National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program

FA-239/June 1994

FEMA

U.S. Fire Administration
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several individuals and numerous organizations contributed to this volume. We would like to thank Travis Cain of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Thomas Minnich of the U.S. Fire Administration for recognizing the seriousness of the juvenile arson problem and for persisting in efforts to gain federal support for this important developmental initiative. They continue to provide helpful guidance to the project. Clifford Karchmer and his able colleagues at the Police Executive Research Forum conducted the initial analysis of program survey information and gathered valuable information on the response of the justice system to juvenile firesetting and arson.

In addition, we would like to thank the members of the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Partnership: Stephen Austin; Jim Estepp; Francis McGarry; Nancy Campbell; James McMullen; Art Glatfelter; Evelyn Davis; Rick Gilman; Robert Savitt; Robert Rubel; Michael Valentine; James Breiling; Patricia Mieszala; Kenneth Fineman; Carol Connor; and Houston Campbell. The Partnership provided invaluable insights and assistance throughout the development of the program materials. Blair Bourque, Roberta Cronin, and Mei Han of the American Institutes for Research conducted a thorough and impartial assessment of these materials and their recommendations helped shape the final program materials.

Without the unfailing cooperation and assistance of the staff of the many juvenile firesetter programs surveyed and visited during the development of these materials, this manual would not have been possible. The staff of the thirteen programs visited by ISA during the assessment stage were particularly generous with their time and materials, and we wish to thank all of them.

This project was supported by grant number 87-JS-CX-K104 awarded to the Institute of Social Analysis by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Fire Administration. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official positions or policies of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention or the U.S. Fire Administration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TABLE OF CONTENTS

BACKGROUND

Juveniles are responsible for a significant proportion of both the accidental and intentional fires that occur each year in the United States. Since the mid-1970's, national, state, and local officials have been turning more attention to the problem of juvenile firesetting and have experimented with various approaches to reducing it. Nonetheless, many experts believe that there are significant gaps in our knowledge and practice.

In response to these concerns, in 1987 the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) began a new research and development program intended to conceptualize, design, develop, and evaluate a variety of community-based approaches to prevent and control juvenile firesetting. The initiative was known as the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program (NJF/ACP).

THE NATIONAL JUVENILE FIRESETTER/ARSON CONTROL AND PREVENTION PROGRAM (NJF/ACP)

The NJF/ACP began with a nationwide assessment of juvenile firesetter programming, conducted by the Institute for Social Analysis (ISA). Based on that assessment, ISA produced a comprehensive set of materials to heighten awareness of juvenile firesetter issues and to guide implementation of model programs. Instead of advocating a single program model, the NJF/ACP materials define seven components common to effective juvenile firesetter programs:

- a **program management component**, to make key program decisions, coordinate interagency efforts, and foster interagency support;
- a **screening and evaluation component**, to identify and evaluate children who have been involved in firesetting;
- an **intervention services component**, to provide primary prevention, early intervention, and/or treatment for juveniles, especially those who have already set fires or shown an unusual interest in fire;
- a **referral component**, to link the program with the full range of agencies that might help identify juvenile firesetters or provide services to them and their families;
- a **publicity and outreach component**, to raise public awareness of the program and encourage early identification of juvenile firesetters;

- a **monitoring component**, to track the program's identification and treatment of juvenile firesetters;

- a **juvenile justice system component**, to forge relationships with juvenile justice agencies that often handle juvenile firesetters.

Developers of juvenile firesetter programs are urged to incorporate all these components in some form. However, the NJF/ACP materials encourage flexibility, emphasizing that programs must be tailored to the characteristics of the local firesetting problem as well as the political and economic environment.

To test the usefulness of the NJE/ACP materials, OJJDP sponsored three juvenile firesetter pilot programs in Colorado, Oklahoma, and Utah, chosen through a competitive process. Each program received an award of $20,000 in October 1991, which supported project operations through December 1992.

THE EVALUATION

OJJDF engaged the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to conduct an evaluation of the three pilot juvenile firesetter programs. The evaluation had two primary aims: to assess the implementation process in the test jurisdictions, and to evaluate the utility of the NJE/ACP resource materials and training so that they could be modified if needed.[1] Data for the evaluation were collected during two rounds of site visits to each pilot program, telephone monitoring of program progress, and analysis of data from the monitoring systems developed by each individual program.

THE PILOT PROGRAMS

The three grantees were:

- The Adam and Dorothy Miller Lifesafety Education Center, a not-for-profit organization in Parker, Colorado. This program targeted Colorado's 18th Judicial District, covering four counties and 34 fire agencies. Fire departments in Parker, Aurora, and Castlewood helped develop the proposal.

[1] Although OJJDP, the USFA, and the evaluation team were also interested in assessing how well the programs controlled juvenile firesetting, it became evident early in the evaluation that the pace of program implementation, the capabilities of local data systems, and limited evaluation resources would preclude assessing these outcomes.

- The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, the council of governments serving the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. Oklahoma City's Fire Department helped prepare the proposal. This program targeted a four county area with 35 fire departments.

- West Valley City, Utah, with support from the West Valley Fire Department.

- The program targeted a single county, containing Salt Lake City, West Valley City, and 11 other fire agencies.

Thus, all three grantees proposed to implement regional or countywide programs for juvenile firesetters. The population of these jurisdictions ranged from 435,000 in Colorado to 900,000 in Oklahoma, and each included urban, suburban, and rural areas. In all three sites a few fire departments had been operating programs to screen, evaluate, and refer juvenile firesetters before the grant award. The grantees proposed to capitalize on this experience, extending juvenile firesetter programs to non-participating departments, and enhancing program quality areawide through coordination, training, publicity, and systematic monitoring.

Interestingly, grant applicants had not been required or encouraged to take a regional approach involving multiple departments. In fact, the NJF/ACP resource materials focus primarily on single-city programs because that was what was operating when the materials were developed. The pilot programs would be breaking new ground. From the standpoint of the evaluation, this meant that although the pilot programs would not provide an optimal test of the NJF/ACP materials, they would offer an ideal opportunity to learn more about a new variation on juvenile firesetter programs.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

All three projects ultimately hoped to influence the firesetting behavior of juveniles in their jurisdictions. During the grant period, however, they focused primarily on making structural changes and enhancing capabilities that would support this longer term goal.

System-level changes

The projects made noteworthy progress in several areas.

- **Establishing a multi-agency management structure.** All three programs established a multi-agency task force, board, or committee that set policy for the juvenile firesetter efforts, made key decisions, and carried them out. In Utah the group consisted

of only five members. Both Colorado and Oklahoma developed much larger task forces, with representation from fire departments, mental health agencies, schools, justice agencies, and other audiences. In both these sites fire service personnel predominated in the day-to-day decisionmaking and program effort, however. Colorado's and Oklahoma's task forces still remained active several months after the grant expired. The future of the Utah group was uncertain because of staff turnover in key city positions.

- **Enhancing local capabilities to screen and educate juvenile firesetters.** All three pilot programs focused on early intervention--identifying, screening, and evaluating youth who had been involved with fire, and referring them for further education or treatment if deemed necessary. The juvenile firesetter program vested responsibility for screening and evaluation in the local fire departments within the program's boundaries. The programs' role was to provide training opportunities to fire department personnel and others, thereby extending evaluation capabilities throughout the target area. The programs also assisted local departments by providing them with new resource materials such as guidebook, manuals, videotapes, or VCR's. Two of the three sites, Colorado and Oklahoma, made an effort to develop consistent screening policies or procedures areawide.

On average, the programs doubled the number of departments with some capability to screen and assess juvenile firesetters in their target areas. They all employed screening forms and procedures that were developed under FEMA-USFA auspices and now are used by programs throughout the country to screen firesetters and gauge their risk of future firesetting.

- **Establishing linkages with the mental health and social services system.** Mental health agencies participated on the task forces in both Colorado and Oklahoma, and a mental health representative was one of the key committee members in Utah. Since the fire agencies in Utah already had strong working relationships with mental health, this area was not a program priority. In contrast, both Colorado and Oklahoma were aggressive in reaching out to the mental health and social service agencies about juvenile firesetting. Colorado developed a resource list of mental health providers, and worked closely with the counseling department in the Children's Hospital Burn Unit. The Oklahoma project pilot-tested a formal referral relationship between one of the area's several Child Guidance Clinics and its largest fire department. This successful referral process is now being replicated by other area fire departments and clinics.

- **Conducting an information campaign.** All the pilot programs engaged in publicity and outreach activities such as publishing brochures for elementary school youth, constructing billboards to advertise services, developing public service announcements, or working to get more mass media coverage. The Oklahoma and Utah programs focused on reaching the general public, while Colorado concentrated more on reaching professional audiences that might participate in the program's task forces or workshops.

- **Establishing linkages to the juvenile justice system.** With strong and visible support from the State Attorney General, Colorado achieved substantial participation in its task force and in training activities from district attorneys, probation officers, and law enforcement personnel. The other two programs made less progress in this arena. However, in Utah the program worked closely with the juvenile's court's pre-existing educational program for juvenile firesetters; and in Oklahoma the program met with juvenile justice system personnel to work out a mutual understanding about the roles of each in handling juvenile firesetters.

There were some areas of weaker implementation:

- **Extending juvenile firesetter approaches throughout the target area.** None of the programs succeeded in involving every fire department in their area. Departments that were small, had limited budgets, relied heavily on volunteer firefighters, or were relatively remote geographically were especially difficult to engage.

- **Establishing a monitoring system.** Although all of the programs made a commitment to monitoring, which was an important step in itself, all had difficulty putting a common system into place. Stumbling blocks included the technical requirements of developing forms and quality control procedures, the need for a central repository of information, and restricted access to confidential data about juveniles.

In both these areas, the programs' original goals were probably too ambiguous given the time frame and resource levels of their grants. All in all, however, we conclude these modest short-term grants stimulated considerable improvements in juvenile firesetter programming at the three pilot sites.

Interventions with Juvenile Firesetters

In addition to bringing about changes in local capabilities and structures, the pilot programs also screened and evaluated the firesetting behaviors of over 600 children. Descriptive data from each program's monitoring system provide information about the children and families involved. However, the results must be interpreted cautiously because of incomplete reporting and differences in the forms and procedures across sites. The reporting periods differed across sites as well; Colorado's statistics cover 12 months, Oklahoma's cover 13 months, and Utah's cover 17 months (but some Utah departments did not provide any reports for the first several months).

Table 1 summarizes information about 372 referrals to Colorado, 253 referrals to Oklahoma, and 88 referrals to Utah.[1]

- In Colorado and Utah parents and other family members were the most common source of referrals to the program, while fire departments ranked second. In Oklahoma the reverse was true, possibly because the program launched its public information campaign late in the grant period.

- The three programs served a predominately white, male population. The majority of the youth lived in two-parent families. In the two sites reporting on parental smoking behavior, the majority of the youth had a parent who smoked, perhaps making it easier to obtain the implements needed to start a fire.

- There were pronounced age differences across sites. Compared to the other two sites, the Colorado program was much more involved with older children: 43.3 percent of their referrals were age 12 and up, versus 16.7 percent in Oklahoma, and 15.6 percent in Utah. At the other end of the age spectrum, children age 6 and under accounted for only 16 percent of referrals in Colorado, but 33.7 percent of the Oklahoma referrals, and 36.4 percent of the Utah referrals. The age differences probably reflect differences in targeting as well as subtle distinctions in the way referral agencies perceived the programs, rather than differences in the nature of juvenile firesetting across jurisdictions.

- A substantial minority of the referred youth had been involved in previous firesetting incidents.

[1] Most frequencies are based on fewer cases because of missing information, however.

A comparison of the characteristics of the youth in four age groups--under 5, age 5 to 9, age 10 to 13, and 14 and up--generally supported the prevailing view (FEMA, 1978) that there are differences between younger and older juvenile firesetters. Among the juveniles screened by all three programs, the younger juvenile firesetters were:

- more likely to have acted alone;
- less likely to live in two-parent household;
- more likely to have a parent who smokes;
- more likely to have set a fire indoors or at their own residence;
- more likely to have done damage over $100; and
- more likely to have started a fire involving injury or death.

Table 1
Personal and Family Characteristics of Juveniles Referred to the Juvenile Firesetter Programs

Characteristics	Colorado (n = 372)	Oklahoma (n = 253)	Utah (n = 88)
Source of Referral	45.0	24.0	67.6
Parents/Guardians/Relatives	28.6	57.3	23.0
Fire Departments	2.8	10.1	1.4
Law Enforcement/Prosecutors/Courts	13.9	5.7	
Schools	9.3	2.8	8.2
Others	n = 353	n = 246	n = 74
Total			
Age	4.3	20.6	15.6
<5	11.7	13.1	20.8
5-6	22.7	26.2	33.7
7-9	18.0	23.4	14.3
10-11	26.8	10.4	14.3
12-13	16.5	6.3	1.3
14+	n = 351	n = 252	n = 77
Total			
Average age	10.3 years	8.2 years	7.8 years
Sex	86.6	89.3	82.3
Male	13.4	10.7	17.7
Female	n = 372	n = 252	n = 79
Total			
Race	86.4	71.8	98.4
White	10.8	19.4	
African American/Black	1.9	4.8	1.6
Hispanic	0.9	4.0	
Other	n = 361	n = 252	n = 61
Total			
Marital Status of Custodial Parent/ Guardian	65.6	51.5	63.1
Married/Remarried	9.2	16.1	11.1
Single	22.9	28.9	25.4
Divorced/Separated	0.8	2.5	
Widowed	1.5		
Other	n = 262	n = 242	n = 63
Total			
Parent or Guardian Smokes?	NA	69.6	52.6
Yes	NA	30.4	47.4
No	NA	n =227	n = 19
Total			
Fire History[2]	NA	40.6	35.4
Involved in Previous Fire	NA	59.4	64.6
No Known Fires	NA	n = 202	n = 65
Total			
For Previous Firesetter, Number of Previous Fires[1]	33.3	21.7	NA
1	28.1	26.1	NA
2	15.8	24.6	NA
3	7.0	5.8	NA
4	12.3	17.4	NA
5-9	3.5	4.3	NA
10+	n = 57	n = 69	NA
Total			

[1] Based on information known to fire departments or reported in screening interviews with child or family.
[2] No data are reported for Colorado because the Colorado forms did not distinguish between "missing data" and "no previous fire history."

Fortunately, however, few cases involved any injury, and most did not involve large amounts of fire damage. Two fires in Colorado resulted in deaths, however. In Colorado and Oklahoma total damages for all cases screened by the program exceeded $400,000 at each site. (Damage data were not available for Utah.)

Significant proportions of the children screened by the juvenile firesetter programs--about two-thirds in Colorado and Oklahoma--were rated as needing further evaluation by mental health services. Two factors contributed to these high percentages. In Colorado some larger departments reserved the relatively time-consuming screening procedure for the most fire-involved youth. Other youth were referred directly to an educational program for firesetters. In Oklahoma some departments requested a second assessment from a mental health provider in most cases. In about 40 percent of the cases where the outcome of this second assessment was known, the mental health agency recommended further counseling.

Most children and families who were referred to the projects--whether or not they were assessed as needing mental health follow-up--were also the beneficiaries of some type of fire education.

LESSONS FOR REGIONAL FIRESETTER EFFORTS

While the programs made great strides in improving the coordination and delivery of juvenile firesetter services, their plans may have been too ambiguous. They expected milestones to be reached too fast and expansion to occur too quickly. These are **important considerations when considering a regional firesetter effort--limiting the scope and goals of the program to a manageable level and establishing a realistic timetable.**

While we do not want to over-generalize from the experiences of three programs, these pilot projects do suggest several lessons about the circumstances that foster regional efforts.

1. Unlike firesetter programs designed to serve a single fire department or district, the function of a regional effort is to organize the individual efforts of several departments to screen, educate, and refer juvenile firesetters. **An organization that already spans the boundaries of the region and that already has experience building and maintaining networks may be a more effective program vehicle than an individual fire department.**

2. While an individual department may not be the optimal agency to manage a juvenile firesetter network, **the leadership and involvement of a fire department with a successful juvenile firesetter program may be critical to the long-term success of the regional program.**

3. Many of the service agencies to which juvenile firesetters are referred are already regionalized. **Obviously, regional efforts should take advantage of whatever regionalized services and coordinating mechanisms already exist.**

4. Since regional programs may transcend the jurisdictional boundaries of the criminal justice, fire, mental health, education, and protective services systems, they face a challenging task in educating relevant officials about the seriousness of juvenile firesetting and enlisting their aid. However, **a high-ranking government official can serve as a catalyst to galvanize the involvement and support of diverse agencies.**

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AGENCIES DEVELOPING JUVENILE FIRESETTER PROGRAMS

At the risk of stating the obvious, we encourage agencies considering juvenile firesetter programs or already implementing them to **take advantage of the body of materials and expertise that has been accumulated over the past few years.** The volumes developed by ISA for the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program are an exceptional and comprehensive resource document for the program planner.

We would like to reiterate one of the underpinnings of ISA's approach--that **programs should build on the existing resources for firesetters in a community, and fit the program design to the exigencies of the local environment.**

In addition to building on existing capacities, **programs should start small and grow incrementally as they gain experience and acceptance.** As a corollary, we recommend that a jurisdiction **develop a juvenile firesetter program in an individual fire department before attempting a regional effort.**

Furthermore, jurisdictions should think in terms of developing a juvenile firesetter **capability** rather than a single **program**. In line with this notion, we believe it is useful to consider the entire continuum of services from fire prevention education, to early intervention for the juvenile

exhibiting inappropriate fire behavior, to treatment for the serious firesetter, to court-directed controls for the arsonist.

Programs should also pay increased attention to the educational and referral services that they provide. Programs must present basic fire safety concepts and information about the consequences of firesetting to children of different ages and different levels of fire involvement. This **requires a range of appropriate educational materials and techniques.** Arranging **training for mental health professionals in the dynamics and treatment of firesetters** can bolster the services available to the program's clientele.

The NJF/ACT's emphasis on the importance of a juvenile justice linkage is on the mark. But, juvenile justice involvement in firesetting does not have to be limited to the arson end of the spectrum. The pilot programs tapped juvenile justice expertise to consolidate procedures for handling firesetters and to review the legality of collecting information on juveniles. To address the full continuum of fire behaviors we need to engage all of the agencies that deal with a piece of the problem.

As technological advances increasingly protect us from accidental fires and alert us to fires of any origin, the human factor is likely to account for a larger share of fire injuries and mortality. Intercepting problem fire behavior at an early stage is likely to become an imperative. We hope that fire, mental health, juvenile justice, education, and other youth-serving agencies will begin addressing the problems now.

USERS' GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

This *Users' Guide* is designed to accompany *The Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program* (JFACPP) *Program Materials*. The *Users' Guide* is intended to accomplish the following objectives.

1. **To provide a summary of how to plan and implement a juvenile firesetter/arson control and prevention program.**

This is achieved by outlining critical decision points in building each component of the juvenile firesetter/arson program. The result is a cookbook format that guides the reader from the planning to the execution of an effective community program.

2. **To highlight the key information contained in *The JFACPP Guidelines for Implementation*.**

INTRODUCTION

Because these volumes contain a great deal of information, the *Users' Guide* identifies the specific areas which will be useful to those developing their own juvenile firesetter/arson program. The *Users' Guide* also shows where to find particular types of information in the two volumes. The *Users' Guide* and *The JFACPP Guidelines for Implementation* follow the same organizational format, therefore cross-referencing is facilitated.

Program leadership, management, and service providers in fire service, mental health, law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice systems will find this guide a quick and easy reference. It can be used as a handbook in helping all of these disciplines build an effective network of community services to control and abate the problem of juvenile firesetting and arson.

COMPONENT 1: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The role of program management begins with planning and developing the juvenile firesetter/arson program. If the proper groundwork is laid early in the planning and development stages, later management and maintenance of the program will be greatly facilitated. Therefore, it is important to recognize that there are specific phases of planning and development, and that certain decisions have to be made to ensure the successful implementation of the program.

There are three general phases of building a juvenile firesetter/arson program. They are assessment, planning, and development. There are several decisions, which must be made during each of these three phases. These phases and corresponding decision points should be viewed by program leadership as guidelines for planning and developing their juvenile firesetter/arson program. Some or all of these phases and decisions may be executed by program leadership, depending on the perceived need and level of effort. The amount of careful planning, which occurs is likely to be directly related to the implementation of an efficient and successful juvenile firesetter/arson program.

Phase I: Assessment

The purpose of the assessment phase is to determine whether there is a need for a juvenile firesetter/arson program in the community.

Decision 1. Problem Identification. Determine whether local experts think that juvenile firesetting is an important or significant problem in the community.

Decision 2. Fact-finding. Conduct fact-finding activities to determine the statistical occurrence or incidence of juvenile firesetting in the community. Some resources in the community which might have relevant information are the fire service, law enforcement agencies, and probation/juvenile justice.

Phase II: Program Planning

The planning phase builds the foundation of the program and to a certain extent determines its effectiveness and longevity. Table 1.1 highlights the seven key steps which must be executed during the program planning phase.

Decision 1. Problem Definition. Define the nature and extent of the juvenile firesetter problem in the community. The problem should be defined in terms of the statistical incidence of juvenile firesetting and arson. These rates should be compared to national averages to determine the significance of the problem.

Decision 2. Program Leadership. Identify the key decisionmakers, such as fire service management, mental health professionals, etc., who are willing to establish program operations.

Table 1.1
Key Elements in Program Planning

I.	Problem Definition	Specify the nature and extent of juvenile firesetting incidents in the community.
II.	Program Leadership	Identify someone responsible for the program.
III.	Service Delivery	Select the type of services to be offered.
IV.	Program Site	Determine the primary location for service delivery.
V.	Service Jurisdiction	Specify the geographic boundaries of service delivery.
VI.	Staffing	Identify management and key service providers.
VII.	Budget	Estimate costs of service delivery.

Decision 3. Service Delivery. Identify the types of services that will be offered to juvenile firesetters and their families. Table 1.2 presents the three general service delivery models for juvenile firesetter/arson programs. They are primary prevention, early intervention, and core intervention. Each program must decide on its basic approach to service delivery. Once the basic approach has been selected, then the specific program functions and operations must be determined. The functions and operations of a program refer to the actual types of screening, evaluation, and intervention services that will be offered. Components 2 and 3 of this *Users' Guide* cover how to select the most appropriate functions and operations for juvenile firesetter/arson programs.

Decision 4. Program Site. Identify and establish the primary program site or sites responsible for the operation of the juvenile firesetter/arson program. In addition, secondary or referral sites can be specified as part of the network of service delivery.

Decision 5. Service Jurisdiction. Define the jurisdiction of service delivery for which the juvenile firesetter/arson program will be responsible. Often smaller towns or communities may want to pool resources and mount a coordinated effort.

Table 1.2
Program Models for Intervention Services

Model	Source	Goals
I. Primary Prevention	A. School Curriculum and Programs	1. Prevention of first-time firesetting.
	B. The Fire Service	2. Communication and education of fire safety and survival skills.
II. Early Intervention	A. The Fire Service	1. Identification of children at risk. 2. Evaluation, education, and referral. 3. Prevention of recurrence.
III. Core Intervention	A. Mental Health	1. Evaluation of recurrent firesetters.
	B. Probation and Juvenile Justice	2. Treatment to stop firesetting and remediate psychopathology. 3. Prevention of antisocial and criminal behavior.

Decision 6. Staffing. Based on the selection of the program model, estimate the personnel and staffing patterns for the program. This includes the identification of primary service providers.

Decision 7. Budget. Based on decision 1-6 develop a proposed budget estimating the cost of service delivery.

Phase III: Program Development

This phase sets in motion activities so that the program's door can be open for business. Table 1.3 summarizes the seven essential tasks for effective program development.

Decision 1. Program Goals. Specify short- and long-term goals and objectives for successful program operations.

Table 1.3
Program Development Tasks

I.	Program Goals	Define program goals, objectives, and time-frame for implementation.
II.	Program Operations	Establish new program functions within existing service structure.
III.	Coordination Council	Solicit members from the community and establish routine meetings.
IV.	Funding	Develop sources of financial support and contribution for short and long term operations.
V.	Training	Conduct orientation and training sessions to educate key staff and service providers.
VI.	Liability	Define potential legal and financial risks and responsibilities.
VII.	Interagency Linkages	Establish referral pathways between community services.

Decision 2. Program Operations. Once the specific program services have been identified, they will have to be integrated within the existing service delivery system. For example, if a juvenile firesetter/arson program is going to offer evaluation and education services within a fire department, the department must decide which division will be responsible for offering this service. In some instances it may be fire prevention, in other instances it may be public education or another fire service division. The details of how the program will operate within the existing structure must be planned.

Decision 3. Coordinating Council. A local coordinating council must be established comprised of leaders of community programs most likely to contribute to the general support and operation of the juvenile firesetter/arson program. Some members of the council may include the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal, the Police Chief, a Juvenile Court Judge, a School Principal or School Board Member, Mental Health or Social Service Agency Directors, and other individuals with status and influence within their profession or agency. Component 1 in the *Guidelines for Implementation* details specific steps to be taken in building an effective coordinating council.

Decision 4. Funding. Establish and secure mechanisms for short- and long-term funding of the program. This includes both financial commitments as well as in-kind contributions for supporting the anticipated costs associated with operating the program.

Decision 5. Training. Plans should be made for conducting orientations and in-service training seminars for staff who will be involved in implementing the program. Specific ideas for training programs are presented in Component 1 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 6. Liability. Consult with local community experts (attorneys, city management, etc.) to determine the nature and extent of the program's legal and financial responsibilities in working with the population of juvenile firesetters.

Decision 7. Interagency Linkages. Identify which community agencies might provide services to juvenile firesetters. These agencies may include social services, mental health, and probation and juvenile justice. Component 4 of this Users' Guide details how to establish and maintain effective referral pathways for juvenile firesetters.

COMPONENT 2: SCREENING, EVALUATION, AND DEVELOPING THE INTERVENTION PLAN

Virtually all juvenile firesetter/arson programs will have some type of screening and evaluation system for working with children and their families. During the program planning phase, preliminary decisions have been made regarding the selection of a general program model. Now, a particular set of screening and evaluation procedures must be selected for implementation.

There are several factors which should be taken into consideration when setting up a screening and evaluation system for juvenile firesetters. There are four major phases which must be completed for the successful operation of the system. These phases are identification of the target population, designation of the responsible service agencies and individuals, selection of the screening and evaluation procedures, and implementation of these procedures. In each of these phases there are specific decisions to be made which will determine the nature and extent of the screening and evaluation effort. It is recommended that program leaders utilize each of these phases and decisions as guidelines when developing their screening and evaluation system.

