:
 - Basic description and headline of each article found
 - Dollar loss due to fire or explosion
 - Cause of fire or explosion
 - Details on persons/person who may have started the fire or explosion
 - Fire deaths and injuries
 - How could this fire have been prevented?
4. Return the completed project to the fire department.

Tips of the Trade: Give a letter with instructions to youth detailing the collage process. Involve school personnel (teacher, librarian or counselor) to assist youth needing academic help. Some schools will give extra credit for this report. Set a timeline for the project to be completed and returned.

(SAMPLE: Letter to Youth Referred-Project Plan #, Collage)

(to be printed on Department Letterhead)

(Date)

Dear (name of youth referred),

You have been referred to me by the (referring agency e.g. juvenile dept., school). As part of your educational intervention program you are required to complete the following project:

1. Research the (name of local paper) daily starting on (date) through (date). You are to look for any articles relating to fire or explosions and cut the complete article out of the paper. Limit your research to the headline and local news sections. Disregard the sports, financial, comics and living sections of the paper.
2. Make a collage on a minimum of a 24 inch by 24 inch poster board that includes all of the articles found.
3. Write a report identifying the details of each article on the collage. The report shall be on 8.5 inch by 11 inch paper, single-spaced, and typed. The report shall be a minimum of three pages in length. Include the following information in the report as a minimum. Further details may be required depending on the content of the article.
 - fire deaths and injuries
 - dollar loss due to the fire or explosion
 - cause of fire or explosion
 - details on person or persons who may have started the fire or explosion
 - basic description and headline of each article found
 - how could each fire or explosion have been prevented?

This project must be completed and returned to (fire official's name) no later than (due date). If you have any questions during this project, call me at (phone number). I will be checking on your progress regularly.

Sincerely,

Project Plan

4

Community Service



Project Plan 4: Community Service

Objective:

To give the youth the opportunity to take responsibility for his or her actions by doing something to benefit the community. This project demonstrates both accountability and responsibility.

Materials needed:

- will vary depending on project selected

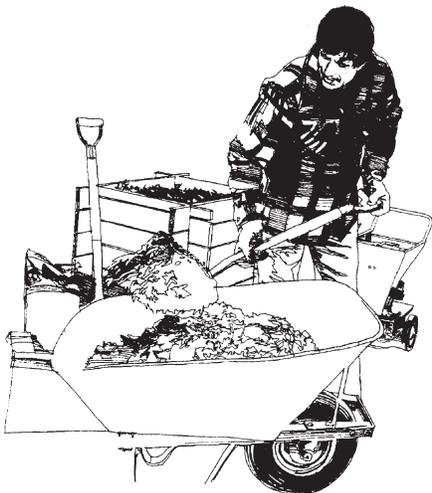
Procedure:

1. Elicit cooperation of agencies within the community. Make sure there is adequate supervision for the youth. Most juvenile departments already have arrangement with local agencies. The most effective community service program has a link to fire and burn safety.
2. The court or court counselor determines the number of service hours.
3. Have some form of summary at the end of the community service program to give the youth opportunity to describe what he or she did and what they learned from their experience. The fire department should ask for a copy of the report.

Tips of the Trade: Relate community service to the fire incident. Most community service projects will be assigned by the court. However, the fire service may influence the selection. With every school district, identify key players such as a risk manager, business manager, disciplinary counselor or school resource officer who may have some ideas for community service projects in the schools.

Community Service Project Ideas

These organizations may offer these service projects in your community. Make local contacts and add/delete to this list to meet your community need.