Phase I: Identification of the Target Population

During this phase the target population of juvenile firesetters must be identified and described in the community. Program leaders must decide on the level of severity of firesetting behavior they are willing to screen and evaluate, along with the type of juvenile firesetters they will serve. There are general personality profiles associated with juvenile firesetting. They are presented in Tables 2.1 (curiosity firesetters ages seven and under), 2.2 (recurrent firesetters ages eight to twelve), and 2.3 (adolescent firesetters), and they are described in detail in Component 2 in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

There are some specific psychosocial characteristics, which are likely to vary from community to community. For example, the demographic characteristics of juvenile firesetters, such as age, ethnic background, and economic status, are likely to represent the demographic characteristics of the particular community in which the juvenile firesetter/arson program is being implemented. Because demographic characteristics vary from community to community, it is important for program leaders to know what types of youth live in their community and hence what type of youth they are likely to serve.

Decision 1. Severity Level. Define the level of severity of firesetting behavior to be screened and evaluated. See Component 2 in the *Guidelines for Implementation* for a complete description of the severity levels of juvenile firesetting behavior.

Table 2.1
Characteristics of Curiosity Firesetters Ages Seven and Under

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Normal physical, cognitive and emotional development. No evidence of psychiatric disturbance.
II. Social Circumstances	A happy, well adjusted family life. Good peer relationships. No academic or behavior problems in school.
III. Environmental Conditions	Firesetting is the result of accident, experimentation and curiosity. Feelings of guilt and remorse occur after firesetting. Attempts are made to extinguish firestarts. A low probability exists of future firesetting.

Table 2.2
Characteristics of Recurrent Firesetting Children Ages Eight to Twelve

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Evidence of difficulties in one or more areas of physical, cognitive, or emotional functioning. Studies suggest the presence of one or more of the following problems: a greater number of physical illnesses, history of sexual abuse, learning disabilities, overwhelming feelings of anger and aggression, overactivity, impulsiveness and frequent temper outbursts.
II. Social Circumstances	Single-parent families with absent fathers are typical. When marriages are intact, there is a high degree of discord. Overly harsh methods of discipline coupled with lack of adequate supervision is common in single-parent households. Violent patterns of family interaction also have been observed. A history of academic failure coupled with behavior problems in school are evident. Difficulties establishing and maintaining friendships are observed.
III. Environmental Conditions	Stressful events trigger emotional reactions which result in firesetting. Firesetting represents the emotional release of displaced anger, revenge or aggression. Firesetting has the immediately positive reinforcing properties of attention and effect. No attempts are made to extinguish firestarts. There is rarely consideration of the negative consequences or potential destruction prior to firesetting.

Decision 2. Demographics. Identify the specific demographic characteristics of the community. These demographic characteristics are likely to describe the population of juvenile firesetters to be served by the program. In addition, the fire service may have information on where fires set by juveniles occur in the community. This type of information also will be useful in planning screening and evaluation services.

Table 2.3
Characteristics of Adolescent Firesetters

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Several significant emotional and behavioral problems are apparent. Studies indicate a higher than average number of accidents resulting in physical injuries, higher levels of sexual arousal, fantasy, excitement, and misbehavior, evidence of gender confusion, lack of emotional depth and restricted capacity for expression, and greater risk-taking behavior.
II. Social Circumstances	Predominant are single-parent households in which discipline and supervision are uneven. Intact families display high levels of marital discord. One or more parents may carry a psychiatric diagnosis. Physical abuse and other violent patterns of family interaction have been observed. Long histories of academic failure and behavior problems in school are typical. Peer pressure and influence are responsible for guiding and directing behavior.
III. Environmental Conditions	Firesetting can be motivated by need for recognition and attention from peers and from stressful events which trigger emotional reactions resulting in antisocial activity. Firesetting is frequently accompanied by other delinquent activities, such as drug consumption or petty theft, and feelings of excitement and defiance are reported just prior to the act. Feelings of guilt or remorse after firestarting are rare, no attempts are made to extinguish the fires, and there is little fear of punishment.

Phase II: Designation of Service Agencies and Individuals

Once the target population of juvenile firesetters has been specified, the next step is to locate the primary site responsible for screening and evaluating juvenile firesetters. The majority of screening and evaluation systems are operated by fire departments. Other sites include law enforcement agencies and mental health facilities. Each agency must then identify the type of personnel most appropriate for conducting the actual screening and evaluation procedures.

Decision 1. Identify Primary and Secondary Service Agencies. Decide which agency is the primary site responsible for screening and evaluating firesetting youth. There may be other agencies in the community which

serve as backup to the primary agency or with whom referral arrangements are established.

Decision 2. Identify Service Providers. Determine which types of professionals will be doing the actual screening and evaluation of juvenile firesetters.

Phase III: Selection of Screening and Evaluation Procedures

The primary site generally is responsible for selecting the most appropriate types of screening and evaluation procedures for working with juvenile firesetters. The range of procedures is described in detail in Component 2 in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

Decision 1. Determine Purpose and Function. The major consideration in selecting screening and evaluation procedures is an agreement on the purpose and function which they are to serve. Program leadership must determine the nature and extent of their evaluation efforts and then decide which procedures best meet their needs. There are specific procedures, which have been implemented by the screening and evaluation procedures, are presented for each of these community agencies in Tables 2.4 (the fire service), 2.5 (mental health), and 2.6 (law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice). These decision grids should help program leadership select the best fit between their agency's capabilities and the available procedures for screening and evaluating juvenile firesetters. Component 2 in the Guidelines for Implementation contains a more detailed analysis of screening and evaluation procedures. Copies of the actual screening and evaluation instruments can also be found in the resource section of that manual.

Table 2.4
Screening and Evaluation Decision Grid Fire Service Procedures

Method	Purpose	Output	Impact	Risk
Telephone Contact Sheet	Screening	Files with demographic information on firesetters	The organization of first contact information to aid in routing firesetters to the most appropriate help	Adding paperwork to an already overloaded system
Juvenile with Fire Worksheets	Screening	Files with demographics and services received in service delivery points to track firesetter within the system	Increased communication between first contact and service delivery points	Creating an unnecessary trail of paperwork following firesetters
USFA's Interview Schedules	Evaluation	Classification of juveniles into low, definite, and extreme risk for firesetting and development of an intervention plan	The application of a widely accepted and applied system for evaluating and classifying firesetters	Currently there are no formal statistical studies of validity or reliability on this method
FRY Program	Recordkeeping	Files on firesetting incidents, demographics, psycho-social data and intervention steps	Numerical codes and values are assigned to data for quantifiable analysis of trends	Short on supplying information on the "why's" of firesetting
Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria	Evaluation	An assessment of the severity of the firesetting and arson behavior. according to one of three risk levels--low, moderate, and high	Systematic documentation of the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior	No quantifiable summary score results, and no formal statistical studies have been conducted

Table 2.5
Screening and Evaluation Decision Grid Mental Health Procedures

Method	Target/ Population	Purpose	Output	Impact	Risk
The Therapeutic Assessment of Firesetting Scale (TAF)	Older children and adolescents with significant histories of firesetting	Evaluation of psychosocial factors related to firesetting, planning for rehabilitation, and stimulating therapeutic growth	Through a structured interview format, a set of answers to systematic questions related to firesetting	Provides a method for obtaining important clinical information on firesetting	Does not yield a summary score nor can its psychometric properties be evaluated
The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist	Youngsters exhibiting behavior problems	A paper and pencil test which provides quantitative information on behavior problems as well as competencies	Standard scores on two scales; social competency and behavior problems	Psychometrically sound clinical information on youngsters with behavior problems	Recommended to be used only in conjunction with a comprehensive clinical evaluation
General Psychosocial Assessment	All youngsters exhibiting psychological problems	To assess the psychological problems and strengths of youngsters and their families	Output will vary according to specific methods and procedures employed	Evaluation of psychological problems and development of plans for their resolution	

Table 2.6
Screening and Evaluation Decision Grid Law Enforcement, Probation, and Juvenile Justice Procedures

Method	Purpose	Output	Impact	Risk
Law Enforcement				
Investigation Interview	Documentation of fire incident	In cases of no arrest, incident reports are filed; in cases of arrest, arrest records are established	Systematic documentation and monitoring of incidence rates of juvenile firesetting and arson	Arrested juveniles may not be diverted for necessary psychological interviews
Child Protective Services Report	Documentation of credible evidence demonstrating neglect, abuse, or maltreatment	Filed reports to the legal entity in state governments responsible for investigating cases of child abuse	The protection of the physical and psychological welfare of children as guaranteed by law	
Miranda Rights	To inform youth of their legal rights	A signed legal document acknowledging administration of rights	The protection of legal rights of arrested minors	
Probation and Juvenile Justice				
Adolescent Firesetting Decision Criteria	The evaluation of the psychosocial factors related to firesetting and arson behavior	An assessment of the severity of the firesetting and arson behavior according to one of three risk levels--low, moderate, and high	Systematic documentation of the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior	No quantifiable summary score results, and no formal statistical studies have been conducted
Probation Case Plan	To assess the psychosocial factors related to firesetting and identify interventions	Documentation of case plans to remediate delinquent firesetting behavior	The identification of specific intervention objectives	Relies heavily on self report from youth and their families

Decision 2. Application. Once the screening and evaluation procedures have been selected, then a system must be designed for their implementation. The flow of juveniles through the screening and evaluation process must be planned, from the moment they are identified to screening, evaluation and through to the development of a plan for intervention. The result should be an organizational chart outlining the flow of juveniles through the service system.

Phase IV: Implementation

The implementation phase consists of all the steps necessary to operate an effective screening and evaluation system. Many of these tasks already have been accomplished, however a few final steps need to be taken to put the system into place.

Decision 1. Staffing. Based on the planned screening and evaluation system, identify the responsible professional and their roles and duties.

Decision 2. Training. Because many of the screening and evaluation procedures require specialized skills in their application, in-service seminars and workshops will be necessary to ensure that those responsible for the program have been adequately trained.

Decision 3. Basic Operations. At this stage, all of the screening and evaluation procedures should be in place. These procedures should be documented in writing in a small operations manual.

RESOURCE LIST

The following items provide ways to get further information about the procedures and methods described in the component.

Fire Service Procedures

1. **Telephone Contact Sheet**

   Source: The Firehawk Children's Program

   Reference: Gaynor, J., et al. (1984) *The Firehawk Children's Program. A Working Manual*. San Francisco: The National Firehawk Foundation.

2. **Juvenile With Fire Worksheets A and B**

Source: Portland Fire Bureau

Contact: Don Porth
Portland Fire Bureau
55 SW Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3806

3. **USFA's Interview Schedules**

Source: U.S. Fire Administration

References: Fineman, K., et al. (1980). Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Fineman, K., et al. (1984). *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 7 to 13*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Gaynor, J., et al. (1988). *Adolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 14-18*. Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office.

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
FEMA/National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue, Building N, Suite 311
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-6771

4. **FRY Program Data Sheet**

Source: Rochester, New York's FRY Program

References: Cole, R. E., et al. (1984). *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R. E., et al. (1986). *Children and Fire. Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Law-Enforcement Procedures

1. **Investigation Interview**

   Source: David Lowery
   Arson Task Force
   1215 South Boulevard
   Charlotte, NC 28203
   (704) 336-3970

2. **Juvenile Miranda Rights**

   Source: Los Angeles Grand Jury

   Source: Arson Task Force
   1215 South Boulevard
   Charlotte, NC 28203
   (704) 336-3970

Probation and Juvenile Justice Procedures

1. **Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria**

   Contact: Alison Stickrod Gray
   The Center for Prevention Service
   P.O. Box 254
   Underhill Center, VT 05490-0254
   (802) 899-2824

2. **Probation Case Plan**

   Source: Juvenile Service Division
   700 E. Trade Street
   Charlotte, NC 28202
   (704) 342-6804

Mental Health Procedure

1. **The Therapeutic Assessment of Firesetting (TAF) Questionnaire**

   Source: Terrance Neary, Ph.D
   Horizon Counseling Center
   Suite 305
   Hoffman Estates, IL 60195
   (708) 882-7744

2. **The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist**

Reference: Achenbach, T.M. & Edelbrock, C.S. (1982). *Manual for the Child Behavior Checklist and Child Behavior Profile*. Burlington, VT: Child Psychiatry, University of Vermont.

3. **General Methods of Psychosocial Assessment**

References: Gaynor, J. & Hatcher, C. (1987). *The Psychology of Child Firesetting, Detection, and Intervention*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Publishers.

Wooden, W.S. & Berky, M. L. (1984). *Children and Arson, American's Middle-Class Nightmare*. New York: Plenum Press.

COMPONENT 3: INTERVENTION SERVICES

The centerpiece of any juvenile firesetter/arson program is the intervention services it provides to help stop firesetting behavior and improve the quality of life for youth and their families. Program leadership must decide what type of system they are going to develop to serve their target population. Now that the program model has been selected and the screening and evaluation procedures identified, it is the task of program leadership to select the best fit between their current level of resources and capabilities and one or more intervention methods.

To reach a decision regarding the selection of an optimal intervention system, it is recommended that program leadership consider three basic decision phases--the definition of the current level of program effort, the selection of specific intervention methods, and the implementation of the best fit between the current level of capabilities and program operations. The desired result should be an intervention system that is competently organized and managed and provides efficient services to the population of juvenile firesetters and their families.

Phase I: Level of Effort

The level of effort must be specified before a particular intervention system can be selected. By defining the level of effort, program leadership can determine the feasibility of implementing various types of interventions.

Decision 1. Funding. Although funding decisions are likely to be determined during the program planning stage, at this point in the program's development the budget must be firmly established so that specific resources can be allocated for particular intervention methods. Knowing what the budget constraints are will help narrow the selection of feasible intervention approaches.

Decision 2. Staff. The number and type of staff, from program leadership to service providers, should be specified so that roles and responsibilities can be taken into consideration when selecting intervention methods.

Phase II: Intervention Selection

First, during the planning stage, a program model was selected. Next, the screening and evaluation system was put into place. Finally, the specific intervention methods must be identified. These methods represent the basic functions and operations of the juvenile firesetter/arson program.

For each program model, there are a variety of corresponding intervention methods. The application of these intervention methods depends, in part, on the type of community agency implementing the interventions. For example, primary prevention programs in schools are likely to use different intervention methods than primary prevention programs in the fire service.

To help different community agencies select the most appropriate set of interventions, decision grids have been developed which provide basic information about the various types of interventions. There are a set of decision grids which outline the primary prevention methods for schools and for the fire service. These are presented in Tables 3.1 (schools) and 3.2 (the fire service). Table 3.3 shows a decision grid for early intervention. The fire service is the primary community agency operating this type of intervention system. This decision grid shows examples of the most widely applied juvenile firesetter/arson programs throughout the country. Lastly, there are a set of decision grids for core intervention, which provide examples of programs for mental health, and probation and juvenile justice. These are outlined in Tables 3.4 (mental health) and 3.5 (probation and juvenile justice). A more detailed analysis of these decision grids can be found in Component 3 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Phase III: Best Fit

During this decisionmaking process, program leadership must tailor the selected program model and corresponding intervention methods to their specific organization and community. Once the specific pieces of the intervention system have been defined, then each juvenile firesetter/arson program must make it fit into their current organizational structure. For example, if a fire department wants to start an early intervention program, with evaluation, education, and referral operations, then program leadership must set these functions into place with the appropriate and available personnel and resources. Decisions have to be made regarding where, within the fire department, such a program is going to operate. It may be best suited for the fire prevention section or perhaps the public education division. A careful consideration of the day-to-day operations of the juvenile firesetter/arson program will determine which intervention methods are likely to work best given the boundaries of the existing service system.

Decision 1. Match the Intervention to the Current System. Determine where and how the new juvenile firesetter/arson program is going to fit within the current service delivery system.

Decision 2. Maximize the Use of Available Resources. Determine how best to capitalize on the available resources to fit the juvenile firesetter/arson program into current operations. Table 3.1.

Table 3.1
Primary Prevention Decision Grid School Curriculum and Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
CTW's Fire Safety Project	Introduce preschoolers to fire safety	Widely used and highly regarded by preschool teachers throughout U.S	Effective use of popular preschool characters as communicators of fire safety	No formal evaluation of this approach
Learn Not To Burn	Classroom curriculum (K-8) teaching fire safety and prevention	Extensively used in urban and suburban school districts throughout U.S	Teaches 25 key behaviors resulting in competent fire safety schools	No long-term followup studies of effectiveness
Knowing About Fire	Classroom curriculum (K-3) presenting hands-on fire learning activities	A new program pilot-tested in a sample of schools	Good initial reception by students and teachers	As yet no information on effectiveness
Fire Safety Skills Curriculum	Classroom curriculum (K-11) teaching mastery of fire survival skills	Utilized by school districts throughout the State of Oregon	Minimal teacher preparation, self-contained, and easily implemented	No documentation of impact
The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum	Teaching crime prevention and fire safety skills to adolescents who in turn teach them to younger children	Utilized in the school districts of the Minneapolis/ St. Paul cities	High satisfaction ratings from all levels of students and teachers	No formal studies assessing crime prevention
Project Open House	First-hand, graphic exposure to watching a controlled fire burn and destroy	Reported as a single episode learning activity by one community	Enthusiastically received by students, teachers and parents	Labor and cost intensive

Table 3.2
Primary Prevention Decision Grid Fire Service Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
National Fire Prevention Week	To raise national awareness about fire safety and prevention	Nationally and locally planned media events throughout U.S.	Increased public awareness of fire safety	Increased awareness but unclear impact on behavior
Media Campaigns				
Curious Kids Set Fires	Press packet promoting national media campaign on fireplay and fire-setting	Pilot-tested in several states	Well-received by states looking to mount media activities	Only a short-term impact on a long-term problem
Big Fires Start Small	National media kit designed to explain problem of children playing with matches	Researched & developed based on statistics showing alarmingly high numbers of children playing with matches	Good reception by local fire departments	Services to help children must be available
Fire Busters	Television broadcasts on evening news teaching fire safety	With minor adjustments in presentation of program, good response from children and families	Continued support and expansion throughout Oregon	Must be a cooperative community effort
School Programs				
Visits	Education and exposure to fire department	Used by several fire departments throughout U.S.	Well-received by students	Short-term impact
Slide Presentations	Visual education	Commonly used teaching method	Good reception from students	One-shot effect
Film	Visual education	Effective teaching method	Well-liked by students	Single exposure
Assemblies	Participant education	Economical teaching of many	Positive response	Short-term effect
Public Fire Education Today	Resource directory	Widely distributed throughout U.S.	Excellent resource	

Table 3.3
Early Intervention Decision Grid Fire Service Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
Evaluation, Education, and Referral				
Juvenile Firesetter Program	Strong educational component with written materials	A new program being well-received by participants	Good follow-up procedures. 7 % recidivism	Resource unable to keep up with demand
Operation Extinguish	Highly structured educational classes coupled with family counseling	Well-received by participants but community support recently declining	Reportedly low recidivism	No follow-up studies to support its impact
Fire Related Youth Program	Strong interagency linkages and excellent documentation	Follow USFA guidelines, acclaimed as a model program	Community cohesiveness	Over-reliance on referral chain
Juvenile Firesetter Program	Solid program with state-wide connection	Part of the widely used and recommended USFA program model	Services aimed at high-risk fire areas in Portland, OR	No formal studies on impact of program
Counseling				
Juvenile Firesetter Counseling Program	Effective interview graphing technique	Although utilized by many mental health professionals, only two fire departments have implemented it	Highly effective in stopping firesetting	Major commitment of resources
Cease Fire	Interview graphing coupled with family counseling	Follows USFA model, but adds family counseling services	Comprehensive services	No formal studies evaluating effectiveness
Firehawk Children's Program	Partnerships with firefighter counselors	Follows USFA model, but adds partnership between firefighters and children as program feature	Long-term intervention approach, low recidivism	Significant commitment of time and resources

Table 3.4
Core Intervention Decision Grid Mental Health Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
Outpatient Treatment				
Cognitive-Emotive Therapy	Recognition and interruption of the urge to firestart using the interview graphing technique	Widely applied not only with firesetters, but with other delinquent populations	Reportedly low (7%) recidivism with difficult (recurrent) firesetters	No information on relative effectiveness of method
Behavior Therapy	Abate firesetting behavior using punishment, reinforcement, negative practice, or fantasies	Applied in single-case studies	Highly effective in cases with reported follow-up	Not applied beyond single case studies
Family Therapy	Improving and restructuring patterns of communication and interaction	Three single case studies reported	Effective in all cases with follow-up	Small number of applications
Group Therapy	**Flame Out** teaches stress and home management skills with fire safety instruction	Pilot-tested	Reported successful in preliminary stages	New and untested method
Inpatient Treatment				
Behaviorally Oriented Juvenile Firesetter Treatment Program	Short-term inpatient evaluation and treatment using satiation, family therapy, and re-entry activities	Private psychiatric hospitals in California and Oregon	Reported effective with low recidivism	Labor and cost intensive; no follow-up or impact studies reported

Table 3.5
Core Intervention Decision Grid Probation and Juvenile Justice Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
The First Offender Program, Dallas, Texas	General diversion offering assessment, treatment, and followup intervention	For first offenders, viable alternative to incarceration	Decline of delinquency rate from 50% to 22.6%	Missing or diverting seriously disturbed offenders
Operation Extinguish Montgomery County, Maryland	Evaluation education, family counseling, restitution, and community service	Acclaimed as a model program, but not yet replicated	Reportedly low recidivism rates	Serious commitment of resources, but may be worth the outlay
Juvenile Firesetter Program Upper Arlington, Ohio	Fire safety education program for incarcerated arsonists	Supported by local agencies, but not replicated in other communities	Well-received by juveniles and local participating community agencies	No data on effectiveness

RESOURCE LIST

Primary Prevention

School Curriculum and Programs

1. **CTW's Fire Safety Project**
   Sesame Street Fire Safety Resource Book

   Contact: Children's Television Workshop
   1 Lincoln Plaza
   New York, NY 10023
   (212) 595-3456

2. **Learn Not to Burn**

   Contact: National Fire Protection Association
   1 Batterymarch Park,
   P.O. Box 9101
   Quincy, MA 02269
   (617) 770-3000

3. **Knowing About Fire**

   Contact: Paul Schwartzman
   National Fire Service Support Systems, Inc.
   20 North Main St.
   Pittsford, NY 14534
   (716) 264-0840

4. **Fire Safety Skills Curriculum**

   Contact: Judy Okulitcy
   Program Manager
   Office of the State Fire Marshal
   3000 Market Street, NE, #534
   Salem, OR 97310
   (503) 378-3473

5. **The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum**

   Contact: Public Relations Department
   The St. Paul Companies
   385 Washington Street
   St. Paul, MN 55102

6. **Follow the Footsteps to Fire Safety**

Contact: City of St. Paul
Department of Fire and Safety Services
Fire Prevention Division
100 East Eleventh Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 228-6203

7. **Project Open House**

Contact: Richard A. Marinucci
Farmington Hills Fire Department
28711 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-2525
(313) 553-0740

8. **Kid's Safe Program**

Contact: Fire Safety Education Curriculum for Preschool Children
Oklahoma City Fire Department
Public Education
820 N.W. 5th
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
(405) 297-3314

Fire Service Programs

1. **National Fire Prevention Week**

2. **Curious Kids Set Fires**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

3. **Big Fires Start Small**

Contact: National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park,
P.O. Box 9101
Quincy, MA 02269
(617) 770-3000

4. **Firebusters**

Contact: Earl Diment
Office of Community Relations
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

5. **Public Fire Education Today**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Fire Department Programs In Schools

1. **Slide Presentations**

Contact: Office of the Fire Chief
Fourth Floor East
Largo Government Center
9201 Basil Court
Landover, MD 20785

2. **Films**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
Fire Marshal's Office
301 2nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

3. **Assemblies**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
Fire Marshal's Office
301 2nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

Contact: Captain Henry Begroot
Fire Prevention
San Jose Fire Department
4 North 2nd Street, Suite 1100
San Jose, CA 95113
(408) 277-4444

Law-Enforcement Programs

1. **McGruff**

Contact: The National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Early Intervention

Evaluation Education and Referral Programs

1. **The Juvenile Firesetter Program, Columbia, Ohio**

Contact: Lonnie Poindexter
Juvenile Firesetter Program
Bureau of Fire Prevention
300 N. Fourth Street
Columbia, OH 42315
(614) 645-7641

2. **Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland**

Contact: Mary Marchone
Division of Fire Prevention
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 271-2442

3. **Fire Related Youth (FRY) Program, Rochester, New York**

Contact: Jerold Bills
FRY Program
Rochester Fire Department
Room 365
Public Safety Building
Civic Center Plaza
Rochester, NY 14614
(716) 428-7103

4. **Juvenile Firesetter Program, Portland Oregon**

Contact: Don Porth
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

Counseling Programs

1. **Juvenile Firesetting Counseling Program, Dallas Texas**

Contact: Inspector Carnell Mays
Arson and Fire Inspection
Fire Department
2014 Main Street, Rm. 404
Dallas, TX 75201
(214) 670-4312

2. **Cease Fire Club, Huston Texas**

Contact: Alfred Taylor
Juvenile Firesetters Prevention Program Houston
Cease Fire Club
1205 Dart Street
Houston, TX 77027
(713) 247-1000

3. **The Firehawk Children's Program**

Gaynor, J., et al. (1984). *The Firehawk Children's Program: A Working Manual*. San Francisco: The National Firehawk Foundation.

Core Intervention

Mental Health Programs

Outpatient Programs

1. **Cognitive-Emotive Psychotherapy**

Bumpass, E.R., Brix, R.J., & Preston, D. (1985). A community-based program for juvenile firesetters. *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, 36(5), 529-532.

Bumpass, E.R., Fagelman, F.D., & Brix, R.J. (1983). Intervention with children who set fires. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 37, 328-345.

2. **Behavior Therapy**

Carstens, C. (1982). Application of a work penalty threat in the treatment of a case of juvenile firesetting. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 13, 159-161.

Holland, C. J., (1969). Elimination by the parents of firesetting behavior in a 7-year old boy. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, 7, 135-137.

Kolko, D.J. (1983). Multicomponent parental treatment of firesetting in a developmentally disabled boy. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 14, 349-353.

Stawar, T.L. (1976). Fable mod: Operantly structured fantasies as an adjunct in the modification of fire-setting behavior. *Journal of Behavior and Experimental Psychiatry*, 7, 285-287.