Parks and Recreation Department
Beautification, maintenance

American Red Cross
assemble disaster kits,
office support
washing vehicles, blood
drives

Humane Society
maintenance, animal care

Habitat for Humanity
cleanup, construction

Oregon Food Bank
inventory, assembling food
baskets

Salvation Army
feeding and cleaning

Homeless Shelter
feeding, maintenance

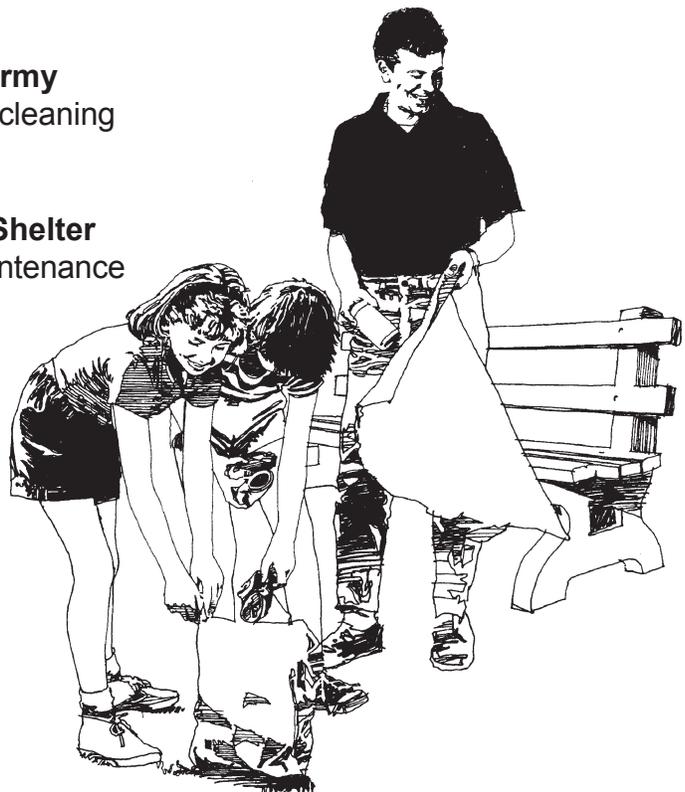
Granges/FFA/Farm Bureau
recycling
landscaping

Special Olympics
recreation assistants

Loaves and Fishes
food baskets

**Service Clubs
(Elks, Lions and Rotary)**
maintenance work,
kitchen help

Senior Centers
reading, writing letters





Fire Prevention Cooperatives
 helping at fairs, setting up
 taking down displays

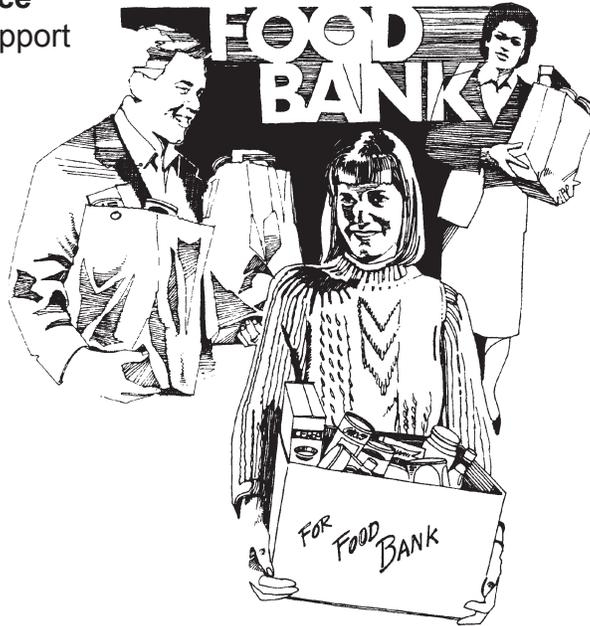
Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism (SOLV)
 cleaning up litter

Chamber of Commerce
 beautification, office support

Schools
 paint bathroom
 scrub

Bureau of Land Management/Oregon Department of Forestry/United States Forest Service
 trail and campsite
 maintenance, tree planting

Local Business
 to be determined



Recycling Centers
 sort inventory

Neighborhood Associations
 to be determined

Churches
 landscaping, office support,
 maintenance

Youth Groups
 recreation aid, maintenance

Litter Patrol
 picking up litter

Project Plan

5

Mind-mapping activity



Project Plan 5: Mind-mapping activity

Mind mapping is the technique of arranging ideas and how they are connected. In this project, the technique is used to illustrate how the DECISION to misuse fire can affect others.