3. **Family Psychotherapy**

Eisler, R.M. (1974). Crisis intervention in the family of a firesetter. *Psychotherapy: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 9, 76-79.

Madanes, C. (1981). *Strategic family therapy*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

4. **Group Therapy**

Monaco, C. (1988). *Flame Out*. Unpublished manuscript. Phoenix, Arizona.

Joseph Richardson
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program
Department of Public Safety
209 Fountain Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 272-3121 (Ext. 2431)

Inpatient Treatment

Birchill, L.E. (1984). Portland's firesetter program involves both child and family. *American Fire Journal*, 23, 15-16.

Probation and Juvenile Justice

A. **General Diversion**

The First Offender Program, Dallas, Texas

Contact: Dallas Police Department
Youth Section
106 S. Harwood Street
Room 225
Dallas, Texas 75201

B. **Juvenile Firesetter Diversion Programs**

Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland

Contact: Mary Marchone
Division of Fire Prevention
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 271-2442

C. **Juvenile Firesetter Programs for Incarcerated Arsonists**

Juvenile Firesetter Program, Upper Arlington, Ohio

Contact: City of Upper Arlington
Division of Fire
3600 Tremont Road
Upper Arlington, Ohio
(614) 457-5080

COMPONENT 4: REFERRAL MECHANISMS

An effective juvenile firesetter/arson program will have strong linkages to a network of service agencies within the community. The majority of juvenile firesetter/arson programs rely on this network to help juveniles enter the system, be screened and evaluated, and obtain one or more interventions to abate the firesetting behavior and improve the quality of life. The primary site of the juvenile firesetter/arson program can be viewed as one part of a network designed to provide effective services to firesetting youngsters and their families.

There are a number of decisions to be made when setting-up a referral system for juvenile firesetters. Consideration of the following sequence of decisions will help program leadership build a comprehensive referral network in their community.

Decision 1. Define the Scope of the Referral System. Once the juvenile firesetter/arson program model is identified, and the screening, evaluation, and intervention systems are put into place, then the question of the relationship between the program and other community service agencies must be addressed. If the juvenile firesetter/arson program is going to rely on other community services for referrals, then these agencies must be identified. If the program is planning to refer juvenile firesetters for additional services, then these community agencies also must be designated. The scope of the referral system will depend on the type of intervention services that program leadership selects to implement.

Decision 2. Identify Referral Sources. The community agencies likely to refer juvenile firesetters to the program must be identified. A list of potential referral sources is presented in Table 4.1 and their operations are described in detail in Component 4 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 3. Identify Referral Agencies. If the program is going to rely on other community agencies to provide services to juvenile firesetters, then these agencies and their roles and responsibilities in the service delivery system must be designated. Table 4.1 shows a list of possible referral agencies. Their functions are described in greater detail in Component 4 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 4. Initiate the Referral Network. Once the referral sources and agencies have been identified, then working linkages must be developed. Relationships must be established on the program leadership and management levels as well as the service provider levels. Effective channels of communication must be opened between agencies and the referral pathways for juvenile firesetters must be specified. Component 4 in the *Guidelines for Implementation* explains how to create and maintain effective referral agreements between community service agencies. Examples of written referral agreements between community service agencies can be found in the resource section of the *Guidelines*. Table 4.1.

Decision 5. Quality Control. Once the referral relationships and pathways have been established, then a plan must be developed to maintain an effective referral network. Activities must be designed to increase the communication between community agencies. Some of these activities may include routine in-service training seminars, case conferences, and follow-up telephone and written communication systems. These activities are described in detail in Component 4 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

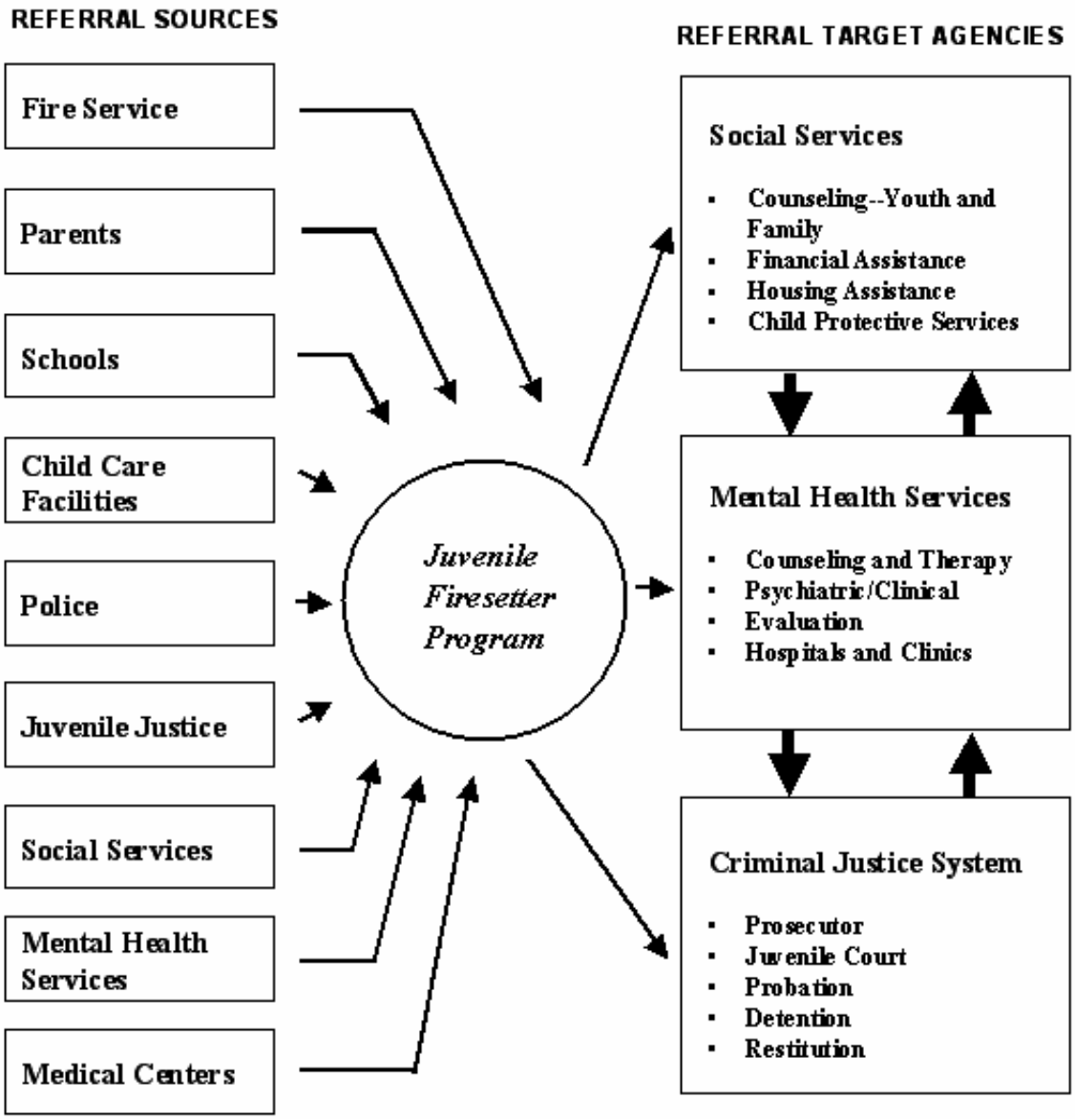
RESOURCE LIST

Cole, R.E., et al. (1984). Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. *Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project.* New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R.E., et al. (1986). *Children and Fire, Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Figure 4.1

Juvenile Firesetter Referral Network



COMPONENT 5: PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Once the juvenile firesetter/arson program has been put into place, it becomes important to let the community know that it is open for business. There are two major activities which can be conducted to increase the program's visibility within the community. First, a publicity program can be organized to take advantage of exposure through a number of different types of media. Second, a community outreach effort can be mounted to ensure that specific target populations in need of services will be aware of the program. If the juvenile firesetter/arson program elects to increase its public awareness, then they must anticipate and accommodate an increase in the number of youth and families requesting its services.

Both a publicity program and a community outreach effort can be limited or broad in scope depending on the number and types of modalities and strategies employed by program leadership. There are several options that can be pursued, depending on the level of effort, commitment, and desired effect. The following guidelines are decisions to be considered when mounting publicity or community outreach activities for juvenile firesetter/arson programs.

Publicity

An effective publicity program will increase the general public's awareness about the problem of juvenile firesetting as well as the solutions available in the community.

Decision 1. Define Goals. The scope of the publicity program must be specified. There are several potential objectives, from educating the general public about the problem of juvenile firesetting to announcing the availability of services.

Decision 2. Select Modalities. Once the goals of the publicity effort have been defined, then the modalities which will be used for communication must be specified. There are four different modalities, including print media, television and radio, press conferences, and general communications. Each of these modalities have various types of strategies and associated effects. These are outlined in Table 5.1 and their implementation is described in detail in Component 5 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Outreach

The value of a community outreach effort is that one or more specific populations can be targeted for communication. Table 5.1.

Decision 1. Identify Target Populations. There may be specific groups of youth living in certain areas of the community whose psychosocial characteristics suggest that they are at high-risk for becoming involved in firesetting. Or, there may be particular parts of a community where there is a higher incidence of child-set fires, and therefore a greater need to target services. Outreach efforts can be aimed at providing these target populations with information about the problem of juvenile firesetting and how they can get help.

Table 5.1
Publicity Activities

Modalities	Stategies	Effect
I. Newspapers and Magazines	Time-dependent articles	Focuses on specific incident, immediacy, and danger.
	Feature articles	In-depth description of problem and solution.
II. Television and Radio	Public Service Announcements	Brief, concise, verbal communication reaching a large audience.
	Interviews	Personal opinion and information exchange.
	Talk Shows	Communication of personal experiences with an analysis of the problem and solution.
III. Press Conferences	Media Kits	Organized promotion and communication to a variety of media.
IV. General Communications	Fact Sheets	General, on-page description of local program efforts which can be used for multiple purposes.
	Press Releases	Promotes important local events of significant current activities.

Decision 2. Select Activities. There are a wide range of outreach activities from developing pamphlets and posters to operating a telephone hot line. Each of these activities and their associated effect are presented in Table 5.2 and described in detail in Component 5 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*. In addition, examples of some of these activities, such as pamphlets and brochures developed by juvenile firesetter/arson programs, can be found in the resource section of the manual. Selection of the most appropriate activity will depend on the target population, which has been identified and the type of information to be communicated.

Table 5.2
Community Outreach Activities

Activity	Effect
I. Pamphlets and brochures	Well-organized, brief written communication with wide distribution to a variety of audiences.
II. Posters	Visual display and exposure to specific target groups.
III. Newsletters	Maintaining important communication linkages between groups.
IV. Speaker's Bureau	Direct education and promotion of program by experienced speakers.
V. Hot Lines	Immediate and relevant help and information to those needing service.
VI. Partnerships	Encourages increased community-wide support and promotion of program.

RESOURCE LIST

Ink and Airtime

National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)
1700 K. Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Public Service Announcements

Fire Pal
c/o Phoenix Fire Department
520 West Van Buren
Phoenix, AZ 85003

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Media Kits

"Curious Kids Set Fires"

U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

"Big Fires Start Small"

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Newsletters

"Hot Issues"
State Fire Marshal
4760 Portland Road, N.E.
Salem, OR 97305

COMPONENT 6: MONITORING SYSTEM

Now that the juvenile firesetter/arson program is in place, the community is aware of its operation, and juveniles and families are receiving services, it becomes important for program leadership and management to be able to monitor the level and volume of business that comes through their doors. Having current and accurate data on program operations provides management with information of the relative impact and effectiveness of

the program. This information can be invaluable when it comes time for sustaining or increasing the funding, staffing, and general life of the program.

As with the previous stages of program planning and implementation, there are specific decisions, which must be made regarding the development of an effective information system for juvenile firesetter/ arson programs. The following decision points should be considered by program leadership and management when organizing and developing an information system.

Decision 1. Determine Applications. Information systems can be simple or elaborate. The nature and extent of implementing a particular system depends on the application of the information, which is derived from the system. Will the information be used to convince funding agencies to increase the program's budget? Will the information be used to ascertain specific personality profiles of juvenile firesetters receiving services? Questions like these need to be asked by program leadership to determine the potential application of information resulting from the system. In addition, these questions need to be asked for the development of an effective output or reporting system.

Decision 2. Specify Capabilities. The nature and extent of the information system also depends on the capability of the program in collecting information and maintaining a data system. Specific considerations to be reviewed by juvenile firesetter/arson programs when developing an information system are outlined in detail in Component 6 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 3. Select the System. There are three basic types of information systems. They are a management information system, an evaluation system, and an incidence reporting system. These information systems are described in Table 6.1. Programs may select to implement one or more of these systems. In addition, there are simple and elaborate versions of these information systems. All of the details regarding these systems are described in Component 6 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 4. Develop the Reporting System. Once the information system has been put into place, specific consideration should be given by program leadership as to how the output or resulting information will be utilized. Will routine or special reports be produced? What will these reports look like and who will use them? Various reporting options are outlined in Component 6 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*. In addition, examples of output are presented in the resource section of the manual.

Decision 5. Define Boundaries of Confidentially. Some of the data maintained in information systems can pertain to the psychological and legal status of minors, and therefore be highly sensitive material. Questions regarding the confidentiality of this information and who has access to this data should be given careful consideration by program leadership. These issues are discussed in detail in Component 6 in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

Table 6.1
Monitoring Systems

Type	Function
I. Management Information System (MIS)	Case tracking caseload analysis, and reporting of program operations and results.
II. Evaluation System	An extension of the MIS plus data on firesetting recidivism and follow-up information on case disposition.
III. Incident Reporting	Monitoring jurisdiction-wide rates of juvenile firesetting and arson, regardless of whether cases enter the system for evaluation and intervention.

COMPONENT 7: DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

A significant set of goals for juvenile firesetter/arson programs is that they stop firesetting behavior, improve the quality of life, and help youth avoid the juvenile justice system. However, this is obviously not possible in all cases of juvenile firesetting. In many instances, firesetting youth enter the juvenile justice system because of the nature of extent of their firesetting activity. In these cases the ideal situation is that juvenile firesetter/arson programs have strong and effective linkages with the juvenile justice system.

Although juvenile firesetter/arson programs and the juvenile justice system share the common goal of preventing the recurrence of firesetting behavior, they frequently offer different solutions and interventions. The pathways between juvenile firesetter/arson programs and the juvenile justice system should remain open so as to maximize the number of intervention options for firesetting youths. There are a number of decision

points that will ensure an open and secure pathway between juvenile firesetter/arson programs and the juvenile justice system.

Decision 1. Define Juvenile Justice Interventions. Generally, when youngsters are arrested for arson, they enter the juvenile justice system. Juvenile firesetter/arson programs should identify the pathway of juvenile firesetter through the juvenile justice system. Examples of these pathways can be found in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 2. Establish Referral Linkages. Juvenile firesetter and juvenile justice programs can work with each other to help remediate juvenile firesetters. Therefore, the referral linkages between the programs should be opened and maintained. Details on how to establish these pathways are outlined in Component 7 in the *Guidelines for Implementation*.

Decision 3. Specialized Programs. Once juveniles arrested for arson enter the juvenile justice system, they infrequently receive specific help to stop their firesetting behavior. Juvenile firesetter/arson programs designed to abate the firesetting behavior of youngsters in the juvenile justice system would greatly reduce the recurrence of this antisocial behavior. The development of specialized programs for firesetters within the juvenile justice system is discussed in greater detail in Component 7 in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

RESOURCE LIST

Cole, R.E., et al. (1984). *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R.E., et al. (1986). *Children and Fire, Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State, Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

November 1993

INTRODUCTION

In Passaic, New Jersey, a firefighter was killed and hundreds of people lost their homes in a fire started by a group of teenage boys. In Roanoke, Virginia, a seven-year-old boy set fire to a chair in an abandoned building. The fire spread to an adjacent house and trapped an elderly woman. In Rochester, New York, a two-year-old, playing with matches, started a fire that took his life and the lives of five family members. Unfortunately, these tragic events are not isolated incidents, but are repeated virtually every day in cities and towns across the United States. Arson fires kill hundreds of people every year and cause over one **billion** dollars worth of damage annually. It is estimated that approximately 40% of these fires are set by juveniles.

Clearly the problem of juvenile firesetting and arson is a costly, often deadly, problem. Fires set by juveniles take a tremendous toll in property losses, personal injuries, and death each year in this country. Whether the result of a curious child playing with matches or the malicious act of a troubled delinquent, juvenile firesetting is a serious and vexing problem that requires a special response from the community and the criminal justice system. Although many fires set by youth are committed more out of ignorance than malice, by youths who are more troubled than criminal, these fires may also be set by mean-spirited delinquents with histories of crime and violence. The justice system must deal firmly with such youths.

Several years ago, as statistics began to reveal the magnitude of the juvenile arson problem, a few innovative officials recognized that the unique elements of juvenile firesetting required the development of strategies that go beyond that traditional capabilities of the law enforcement establishment. New approaches to screening and counseling would have to be developed, applying techniques especially suited to youths and drawing on the resources of multiple disciplines in the community. Although scores of programs have been developed across the country, there was virtually no careful examination of the juvenile firesetting problem or the programs designed to address it.

In recognition of the seriousness of the juvenile firesetting problem, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) in conjunction with the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) sponsored the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program, which was conducted by the Institute for Social Analysis with assistance from the Police Executive Research Forum. The purpose of this development program was to assess, develop, test, and disseminate information on promising approaches for the control and prevention of juvenile firesetting and arson.

The program, which began in early 1988, was divided into four incremental stages:

1. An assessment of the incidence and dynamics of juvenile firesetting/arson and selected juvenile firesetter programs throughout the United States.

2. The development of a comprehensive approach to controlling juvenile arson, including descriptions of program development, implementation, and operation.

3. The development of training and technical assistance packages to provide local jurisdictions with the necessary information to implement appropriated programs.

4. Testing and dissemination of the training and technical assistance packages.

ISA was assisted during the development project by the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Public/Private Partnership, a group composed of diverse individuals from both the public and private sector who have a special expertise and interest in juvenile arson.

One of the clearest findings from the initial assessment phase is that no one agency should be responsible for alleviating the juvenile firesetter problem. It is clearly a **community** problem that requires **community** action. Another clear finding is that fire safety education and counseling has a profound effect on whether these children continue to set fires. Juvenile firesetter programs throughout the country can attest to the fact that programs that provide prevention, early identification, and early intervention with juvenile firesetters can save communities thousands of dollars in property loss and can save families untold suffering.

The central elements of a prototype juvenile firesetter program emerged rather clearly from our national assessment. ISA initially planned to develop one "model" program. However, we quickly realized that a program suited to a small, volunteer fire department in rural Minnesota would not be appropriate for a large, paid department in the Bronx and vice versa. Instead, ISA developed a modular or components model. The components describe how to develop, implement, and operate a juvenile firesetter program. These components highlight seven different aspects of a program and include: 1) Program Management, 2) Screening and Evaluation, 3) Intervention Services, 4) Referral Mechanisms, 5) Publicity and Outreach, 6) Monitoring Systems, and 7) Developing Relationships with the Justice System.

These components are designed to be flexible and their exact implementation will differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. This modular approach allows jurisdictions to develop or expand a juvenile firesetter program which meets their particular needs using the resources available. Each component presents a wide range of approaches which vary according to their impact and the resources required for implementation. Thus, the materials allow maximum adaptability for virtually any jurisdiction to develop a juvenile firesetter prevention and intervention program tailored to their specific requirements.

The information in this volume is generally, but not exclusively, written for the fire service--the agency most likely to house a firesetter program. Although a variety of approaches are described, ISA advocates a "prevention, screening, early intervention, and referral program"--where the fire service provides fire safety education in the schools, initial screening and evaluation of firesetters who have been identified, early intervention/fire safety education for curiosity firesetters or other firesetters who may benefit from such education, and referral to mental health or other appropriate agencies for more troubled firesetters. Although some programs include a "counseling" component within the fire service, ISA has found that the fire service is best equipped to screen juvenile firesetters, generally using the screening tools developed by the U.S. Fire Administration, and provide fire safety education when appropriate. Any additional counseling is usually best handled by mental health or child protective services agencies.

ISA believes that the fire service should not have to tackle the problem of juvenile firesetting alone. Other agencies including schools, mental health agencies, juvenile justice agencies, child protective services, and other agencies that work with youth need to work with the fire service to help identify juvenile firesetters and provide the appropriate services so that these juveniles do not continue to set fires. In most communities, the initial impetus to develop a juvenile firesetter program comes from the fire service, but as this volume indicates, the fire service should solicit assistance from these other agencies--often in the context of developing a coordinating council, to provide all the necessary service.

The components described in this volume provide detailed information about each of the program areas noted above. The volume was originally written in 1990 and, although the resource lists have updated, some of the specific program information may be outdated. The program information, however, was designed to provide examples of the different types of juvenile firesetter programs. These examples can still be used as models for developing new programs. We strongly believe that the seven components presented in this volume are essential to the success of any program. Details of these components are presented in the following chapters and are summarized below:

Program Management. The Program Management component provides information on program structure, staffing, training, and funding. In addition, the component presents planning and coordination strategies which include establishing interagency links, creating a coordinating council, and conducting a juvenile firesetter prevention workshop. As with all of the components, this component discusses the jurisdictional characteristics which need to be considered when the jurisdiction is deciding on the best approach to alleviating their juvenile firesetting problem.

Screening, Evaluating, and Developing the Intervention Plan. The second component summarizes a wide variety of screening and evaluation procedures used by the fire service, law enforcement, probation and juvenile justice, mental health, and schools. The procedures are described in terms of their function, target population, users, content, benefits, and limitations. Decision grids are provided to help users select the most appropriate methods for their service needs.

Intervention Services. The Intervention Services component provides information on three levels of intervention strategies--primary prevention, early intervention, and core intervention--which are aimed at reducing juvenile involvement in the entire range of unsupervised fireplay and firesetting activities. Each of the strategies have specific intervention objectives and are aimed at particular target populations. A wide variety of intervention, decision grids are presented to help program managers select the best intervention options to meet the needs of their target population.

Referral Mechanisms. The Referral Mechanisms component highlights the need for the juvenile firesetter program to have strong links with other agencies. The component describes how the program can identify referral sources and target referral agencies. In addition, the component outlines strategies for establishing links between the program and these agencies.

Publicity and Outreach. This component describes how juvenile firesetter programs can develop a public information and education campaign to raise the public awareness about juvenile firesetting and the juvenile firesetting program. Various strategies including brochures, newspaper, T.V. and radio exposure, public service announcements, and speakers bureaus are discussed. Programs are cautioned, however, not to promote their program until they are ready to provide services.

Monitoring Systems. The purpose, content, format, and use of systems for monitoring juvenile firesetter programs are covered in this component. Three types of monitoring systems are summarized--management information systems, evaluation systems, and incident reporting systems.

The component describes a wide range of possible monitoring systems, from manual, paper and pencil systems to computerized systems.

D**eveloping Relationships with the Justice System**. The purpose of this component is to provide information to assist programs in developing effective relationships with the justice system. The component highlights strategies the juvenile firesetter program can use to establish relationships with the probation department, law enforcement, legal, and judicial community, and correctional institutions. In addition the component contains detailed information about three specific programs--Rochester, New York; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Portland, Oregon.

In addition to this volume, ISA has developed a *Users' Guide* and a *Trainers' Guide*. The *Users' Guide* provides step-by-step guidelines on how to use the information in this volume to implement a juvenile firesetter program. The *Trainers' Guide* describes how to use this information, as well as other resources, to develop a comprehensive juvenile firesetter prevention training workshop. The guide provides a detailed curriculum to meet specific needs. In addition, ISA recently completed a guide to early intervention programs, which synthesizes some of the information presented here and describes how to implement one type of recommended program.

The materials have been pilot-tested during a year-long national evaluation and have been modified based on the results of that evaluation. It is our hope that the materials and information presented in the prototype and the training materials will provide jurisdictions with all the information they need to develop and implement a juvenile firesetter program tailored to their individual needs and resources.

COMPONENT 1: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Background

It is estimated that approximately 40% of all **arsons** are set by juveniles. These fires cause hundreds of millions of dollars in damages annually and thousands of needless injuries and deaths. The rate of juvenile fireplay and firesetting--short of arson as determined by fire investigators--may also be quite high. Studies have shown that the majority of normal children possess an interest in fire and nearly half have engaged in fireplay. While the majority of the child-set fires are set out of curiosity, not malice, the damage they cause, both in economic and human costs, are real and devastating.

During the last decade, hundreds of programs have been established across the nation to address the growing concern about juvenile firesetting. These programs are housed primarily within the fire service and are designed to identify, evaluate, and treat the juvenile firesetter to prevent the recurrence of firesetting. Early programs were developed by local mental health professionals and fire service personnel. More recently established programs have been aided by Federal efforts and have been based on models developed by the U.S. Fire Administration.

Juvenile firesetter programs receive referrals from the fire departments, police departments, schools, parents, social service and mental health agencies, and justice agencies. These programs often have working relationships with some of these key agencies, but rarely do they have working relationships with all of the essential community agencies. The number of referrals to these agencies depends largely on how the program is established and how strong the links between the program and the agencies are.

Purpose

The purpose of the Program Management Component is to present an overview of how a juvenile firesetter program should appear--providing the shell within which program services are provided. This overview will include a discussion of where the program should be located, how it should be staffed, how its staff should be trained, and how funds may be raised. In addition, this component will describe some of the initial steps in starting a juvenile firesetter program and discuss how to establish links between the program and other community agencies.

The other components presented in this manual will describe how particular elements of the program (e.g., screening, intervention, referral, etc.) should operate. It is clear that no single approach is appropriate for every jurisdiction. Each fire district differs with respect to their juvenile firesetter problem and the resources available to combat the problem. To address these varying needs, each component will provide alternative ways to implement the component depending on jurisdictional needs and resources.

Although this component will concentrate on describing the structure of the juvenile firesetter program and will focus primarily on the fire service, it does not mean to indicate that the problem of juvenile firesetting is solely a fire service problem. Juvenile firesetting is a community problem that requires the resources of the entire community. This component, and others, will explain how to establish links and working relationships with key referral sources and target referral agencies. The fire service and the

juvenile firesetter program are part of a network of key agencies that need to work together to address the juvenile firesetter problem.

Program Planning

Juvenile firesetter programs often originate out of the concern of one inspired individual. These individuals may be members of the fire service who have a genuine interest in children or have seen, first hand, the damage and pain caused by juvenile firesetting. (If a program is established, they often serve as program coordinators). Once the interest is generated, the next step is to acquire a detailed understanding of the juvenile firesetter problem in the particular jurisdiction. Local fire departments are the first place to go to obtain the necessary information. Fire incident reports, arson investigation reports, and other records should provide data on the extent and nature of the juvenile firesetter problem. Information on property loss, injuries, and deaths, if available, give added meaning to the numbers. Additional information and arrest data is often available from hospital burn units and police departments.

Once data on the extent of the local juvenile firesetter problem is collected, the person interested in the problem will need to meet with fire chiefs, community representatives, local city councils, and others to determine if the magnitude of the juvenile firesetting problem constitute a serious enough issue to warrant community action. These meetings often center around: (1) the cost of the problem versus the cost of the solution, (2) whether fires set by juveniles are a significant proportion of the fires set in the community and (3) whether juveniles firesetters are over-represented given the proportion of juveniles in the community. Deciding whether the issue of juvenile firesetting is a significant problem will probably take many meetings and discussions.

If juvenile firesetting is not considered a problem, the path is easy. If, however, the community decides that juvenile firesetting is a threat to the community, the next issue is deciding how to address the problem. The community may decide that the problem is severe enough to establish a complete juvenile firesetter program. Communities wishing to implement such a program can use the guidelines described in these components and can seek assistance from other juvenile firesetter programs. If a separate juvenile firesetter program is beyond the resources of a particular community, the fire service may choose to bolster existing programs by implementing one or more of the components. Each jurisdiction is unique and has their own problems and resources. Only the members of that community can decide what constitutes a serious problem and which strategies will be most effective to address the problem.

Program Structure

If the members of the community feel that the juvenile firesetter program is serious enough to warrant a juvenile firesetter program, they must decide what kind of program would best serve their jurisdictional needs and then develop such a program. The following sections are designed to provide information on how to establish a juvenile firesetter program. The remainder of this component provides on such issues as location, staffing, training, funding, and establishing interagency links.

Location

Fire Service. The primary site for a juvenile firesetter program should be within the fire service. The results of the Institute for Social Analysis' (ISA) survey of juvenile firesetter programs throughout the country reveal that 87% of the programs are administered by the fire service. These programs are located in different branches of the fire service. Including the Office of the Fire Chief, Fire Investigation, and the Fire Marshal. The primary reason why juvenile firesetter programs should be established within the fire service is the fire service's capacity to identify large numbers of firesetters. The fire service is usually the first agency to respond to a fire and many of the firesetters are identified at the scene. Indeed, the majority of juvenile firesetter referrals to existing programs are from within the fire service, usually followed by parents and then schools and mental health organizations.

The fire service's knowledge of fire cause and origin facilitates their ability to identify youthful firesetters. The fire service can track a case from the identification of the firesetter through the fire investigation, assessment, and intervention (education, counseling, prosecution, etc.). In addition, many fire departments have established links with some of the crucial referral agencies. In the course of their investigations, fire investigators often communicate with police, probation, social service, and justice personnel. These links are vitally important to the success of a juvenile firesetter program (see the Referral Mechanisms Component).

Although the overwhelming majority of juvenile firesetter programs are housed within the fire service, there is still some concern that such a program will fall prey to departmental politics. The greatest concern is that the program would be terminated when the Fire Chief who instituted it leaves. Most departments feel that a juvenile firesetter program is too valuable to have such a tenuous existence. Another concern is that firefighters and investigators may be hesitant to use the juvenile firesetter program. To overcome these potential problems, juvenile firesetter programs must be institutionalized within the fire service. Their existence

cannot rely solely on the motivation and drive of one individual. To survive, the juvenile firesetter program must receive support from **all** levels within the fire service and community.

To gain the support of all the fire service personnel, the program director should brief the chief and all the division heads about the juvenile firesetter program. Brief memos can be circulated to each fire service division describing the juvenile firesetter program services. Each firefighter, fire investigator, fire educator, etc. should know about the program and understand how it works. The Publicity and Outreach component will describe how to inform the general public about the juvenile firesetter program.

Private agencies. Some fire departments do not have the resources to manage a juvenile firesetter program. The need for such a program, however, may still exist. Many of these jurisdictions have solved this problem by establishing private agencies to run the juvenile firesetter program. Examples of such programs are: 1) The Cease Fire Club, a community-based, non-profit organization in Houston, Texas; and 2) Fight Fire With Care (FFWC) in Ft. Worth, Texas. The FFWC program is directed by the fire service personnel but receives all of its funding from local businesses. Juveniles are referred to the program by the fire service, probation, mental health agencies, and parents.

Mental health agencies. Juvenile firesetter programs may be established by mental health and counseling agencies. These agencies have the ability to address the needs of children who require counseling in addition to fire safety education. Most often, however, mental health agencies are part of the referral network and serve as a resource to the juvenile firesetter program. Usually, juvenile firesetters are identified by the fire service and, as needed, are referred for mental health services.

The greatest concern surrounding programs housed outside of the fire service is that some firesetters may not be referred to the program or may refuse to participate. The fire service has the unique ability to identify and **track** all juvenile firesetters. Private agencies often do not have access to fire department records and have no way of knowing what percentage of firesetters receive their service. In addition, as noted earlier, the fire department investigators in many programs work with the probation department to require juveniles to participate in the juvenile firesetter program in lieu of prosecution or as a condition of probation. If the juvenile firesetter program is managed by an agency outside of the fire service, that agency needs to work closely with the fire service personnel to ensure that all firesetters are screened and evaluated and receive the services they need.

Multi-jurisdictional Approach

The majority of the juvenile firesetter programs surveyed by ISA functioned at the local level. A number of programs, however, are considering a county or larger multi-jurisdictional. One of the greatest advantages of such an approach is that many of the referral agencies that work with the juvenile firesetter program (e.g., mental health, probation, juvenile court, etc.) are county, not local, agencies. A multi-jurisdictional program may span many towns and allows these communities to combine their resources instead of competing for the limited resources of county agencies with whom they work.

The multi-jurisdictional approach, however, requires additional planning and coordinating. The program should be housed in a central fire service agency. In many cases, the County or State Fire Marshal's office is the agency selected to house the program. The juvenile firesetter program will need to establish detailed guidelines for referral and feedback to each fire department/station within the juvenile firesetter program jurisdiction. Each fire department/station within the jurisdiction served by the program should be briefed about the program's purpose and services. As is true for local juvenile firesetter programs, the multi-jurisdictional program will be responsible for assessment, intervention, referral, case tracking, and follow-up.

The feasibility of a multi-jurisdictional program will be based on the extent of the juvenile firesetter problem in a given jurisdiction and the resources available to ameliorate the problem. In some cases, the structure of the fire service or referral agencies may make such an approach untenable. Each jurisdiction will need to assess which approach is most appropriate to meet the needs of the community.

Staffing and Responsibilities

Fire Service Personnel. Programs located within the fire service should be coordinated by an individual with a genuine interest in the juvenile firesetter issue. Ideally, that individual should be a senior ranking fire official. As noted earlier, programs need support from the highest level in the fire service. Many programs are administered by the Office of the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal with the coordinators answering directly to the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal. The coordinators would be responsible for the day-to-day activates of the juvenile firesetter program. They would be in charge of assessment and intervention, either directly or by supervising others who are assigned to provide the assessment and intervention services. The coordinators would also be primarily responsible for facilitating communications between the juvenile firesetter program and

other agencies. The coordinators should be viewed as managers who are responsible for not only the mechanics of running the juvenile firesetter program, but also for the leadership and direction of the program.

In larger departments, additional fire service staff should also be assigned to the program. Firefighters, fire investigators, and fire educators can provide screening and evaluation services, fire education, and referral services. Firefighters who have received specialized training may serve as "buddies" for firesetters who need a role model to provide one-to-one attention and guidance as part of the juvenile firesetter program. Fire service personnel can also be trained to screen juvenile firesetters using standard screening instruments. In addition, fire service personnel can provide fire safety education to juvenile firesetters and, in some cases, provide "counseling" using techniques designed for use with firesetters (See Intervention Services Component). Many fire departments employ fire educators who have the responsibility to teach fire safety in the schools. Providing fire safety education to the juvenile firesetters is often seen as an extension of the responsibility.

There is some question as to which fire service division is best suited to manage a juvenile firesetter program. Some programs, such as Rochester, New York's FRY program, are run by fire investigators. In the FRY program, investigators identify the juvenile firesetter and provide fire safety education. They also refer firesetters to other agencies (e.g., justice, social service, and mental health) if necessary and track the progress of the firesetter. Other programs may be housed in the Fire Marshal's Office or in the Department of Fire Safety Education. Once the firesetters are identified by the firefighters or fire investigators, they are referred to the juvenile firesetter program for screening, education, and referral.

Either approach can work as long as there is clear communication between the referral division (or outside agency) and the juvenile firesetter program. Problems have developed when fire investigators or firefighters refer juveniles to the juvenile firesetter program and fail to hear about the outcome of the case. The juvenile firesetter program needs to develop strategies to provide feedback to referral sources. Examples of these strategies will be described in the Referral Mechanisms Component. Effective communication between referral sources and the juvenile firesetter program can avert many problems.

Non-fire service personnel. Some fire departments do not have the resources to staff a juvenile firesetter program. In such cases, the program can be run by trained mental health counselors or community volunteers. These counselors and community volunteers would have the same responsibilities as their fire service counterparts. In addition, the mental health counselors are trained to provide in-depth counseling to more troubled firesetters. Non-fire service personnel would need additional

training in fire safety education before providing such education to juvenile firesetters.

Staffing Issues and Concerns

The staffing structure presented above can be implemented by jurisdictions that have the manpower resources available to staff a juvenile firesetter program. Smaller jurisdictions, however, may not have the resources or the need to establish an actual juvenile firesetter program. These jurisdictions may simply want to incorporate some of the services provided by a juvenile firesetter program into existing agencies. Although it is recommended that jurisdictions establish a "program" within the fire department, an alternative possibility for some jurisdictions is to have interested people in various agencies take on the responsibilities of the juvenile firesetter program staff. These individuals would be responsible for assessment, education, referral, and tracking.

Jurisdictions must also decide whether the juvenile firesetter program will be operated by full-time or part-time staff and whether the staff will be paid or volunteer. Ideally, a juvenile firesetter program should be staffed by at least one full-time, paid fire service employee. Many fire departments have separate budgets for the juvenile firesetter program, which includes full-time personnel. In other jurisdictions, fire service personnel provide juvenile firesetter assessment, education, and referral in addition to other responsibilities, such as fire investigations, fire inspections, or school fire safety education. Still other jurisdictions rely entirely on fire service personnel who volunteer their off-duty time to help provide assessment and education to juvenile firesetters. (In later sections, this component will discuss liability concerns surrounding the practice of having paid fire service personnel volunteer their time to the juvenile firesetter program).

Funding and staffing decisions for each jurisdiction should be based on an assessment of the jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter problem and the resources available. Fire service personnel will need to look at the incidence of juvenile firesetting in their jurisdiction and the cost in terms of property damage and personal injury. In addition, the fire service will need to estimate the cost per case for assessment and intervention services for a juvenile firesetter.

Training

Regardless of the staff background, all program staff should receive training in juvenile firesetting and child related issues. At a minimum, the training should include the following topics:

Characteristics of juvenile firesetters
How to identify juvenile firesetters
Developing and managing a juvenile firesetter program
Screening/assessment techniques
Interviewing and educating the juvenile firesetter
Referral and follow-up
Normal child development
Juvenile delinquency
Child Abuse/Neglect
Legal Issues

National experts in the field of juvenile firesetting can provide training in the characteristics of juvenile firesetters and information on how to identify, assess, interview, educate, and refer firesetters. Local fire service personnel can provide specific information about the jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter problem.

Personnel from local social service agencies and mental health facilities can provide training in child related issues, such as child development, delinquency, abuse, and neglect. Training in these child related issues is important to understanding juvenile firesetters. For example, in some cases, more seriously disturbed firesetters engage in other acts of juvenile delinquency. In other cases, youth will set a fire to draw attention to parental abuse or neglect. Juvenile firesetters represent a broad spectrum of youth, from developmentally normal children who are simply curious about fire to very seriously disturbed youth who require specialized treatment. The juvenile firesetter staff need this diverse training because they will come in contact with a wide range of juveniles in the course of their work.

Information about the legal issues surrounding juvenile firesetting can be obtained through the local prosecutor's office. Program staff need to be aware of the arson laws, including the age of accountability. The staff should also know how juvenile firesetters are handled by the justice system.

Once the juvenile firesetter program has been established and the program staff have received training, the program coordinator or other staff should provide an orientation to all fire service personnel, especially arson investigators and upper level command staff. This may be done in the form of an in-service meeting or one day seminar. (If the resources are available, these personnel may also be included in the training seminar). All fire service personnel should be aware of the program and the service it provides. All fire service personnel should be aware of the program and the services it provides. In addition, all fire service personnel should understand the procedures used to refer a firesetter to the program. Questions and concerns of the fire service personnel about the program

should be addressed at this time. An example of a Juvenile Firesetter Training Workshop can be found in the *Trainers' Guide*.

In addition to the fire service orientation, the program coordinator should prepare briefings for the Chief and Deputy Chief to enhance their understanding of the problem and gain their support. As the program continues, the coordinator should provide the Chief and Deputy Chief with brief updates on the progress of the juvenile firesetter program.

Funding

As noted earlier, the nature and extent of any juvenile firesetter program will depend, to a large extent, on the resources available to the program. Programs with limited money and manpower have gone to the community to acquire the necessary services, materials, and funds. The community can offer an unlimited wealth of resources. Corporations may contribute money or sponsor specific activities or products. When looking for corporate donations, juvenile firesetter program staff should appeal to the corporation's sense of civic mindedness and self-interest. Contributing money to better the community and help eliminate a costly and deadly problem is basically good business. The juvenile firesetter program should consider establishing local public/private partnerships. These partnership, which include representatives from local businesses and pubic agencies (such as the fire service), have been useful in other government programs. Local businesses can donate more than money or equipment--they can contribute their management, fund-raising expertise, and other in-kind contributions.

One potential resource for the juvenile firesetter program is local insurance companies. Where they may not always be able to offer monetary contributions, they may be able to provide in-kind assistance. Several juvenile firesetter programs have received generous help from the insurance industry regarding public relations activities, such as printing brochures or publishing an article on the problem of juvenile firesetting and the promising program solutions. Insurance agencies can be a valuable resources because they have a vested interest in facilitating the reduction of juvenile firesetting.

Prior to approaching insurance agencies or other local businesses, the juvenile firesetter program should gather as much statistical information as possible about the juvenile firesetter problem in their community. Information about the cost of juvenile firesetting in economic and human terms will help support funding efforts. The most important element of juvenile firesetting that needs to be stressed is that the problem is a **community** problem that cannot be alleviated without the assistance of the community.

One additional source of funding can be investigated by the juvenile firesetter program. In some jurisdictions the restitution paid by a juvenile firesetter as part of a court sentence is not claimed by the insurance industry. Often this is because the cost of claiming that money is more than the actual amount of restitution. The program coordinator should talk to the court and the insurance agencies about the possibility of earmarking those funds for the juvenile firesetter program.

Liability

Another financial (and legal) concern is the issue of liability. Liability refers to the potential for programs or referral agencies to be "at risk" for legal action because of the actions of a juvenile firesetter. Program staff need to take steps to ensure that referral agencies will not be held liable for the actions of the juveniles referred to them. Liability waiver forms are often used to counter these concerns. The liability waivers should be reviewed by attorneys to make sure they address all the concerns of the juvenile firesetter program and referral agencies. Parents will need to read and sign these waivers (which usually release the program or the referral agencies from responsibility for the action of their children). The juvenile firesetter program and the program's referral agencies need to be able to address the needs of the firesetters but will be limited if they are going to be held accountable for the actions of the firesetter.

Another liability issue arises when fire service personnel volunteer their time to work with juvenile firesetters. As mentioned earlier, paid fire service personnel sometimes volunteer their time to assist juvenile firesetters. The new Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) may limit this practice. Many states are interpreting the FLSA to mean that the fire service is liable for fire service personnel when they are conducting fire service related activities regardless of whether they are on- or off- duty. Juvenile firesetter programs that use volunteers from the fire service as part of their program need to carefully review their state's interpretation of the FLSA and how it affects the program.

How to Establish Interagency Links

Regardless of how the fire service or other agency chooses to tackle the juvenile firesetter problem, they will need the assistance of the key community agencies which work with juveniles (e.g., police, probation, justice, schools, mental health, and social services). The following section will describe techniques for gaining support from these community agencies and establishing interagency relationships.

Coordinating Council. Strong interagency relationships and referral networks are vital when establishing a juvenile firesetter program. Because these relationships are so critical to the success of a program, the creation of a coordinating council is essential. Such coordinating councils or task forces have been established in Portland, Oregon; Upper Arlington, Ohio; and other programs around the country. The juvenile firesetter program coordinating council should be composed of representatives from all agencies in the jurisdiction whose responsibilities relate to juvenile firesetters. At a minimum, the council should include representatives from the fire service, police, probation, juvenile court, children's protective services, district attorney's office, schools, and mental health agencies. These agencies represent the avenues through which juveniles are referred to the juvenile firesetter program, as well as resources for the program. Including all of the key agencies on the coordinating council will ensure that no juvenile falls through the cracks and that all firesetters are identified, evaluated, and receive appropriate interventions. Ideally, the council should meet once a month to discuss the problems or concerns and develop future plans for the program.

The officials recruited for the council should be individuals with status and influence within their agency (e.g., Fire Chief/Fire Marshal, Police Chief, Juvenile Court Judge, District Attorney, School Principal/School Board Member, and Mental Health and Social Service Agency Directors). The individuals selected should also have a commitment to the problem of juvenile firesetting and the time to devote to finding a solution to the problem.

The coordinator of the juvenile firesetter program will have the primary responsibility for recruiting the council representatives. If the coordinator is a member of the fire service, s/he may also represent the fire service on the council. The coordinator should contact the administrator of each agency to explain the juvenile firesetter program and the role of the council. The coordinator should then set a time to meet with the potential council members. The coordinator may want to have background materials, such as statistics on the local juvenile firesetter problem and examples of how each agency is affected. It is important to stress that the problem of juvenile firesetting is a community problem that touches every agency mandated to provide services for juveniles. One program coordinator caught the attention of other agencies--and ultimately won their support--by telling them that the next child to die in a fire was their responsibility, not his. Descriptions of how other programs work may also help convince agencies that juvenile firesetter programs work, if they receive the support of other agencies. If the head of the agency is unable to participate on the council, s/he should suggest a representative, preferably the person most likely to have contact with juvenile firesetters.

In addition to representatives from each agency, the juvenile firesetter program may want to contact local corporate representatives. As noted earlier, these individuals can assist the program with finding issues and publicity and outreach.

Role of the Council. The primary role of the juvenile firesetter program coordinating council is to facilitate multi-agency cooperation to plan, implement, and maintain the juvenile firesetter program. A constitution and by-laws similar to those established by the Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Task Force, Inc. in Upper Arlington, Ohio can be developed to help guide the council. The creation of the council will help lay the groundwork for the establishment of referral networks.

The coordinating council should institute procedures for referrals to and from the juvenile firesetter program and should define the roles of each agency. For example, the juvenile firesetter program would be chiefly responsible for providing assessment and education, while child protective services and mental health agencies would provide counseling services for more troubled firesetters. Each agency representative could work toward providing the necessary procedures for acquiring services for juveniles referred by the juvenile firesetter program, such as sliding fees, if necessary.

The council will be responsible for developing specific referral agreements between the juvenile firesetter program and different agencies. These referral mechanisms, which will be described in detail later in the Referral Mechanisms Component, should include procedures for information exchange between the program and the referral agencies. Dual waivers and contracts enable the program staff to learn the status of the juveniles they refer for additional services. Referral agencies should also be able to learn the status of juveniles referred to the program.

One of the most important functions of the council representatives is to educate the other council members about their agency's strengths and limitations. Misunderstandings and problems between agencies often develop because one agency is not familiar with how the other agency operates. The fire service, for sample, is designed for immediate response, but social service organizations are often not able to respond with the same speed. The workshop described below is designed to help personnel in different agencies understand how their counterparts work. The council will maintain communication between agencies and troubleshoot when necessary. If a firesetter is not receiving the services recommended by the juvenile firesetter program, the council or appropriate representatives can intervene to find out why.

Finally, council representatives will also be called upon to help identify other agencies or individuals who work with juvenile firesetters. Council representatives should disseminate information about the juvenile firesetter program to their agencies and the community and promote the program. The goal of the council is to gain support for program from all agencies that work with juveniles and to ensure that all those who work with juvenile firesetters understand the function of the juvenile firesetter program.

Juvenile Firesetter Program Workshop

As noted earlier, different agencies have different working cultures. To help agencies learn about each other, the juvenile firesetter program should sponsor a one-day workshop for employees of each of the agencies represented on the council. During the workshop, which is based on a seminar sponsored by Rochester, New York's FRY program, the members of the coordinating council will serve as a panel to moderate the workshop. Members of the key agencies who work with juvenile firesetters should be invited to attend. The workshop will give participants the opportunity to meet their counterparts in different agencies and learn how different agencies operate.

The juvenile firesetters program may want to have the State Fire Marshal or other representative give opening remarks or a keynote address. After the welcoming remarks, the program coordinator can begin the workshop by describing the characteristics of juvenile firesetters, the nature and extent of the problem in that jurisdiction, and the role of the juvenile firesetter program. The panel representatives can then be asked to describe how their agency works with juvenile firesetters. Attendees can be asked to share their experiences with juvenile firesetters. Participants should be encouraged to ask the panel members how they might handle a particular case.

After a break for lunch, attendees should be assigned to different groups. Each group should include at least one member from each of the different agencies attending the workshop. Each group should be given a description of a juvenile firesetting case and instructed to discuss how they would handle the case. Each group member would then be responsible for describing how his/her agency handles such cases. Participating in this activity gives each attendee the opportunity to see how different agencies handle the same case. Understanding different work styles and philosophies is essential if agencies are going to be asked to work together to solve the juvenile firesetter problem. The workshop can close with a discussion of the role of the juvenile firesetter program coordinating council and what the program needs from each agency.

The workshop should be conducted after the juvenile firesetter program has been established and the staff has been trained. It is designed to give the referral and resource agency staff a formal opportunity to learn about the juvenile firesetter program and meet their counterparts in other agencies.

Resource Directory

The juvenile firesetter program should also create a Juvenile Firesetter Resource Directory. The directory should include the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the agencies and individuals who work with juvenile firesetters. The directory may include local, county, or state agencies. The coordinating council should be able to provide the information needed for the director. Additional resources may be obtained by writing area fire departments or social service agencies and asking for their help in identifying resources. An example of a juvenile firesetter resource directory can be found at the end of this chapter.

Jurisdictional Characteristics

The structure of any jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter program will be affected by: 1) the size and nature of the juvenile firesetter problem; 2) the resources (e.g., manpower, money, space, etc.); and 3) the availability of private funding, if necessary. As noted earlier, no one program structure is best or even feasible for every jurisdiction. Large fire departments with the necessary people and funds can staff full-time juvenile firesetter programs and provide all of the necessary services using multiple personnel. Smaller departments or those with limited funds may be able to fund one full-time position or may have different fire service personnel assume some of the juvenile firesetter program responsibilities in addition to their other duties.

Like many juvenile firesetter program activities, recruiting representatives to serve on the coordinating council takes time. For some programs, especially smaller programs, it may take more time than the coordinator can supply. At a minimum, the program coordinator should contact each potential referral agency and describe the program. Referral networks need to be established if the juvenile firesetter program is going to meet the needs of the youth it sees. Each referral agency needs to understand that juvenile firesetting is a community problem and they must be willing to be part of the solution.

The juvenile firesetter program staff must also be prepared to handle the turf issues that may exist between agencies. These issues are often deeply-rooted and preclude agencies from working together. One of the major functions of the coordinating council is to maintain communication between agencies. Recruiting representatives from **all** of the key agencies listed above will help gain support for the program. All of the agencies must be involved in the planning and coordination stage of a juvenile firesetter program. This involvement will give each agency a vested interest in the success of the program and assist in breaking down the barriers that may arise over turf issues.

Summary

The problem of juvenile firesetting is a serious and deadly problem that faces communities throughout the United States. Although the fire service is often the first agency to respond when a fire is set, juvenile firesetting is a community problem that requires the resources of the entire community. Jurisdictions vary, and each will need to determine the seriousness of the juvenile firesetting problem. This component presents guidelines on how to decide what type of program best suits the needs of a particular jurisdiction. The component also provides information on program structure, staffing, training, funding, and planning and coordination with other community agencies.

Each program must assess their needs and resources to decide the optimum means of providing the essential services to juvenile firesetters. The remaining components will describe those essential and different approaches to providing those services.

COMPONENT 2: SCREENING, EVALUATION, AND DEVELOPING THE INTERVENTION PLAN

Purpose

The primary purpose of this component is to describe the various screening and evaluation options used to assess firesetting youth and their families. There are a number of methods currently used by a variety of community agencies. Different communities may elect to involve one or many agencies in these screening and evaluation procedures. The various types of procedures are described in terms of the specific context in which they are applied. For example, the screening and evaluation procedures typically used by the fire service are different than those used by law enforcement. This is because the fire service is more likely to choose methods which will help in preliminary interviews with firesetters;

whereas law enforcement is likely to select techniques which will be useful in investigation interviews with suspected arsonists. Screening and evaluation methods will vary according to the roles and functions different community agencies have in working with juvenile firesetters. Therefore, the current assignment of screening and evaluation procedures to particular users reflects their current application by community agencies.

Each of the screening and evaluation methods are described in terms of their function, the appropriate target populations, who uses them, their content, and their benefits and limitations. There may be instances where procedures utilized by one community agency, such as the fire service, also may be helpful to other users such as mental health or the schools. Decision grids are presented to help users select the most appropriate instruments or methods to best fit their service delivery needs. Although each of the screening and evaluation methods results in different types of information, one of the final products of their application is the development of an effective intervention plan for firesetting youth and their families. The purpose of the intervention plan is to recommend specific steps to be taken to eliminate firesetting behavior and resolve the accompanying psychosocial problems. Careful consideration of various situational factors and critical issues will ensure the successful implementation of these screening and evaluation procedures.