Objective:

To educate the youth about the consequences of his/her firesetting behavior on other people in the community.

Materials:

- Poster Board
- Community Cards
- Questions Worksheet

Procedure:

- 1) Have the youth cut out all the Community Cards on the table.
 - Depending on the age, you may want the youth to color the cards.
 - Have the youth personalize the youth's card in some way (i.e. draw a self portrait/ paste a photo) and write name on the card.
 - Have the youth draw his/her fire or write a description of the fire.
 - Have the youth draw his family or write the name of family members on the family card.
- 2) There is no "right" order to placing the cards on the poster board except that the mind-mapping activity should begin with the youth's decision to set a fire. The next two cards placed on the poster board should be the youth and the youth's fire. Have the youth draw a line between his/her decision card and the fire card.
- 3) Ask the youth to identify what happened after the fire started? As the youth answers the questions below, he/she should be placing the corresponding community card on the poster. Once all the cards are on the poster the youth should paste them in place. They can connect the cards with a line if the community agencies were in contact with each other.

Some questions to elicit the youth's thinking about the community response:

- Who discovered the fire and who did they call?
- Did they call 911? Did 911 dispatch the fire department?
- Who besides the fire department responded?
- Did law enforcement arrive? What did they do?
- Did an ambulance arrive?
- When did your parents get called and by whom? Other family members?
- Was your school called?
- Did anyone get hurt and need to be transported to a hospital?
- Was a business owner involved?
- Was an insurance company called?
- Who did the clean-up if there was water damage?
- What other clean-up was needed and who did it?
- Did you see a judge or a juvenile department counselor

4) Have the youth answer the following questions. The answer can be written on the bottom of the poster.

- 1) Did you know the possible consequences when you made the decision to set the fire?
- 2) Was your decision wrong or dangerous?
- 3) Who could have been injured as a result of your fire?
- 4) Who was hurt most by your decision?
- 5) When you are faced with a tough decision next time, what will help you decide on a better course of action than setting a fire?

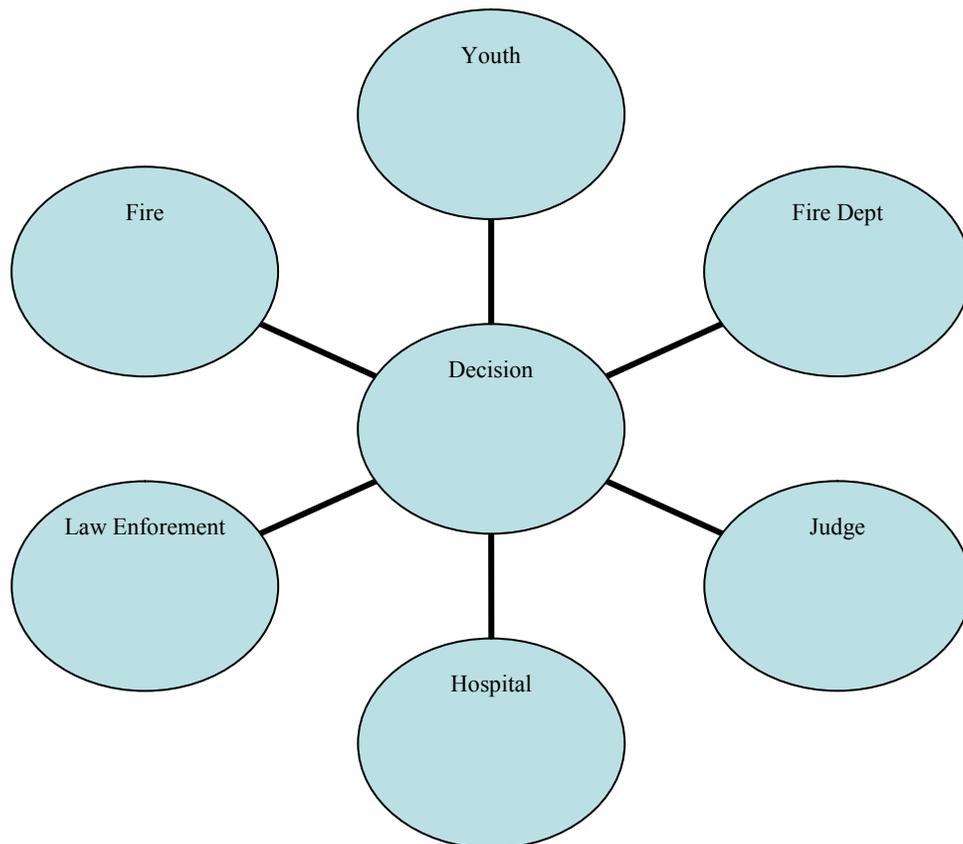
5) Have the youth explain his/her poster to a group of supporting adults (e.g. fire marshal, a court counselor or school principal, parent or caregiver). Decide on who would be most appropriate. Remember, the objective is to have the youth understand that the consequences of making the DECISION to start a fire has a definite social, emotion and financial cost to the community and to the youth's family.