Objectives

There are four major objectives to be achieved in the screening and evaluation of firesetting youth and their families. The first is the assessment of firesetting risk. A complete firesetting history must be taken to determine the extent and nature of the problem. In addition, a detailed descriptive of the motives and circumstances surrounding the most recent firestart must be documented to ascertain the severity of the presenting problem. Based upon current information, an estimate must be made of the likelihood that firesetting behavior will recur.

The second objective is the evaluation of the psychosocial and environmental features related to firesetting behavior. Firestarting episodes do not happen as isolated incidents. Although the majority of juvenile firestarts are estimated to be the result of curiosity or accident, about one-third of juvenile fires are started by troubled and conflicted children. Therefore, for a selected proportion of firesetting youth, there must be an assessment of the underlying psychosocial features which accompany their firesetting behavior.

The third objective is the determination of criminal intent. If juveniles are involved in significant fires resulting in property loss, personal injury, or

death, then they are at risk for being arrested for the crime of arson. Several factors are taken into consideration for determining criminal intent, including whether firesetters have reached the age of accountability, the nature and extent of their firesetting histories, and the motive and intent of their firesetting. Although legal definitions of arson vary from state to state, if an evaluation reveals that there is sufficient evidence indicating malicious and willful firesetting, then the youth can be arrested for arson.

The final objective is the development of an intervention plan. The result of a comprehensive evaluation is the development of an effective intervention plan. Intervention plans must identify the specific steps to be taken to eliminate firesetting behavior and to remediate the accompanying psychosocial problems. In addition, adequate incentives must be set in place to ensure that juvenile firesetters and their families will follow through with the recommended interventions.

The Target Population

There are three general groups of juvenile firesetters which must be targeted for screening and evaluation. The first group is young children under seven years of age. The fires started by the majority of these children are the result of accidents or curiosity. In general, they do not exhibit significant psychological problems and their family and peer relationships are intact and stable. (There are a small number of children involved in firesetting who exhibit severe psychopathology, and these children are generally referred immediately for psychological evaluation and treatment.) Table 2.1 describes the characteristics of most curiosity firesetters under seven-years-old.

The second group of firesetters are children ranging in age from eight to twelve. Although the firestarting of some of these children is motivated by curiosity or experimentation, a greater proportion of their firesetting represents underlying psychosocial conflicts. Clinical and empirical research has identified a group of personality and social factors characteristic of this group of firesetters. In addition, there are a set of immediate environmental conditions which are hypothesized to be related to triggering and reinforcing their firesetting behavior. Table 2.2 presents the factors describing recurrent firesetters between the ages of eight and twelve.

The third group of firesetters are adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. These youths tend to have a long history of undetected fireplay and firestarting behavior. Their current firesetting episodes are either the result of psychosocial conflict and turmoil or intentional criminal

behavior. There are some preliminary studies suggesting a set of personality, social and environmental features descriptive of adolescent firesetters. These features are outlined in Table 2.3.

There are a number of different community agencies that screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters and their families. Based on their broader role in the network of community services, each of these agencies will have different functions regarding their work with firesetters. Consequently, the screening and evaluation methods they select will vary depending on their specific needs. These needs, in part, will depend upon the specific target populations services by these agencies. The following community agencies are identified as those most likely to screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters.

The Fire Service. The fire service is frequently viewed as the lead agency in the community for screening and evaluating juvenile firesetters. The primary role of the fire service is the early identification of firesetting youth and their families. There are a number of different ways in which juvenile firesetters are identified by the fire service. First, parents may discover firestarting behavior and voluntarily seek help for their children. Second, other community agencies may look to the fire service as the experts in working with juvenile firesetters and refer their cases to them. Third, fire and arson investigation efforts may reveal the involvement of juveniles in significant fires. Finally, if firesetters are arrested for arson, probation and juvenile justice may refer them to the fire service for an evaluation of the severity of their firesetting problem. Hence, the fire service is likely to see the entire range of juvenile firesetters from young children under seven who firestart out of curiosity to adolescents involved in recurrent firesetting.

Frequently the fire service will have two levels of screening and evaluation procedures. The first level involves preliminary screening to determine the immediate severity of the firesetting problem. This generally is done by telephone interview. If there appears to be no imminent risk, basic information is obtained and appointments are made for additional evaluation sessions. A complete interview with firesetters and their families follows and represents the second level of evaluation. The primary goals of these interviews are to analyze the severity of the firesetting behavior and describe the psychosocial environment. This two level system facilitates the handling of emergency problems and establishes the conditions necessary for a comprehensive evaluation system.

Table 2.1
Characteristics of Curiosity Firesetters Ages Seven and Under

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Normal physical, cognitive and emotional development. No evidence of psychiatric disturbance.
II. Social Circumstances	A happy, well adjusted family life. Good peer relationships. No academic or behavior problems in school.
III. Environmental Conditions	Firesetting is the result of accident, experimentation and curiosity. Feelings of guilt and remorse occur after firesetting. Attempts are made to extinguish firestarts. A low probability exists of future firesetting.

Table 2.2
Characteristics of Recurrent Firesetting Children Ages Eight to Twelve

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Evidence of difficulties in one or more areas of physical, cognitive, or emotional functioning. Studies suggest the presence of one or more of the following problems: a greater number of physical illnesses, history of sexual abuse, learning disabilities, overwhelming feelings of anger and aggression, overactivity, impulsiveness and frequent temper outbursts.
II. Social Circumstances	Single-parent families with absent fathers are typical. When marriages are intact, there is a high degree of discord. Overly harsh methods of discipline coupled with lack of adequate supervision is common in single-parent households. Violent patterns of family interaction also have been observed. A history of academic failure coupled with behavior problems in school are evident. Difficulties establishing and maintaining friendships are observed.
III. Environmental Conditions	Stressful events trigger emotional reactions which result in firesetting. Firesetting represents the emotional release of displaced anger, revenge or aggression. Firesetting has the immediately positive reinforcing properties of attention and effect. No attempts are made to extinguish firestarts. There is rarely consideration of the negative consequences or potential destruction prior to firesetting.

Table 2.3
Characteristics of Adolescent Firesetters

Dimension	Description
I. Individual Characteristics	Several significant emotional and behavioral problems are apparent. Studies indicate a higher than average number of accidents resulting in physical injuries, higher levels of sexual arousal, fantasy, excitement, and misbehavior, evidence of gender confusion, lack of emotional depth and restricted capacity for expression, and greater risk-taking behavior.
II. Social Circumstances	Predominant are single-parent households in which discipline and supervision are uneven. Intact families display high levels of marital discord. One or more parents may carry a psychiatric diagnosis. Physical abuse and other violent patterns of family interaction have been observed. Long histories of academic failure and behavior problems in school are typical. Peer pressure and influence are responsible for guiding and directing behavior.
III. Environmental Conditions	Firesetting can be motivated by need for recognition and attention from peers and from stressful events which trigger emotional reactions resulting in antisocial activity. Firesetting is frequently accompanied by other delinquent activities, such as drug consumption or petty theft, and feelings of excitement and defiance are reported just prior to the act. Feelings of guilt or remorse after firestarting are rare, no attempts are made to extinguish the fires, and there is little fear of punishment.

Law Enforcement. In some communities law enforcement is responsible for the investigation of arson fires. In other communities arson fires are investigated either by an Arson Task Force comprised of both law enforcement and fire service personnel or by the arson investigation unit of the fire department. If an arson investigation is underway, certain types of specialized investigative interviews and interrogation procedures may be used to ascertain the nature and extent of the firestarting problem. In some instances investigative interviews lead to the arrest of juveniles for arson. In order to arrest juveniles for arson, sufficient firesetting history and criminal intent must be demonstrated. In addition, in most states juveniles must have reached the age of accountability before they can be arrested for criminal acts. The age of accountability varies from state to state, and can range from as young as seven to as old as 14. If the

firesetters have not reached the age of accountability or they are involved in their first firesetting offense, then law-enforcement agencies can elect to administer the procedures of counsel and release. Counsel and release refers to talking to juveniles about the dangers of firestarting and the potential for arrest, trial, and incarceration if their firesetting continues. At the conclusion of this talk the youth are released from further obligation or commitment. However, if there is sufficient evidence to arrest the juveniles for the crime of arson, they then enter the juvenile justice system for evaluation and intervention.

Frequently, investigative interviews uncover additional difficulties or problems with juvenile firesetters and their families and the result is their diversion to appropriate social service agencies. For example, most states have mandatory reporting laws that state that children suspected of being victims of neglect, maltreatment, or abuse must be reported within a 24- to 48- hour time period to the appropriate law-enforcement agency. This agency usually is located within the Department of Social Services and in many state is called Child Protective Services. Child Protective Services has the mandate to evaluate all reported cases of suspected child neglect, maltreatment, and abuse and to take the appropriate and necessary actions to remediate the existing problems.

Probation and Juvenile Justice. Juveniles arrested for arson are the primary target population of probation and juvenile justice. Although the procedures of juvenile justice systems vary from state to state, there are some common features which represent the steps that are taken once juveniles have been arrested for arson. Before cases go to court, probation usually conducts a comprehensive evaluation with firesetters and their families. In addition to personal interviews, information is gathered from arresting officers or agencies regarding the circumstances of the cases. Along with collecting family and personal histories, a thorough analysis is made of criminal intent. There are at least two options which can be pursued at the end of these interviews. First, firesetters and their families can be referred for counseling and mental health treatment. In these instances the youth are assigned probationary status with respect to the firesetting offense. These referrals are technically voluntary, but probation frequently informs families that formal action will be taken if they refuse to cooperate. Second, given the presenting information on the juveniles and the nature of their outstanding criminal behavior, probation can determine that a petition will be filed for them to appear in court.

In general, juvenile court judges assume that every effort has been made to keep these juveniles out of court. Juvenile cases proceed like any non-jury trial. There is a fact finding period leading up to the trial. During this period, additional evaluations with juveniles and their families are conducted by probation. From these interviews, probation is likely to make recommendations to the judge for intervention. Hence, both

probation and the courts rely heavily on information obtained from personal interviews with children and their families to determine the disposition of their cases.

Mental Health. Mental health evaluation represents the primary alternative for initiating effective treatment for children and adolescents involved in recurrent firesetting. Mental health agencies and professionals evaluate children whose firesetting is indicative of underlying psychological conflict and social maladjustment. In addition, mental health evaluation is appropriate for those juveniles whose firesetting is the result of antisocial and delinquent behavior. Curiosity firesetters are unlikely to require mental health evaluation. Therefore, with the exception of curiosity firestarters, mental health evaluation is an important option for the majority of firesetting youth.

There are a number of ways in which firesetters reach mental health agencies or professionals for evaluation. First, parents may seek help directly for their firesetting children. Second, various community services which identify and screen these youths can refer them for mental health consultation. For example, because the fire service screens the entire range of juvenile firesetters, those children they evaluate as at risk for potential firesetting can be referred immediately for mental health evaluation. Finally, in some instances, mental health consultation can be mandated for firesetters. For example, as a condition of their probation, juvenile justice can specify that juveniles arrested for the crime of arson must receive psychiatric evaluation and intervention. Therefore, there are a number of different pathways which lead firesetting youngsters to mental health evaluation.

Schools. Schools are likely to identify juvenile firesetters in one of two ways. First, parents may disclose to teachers or counselors that their children have become involved in unsupervised firesetting activities. If these children are young, elementary school students, they are likely to be curiosity firesetters. If they have no history of previous firesetting and they have not set a significant fire, then preliminary screening may suggest referral to the fires service for educational intervention. Second, juveniles may select the school environment as their firesetting target. Statistical studies show that over three quarters of school fires are started by children. School fires can range from trash can fires to fires which burn entire buildings. The severity of the fires frequently determines the actions taken by school officials. Older children and adolescents identified as setting school fires are likely either to be referred for mental health intervention or, if they have histories of previous firesetting and they have set a significant fire, they can be arrested for arson. Therefore, school officials are likely to see the entire range of firesetting youth, and they must be prepared to refer them to the appropriate community agencies.

The Procedures

The procedures currently utilized by community agencies to screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters are described in detail later in the component. The procedures described in this component are separated by use (e.g. fire service, law enforcement, probation). The explanation of each procedure includes a description of the procedures: 1) function, 2) target population, 3) users, 4) content, 5) benefits, and 6) limitations. The **functions** are the intended application of these methods and the anticipated information which results from their use. The **target populations** define the types of firesetting youth these procedures are intended to screen and evaluate. The **users** are those professionals most appropriate to implement these procedures. The content **describes** the construction of the instruments and the specific items which comprise them. The **benefits** assess the salient features contributing to the successful screening and evaluation of firesetting youth. The **limitations** define the circumstances which limit the interpretation and application of the information resulting from these procedures. Examples of some of the actual screening and evaluation instruments can be found at the end of this chapter. The Resource List at the end of this component lists the origin of these procedures and who to contact for additional information.

For each user, the fires service, law enforcement, probation and juvenile justice, and mental health, decision grids are presented to help in the selection of the most appropriate screening and evaluation methods. The decision grid summarizes these methods in terms of five critical dimensions: (1) purpose, (2) user, (3) output, (4) impact, and (5) risk. These five dimensions are designed to provide the critical information necessary to help in deciding which method best fits the user's needs. For example, a juvenile firesetter program may want to implement an evaluation system designed to identify and separate curiosity firesetters from firesetters with serious psychological problems. Their rationale for wanting such a system is that they think they can provide the necessary educational programs to help curiosity firesetters, while they can refer the more severely disturbed firesetters to mental health agencies. The decision grid is organized to identify which methods yield evaluation information and are likely to discriminate these target populations in the most effective way with the least amount of risk. The decision grids are designed to guide users toward the most intelligent selection and application of screening and evaluation methods.

Developing the Intervention Plan

Regardless of which agencies implement their selected methods of evaluation, they all share the common goal of producing a plan for the

remediation and treatment of juvenile firesetters. Although specific information and recommendations will vary depending on the particular methods employed, there are some general factors which can serve as guidelines in developing the most effective plan for intervention.

There are five basic factors which should be contained in an intervention plan. The first factor is a comprehensive description of the firesetting problem and the contributing psychosocial features. Although each procedure approaches this description in its own way, there are some fundamental points which must be identified. Firesetting history must recount the emergence of fire interest and fireplay, along with describing all incidents of firesetting. A description of the psychosocial features must include an analysis of personality, family, and social characteristics which may be related to firesetting. A detailed description of this information will contribute to an accurate assessment of the presenting problem.

The second factor of an interview plan is the assessment. There are four major content areas which must be contained in the assessment. First, there must be an evaluation of firesetting risk, or the likelihood that juveniles will be involved in future firesetting episodes. Second, there must be an assessment of the underlying psychosocial features related to the firesetting. Third, if appropriate, there must be analysis of the motivations and intentions of firesetting to rule out criminal intent. Finally, any special circumstances which are observed must be evaluated, such as evidence of severe neglect, maltreatment, or abuse. This assessment should result in the identification of specific areas that need to be adjusted or changed to stop firesetting and remediate the underlying psychosocial features.

The third factor of an intervention plan is specifying recommendations for intervention. While the assessment identified the targets of behavior change, recommendations must be made to effect these changes. Specific interventions must be suggested to stop the firesetting behavior and repair the contributing psychosocial dysfunction. The interventions must be targeted directly at the specific needs of individual children and their families. The interventions represent strategies for changing the behavior patterns of firesetting youth.

The fourth factor is the presentation of the intervention plan to juveniles and their families. This is an extremely important aspect of these procedures in that families must be convinced of the severity of their problems and the urgency of taking action to get the appropriate type of help. In some instances, a written evaluation is prepared and presented to the family. The presentation of the intervention plan must clearly communicate to children and families feasible methods for remediating their presenting problems.

The final factor of the implementation plan is ensuring follow-through by firesetters and their families. At the very least, agencies referring juveniles and families for additional intervention can follow through on their own with telephone calls to the referral agency to ascertain whether the recommended contact actually occurred. Different community agencies may have various ways of providing incentives or creating leverages so that follow-through with the intervention plan is more likely to occur. For example, fire departments can offer children a tour of the firehouse or a visit with the fire chief if they pursue their educational intervention. Law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice can help youth avoid arrest and incarceration by diverting them to mental health counseling. Mental health can suggest to firesetting youth and their families that their quality of life is likely to improve as a result of participation in treatment. Schools can refuse to accept firesetters in their classrooms. There are a number of leverages which can be successfully implemented in certain circumstances to help ensure follow-through with the intervention plan.

Situational Influences

Communities will set up screening and evaluation procedures for juvenile firesetters and their families only if they perceive that the problem is important and critical to their safety and welfare. The nature and extent of the juvenile firesetter problem in communities, in part, will contribute to the social awareness and pressure necessary to create community action on behalf of juvenile firesetters. However, it is the primary responsibility of community agencies to identify whether juvenile firesetting represents a significant part of the firesetting and arson problem in their community. If an active attempt is made to assess the scope of the problem in the community and the availability of services, and there is a confirmation of the problem and need for services, then mounting an effort to establish and maintain screening and evaluation programs can be sanctioned on a community-wide basis.

Critical Issues

The overriding goal of this component is to describe various options for setting up a successful system in communities for screening and evaluating firesetting youth and their families. There are certain circumstances which communities must consider when they set forth to accomplish this goal. Anticipating these conditions and resolving some of these concerns before they create roadblocks can be a critical key to the implementation of an effective screening and evaluation system.

Secure a Mandate. To implement an effective screening and evaluation system for juvenile firesetters in the community there has to be agreement form the participating agencies that this is a necessary, desirable, and feasible goal. Certain agencies may be identified as providing the primary leadership in establishing the system. For example, in many communities fire departments have taken the lead in both implementing screening and evaluation procedures for juvenile firesetters and providing training on the topic to cooperating agencies such as mental health, probation, and juvenile justice and the schools. Cooperating agencies must be identified and agreement must be reached between them regarding a workable system for their community.

Identify Agency Responsibilities. Once an agreement is reached between community agencies regarding the need for a screening and evaluation system for juvenile firesetters, agencies must identify within their own operations the responsible personnel and appropriate program structure. For example, fire departments may determine that public education is the most feasible division to take on the tasks of establishing screening and evaluation procedures for juveniles. Law enforcement may send their juvenile officers to interview firesetters. Schools may send students involved in firestarting to their counselors for preliminary screening. The details of what personnel in which departments are responsible for screening and evaluating firesetters is an important consideration and must be carefully analyzed prior to the implementation of the system.

Provide Adequate Training. Subsequent to working out a mandate and specifying the logistics of the screening and evaluation system within the community, all personnel responsible for working with juvenile firesetters must receive appropriate training. In many communities, fire departments have played a major role in providing training not only to their personnel, but to other agencies within the community that they have identified as critical in their attempts to help juvenile firesetters. These agencies include, but are not limited to, law enforcement, probation and juvenile justice, burn and trauma units, departments of social services, mental health, and the schools. Training seminars range from one to two hours to one to two days. Their formats and structures vary depending on the specific needs of various communities. Examples of training seminar agendas focused on teaching multiple professions how to effectively screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters and their families can be found at the end of this chapter.

FIRE SERVICE PROCEDURES

The following instruments and methods are used as screening and evaluation procedures by the fire service. As noted earlier, the characteristics of each procedure; function, target population, user, content, benefits, and limitations will be summarized. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented to help users select the screening or evaluation procedure most likely to fit their needs.

Telephone Contact Sheet

Functions. When parents or community agencies call the fire department to request help for firesetting youth and their families, this sheet is used as a preliminary screening mechanism. Basic information is gathered such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, a brief summary of the firesetting problem, and a description of the steps to be taken, which frequently includes the dates and times for setting up personal interviews or the other follow-up procedures which are to be implemented for particular cases.

Target Populations. The target populations include the entire range of juvenile firesetters and families referred to the fire service.

Users. This sheet can be used by any level of fire service personnel who receive initial telephone calls regarding juvenile firesetters. This or other similar sheets recording telephone inquiries or requests for help can be used by a variety of community agencies servicing juvenile firesetters.

Content. The content is basic demographic information and an indication of the next steps to be taken to provide services to juvenile firesetters and their families.

Benefits. The primary benefit of this sheet is that it provides a way to systematically organize incoming information about juvenile firesetters and their families. In addition, it records preliminary plans for future actions.

Limitations. It may be an unnecessary link in the paperwork chain which potentially impedes rather than assisting the program in providing services to juvenile firesetters.

Juvenile with Fire Worksheets A and B

Functions. Engine companies and fire investigators at the fire scene may identify juveniles involved in firesetting. In these cases they can record preliminary screening information on the Juvenile with Fire Worksheet A.

Once the information is recorded at the fire scene, officers and investigators can return to their departments and relay this information to existing juvenile firesetter programs. Juvenile firesetter programs can record incoming information on the Juvenile with Fire Worksheet B. Together these two worksheets provide preliminary screening information on firesetting youth and their families.

Target Populations. The information recorded on these sheets can apply to the entire range of juvenile firesetters identified by engine companies and fire investigators and referred to juvenile firesetter programs.

Users. These sheets are designed to go hand-in-hand with one another and to facilitate communication regarding the identification of juvenile firesetters between different divisions within the same fire department. Therefore, in those fire departments where engine companies and fire investigators are likely to make first contact with juveniles, these forms will help direct these youths to existing juvenile firesetter programs within the same fire department.

Content. These sheets contain basic demographic information on juvenile firesetters and their families and record the type of services they receive once they enter juvenile firesetter programs.

Benefits. These sheets are likely to increase communication between various divisions within fire departments regarding juvenile firesetters. In addition, these forms are likely to reduce the possibility of juvenile firesetters and their families "falling through the cracks" in the system and failing to receive the necessary services.

Limitations. These sheets will add to the paperwork load of those divisions who use them within fire departments.

USFA's Interview Schedules

Functions. These interview schedules are designed to provide the juvenile firesetter program with systematic methods for evaluating juvenile firesetters and their families. The interview schedules consist of a series of questions which are asked of firesetting youth and their families in personal interviews. The application of these interview schedules yields information regarding the severity of the firesetting problem and preliminary data on the psychosocial environment of juvenile firesetters and their families. The USFA interview schedules have been widely used by a number of fire departments throughout the country and represent standard practice for many fire departments and juvenile firesetter programs. With minimal training, these procedures can be used by fire

service personnel to screen, evaluate and refer juvenile firesetters and their families to appropriate service agencies in the community. There are three manual describing in detail the application of these interview schedules. They are indexed in the Resource List at the end of this component.

Target Populations. These interview schedules and the manuals which describe their application are divided into three age groups. The first manual outlines the interview schedules and methods for working with children seven and under. The second manual describes the interview schedules and methods to be applied to children ages seven to thirteen. The third manual contains the interview schedules and procedures for working with adolescent firesetters. The implementation of the procedures in each of these three manuals allows fire departments to screen and evaluate the entire range of juvenile firesetters.

Users. These interview schedules and accompanying manuals are used by fire departments extensively throughout the United States. Many departments have established juvenile firesetter programs following the guidelines suggested in these manuals. The interview schedules also contain information which may be useful to mental health professionals regarding the severity of the firesetting problem and the conditions of the psychosocial environment.

Content. Juvenile firesetters and their families are interviewed alone and together for approximately ninety minutes by fire service personnel using the interview schedules. The interview schedules are organized and presented in slightly different ways depending on the age of the firesetter. For children under seven, the interview schedule is divided into two sections. Section one focuses on questions regarding firesetting behavior and section two requires observations to be made regarding the home and the parents. For children seven through thirteen, the interview schedule is divided into three sections. The fire section asks questions related to firesetting history, the second section presents questions related to the home and family, and the third section asks questions regarding school and peers. For adolescent firesetters the interview schedule is divided into two main sections. Section one asks questions related to firesetting history and details of the most recent firesetting incident. Section two asks questions regarding the psychological environment, including information about physical health, the home, the family, peers, and school. For all age levels parents are asked to complete a questionnaire which contains observations about the psychological behavior of their children.

The interview schedules have scoring procedures which classify firesetting youth and their families according to risk levels. These risk levels refer to the probability that the juvenile firesetters are likely to participate in future firesetting incidents. There are three levels of risk--little, definite, and

extreme--representing increasingly severe firesetting behavior. In general, children classified as little risk firestart by accident or out of curiosity, and require educational intervention to remediate their problem. Juveniles classified as definite and extreme risk firestart because of psychological conflict, family difficulties, or as part of a pattern of antisocial and delinquent behavior. They require mental health or juvenile justice intervention. Hence, the interview schedules yield a specific method for classifying juvenile firesetters according to the severity of their presenting problem. This classification system also suggests the type of interventions most likely to be beneficial to firesetting youth and their families.

Benefits. The primary advantage of the interview schedules is that they provide systematic procedures for fire service personnel to evaluate the entire range of juvenile firesetters and their families. In addition, these interview schedules yield a quantifiable method for classifying the severity of the firesetting problem and for recommending specific types of interventions. Also, only a brief training period is required to teach fire service personnel how to use these interview schedules. Their application is well-documented in three manuals and they are widely accepted and applied throughout the fire service.

Limitations. The major disadvantage of these interview schedules is that their validity and reliability have not been investigated. Therefore, the accuracy and consistency of the information which they yield remains open to question. A primary concern is that children identified as little risk may actually be exhibiting signs of more serious firesetting behavior. One way to address this problem is to monitor little risk firesetters for a period of time subsequent to their evaluation and educational intervention. Also, in cases where definite and extreme firesetting youth have been identified, it is recommended that other assessment strategies be used in conjunction with the interview schedules. For example, as a general rule these types of cases should be referred for additional evaluation by mental health professionals. While these interview schedules provide an important first step in screening and evaluating juvenile firesetters, virtually nothing is known about the quality of the information by yield. Therefore, back-up procedures must be set in place. This will ensure that juvenile firesetters and their families receive appropriate assessment and intervention.

Fire-Related Youth (FRY) Program Data Sheet

Functions. The primary function of the FRY Program Data Sheet is the organization of interview information obtained during evaluations of firesetting youth and their families. The data sheet is used to keep a record of the information describing the specific characteristics of

firesetting incidents, including firesetting history and details of the most recent firesetting episode. In addition, some information is collected regarding the characteristics of the firesetters, including school data and the physical and psychological features of firesetters. The specific items on the data sheet do not represent questions which are to be asked of firesetting youth and their family members, but rather they represent the type of information which emerges from interviews. Therefore, the data sheet can be viewed as a recordkeeping instrument which also has the potential to yield quantifiable data on the characteristics of firesetting incidents.

Target Populations. The FRY Program Data Sheet can be used for recording data on the entire range of juvenile firesetters screened and evaluated by fire departments.

Users. The FRY Program Data Sheet can be used by juvenile firesetter programs as part of the information they keep in their files on firesetting youth and their families. In addition, because this data sheet contains detailed information on firesetting incidents, arson investigation units within fire departments and law enforcement units investigating arson fires may find the information in this record useful.

Content. The FRY Program Data Sheet is organized according to firesetting incidents. For each incident, information is collected regarding the number of juveniles involved and their relationship to one another. For each juvenile involved in the incident, information is collected on the specific circumstances surrounding the fire, demographic characteristics, school data, behavioral features, and the actions taken by the program to remediate the presenting problems. All information is assigned a numerical value or code which facilitates later analysis of the data. The FRY Program Data Sheet classifies information on firesetting incidents and monitors the youth involved in these episodes.

Benefits. The advantage of the FRY Program Data Sheet is that it assigns numerical codes and values to information regarding firesetting incidents. This structure allows for summarizing data and arriving at quantifiable patterns of firesetting. As a result, trends in firesetting incidents can be identified. Thus, the FRY Program Data Sheet not only has value as a recordkeeping method, but it also has potential values as a research instrument.

Limitations. The information on the FRY Program Data Sheet is provided by fire investigators. As such, there is a strong emphasis on firesetting incidents and somewhat less emphasis on understanding why juveniles become involved in firesetting behavior. That is, the clinical interpretation of firesetting behavior is somewhat neglected. Therefore,

while the FRY Program Data Sheet provides quantitative information on firesetting incidents, it does not contribute to a qualitative understanding of the psychosocial attributes of firesetting youth and their families.

Decision Grid

Table 2.4 presents the decision grid for fire service procedures. For each method, five dimensions are analyzed which represent important considerations when selecting the most appropriate procedures. Users can identify their need for a specific type of screening or evaluation instrument and weigh the potential output and impact against the anticipated risk. For example, if a fire department wants to implement a method to determine the severity of a youth's firesetting problem, they might select the USFA's interview schedule. The decision grid suggests that this procedure is widely used by several fire departments and will yield a classification of firesetting risk for juveniles. Therefore, the implementation of this procedure is likely to adequately service the current screening and evaluation needs of the fire department. Other fire departments may have different assessment objectives, and the decision grid can assist in evaluating the utility of implementing the various available procedures.

Table 2.4
Fire Service Decision Grid

Method	Purpose	User	Output	Impact	Risk
Telephone Contact Sheet	Screening	Anyone answering the telephone or any fire service personnel	Files with demographic information on firesetters	The organization of first contact information to aid in routing firesetters to the most appropriate help	Adding paperwork to an already overloaded system
Juvenile with Fire Worksheets	Screening	Firefighters, arson investigators, or anyone working in the field	Files with demographics and services received in service delivery points to track firesetters within the system	Increased communication between first contact and service delivery points	Creating an unnecessary trail of paperwork following firesetters
USFA's Interview Schedules	Evaluation	Trained fire service personnel	Classification of juveniles into low, definite, and extreme risk for firesetting and development of an intervention plan	The application of a widely accepted and applied system for evaluating and classifying firesetters	Currently there are no formal statistical studies of validity or reliability on this method
FRY Program	Record-keeping	Juvenile firesetter program manager	Files on firesetting incidence, demographics, psychosocial data and intervention steps	Numerical codes and values are assigned to data for quantifiable analysis of trends	Short on supplying information on the "whys" of firesetting
Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria	Evaluation	Designed for intake counselors in probation departments--may be used by fire service personnel as well	An assessment of the severity of the firesetting and arson behavior according to one of three risk levels--low, moderate, and high	Systematic documentation of the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior	No quantifiable summary score results, and no formal statistical studies have been conducted

LAW ENFORCEMENT, PROBATION AND JUVENILE JUSTICE PROCEDURES

The following are some examples of the procedures used by law-enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice agencies when encountering juvenile firesetters and arsonist. These are general procedures and they are applied to most all juveniles suspected, investigated, or arrested for any type of criminal activity. At the end of this section the decision grid summarizes the impact of implementing these procedures.

Investigation Interview

Functions. When the cause and origin of fires are either unknown or determined to be arson, law enforcement officials begin their investigation procedures. The investigation usually begins at the fire scene. There are some instances in which juveniles involved in setting fires are identified at the fire scene. The general approach taken by many fire investigators is to convince juveniles to admit to firesetting. If juveniles acknowledge their firesetting, law enforcement has several options. If the fire was set by a very young child, or if it was a first offense motivated by accident or curiosity, then investigators can counsel the youth about the dangers of firesetting, and refer them to juvenile firesetter programs where they are available. If no local juvenile firesetter programs exist, these children are usually released to their parents without further obligation. However, older youth who are involved in fires resulting in significant damage or personal injury and whose firestarting represents a recurrent behavior, can be arrested for the crime of arson. If the firesetter is arrested, juvenile arrest reports are filed. Although these reports are confidential, they are reported as part of the national uniform crime statistics. In addition to arrest reports, there may be other reporting procedures to be completed such as a fire investigation report, a fire scene examination report documenting the physical evidence of arson, and an interview schedule. The interview schedule recounts the communication which occurs between fire investigators and juveniles suspected of arson.

Target Populations. Investigation interviews are conducted with juveniles suspected of arson.

Users. There are at least three different types of law enforcement approaches to fire and arson investigation. In some communities arson investigators are fire department personnel. In other communities police departments handle arson investigations. Finally, there are communities in which Arson Task Forces, comprised of both the fire service and law enforcement, are assigned to investigate arson fires. All law-enforcement

and agencies designated with the responsibility and authority to investigate and arrest arson suspects follow these procedures.

Content. The content of investigation interviews will vary depending on the stipulated procedures of the various law-enforcement agencies. In addition to collecting basic demographic information, the primary objective of the investigation interview is to establish motive and intent for firesetting.

Miranda Rights

Functions. If arson investigation interviews appear to be leading to the arrest of firesetters, then law-enforcement officials are mandated by federal law to read the juveniles their Miranda Rights. Miranda Rights pertain to the nature and type of communication which occurs between law enforcement and criminal suspects. These rights outline what can and cannot happen to the information disclosed by suspects during the course of investigation interviews leading to arrests. The Los Angeles Grand Jury has recommended a set of Miranda Rights specifically for juveniles. In addition to California, there are other states which use Juvenile Miranda Rights. These Miranda Rights not only inform juveniles about the nature of their communication with law enforcement, but they include a series of questions to ascertain whether the juveniles understand the meaning of their rights.

Target Populations. In general, juveniles participating in investigation interviews which may lead to their arrest for arson should be read their Miranda Rights.

Users. Law-enforcement agencies responsible for arson investigation and arrest are most likely to administer Miranda Rights.

Child Protective Services Report

Functions. In most states, the law mandates reporting suspected child neglect, maltreatment, or abuse within a 24- to 48- hour time period to the agency designated as enforcing this type of legal protection. This agency frequently is organized within the Department of Social Services and typically is referred to as Child Protective Services. In most states, Child Protective Services investigates all reported incidents of suspected child neglect, maltreatment, or abuse. Their primary function is to ascertain if credible evidence can be demonstrated to substantiate suspicions of neglect and abuse. Usually within a short period of time, (24 hours in most States), a preliminary assessment is completed to determine if the

health and safety of children are in immediate jeopardy. If this determination is made, then it is likely that these youngsters will be removed from their current living situation. If there is no outstanding emergency, then within a specified period of time Child Protective Services will conduct a comprehensive evaluation to determine whether the reports are indicated or unfounded. Based upon the information collected in these evaluations, Child Protective Services refers these youngsters and their families for appropriate intervention.

Target Populations. Children suspected of being victims of neglect, maltreatment, or abuse and their families can be reported to Child Protective Services.

Users. All persons, officials, and institutions suspecting child abuse are mandated by most state laws to report their suspicions within a 24- to 48-hour time period to Child Protective Services.

Content. The reporting procedures require basic demographic information on children and family members. The type of suspected neglect, maltreatment, or abuse must be specified, along with the reasons for the suspicions or observations.

Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria

Functions. In most States, when youth are arrested for arson they are referred to probation. Probation departments usually conduct an assessment of the youth and their families. The primary goal of this assessment is to determine whether to prosecute. The Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria are guidelines to be used in assisting in the evaluation of the psychological and social environment of firesetters and their families. It classifies juveniles and families into risk levels which help determine the likelihood that these youths will be involved in future arson-related or other antisocial activities.

Target Populations. The Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria focuses primarily on analyzing components of delinquent behavior. Therefore, it is most appropriately applied to juveniles who have been arrested for firesetting or where there is some question as to whether their firesetting activity is the result of psychosocial conflict or defiant antisocial behavior.

Users. The Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria is designed to be used by intake counselors in probation departments. It is designed to be used in conjunction with other assessment tools. Its application requires a certain level of understanding regarding the interpretation of individual items, therefore it should not be used without prior training.

Content. The Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria is modeled after The Juvenile Sexual Offender Decision Criteria. The decision criteria contained in the instrument are intended to be used as guidelines in determining the severity of the presenting firesetting behavior. The instrument is divided into three risk levels--high, moderate, and low. Each risk level contains two subscales which assess risk characteristics separately for juveniles and their families. The scales contain statements which describe a range of attitudes and behaviors reflecting participation in firesetting as well as other types of antisocial activities. These statements represent the actual decision criteria for each of the three risk levels.

Counselors are asked to rate the juveniles and families on the individual statements by assigning a numerical rating of 3 if the item is of high concern, a 2 if it is of moderate concern, and a 1 if it is of low concern. These statements are not intended to be asked as questions during intake evaluations with juveniles and their families. Rather, as result of intake assessments, counselors should be able to rate the juveniles and their families using these decision criteria.

The Adolescent Decision Criteria does not result in a total score determining a specific risk level for juveniles and their families. Rather, by calculating the frequency with which the counselors use the ratings, 3 (high concern), 2 (moderate concern), or 1 (low concern), the tendency toward high, moderate, or low risk for firesetting can be estimated. Consequently, counselors will have a general idea which risk levels adolescents and families are likely to represent in assessing the severity of the presenting firesetting behavior and their amenability to treatment.

Benefits. The major asset of the Adolescent Decision Criteria is that it organizes statements regarding the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior. Currently there are no other attempts to describe these distinctions. In addition, it offers general guidelines in helping probation counselors make difficult decisions regarding actions to be taken for firesetting youth and their families.

Limitations. The Adolescent Decision Criteria represents a preliminary attempt at developing standards to help increase the accuracy of decisions reached regarding the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior. Although this approach shows great promise, there are a number of tasks which remain to be accomplished. First, instructions standardizing its application would increase the quality of the evaluative information. Second, if the instrument resulted in a total quantitative score, then a more reliable decision-making criteria may be approached. Because there have been no reliability or validity studies conducted on the instrument, it is difficult to determine its success in assessing the severity of firesetting and

arson related behaviors and deciding on the most effective course of intervention.

Probation Case Plan

Functions. Once juvenile firesetters are referred to probation for evaluation, counselors follow specific procedures for conducting assessments and making recommendations for intervention. There are a number of different approaches that are used for conducting these assessments. They vary from county to county and from state to state. In general, basic information is collected from juveniles regarding their firesetting or other delinquent offenses and their psychological and social background. Family members also are interviewed regarding these same topics. From these evaluations, specific intervention objectives are identified to remediate the current behavior problems. In addition, specific steps are outlined to ensure that these objectives are accomplished within a reasonable period of time.

Target Populations. Juveniles are not evaluated by probation unless they have been arrested for arson or other crimes.

Users. Probation intake counselors typically conduct assessments of juveniles arrested for arson.

Content. Although the specific format and content of this evaluation is likely to vary between probation departments, there is some basic information that is routinely collected in the majority of these assessments. This basic information includes detailed descriptions of the history of antisocial activities with an emphasis on the current firesetting offense, involvement with alcohol and drugs, relationships with family and friends, current skills and strengths, and future goals. Upon completing interviews with juveniles and their family members, intake officers develop case plans which outline treatment objectives, specify the steps which are to be taken to meet these objectives, and outline who is responsible for achieving these objectives within a specific period of time. This constitutes the basic format of the evaluation procedures.

Decision Grid

Table 2.5 presents the decision grid summarizing the procedures utilized by law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice to screen juvenile firesetters and arsonists. There are general procedures which can vary from state to state, depending on specific statutes and legal guidelines. It is anticipated that most law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice

agencies will have similar procedures already in place, but they may want to refer to this decision grid to verify the output and impact of their particular methods. The Adolescent Decision Criteria represents a new evaluation method designed specifically for juvenile firesetter and arsonist populations.

Table 2.5
Law Enforcement, Probation, and Juvenile Justice Decision Grid

Method	Target/ Population	Purpose	User	Output	Impact	Risk
Law Enforcement						
Investigation Interview	Youth suspected of arson	Documentation of fire incidence	Juvenile investigators	In cases of no arrest, incidence reports are filed; in cases of arrest arrest records are established	Systematic documentation and monitoring of incidence rates of juvenile firesetting and arson	Arrested juveniles may not be diverted for necessary psychological interventions
Child Protective Services Report	Youngsters who evidence abuse, neglect, or maltreatment	Documentation of credible evidence demonstrating neglect, abuse, or maltreatment	Any persons, officials, or institutions suspecting child abuse	Filed reports to the legal entity in state governments responsible for investigating cases of child abuse	The protection of the physical and psychological welfare of children as guaranteed by law	
Miranda Rights	Youth arrested for arson	To inform youth of their legal rights prior to arrest	Law enforcement personnel responsible for arson investigation s and arrest	A signed legal document acknowledging administration of rights	The protection of the legal rights of arrested minors	
Probation and Juvenile Justice						
Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria	Adolescent arrested, but not yet tried or sentenced for arson	The evaluation of the psychosocial factors related to firesetting and arson behavior	Intake counselors in probation departments	An assessment of the severity of the firesetting and arson behavior according to one of three risk levels--low, moderate, and high	Systematic documentation of the severity of delinquent firesetting behavior	No quantifiable summary score results, and no formal statistical studies have been conducted
Probation Case Plan	Juveniles arrested, but not yet tried or sentenced for arson	To assess the psychosocial factors related to firesetting and identify interventions	Probation department counselors	Documentation of case plans to remediate delinquent firesetting behavior	The identification of specific intervention objectives	Relies heavily on self report from youth and their families

MENTAL HEALTH AND SCHOOL PROCEDURES

The following approaches represent some examples of mental health procedures used to evaluate juvenile firesetters. At the end of this section, the decision grid is presented which evaluates the impact of these procedures. In addition, the section will discuss briefly the role of schools in working with juveniles to prevent firesetting behavior.

The Therapeutic Assessment of Firesetting (TAF) Questionnaire

Functions. The TAF is a structured interview/questionnaire designed to assess older children and adolescents who have been involved in firesetting. The TAF is constructed to accomplish several functions, including evaluating the nature and extent of the firesetting problem, assessing the underlying dynamics of firesetting behavior, planning for the rehabilitation of firesetters, and stimulating therapeutic growth and introspection. The 133 items comprising the TAF were drawn from the literature on firesetting and from clinical experience with psychiatrically-committed arsonists. The TAF items are organized into general factors examining the situational and personality precipitants of the firesetting incident. In addition, it provides a method to explore the most recent fire-start and its circumstances in a detailed and explicit way. The TAF is designed to allow firesetters to talk explicitly about their firesetting problem and give them the opportunity to gain a greater understanding about the underlying motivations for their behavior.

Target Populations. The TAF is designed to be used when conducting structured interviews with firesetters who are being assessed for the first time or who are receiving treatment for firesetting or arson.

Users. The TAF is intended to be implemented by mental health professionals or experienced clinicians. It is recommended that those administering the TAF have some familiarity with rapport-building, interview techniques, and awareness of gross psychopathology. Although designed for mental health professionals, the TAF also has been used by evaluators for parole, law-enforcement, fire prevention, and county fire department personnel. The interview can be completed in as little as one hour (for the purposes of assessment), or it can take up to five one-hour sessions (for the purposes of treatment and therapy) depending on the availability of time and how much the firesetters are encouraged to elaborate on their answers. The TAF is accompanied by a well-documented set of instructions describing its applications.

Content. It is intended that the TAF's primary focus be its usefulness in stimulating understanding and insight into the dynamics of firesetting behavior within the context of a clinical interview. The items comprising the TAF also can be organized into specific dimensions or factors relating to the explanation of firesetting behavior. These factors include: (1) reliability, which is a scale assessing the consistency or accuracy of responses to the TAF, (2) family background and experiences, (3) intelligence, (4) mental disturbance and disorder, (5) physical health, (6) financial problems, (7) lack of supportive relationships, (8) difficulty in expressing anger and frustration, and (9) pyromania or pyromaniac tendencies. Although there is no formal scoring procedure for assessing these factors, interpretation can be enhanced by noting that the greater the number of endorsed items under a particular factor, the more focus should be placed on that factor for treatment and rehabilitation. However, the fact that firesetters do not score highly on a particular factor does not conclusively prove that such a factor is absent. Rather, it says that firesetters do not admit to the specific items comprising the factor. Hence, the self-report nature of the TAF must be taken into consideration when interpreting responses.

Benefits. The major benefit of the TAF is that it represents a unique attempt at providing a structure for interviewing, evaluating, and stimulating the treatment of individuals with significant firesetting histories. It has the potential to provide valuable information on the underlying causes of recurrent firesetting behavior and arson-related activities. In addition, it has the dual advantage of providing clinicians with important psychosocial information and potentially stimulating self-insight and introsopection on the part of firesetters.

Limitations. Although the TAF yields excellent qualitative data on the psychosocial functioning of firesetters, an attempt to obtain norms, profiles, or summary scores of the items would enhance its credibility, broaden its application, and improve its interpretation and generalizability. Information on the reliability and validity of the TAF would increase its utility as a clinical and research instrument.

The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist

Functions. The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist provides an empirical definition of child behavior problems. In addition, it assesses the social competency of children. It is a paper and pencil test which can be used in conjunction with clinical evaluations to provide a quantitative picture of the problems and the competencies of juveniles.

Target Populations. The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist assesses children as young as four and as old as 16. There are standardized norms against which to compare individual responses. It can be used with normal and emotionally impaired youth.

Users. The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist should be administered and interpreted by trained clinicians who are familiar with the application and interpretation of the scale.

Content. The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist consists of two major scales. The first is a 20-item social competency scale which contains three sub-scales, an activities score, a socialization score and a school score. The second is a behavior problem scale which contains two sub-scales, an internalizing behavior score, and an externalizing behavior score. The social competency scale asks questions regarding participation in sports, hobbies, games, activities, organizations, jobs, chores, the nature of friendships and how juveniles get along with others, how well they work and play alone, and their level of school functioning. There are four different respondent forms for the Checklist, including a parent form, a teacher form, a direct observation form and a youth self-report form. The parent form is most frequently used in clinical settings. A substantial number of reliability and validity studies demonstrate that the responses to the Checklist are accurate and consistent.

Benefits. There are several advantages of the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist. First, there are well-documented studies on the reliability and validity of the Checklist. Second, the scales assess both problems and competencies, giving a comprehensive perspective on the behavioral functioning of children. Third, the scales can be scored without the use of a computer. Finally, there is a well-written manual describing the administration and scoring of the Checklist.

Limitations. The Checklist must be used in conjunction with a comprehensive clinical evaluation when assessing firesetting youth and their families. While it provides an accurate and reliable empirical view of behavior, it does not replace the value of exploration, observation, and evaluation which takes place during clinical interviews.

General Methods of Psychosocial Assessment

Mental health professionals often develop their own styles and methods for conducting assessment interviews. Frequently evaluations will reflect the theoretical orientation, training, and treatment approaches of the practitioners. However, regardless of these factors, it is expected that juveniles whose presenting problem is firesettiing will receive a thorough

evaluation of their firesetting history, along with an analysis of the underlying psychosocial dynamics contributing to the presenting problems. The Resource List at the end of this component indicates additional references which will be helpful to clinicians who want to understand how to conduct comprehensive assessments of firesetting history and related psychopathology.

Decision Grid

Table 2.6 presents the decision grid for mental health procedures. The TAF represents the only method designed to be used specifically with juvenile firesetters. The remaining two methods represent general assessment procedures which also have been utilized to assess juvenile firesetters. The decision grid summarizes the output, impact, and risk associated with the application of each of these methods.

School Procedures

The primary role of schools in working with juveniles is to prevent the occurrence of fireplay and firesetting behavior through educational programs. These activities are outlined extensively in the Intervention Services component. When school personnel identify youth who firestart, their major course of action should be to refer them to one of several agencies including the juvenile firesetter program, a mental health professional or agency, and law enforcement. The referral will depend, in part, on the severity of the presenting problem and the significance of the fire. While it is unreasonable to assume that school personnel can provide evaluation services to juvenile firesetters, schools should be able to recognize the problem, identify the juveniles, and through preliminary screening procedures, refer them to the appropriate service agency.

Table 2.6
Mental Health Decision Grid

Method	Target/ Population	Purpose	User	Output	Impact	Risk
The Therapeutic Assessment of Firesetting Scale (TAF)	Older children and adolescents with significant histories of firesetting	Evaluation of psychosocial factors related to firesetting, planning for rehabilitation, and stimulating therapeutic growth	Trained mental health professionals or para-professionals	Through a structured interview format, a set of answers to systematic questions related to firesetting	Provides a method for obtaining important clinical information on firesetting	Does not yield a summary score nor can its psychometric properties be evaluated
The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist	Youngsters exhibiting behavior problems	A paper and pencil test which provides quantitative information on behavior problems as well as competencies	Trained mental health professionals	Standard scores on two scales; social competency and behavior problems	Psychome-trically sound clinical information on youngsters with behavior problems	Recommended to be used only in conjunction with a comprehensive clinical evaluation
General Psychosocial Assessment	All youngsters exhibiting psycho-logical problems	To assess the psychological problems and strengths of youngsters and their families	Mental health professionals	Output will vary according to specific methods and procedures employed	Evaluation of psychologic al problems and development of plans for their resolution	

RESOURCE LIST

The following items provide ways to get further information about the procedures and methods described in the component.

Fire Service Procedures

1. **Telephone Contact Sheet**

   Source: The Firehawk Children's Program

   Reference: Gaynor, J., et al. (1984). *The Firehawk Children's Program. A Working Manual*. San Francisco: The National Firehawk Foundation.

2. **Juvenile With Fire Worksheets A and B**

   Source: Portland Fire Bureau

   Contact: Don Porth
   Portland Fire Bureau
   55 SW Ash
   Portland, OR 97204
   (503) 823-3806

3. **USFA's Interview Schedules**

   Source: U.S. Fire Administration

   References: Fineman, K., er al. (1980). *Child Firesetter Handbook. Ages 7 and Under*. Washington, DC: U.S Government Printing Office.

   Fineman., et al. (1984). *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 7 to 13*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

   Gaynor, J., et al. (1988). *Adolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 14-18*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
FEMA
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue, Building N, Suite 311
Emmitsburg, MD 21727
(301) 447-6771

4. **FRY Program Data Sheet**

Source: Rochester, New York's FRY Program

References: Cole, R.E., et al. (1984). *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project.* New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R.E., et al (1986). *Children and Fire, Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project.* New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Law-Enforcement Procedures

1. **Investigation Interview**

Source: David Lowery
Arson Task Force
1215 South Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28203
(704) 336-3970

2. **Juvenile Miranda Rights**

Source: Los Angeles Grand Jury

Contact: Arson Task Force
1215 South Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28203
(704) 336-3970

Probation and Juvenile Justice Procedures

1. **Adolescent Firesetter Decision Criteria**

   Contact: Alison Stickrod Gray
   The Center for Prevention Service
   P.O. Box 254
   Underhill Center, VT 05490-0254
   (802) 899-2824

2. **Probation Case Plan**

   Source: Juvenile Service Division
   700 E. Trade Street
   Charlotte, NC 28202
   (704) 342-6804

Mental Health Procedures

1. **The Therapeutic Assessments of Firesetting (TAF) Questionnaire**

   Source: Terrance Neary, Ph.D.
   Horizon Counseling Center
   Suite 305
   Hoffman Estates, IL 60195
   (708) 882-7744

2. **The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist**

   Reference: Achenbach, T.M. & Edelbrock, C.S. (1982). *Manual for the Child Behavior Checklist and Child Behavior Profile*. Burlington, VT: Child Psychiatry, University of Vermont.

3. **General Methods of Psychosocial Assessment**

   References: Gaynor, J. & Hatcher, C. (1987). *The Psychology of Child Firesetting, Detection, and Intervention*. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Publishers.

   Wooden, W.S. & Berky, M.L. (1984). *Children and Arson, America's Middle-class Nightmare*. New York: Plenum Press.

COMPONENT 3: INTERVENTION SERVICES

Purpose

The Intervention Services component presents the primary intervention strategies designed to reduce the incidence of juvenile involvement in firesetting behavior and arson-related activities. These strategies reflect three major intervention approaches. The first strategy is primary prevention. The goal of primary prevention is to provide substantial fire safety and educational experience to juveniles so that they develop fire-competent behaviors and avoid participation in unsupervised firestarts. The second strategy is early intervention. Youth participating in fireplay and firesetting behavior motivated by accident, curiosity or experimentation can be identified and educated to reduce the likelihood of their future involvement in unsupervised firestarts. The third strategy is core intervention. Recurrent firesetters frequently experience significant psychological and social conflict and turmoil related to their firestarting activities. It is hypothesized that if these psychosocial problems can be adjusted or remediated, then not only are the chances of involvement in future firesetting episodes greatly reduced, but the quality of life is likely to improve for these juveniles and their families.

The three intervention strategies--primary prevention, early intervention, and core intervention--are aimed at reducing juvenile involvement in the entire range of unsupervised fireplay and firesetting activities. Each of the strategies have specific intervention objectives and they are aimed at particular target populations. Primary prevention efforts involve several community agencies including the schools, the fire service, and law enforcement. The fire service is the lead community agency providing early intervention services. They use many different types of program models to work with juvenile firesetters. Core intervention services involve mental agencies and professionals and the probation and juvenile justice systems. For each level of intervention, decision grids are presented to help program managers select the best intervention options to meet the objectives and target population needs of their service delivery system.

Intervention Objectives and Decision Grids

Each of the three intervention strategies are designed to achieve specific objectives. Primary prevention efforts are intended to reduce the incidence of first-time unsupervised fireplay and firesetting in populations of otherwise normal youth. This is accomplished by providing children of all ages with educational experiences focused on the rules of fire safety and prevention and understanding the consequences of fireplay and firesetting.