NOTE: It is not acceptable, in any way, to shame the youth or belittle the youth in front of his/her family or peers. Nor is it appropriate to scare the youth with stories of burned victims or threat of going to jail.

Questions Worksheet

1. Did you know the possible consequences when you made the decision to set the fire?
2. Was your decision wrong or dangerous?
3. Who could have been injured as a result of your fire?
4. Who was hurt most by your decision?
5. When you are faced with a tough decision next time, what will help you decide on a better course of action than setting a fire?

sample mind-mapping poster





9-1-1



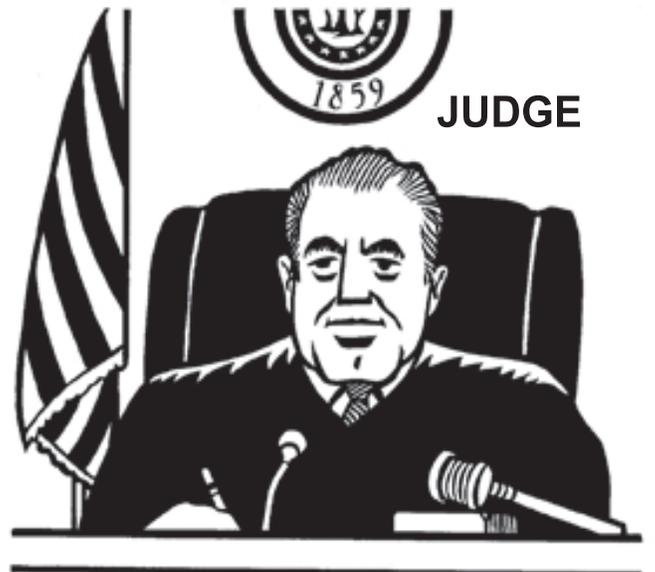
AMBULANCE

FIRE DEPARTMENT



FIRE FIGHTER

HOSPITAL



JUDGE

LIFE FLIGHT



FAMILY HOME

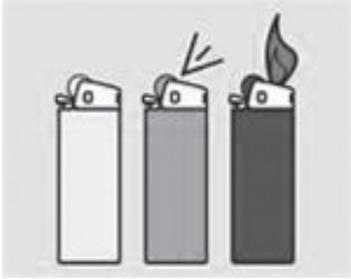
POLICE OFFICER



POLICE DEPARTMENT

SCHOOL





YOUR DECISION

YOU

YOUR FAMILY

LOCATION OF FIRE

INSURANCE AGENT

COURT COUNSELOR