Early intervention programs are focused on identifying both children at-risk for fireplay or firesetting activities and those involved in first-time fireplay and firesetting episodes. In addition, their objective is to prevent the recurrence of fireplay and firesetting incidents. The implementation of short-term evaluation, education, and referral mechanisms within the fire service and other supporting community agencies are designed to meet these objectives.

Core intervention services are aimed at eliminating recurrent firesetting behavior and providing treatment and remediation for the contributing psychosocial determinants. Mental health intervention is the primary method utilized to stop recurrent firesetting and treat the underlying causes of the behavior. Probation and juvenile justice efforts provide legal incentives to youth and their families to pursue treatment for their patterns of antisocial and delinquent behavior. If treatment recommendations are not followed, the juvenile justice system can implement legal consequences and punishments related to firesetting and arson offenses.

Decision grids are presented for each level of intervention. These decision grids are designed to help program managers make informed choices regarding the selection and implementation of intervention approaches which best meet their needs. There are five critical dimensions identified as important criteria in choosing intervention strategies. They are: (1) purpose, (2) source, (3) acceptability, (4) impact, and (5) limitations. Careful consideration of these dimensions will lead to an intervention strategy. For example, if a well-funded fire department in a major metropolitan areas wants to initiate a comprehensive juvenile firesetter program, which includes both evaluation and family counseling services, they can utilize the decision grid to ascertain whether this approach has been tried, and, given specific limitations, whether it has been successfully implemented. The decision grids serve as guides to help users decide how to build an effective juvenile firesetter program in their community.

Target Populations

Each of the three major intervention strategies are designed to work with specific target populations of firesetting youth. Primary prevention efforts are focused on children and adolescent with little or no history of fireplay or firesetting. Although the majority of these programs are developed for elementary school children, it is expected that older youth and adolescents also can benefit from age appropriate fire safety and prevention programs. Early intervention programs are designed for children whose firesetting is the result of accident, curiosity or experimentation. These programs work with children ranging from under seven to as old as twelve. Core intervention services are aimed at those children and adolescents whose

recurrent firesetting behavior is the result of significant psychopathology, antisocial activity or criminal behavior. These youth are usually older and range in age from eight to eighteen. The Screening, Evaluation and Developing the Intervention Plan Component details the psychosocial characteristics of the entire range of firesetting youth.

Situational Influences

There are several situational factors which must be taken into account when designing intervention programs for juvenile firesetters. First, the incidence of the local juvenile firesetting problem must be assessed prior to the development of plans to initiate a program. This information is not always readily available and often requires the organization of a separate project to evaluate the extent of the juvenile firesetting problem in the community. As assessment of need is an appropriate starting point for determining whether communities can benefit from the development of juvenile firesetter intervention programs.

The design and implementation of juvenile firesetter programs will depend upon the commitment of time and resources participating agencies are willing to make in their community. For example, schools must decide whether primary prevention programs designed to teach fire safety are a high priority for their curriculum. Fire departments, heavily committed to suppression activities, will need to direct their focus to the prevention aspect of fighting fires. Law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice must elect to pay particular attention to the firesetting population of juveniles, as opposed to other groups of delinquent youth. Frequently additional program efforts aimed at specific problem areas or target populations can be incorporated into existing operations, thereby keeping costs at a minimum. Nevertheless, the level of time and resources committed to juvenile firesetter intervention programs is directly related to their content, utility, and effectiveness.

Juvenile firesetting must be viewed as a community problem, and as such, it deserves community-wide attention. Although fire departments may take the lead role in developing programs for juvenile firesetters, their efforts alone will not resolve the problem. It is crucial that there be working linkage established between the various community agencies capable of helping juvenile firesetters and their families. Schools, the fire service, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and mental health must all establish open communication channels with one another so that an organized effort is mounted to reduce juvenile involvement in firesetting and arson-related activities.

Critical Issues

The success of juvenile firesetter intervention programs depends on several factors. First, the community must be educated about the problems of juvenile firesetting. An effective public relations campaign must be developed to teach parents and adults how to recognize the problem in children and where and how to go for help to resolve it. Regardless of the level of intervention, from primary prevention to core intervention, the public must understand the seriousness of juvenile involvement in firesetting and they must be knowledgeable enough to take the first steps to get the appropriate help.

Each community agency focusing their attention on the problem of juvenile firesetting is likely to have slightly different roles and responsibilities, depending on the nature and extent of their services. Those agencies and professionals involved in helping juvenile firesetters must be trained in how to work with this special population of youth. Although training needs will vary according to the type of services offered, designing and implementing intervention programs often require special expertise and information. Educational manuals coupled with training seminars are important resources for establishing and maintaining effective intervention services.

Although the preliminary stages of designing and developing new programs often involves a great deal of struggle and perseverance, the true sign of a successful endeavor is whether these new program efforts can survive their infancy and mature into a fully functioning and ongoing part of their organizational structure. Juvenile firesetter intervention programs must be viewed as an essential part of not only reducing juvenile involvement in firesetting, but integral to maintaining low rates over time. This argument is a key factor in helping to sustain the resources necessary for maintaining program operations over the long-term. The community and the participating service agencies must be convinced of the value of juvenile firesetter intervention programs. Efforts to ensure that the time and resources committed to these programs become part of ongoing budget and staffing considerations within the management of organizations will help to sustain the life of these programs. Although community needs and priorities are likely to shift over time, a fire safe and secure community is a powerful argument for maintaining an adequate and effective intervention system for sustaining low rates of juvenile involvement in firesetting and arson.

PRIMARY PREVENTION

Primary prevention programs are aimed at reducing juvenile involvement in first-time unsupervised fireplay and firesetting incidents. The basic premise of these programs is that if children understand the rules of fire

safety and prevention and the consequences of firestarting, they are less likely to initiate or participate in nonproductive firesetting. Primary prevention efforts are educational programs designed to teach children of all ages fire safety and survival skills.

There are several different educational models utilized in primary prevention programs. The models employed largely depend on the sites which operate the programs. Primary prevention programs are found in the schools, the fire service, and law-enforcement. Schools can offer a wide range of prevention activities including fire safety education curriculum and activities, slide presentations, films, and assemblies. The fire service can mount national and local media campaigns, utilize district fire houses to provide tours and educational seminars for youth, and work with their school districts to present unique educational experiences. Law-enforcement can incorporate fire safety education as part of their general anti-crime efforts aimed at youth. Primary prevention programs can utilize a variety of different learning strategies and activities to accomplish the common objective of teaching youth how to develop fire-safe and competent behaviors.

It is recommended that community organizations or agencies launch a comprehensive fire prevention effort designed to reach a broad age-range of children. Educational programs for preschool children should be explored as well as programs aimed at elementary, middle, and high school aged youth. Schools are the obvious site where maximal efforts can be focused to reach the majority of children. The amount of time set aside for teaching fire prevention and safety will depend on the level of effort schools are willing to commit. A minimal effort might consist of a fire education presentation to youth coupled with the distribution of printed material to parents. A more comprehensive approach might be the adoption of a fire safety curriculum. There are several excellent packages of fire safety and prevention programs already developed for schools. The particular program or set of programs developed depends on the available resources and the range and depth of desired services. It is strongly recommended that schools integrate primary prevention efforts into their ongoing curriculum plans.

Fire service efforts can be important adjuncts in helping to promote the development of fire safety behaviors in children and their families. For example, parents who first notice their children's interest in fire or who have found their children playing with matches may instinctively call their local fire department for help. Fire departments can offer to talk with these youth, have them tour the local fire house and provide short-term educational services designed to teach fire prevention to children and their families. In addition, the fire service can work with their local schools to enrich fire prevention programs by offering classroom visits or assemblies,

slide presentations, and films designed to communicate information on fire safety and prevention. Finally, local fire departments can support national programs, such as National Fire Prevention Week, by mounting active print and television media campaigns designed to promote fire safety.

There are five basic elements which must be considered in the development of a successful primary prevention program for fire safety. First, the educational objectives of the fire safety program must be specified. Second, the community agencies willing to participate in primary prevention must be identified. Third, the specific populations of juveniles must be targeted. Fourth, the degree of commitment to teaching fire prevention (in terms of time, personnel, etc.), must be determined. Finally, the format and structure of the prevention effort must be established. Careful consideration must be given to the nature and type of fire safety programs which are selected for implementation. They must fit into a coordinated and comprehensive plan for promoting community fire safety and prevention.

The following programs represent a select sample of successful primary prevention efforts currently operating in several communities. They are described in terms of their function, target populations, users, content, benefits, and limitations. The Resource List at the end of this component provides details on now to obtain further information about all of the programs.

School Curriculum and Programs

The following are descriptions of primary prevention school curriculum and programs. Most of these programs are comprehensive packages which consist of specific classroom learning activities designed to teach fire safety and prevention rules to elementary and secondary school students. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented to analyze the impact and risk associated with implementing these programs.

A. Children's Television Workshop (CTW's) Fire Safety Project

Functions. The CTW's Fire Safety Project, produced by its Community Services Division, is a unique nationally focused program teaching preschool children fire prevention. This project reaches children at the critical age of their initial fire awareness and teaches them appropriate attitudes toward fire and basic fire safety rules. The methods of communication utilized by this project deserve special attention. Sesame Street characters (already popular with preschoolers) are the primary communicators of fire safety lessons. Characters like "Bert" and "Ernie," two very different fellows but very best friends, are utilized to teach

children about fire drills, firefighters, and firefighter training. Because these Sesame Street characters already have entered the lives of preschoolers through a variety of different types of exposures, they become effective communicators of important messages to children.

Target Populations. The primary audience of CTW's Fire Safety Project is preschoolers, although children ages five to seven also find these fire safety lessons valuable.

Users. Children, parents, and teachers can understand and apply the messages and materials created by this project.

Contents. The CTW's Fire Safety Project employs multiple mediums of communicating fire safety information. The primary method is through short, single-topic vignettes presented as a regular part of the television programming of Sesame Street. Initial research indicated that although some fire safety lessons were appropriate for television viewing, the majority of the material needed to be demonstrated directly to children. Hence, CTW designed materials and seminars to teach children in their preschool setting. In addition, CTW produces a Fire Safety Newsletter available to nursery and preschools. The applications of three diverse mediums of communication--television, teaching materials and the Newsletter--along with the use of Sesame Street characters as communicators, offers an intensive and consistent approach to teaching fire safety to children at the critical preschool age.

Benefits. This is a unique and comprehensive attempt at introducing preschool age children to the concept of fire safety.

Limitations. Although previous research suggests that preschoolers can benefit from fire safety education, there is little documentation evaluating the effectiveness of this particular approach.

B. Learn Not to Burn

Functions. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) developed the Learn Not to Burn Fire Safety Curriculum to meet the demand to educate primary school children about the rules and behaviors of fire prevention. Learn Not to Burn consists of a comprehensive package of materials for teachers which is designated to help them implement a fire safety curriculum in their classroom. The curriculum is organized around a set of 25 key fire safety behaviors which are divided into three categories: protection, prevention, and persuasion. The NFPA recommends that children demonstrate competency in all 25 behaviors by the completion of their primary school education.

Target Populations. Learn Not to Burn is designed to be used in the elementary school classrooms of kindergarten through eighth grade.

Users. Learn Not to Burn is intended to be implemented in the classroom by primary school teachers.

Content. Learn Not to Burn's 25 fire safety behaviors are categorized according to protection, prevention and persuasion and prioritized in terms of their importance. The first priority, protection, involves those behaviors children must learn in case of fire. Some examples of protection behaviors include participating in school fire drills, performing the stop, drop, and roll procedure, and developing a home fire escape plan. The second priority, prevention, is comprised of those behaviors which will deter injury before fire occurs. Some examples of prevention behaviors include how to use matches safely, how to store flammable liquids, and how to identify and remove electrical hazards. The third priority, persuasion, focuses on those behaviors which encourage others to become aware of fire safety and prevention activities. Some examples of persuasion behaviors involve teaching others about smoke detectors, making sure others properly maintain their electrical equipment and helping others install electrical outlet covers. Learning all 25 key behaviors results in children developing competent and responsible fire safety skills.

The Learn Not to Burn program contains an extensive package of materials including documentation of the general design of the curriculum, 25 curriculum cards showing teachers how to help their students attain competence is each of the key fire safety behaviors, evaluation instruments designed to measure achievement in fire prevention and satisfaction with the program, fire prevention information for teachers to disseminate to their students, and information regarding the availability of additional teaching aids. Teachers report that all the necessary materials are included for the implementation of the complete Learn Not to Burn educational program in their classroom.

Benefits. The research and development phase of Learn Not to Burn evaluated the effectiveness of implementing the program in seven urban and suburban sites involving 4,000 students and 200 teachers. The impact of the curriculum on both knowledge and practice was found to be significantly better for those children participating in the program versus those who had no exposure to a fire safety curriculum. Parents reported being highly satisfied with their children's involvement in the program. Also, teachers gave highly positive ratings to the curriculum in terms of its value and usefulness. Learn Not to Burn's acceptance and application within the educational community appears to be firmly established.

Limitations. To date, there have been no reported long-term follow-up studies investigating the impact of Learn Not to Burn in reducing the incidence of juvenile involvement in unsafe firestarts. Although the general merit of fire prevention programs in the schools cannot be argued, it would be useful to have data to substantiate these claims. In addition, while the Learn Not to Burn materials are comprehensive and produced at a high level of quality, not all school districts may be willing to allocate a proportion of their budget to purchase these educational supplies. Nevertheless, the monetary output may well be worth the costs of preventing just one significant fire.

C. Knowing About Fire

Functions. Knowing About Fire is a relatively new elementary school curriculum designed to teach children about the wonders and the limitations of fire. It is developed by a group of educators, psychologists, and fire service professional who also have been involved in developing juvenile firesetter programs. It was conceived as an additional educational package designed to complement the Learn Not to Burn program. The activities in the curriculum are appropriate for kindergarten through third grade and can be implemented by classroom teachers. They provide children will "hands-on" experience designed to teach them about the power of fire, how quickly it can spread, and how vulnerable they are with respect to its power.

Target Populations. This curriculum is designed to be used in the elementary school classroom for children in kindergarten through the third grade. There are some activities also directed at the parents of these school-age children.

Users. The activities in the curriculum are designed by a classroom teacher and they are intended to be implemented by kindergarten through third grade classroom teachers.

Content. The activities in Knowing About Fire address children's curiosity about fire. They attempt to go beyond programs which have been developed to help get children out of fire once it has started. They provide information about the nature of fire, the power of a single match, and the rapidity with which fire spreads. These activities are designed to promote discussion so that students can think through the possible consequences of fireplay by themselves or their siblings. Some of these activities include games, crossword puzzles, songs, and creative writing projects. There are some activities included for parents to remind them of the need to be aware of how available firestarting materials are to their children.

Benefits. Preliminary research and development efforts demonstrate that teachers find the concepts presented in the activities useful and the presentation of the materials clear so that they are easily incorporated in their curriculum. Students report that they are enthusiastic about participating in the activates and they seem to derive the intended benefits.

Limitations. This is a newly developed curriculum, and as such, needs broader application before its effectiveness can be clearly determined.

D. Fire Safety Skills Curriculum

Functions. In the state of Oregon, school personnel in cooperation with the fire service developed, published, and implemented a skills-oriented curriculum designed to assist primary and secondary school students in mastering fire prevention and survival skills. The Fire Safety Skills Curriculum provides each school grade with a set of expectations, including measurable learning objectives, a specific set of fire safety activities, and methods designed to measure knowledge acquisition. In-service training is offered by fire departments to schools to implement the curriculum.

Target Populations. The Fire Safety Skills Curriculum is intended for students in kindergarten through eleventh grade.

Users. The curriculum is written for teachers and designed to be implemented by them in the classroom.

Content. The curriculum presents eight fire safety skills which contribute to the goal of assisting students to protect themselves against the hazards of uncontrolled fire. Grade level expectations explain the fire safety learning outcomes expected of students. Each grade has different levels of expectations. Fire learning activities are suggested for each grade level to assist students in learning fire safety skills. These activities include learning the stop, drop, and roll technique, demonstrating how to light a match safely, developing and implementing a home fire safety survey, and many more direct fire-related experiences. They are designed to fit into a number of different subject areas including the language arts, math, science, health, and art. The implementation of these learning activities often involves the participation of local fire service personnel. Each activity has a measurable learning objective. Therefore, the successful completion of each fire learning activity can be evaluated. The curriculum also contains a number of quizzes that can be administered to assess learning acquisition.

Benefits. The curriculum was field tested by more than 100 Oregon teachers. Each fire safety learning activity is designed for minimal teacher

preparation, to be as self-contained as possible, and to provide interesting, instructional, and meaningful student experiences. Informal reports suggest that it is well-received throughout the state of Oregon.

Limitations. There does not appear to be any documentation available detailing the impact of this curriculum in reducing juvenile involvement in fireplay and firesetting activities.

E. The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum

Functions. The St. Paul, Minnesota Insurance Companies have sponsored a unique educational program aimed at teaching fire prevention to eighth and ninth graders, who in turn utilize their newly acquired information and skills to instruct fourth and fifth graders on the topic of fire safety. The two major objectives of this program are to teach fire safety skills to adolescents and to help these youths learn how to teach these skills to younger students. There is a 12 week curriculum designed for teachers to implement this program in their classroom.

Target Populations. This educational program reaches two distinct groups of youth, adolescents in eighth and ninth grade and elementary school children in fourth and fifth grade.

Users. This program is to be implemented by eighth and ninth grade classroom teachers.

Content. The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum not only teaches fire prevention to adolescents, but it aloes emphasizes general topics in crime prevention. The curriculum is designed to provide youth with information on arson, vandalism, property crimes, law enforcement, and the juvenile justice system. The curriculum consists of lesson plans on each of these topics for a 12 week course. There are exercises that teach the eighth and ninth graders how to apply their newly acquired knowledge of fire safety and how to prepare themselves to be student teachers. The curriculum also includes the participation of law-enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice personnel in teaching children not only the principle of crime prevention, but a sense of responsibility toward their school and their community. The program contains an evaluation component which requires participants to provide feedback on its effectiveness.

Benefits. Case reports suggest that both eighth and ninth grade and elementary school students report being highly satisfied with their participation in the program. In addition, student performance indicates that they also learn a significant amount of new material related to fire prevention. This curriculum not only educates two different age groups of children, it helps to build the self-confidence and self-esteem of

adolescents by introducing them to new roles as teachers to younger students.

Limitations. While preliminary case reports are highly favorable about the impact of the program, there have been no attempts to assess whether this effort has deterred children from participating in firesetting or other antisocial activities. Until such studies are undertaken, it is difficult to evaluate the actual benefits of the program.

F. Project Open House

Functions. Although the content of this program is somewhat difficult to replicate, it is included here because of the unique and graphic learning experience it provides for adolescent age school students. A cooperative effort between the fire service and the school district, the idea of Project Open House is to furnish a house as one normally would, set a fire in one room, extinguish it, and then utilize this as a learning experience for students. This process is known as a controlled or training burn. All events, from ignition to suppression and overhaul, are recorded on videotape and photographed with a 35mm camera. Students watch the entire progress of the fire as it is happening on the videotape. Then minutes after the blaze, they are allowed to tour the house escorted by firefighters. Thus, students are able to experience first-hand the consequences of fire.

Target Populations. There are a number of reasons why participation in this project is limited to adolescent age school children. First, younger children witnessing this type of fire experience may become fearful and anxious, and therefore not be able to understand it as a learning exercise. Second, public education programs are traditionally aimed at elementary school children, and middle school fire safety educational experiences are less common. Third, the adolescent age group includes many latchkey children, who are at fire risk because they are unsupervised at home after school until parents return from work. Finally, adolescents represent a large percentage of the babysitting population, which needs to know about the dangers of fire and the proper response to emergencies.

Users. The implementation of Project Open House takes the combined cooperation of the fire service and the school district.

Content. Subsequent to watching the controlled burn on videotape, students receive a presentation by their school principal and firefighters regarding their impressions of the fire. Then students are escorted through the burned house by firefighters. They immediately see the devastation in the room where the fire started and throughout the remainder of the house. A large cardboard post is placed inside the house to remind them of the

chronology of the fire events, from the first ignition, through triggering the smoke detector alarms on both levels of the house, to extinguishing the blaze. Each room contains its own safety message depending on the specific damage caused and the particular function of the room. For example, the melted telephone in the kitchen can stress the importance of staying as close as possible to the floor and leaving the home immediately to call for help from the neighbor's home. Once students return to the classroom there are further discussions about their understanding of the devastation that can be caused by fire.

Benefits. The primary advantage of such a program is to allow adolescents to see for themselves the potential destructive consequences of unsupervised and nonproductive firesetting.

Limitations. It is unclear whether this type of teaching strategy, as opposed to less elaborate and more inexpensive methods, is significantly more effective in discouraging adolescents from firesetting.

Decision Grid

Table 3.1 presents the decision grid summarizing information on school curriculum and programs designed for primary prevention. There are a number of different programs available utilizing a variety of teaching methods aimed at a wide range of youth from preschool through high school. Users can make their selections based on their needs and the intended impact and acceptability of these programs.

Table 3.1
Primary Prevention Decision Grid School Curriculum and Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
CTW's Fire Safety Project	Introduce preschoolers to fire safety	Widely used and highly regarded by preschool teachers throughout U.S	Effective use of popular preschool characters as communicators of fire safety	No formal evaluation of this approach
Learn Not To Burn	Classroom curriculum (K-8) teaching fire safety and prevention	Extensively used in urban and suburban school districts throughout U.S	Teaches 25 key behaviors resulting in competent fire safety schools	No long-term followup studies of effectiveness
Knowing About Fire	Classroom curriculum (K-3) presenting hands-on fire learning activities	A new program pilot-tested in a sample of schools	Good initial reception by students and teachers	As yet no information on effectiveness
Fire Safety Skills Curriculum	Classroom curriculum (K-11) teaching mastery of fire survival skills	Utilized by school districts throughout the State of Oregon	Minimal teacher preparation, self-contained, and easily implemented	No documentation of impact
The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum	Teaching crime prevention and fire safety skills to adolescents who in turn teach them to younger children	Utilized in the school districts of the Minneapolis/ St. Paul cities	High satisfaction ratings from all levels of students and teachers	No formal studies assessing crime prevention
Project Open House	First-hand, graphic exposure to watching a controlled fire burn and destroy	Reported as a single episode learning activity by one community	Enthusiastically received by students, teachers and parents	Labor and cost intensive

Fire Service Programs

On both a national and local level, the fire service is active in developing, implementing, and promoting efforts aimed at teaching children fire safety and prevention. Several fire service programs have been designed specifically on the problem of juvenile involvement in accidental and recurrent firesetting. The following are descriptions of selected prevention focused on juvenile firesetting. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented analyzing the dimensions relevant to the successful application of these programs.

A. National Fire Prevention Week

Functions. Each year the first week in October is designated by the federal government as National Fire Prevention Week. Usually there are national fire prevention projects planned by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) for this special week. In addition, many States kick off their own fire prevention projects during this week. Also, local fire departments may initiate fire safety activities in their community to recognize fire prevention week. Organized efforts at national, state, and local levels are aimed at increasing public awareness of the importance of fire safety.

Target Populations. National Fire Prevention Week activities are usually focused on all children and adolescents, regardless of whether they have histories of fireplay or firesetting. Recently there also have been efforts aimed at educating parents about teaching their children fire safety and prevention.

Users. The U.S. Fire Administration, State Fire Marshal Offices, and local fire departments can take part in developing projects for National Fire Prevention Week.

Content. The nature of the projects conducted during Fire Prevention Week will vary depending on who initiates and implements them. It is customary for new educational efforts or media campaigns to be launched during this time.

Benefits. The major advantage of National Fire Prevention Week is that it provides an organized effort for all levels of the fire service to promote fire safety to the public.

B. Media Campaigns

There are a number of efforts to use print and television media to educate the general public about the problems of juvenile firesetting. The following programs represent examples of both national and local attempts

to promote fire safety messages through the use of the media. The Resource List at the end of this component describes how to obtain more information about these programs.

Curious Kids Set Fires. The most recent program developed by the U.S. Fire Administration is a press packet designed to stimulate public awareness about the problem of juvenile fireplay and firesetting. These press packets help state and local fire service personnel hold press conferences and distribute information regarding the nature and extent of accidental firesetting. This information is designed to educate the general public and, in particular, parents about what they can do if they discover their children involved in firestarting. Presumably this information will result in local newspaper articles instructing parents in how they can recognize and prevent accidental firesetting behavior in their children.

Big Fires Start Small. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) develops media kits which it promotes during National Fire Prevention Week. The theme of the most recent press kit, Big Fires Start Small, is based on recent findings by the NFPA indicating that children playing with fire is the leading cause of fire deaths among very young children. The media kit contains information regarding the nature and extent of the problem of children playing with matches and offers suggestions as to what families and their communities can do to prevent child-set fires.

Firebusters. A local television station, the fire service, the school district, and a popular restaurant chain combined efforts in Portland, Oregon to encourage children to learn fire safety and prevention rules from watching their evening news. A checklist of important fire safety and prevention questions was developed and distributed to children in elementary schools. Then, each night for one week during the evening news, the answers to these questions were disclosed. Children were asked to complete their checklist and return them to their school. The local restaurant chain agreed to provide a free children's meal to every child returning the checklist. In addition, there were drawings for grand prize awards. All of the participating community agencies were pleased with the response and outcome of the project. They are making plans for this to be an annual cooperative event between the local media, the fire service, the school district, and corporate sponsors.

C. Fire Department Programs in Schools

It is the mandate of many public education divisions within fire departments to provide fire safety and prevention programs for their local schools. Educating children about the dangers of fireplay and firesetting are one of several teaching objectives of these programs. There are many innovative approaches utilized by public education programs to teach

school children about the dangers of playing with fire. The following are some examples of the creative teaching methods employed by public education efforts in the schools.

Classroom Visits. Each year for the last decade fire inspectors in Charlotte, North Carolina have conducted three one-hour sessions in fourth grade classes on fire safety and prevention. A major part of their teaching program focuses on helping children understand the nature and power of fire and the dangers and consequences of unsupervised firestarting. These fire inspectors also are responsible for operating the fire department's juvenile firesetter program. Therefore, through their work in the schools they are able to setup effective linkages and referral mechanisms for evaluating school children involved in fireplay and firesetting activities. Classroom visits also are conducted by many other fire departments across the county.

Slide Presentation. Along with classroom visits, Prince George's County, Maryland has developed eight multi-image slide programs on fire safety and prevention. A series of slide projectors coordinated by a microcomputer projects a three-screen video presentation with sound. Several of these media shows are directed at middle school students, with one teaching about how involvement in nonproductive firesetting can lead to arson arrests. This show emphasizes the legal and destructive consequences of participating in firesetting and arson-related activities. Fire department officials comment that this media presentation is well-received by students and teachers.

Films. As an annual project, Seattle, Washington's Fire Prevention Division develops, directs and produces a fifteen-minute film on teaching juveniles fire safety tips. For their films they use local sports figures or other prominent citizens to help deliver their fire safety and prevention messages. These films are then used as one of several teaching aids in their visits to local schools.

Assemblies. Several fire departments, including Seattle, Washington and San Jose, California conduct assemblies to teach fire safety and prevention to groups of school children. These fire departments develop scripted presentations focused on teaching children the dangers of playing with fire. Seattle utilizes a talking robot, which physically resembles a fire hydrant, to interact with the school children. The robot is operated by remote control and is programmed to answer simple fire safety questions. San Jose trains delinquent or truant high school students as performers and entertainers. These students are then utilized in a show to demonstrate safe fire behaviors to school children. These assemblies represent an efficient method for delivering fire safety messages to large numbers of school children.

Resource Book on Public Fire Education Programs. The US Fire Administration has published a resource directory listing and describing 72 public fire education programs developed by fire departments across the country. It outlines the creative and innovative methods and approaches they have used in developing fire prevention and education programs. This book, *Public Fire Education Today*, is referenced in the Resource List at the end of this component.

Decision Grid

Table 3.2 presents the decision grid summarizing primary prevention programs which can be implemented by the fire service. In addition to National Fire Prevention Week, there are various types of media campaigns and school programs which represent viable options. Users can select one or more of these programs based on their plans for implementing an effective primary prevention effort in their community.

Table 3.2
Primary Prevention Decision Grid Fire Service Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
National Fire Prevention Week	To raise national awareness about fire safety and prevention	Nationally and locally planned media events throughout U.S.	Increased public awareness of fire safety	Increased awareness but unclear impact on behavior
Media Campaigns				
Curious Kids Set Fires	Press packet promoting national media campaign on fireplay and fire-setting	Pilot-tested in several states	Well-received by states looking to mount media activities	Only a short-term impact on a long-term problem
Big Fires Start Small	National media kit designed to explain problem of children playing with matches	Researched & developed based on statistics showing alarmingly high numbers of children playing with matches	Good reception by local fire departments	Services to help children must be available
Fire Busters	Television broadcasts on evening news teaching fire safety	With minor adjustments in presentation of program, good response from children and families	Continued support and expansion throughout Oregon	Must be a cooperative community effort
School Programs				
Visits	Education and exposure to fire department	Used by several fire departments throughout U.S.	Well-received by students	Short-term impact
Slide Presentations	Visual education	Commonly used teaching method	Good reception from students	One-shot effect
Film	Visual education	Effective teaching method	Well-liked by students	Single exposure
Assemblies	Participant education	Economical teaching of many	Positive response	Short-term effect
Public Fire Education Today	Resource directory	Widely distributed throughout U.S.	Excellent resource	

Law-Enforcement Programs

The National Crime Prevention Council has recently mounted an anti-crime campaign aimed at discouraging children from participating in dangerous and illegal activities. This campaign involved the development of a mascot, McGruff, the crime fighting dog, to deliver anti-crime messages to children. There are kits, posters, books, and other materials available to law-enforcement agencies and other community organizations. These resources are designed to help communities build effective crime prevention programs. The Resources Directory at the end of this component contains more information on how to obtain these materials.

Improving Primary Prevention Programs

There are three major areas where improvements can be made in primary prevention efforts to teach children about the dangers of participating in unsupervised and nonproductive firestarts. First, there are virtually no systematic programs designed to help parents teach their children how to develop fire safety behaviors. Fire education can begin in the home if parents are aware of the activities they can do to educate their own children. Second, there needs to be a greater effort focused on teaching adolescents the dangers of participating in nonproductive firestarts. The majority of educational programs currently are aimed at elementary school children, however adolescents also must be reminded not only of the dangers of fireplay and firesetting, but of the potential destructive and legal consequences of participating in this type of activity. Finally, cooperative primary prevention efforts, like Portland, Oregon's Firebusters, can increase the visibility and impact of these programs and improve the chances of reducing juvenile involvement in nonproductive firesetting.

EARLY INTERVENTION

The fire service is the leading community agency involved in the development of early intervention programs for juvenile firesetters. The primary objective of early intervention programs is to identify children at-risk for participating in unsupervised fireplay and firesetting incidents. In addition, these programs are aimed at preventing the recurrence of first-time firesetting episodes motivated by accident, curiosity, or experimentation. These objectives are accomplished by setting up short-term evaluation, education, counseling, and referral services designed to stop firesetting behavior and identify related psychosocial problems.

There are two types of early intervention program models operated by the fire service. The first program model is evaluation, education, and referral. This approach is the one most frequently employed by fire departments across the country and is the recommended strategy for building effective juvenile firesetting programs. To implement this model, fire departments must establish methods for screening and evaluating the firesetting risk of children and their families. These methods have been detailed in the Screening, Evaluation and Developing the Intervention Plan Component. The identification of risk levels allows fire departments to determine the most appropriate strategies for remediating the current firesetting problem. If children are identified as little risk, then it is likely that short-term education intervention will stop any further firesetting behavior. Fire departments have successfully implemented a number of different educational programs. If youth are identified as definite or extreme risk, while they may benefit from educational programs, they are likely to need core intervention services. Fire departments must know how to refer firesetters and their families to the appropriate service agencies.

The second program model is counseling intervention. There are some fire departments that not only screen, evaluate, and educate juvenile firesetters and their families, but also offer counseling services to stop the firesetting behavior and remediate the accompanying psychosocial problems. This counseling model requires significantly more resources to implement than the evaluation, education, and referral model. For example, special program staff, such as mental health consultants, are needed for training and implementing counseling services. Therefore, the counseling model should be utilized only by fire departments which are capable of developing and maintaining significant intervention efforts for juvenile firesetters. There are a variety of counseling methods which have been employed by fire departments. The selection of these methods will depend on the availability of resources and training expertise to help fire departments implement specific counseling services. Evaluation, education and counseling services offered by fire departments represent the maximum level of commitment to control and abate juvenile firesetting.

At the end of this section on early intervention, a decision grid is presented summarizing the major aspects of both program models. It is assumed that fire departments wanting to establish juvenile firesetter programs first will select one of the two intervention models--evaluation, education, and referral or counseling--and then proceed to determine which specific version of these programs best fits their needs. This later decision can be based on a review of the impact and risk associated with the implementation of each program.

Evaluation, Education, and Referral Programs

The following programs are examples of evaluation, education, and referral interventions for juvenile firesetters currently operating in fire departments across the country. They were selected because certain features of these programs represent outstanding or exceptional aspects of the evaluation, education and referral program model. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented which summarizes the major aspects of these programs which must be considered to facilitate their successful implementation. Documentation on specific programs is provided in the Resource List at the end of this component.

A. The Juvenile Firesetter Program, Columbus, Ohio

Functions. The primary purpose of this Juvenile Firesetter Program is to prevent juveniles who are setting fires and playing with matches and lighters from starting additional fires. The majority of these juveniles are referred from fire investigators, with a smaller number coming from children's services and mental health agencies. These children and their families are evaluated using USFA's Interview Schedules. All youth attend 4-6 educational sessions. This educational segment of the program is one of the outstanding features of its operation. Those youth identified as definite or extreme risk are referred for further core intervention services. Follow-up evaluation forms are sent every six months for two years to participating families and the resulting data indicate a 7% recidivism rate.

Target Populations. The entire range of juvenile firesetters and their families can be screened, evaluated, educated, and referred for additional services.

Users. This program is intended to be implemented by fire service personnel.

Content. While the format of this juvenile firesetter program represents a standard example of the evaluation, education and referral program model, the educational feature of this approach deserves special mention. Prior to their participation in the educational sessions, juveniles complete written pretests designed to assess fire safety knowledge. They then attend four to six educational sessions at their local firehouse, depending on their age and the history of their firesetting behavior. Audio-visual teachings aids are used extensively. *The Official Fire Safety Manual*, containing games and puzzles designed to teach fire safety and prevention rules, is used with all youth. Separate manuals have been developed for children 4-6 years, 7-9 years, and 9-12 years. In addition, the family does homework, including designing a Home Fire Escape Plan and conducting a home fire

safety inspection. In the final educational meeting, children complete post-tests to assess the amount of increased knowledge of fire safety and prevention accrued from the program. This represents a comprehensive approach by fire service personnel to provide educational experiences for children at the firehouse.

Benefits. Youth participating in this program receive excellent educational exposure to fire safety and prevention information as well as access to the appropriate evaluation and referral services.

Limitations. There is a greater demand for this program than currently can be met, therefore there is a waiting list for children and their families. In addition, outside of recidivism data, there is no other reported information on the impact of the program. However, the program has been in operation for only two years. Therefore, as it continues to develop it is likely that more information on its effectiveness will be forthcoming.

B. Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland

Functions. Operation Extinguish is one of the programs run by the Montgomery County Fire Department's Division of Fire Prevention. Youth are referred to fire prevention by their parents, from the youth division of the police department, and from the juvenile services administration. All juveniles are evaluated using family assessment methods and following the guidelines recommended by USFA's Interview Schedules. All children also attend fire safety classes conducted by the division of fire prevention. These classes represent an outstanding feature of this program. Families of juvenile firesetters are referred to a private mental health agency for at least six family counseling sessions. This also is a unique program feature. Firesetters and their families are referred for other services on an as-needed basis. Release from Operation Extinguish is contingent upon completion of the prescribed intervention plan.

Target Populations. Operation Extinguish screens and evaluates the entire range of juvenile firesetters. However, the program reports that their typical child is one who is between the ages of nine and fourteen and has a significant history of fireplay and/or firesetting.

Users. Fire service personnel can implement this program successfully.

Content. Operation Extinguish has two unique program features. The first is a highly structured format of fire education classes. Three two-hour fire safety classes are run for groups of juvenile firesetters. Firesetters attend the first two classes and may bring their siblings. Parents also attend the last class. Audio-visual aids are used along with a manual, *A Question of Burning*. Week one covers the history of fire facts.

Fire prevention, recognition of fire hazards, escape planning and survival techniques are discussed. Arson and arson laws in the state of Maryland are reviewed. The homework, to be completed by week three, is assigned and consists of developing a home fire escape plan. Week two focuses on burn injuries. Films are shown and children participate in writing exercises designed to help them think about the potential consequences of firesetting. Week three summarizes fire safety rules for parents. Escape plans are reviewed and the importance of knowing how to react in fire emergencies is discussed. By the end of the third session, both children and parents report being satisfied with the educational experience.

The second unique program feature is that the majority of firesetters and their families are referred for at least six family counseling sessions. The entire family is encouraged to participate in these sessions, since it is likely that siblings also may be involved in fireplay and firesetting activities. Counseling sessions are tailored to meet the individual needs of families. Families participating in these sessions report that their communication is greatly improved as a result of these counseling sessions.

Benefits. The apparent advantage of this program is that it provides a comprehensive evaluation and education intervention for juvenile firesetters and their families. In addition, the referral of families for counseling is a unique and important feature which may help remediate some of the underlying psychosocial factors related to the firesetting problem.

Limitations. Apparently interest in supporting this program has waned in the last several months. Perhaps it would be useful for program staff to compile information regarding the effectiveness of Operation Extinguish in deterring juveniles from participating in further firesetting and other delinquent activities.

C. Fire-Related Youth (FRY) Program, Rochester, New York

Functions. The FRY program is housed in the Rochester Fire Department. It receives the majority of its referrals from within the fire department. When the program receives referrals, fire investigators conduct complete investigations of the firesetting incidents. In addition to investigating the scene and conducting a records check, investigators interview children and their parents. The interviews are not designed to draw definite conclusions about the psychosocial functioning of juveniles, rather they are intended to provide investigators with more information about the fire. The USFA Interview Schedules are used as guidelines during these interviews. After interviewing the parents, investigators meet with the child to talk about the incident and provide fire safety education.

The exact nature of the education depends on the age of the child. The majority of juvenile firesetters interviewed are referred for additional services. The FRY program has excellent linkages to other community agencies and this is an exceptional feature of this operation. The FRY program follows all cases until the juveniles receive the necessary treatment of assistance. There are two well-documented manuals outlining the operations of the FRY program. These manuals represent a second outstanding feature of this program.

Target Populations. The FRY program evaluates the entire range of juvenile firesetters.

Users. The program is effectively implemented by fire investigators.

Content. There are two outstanding features of the FRY program. The first is their well-established linkages with numerous service agencies within their community. The FRY program can refer juvenile firesetters to one of four mental health agencies, the Police Department's Family and Crisis Intervention Team, Child Protective Services, Probation, or Family Court. This referral system also includes a dual waiver form that allows a free flow of information between the FRY program and all referral agencies. The solid referral network established by the FRY program ensures that children and their families will receive the services necessary to stop firesetting and remediate the related psychosocial problems.

The second exceptional program feature is the complete documentation of the FRY program in two sequential manuals. These manuals not only describe the operation of the program, but they report investigative studies concerning a number of different topics including a complete description of the population of firesetting juveniles and explanations of their firestarting behavior. These manuals provide visibility and credibility for the FRY program.

Benefits. This is a well-documented comprehensive program designed to evaluate and refer firesetting youth and their families for help in remediating their presenting problems.

Limitations. This program relies heavily on the referral agencies in their community to provide effective services to eliminate firesetting behavior and the accompanying psychosocial problems.

D. Juvenile Firesetter Program, Portland, Oregon

Functions. The primary goal of Portland's Juvenile Firesetter Program is to reduce the rate of property loss and fire injuries and deaths due to juvenile-related fires. The Portland Fire Bureau developed their Juvenile

Firesetter Program to work with firesetting youth from the ages of seven to eighteen. The program offers evaluation, education, and referral services to these youths. In addition, they have implemented a number of unique program activities including the development of a statistical resource base to assess the incidence and prevalence rates of juvenile firesetting in the community, an active radio and television media campaign to educate the public about the problem of juvenile firesetting, and a statewide resource directory listing all agencies capable of working with juvenile firesetters and their families.

Target Populations. Portland's Juvenile Firesetter Program is designed to work with curious and recurrent firesetters.

Users. The program can be implemented by fire service personnel.

Content. This program offers standard evaluation, education, and referral services. One of its unique contributions is supporting the development of a statewide directory of juvenile firesetter programs and resource agencies. This directory provides an explanation of the service delivery system for treating juvenile firesetters in the state of Oregon. It lists by county the fire service, law-enforcement, mental health, and other agencies capable of providing help to juvenile firesetters and their families. The directory is widely distributed throughout the state, by the Oregon Council Against Arson, and there is a planned system for updating the information contained in it. The resource directory provides systematic documentation of the statewide availability of services for juvenile firesetters.

Benefits. This program offers excellent services as well as participation in the organization of statewide efforts to identify services for firesetting youth and their families.

Limitations. The program provides comprehensive services to firesetting youth in their community. However, it would be informative if studies were conducted to assess the actual impact of their program in reducing juvenile firesetting rates.

Counseling Programs

There are some fire departments that take their services one step beyond evaluation, education, and referral. A second program model, offering direct intervention services, has been applied successfully by a handful of fire departments. The majority of these programs provide some type of counseling intervention. Counseling services are viewed as an integral part of these juvenile firesetter programs. The following programs represent the range of counseling interventions currently used to work

with juvenile firesetters. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented summarizing the salient characteristics distinguishing the successful application of these programs. Specific references documenting these programs are listed in the Resource Directory at the end of this component.

A. Juvenile Firesetter Counseling Program (JFCP), Dallas, Texas

Functions. The Dallas JFCP evaluates, educates, and counsels juvenile firesetters. The majority of their cases are referred by fire investigators. Once cases are received, parents and children are asked to voluntarily participate in the program. Juveniles are screened and evaluated utilizing the USFA Interview Schedules as guidelines. They are classified according to the severity of their firesetting behavior. They then receive one to two counseling sessions where they participate in an interview graphing technique which is designed to help them recognize and change their feelings associated with their urge to firestart. In addition, they participate in one or two follow-up sessions where fire safety education rules are discussed. Juveniles and their families can be referred to other agencies for services, particularly if a serious fire was set or if a different or longer-term intervention is deemed necessary.

Target Populations. The Dallas JFCP handles the entire range of juvenile firesetters. They classify them into four major categories. The curious firesetters range in age from two to nine, they believe that they can control fire, and they do not understand its consequences. The problem firesetters range in age from four to 17, they understand the consequences of firesetting, but their firestarting represents feelings of anger, revenge, and spite. The delinquent firesetters set fires to cover-up other offenses such as burglary, theft, or homicide. The seriously disturbed firesetters firestart as an expression of severe psychopathology.

Users. Fire investigators are trained to implement every phase of this program from evaluation, education, and counseling to referral.

Content. The methods employed in the interview graphing sessions deserve particular mention. This technique requires children to describe the events preceding their most recent firestart, the fire, and the activities following the fire. These events are outlined on the horizontal axis of a graph. Four feelings associated with these events are indicated in different colors, from low to high, on the vertical axis of the graph. The feelings, happy, sad, angry, and scared, are color-coded. The relationship between events and feelings are correlated. Juveniles are taught to identify their feelings and use them as a signal to change their behavior. They are taught to recognize when their feelings are leading to the urge to firestart. They are taught not to act on these feelings, but to substitute different

actions in place of their urge to firestart. These alternative behaviors also are listed on the graph. If, in the following weeks, the youth again feel the urge to firestart, and they want to act on their feelings, they are encouraged first to call their counselor and talk over their feelings with them. In this way, juveniles are taught to recognize and control the underlying feelings which lead to their firestarting.

Benefits. The Dallas JFCP provides a comprehensive package of services within one setting for juvenile firesetters and their families.

Limitations. This type of counseling effort is likely to be successful in larger fire departments where there may be more resources available to offer these kinds of extensive services.

B. Cease Fire Club, Houston, Texas

Functions. The Juvenile Firesetter Program in Houston is organized in a slightly different way than other fire service programs. Although headed by Houston's Fire Marshal, the program is subcontracted to the Cease Fire Club, a community-based, non-profit organization. The majority of juveniles are referred to the program by law-enforcement with fewer numbers being referred from social service agencies, parents, and volunteer agencies such as the Red Cross. When a referral occurs, a preliminary assessment of the problem is usually made by telephone. If a significant firesetting problem exists, the juveniles and their families are referred to program counselors. These counselors conduct complete intake evaluations, which include the application of the interview graphing technique outlined in the previous section. Most youth and their families are then recommended to participate in short-term family counseling sessions. If serious or dangerous problems persist, the juvenile firesetters and their families can be referred for additional services.

Target Population. Houston's Juvenile Firesetter Program is set up primarily to treat recurrent firesetting juveniles and their families.

Users. The program's evaluation and intervention services are designed to be implemented by trained mental health professionals.

Content. The centerpiece of Houston's Juvenile Firesetter Program is family counseling. A family systems approach is used to identify and address the problems underlying the firesetting behavior. A short-term crisis intervention model is implemented, with most juveniles and families attending 15 or fewer sessions. The goal is to redirect the firesetting behavior into a more acceptable direction. Any set fire is viewed as arson and this is discussed with the family. Families usually express fear and concern over their own safety and the safety of their home and property.

Families want help to stop the firesetting behavior. Initially, counseling is provided on a weekly basis. As behaviors improve, sessions are scheduled bi-weekly and then monthly. Juveniles are released when match play has stopped and general behavior has improved at home and in school. If serious problems persist, it is recommended that further counseling be pursued.

Benefits. The Houston Juvenile Firesetter Program attempts to treat recurrent firesetters by offering an intervention designed to remediate the underlying cause of firesetting behavior.

Limitations. Funding is declining for this type of program intervention for juvenile firesetters. Systematic studies conducted to establish the cost-effectiveness of this juvenile firesetter program would greatly enhance the argument for retaining funds to support this community service.

C. The Firehawk Children's Program

Functions. The primary goal of the Firehawk Children's Program is to provide a comprehensive set of services to juvenile firesetters and their families. These services include evaluation, education, intervention, and referral. The program utilizes a two-phase evaluation system in which an initial screening is conducted by trained firefighters using the USFA Interview Schedules and a follow-up evaluation is conducted by a trained mental health professional. Youth and families are classified according to risk levels, and little concern youth participate in an educational seminar on fire safety and prevention conducted at the local firehouse. Definite concern children are paired with firefighter volunteers who act as partners or "big brothers." Extreme risk youth are referred immediately to mental health of other core intervention services.

Target Populations. The Firehawk Children's Program is designed to handle the entire range of juvenile firesetters and their families.

Users. The program is intended to be set in place within fire departments, however, it also has been applied in other organizational settings, such as church groups and community-based non-profit agencies.

Content. The intervention component of the Firehawk Children's Program differs somewhat from the traditional counseling modality. The partnership program for firesetting youth is based on the finding that the majority of recurrent firesetters come from homes where there is an absent or inattentive father. By pairing firefighter volunteers to act as partners to these children a void is being filled in their lives. It is assumed that the strength of the relationships between children and firefighters will deter further firesetting behavior. Firefighters who volunteer for this program

are trained in how to establish and maintain close, effective working relationships with youth. Firefighters learn how to be role models for these children while at the same time being someone with whom these youth can talk and spend time. The objective of this partnership between firefighter and juvenile firesetter is to eliminate firesetting behavior and redirect this nonproductive expression of aggression toward more positive outlets such as activities and other recreational endeavors.

Benefits. The major advantage of the Firehawk Children's Program is that it provides the fire service with a creative alternative to the more traditional counseling and referral services.

Limitations. The implementation of the Firehawk Children's Program requires a certain level of commitment to resolving the problem of juvenile firesetting that many fire departments may not be willing to pursue. Nevertheless, preliminary data suggest that for urban communities, it is a cost-effective intervention service for firesetting juveniles and their families.

Decision Grid

Table 3.3 presents the decision grid summarizing the early intervention programs which can be implemented by the fire service. Two intervention models are represented--evaluation, education, and referral and counseling--accompanied by various program types. Users can select both an appropriate intervention model and a specific type of program within that model. Selection should be based on an analysis of the impact and risk associated with the implementation of each program.

Table 3.3
Early Intervention Decision Grid Fire Service Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
Evaluation, Education, and Referral				
Juvenile Firesetter Program	Strong educational component with written materials	A new program being well-received by participants	Good follow-up procedures. 7 % recidivism	Resource unable to keep up with demand
Operation Extinguish	Highly structured educational classes coupled with family counseling	Well-received by participants but community support recently declining	Reportedly low recidivism	No follow-up studies to support its impact
Fire Related Youth Program	Strong interagency linkages and excellent documentation	Follow USFA guidelines, acclaimed as a model program	Community cohesiveness	Over-reliance on referral chain
Juvenile Firesetter Program	Solid program with state-wide connection	Part of the widely used and recommended USFA program model	Services aimed at high-risk fire areas in Portland, OR	No formal studies on impact of program
Counseling				
Juvenile Firesetter Counseling Program	Effective interview graphing technique	Although utilized by many mental health professionals, only two fire departments have implemented it	Highly effective in stopping firesetting	Major commitment of resources
Cease Fire	Interview graphing coupled with family counseling	Follows USFA model, but adds family counseling services	Comprehensive services	No formal studies evaluating effectiveness
Firehawk Children's Program	Partnerships with firefighter counselors	Follows USFA model, but adds partnership between firefighters and children as program feature	Long-term intervention approach, low recidivism	Significant commitment of time and resources

CORE INTERVENTION

Children and adolescents involved in recurrent firesetting behavior and displaying serious psychopathology are candidates for core intervention services. In addition, youth whose firesetting is willful or malicious and an expression of criminal intent also are likely participants for core intervention. Core intervention services are those modalities which provide long-term help for juvenile firesetters and their families to eliminate firesetting behavior and remediate the accompanying psychopathology. There are two major modalities of core intervention, mental health treatment, and the probation and juvenile justice system.

Mental Health Intervention

Children and adolescents with histories of recurrent firesetting behavior and symptoms of psychopathology are likely to benefit from mental health treatment. These types of children may be identified initially by fire departments, law-enforcement, or the schools. If adequate screening and evaluation mechanisms are in place, these agencies should be able to refer these juveniles to the appropriate mental health professionals or agencies.

Depending on the severity of the firesetting and the psychopathology, there are a number of mental health program models designed to treat firesetting youth and their families. Specific outpatient psychotherapies have been developed to help children presenting with firesetting as their primary problem. Individual family and group therapy methods have been developed for juvenile firesetters. In addition, there are inpatient programs specifically designed to treat firesetting youth. Because many of these program models are recently developed, there is an obvious absence of empirical studies demonstrating their relative effectiveness. Nevertheless, preliminary clinical evaluations of these methods suggest that they are effective in stopping firesetting behavior and making significant adjustments in the accompanying psychopathology.

The following descriptions summarize the mental health modalities currently utilized to treat firesetting youngsters and their families. At the end of this section a decision grid is presented outlining the specific features related to the effective implementation of these procedures. Specific references describing the details of these program models are listed in the Resource Directory at the end of this component.

A. Outpatient Intervention

Individual Treatment. The primary focus of individual psychotherapy is on the immediate elimination of firesetting behavior, with a secondary

emphasis on adjusting or changing the underlying psychopathology. Cognitive-emotive and behavior therapy are the two most highly developed approaches utilized in treating juvenile firesetters. Both of these psychotherapies employ short-term (six to eight sessions) strategies to stop firesetting behavior. In addition, although both of these psychotherapies use dramatically different approaches, preliminary evidence suggests that they are successful in eliminating firesetting behavior.

The major goal of cognitive-emotive therapy is to teach firesetters how to recognize the urge to firestart, interrupt the behavior before it starts, and substitute socially appropriate types of behaviors to express their underlying emotions. The primary mechanism developed to implement the cognitive-emotive approach is a relatively uncomplicated procedure called the interview graphing technique. This technique was described earlier because it also has been applied by the Dallas Fire Department in its counseling program for firesetting youth. This procedure involves youth constructing a written graph correlating their feelings with the events leading up to and following their most recent firestart. They are taught to recognize their feelings associated with their urge to firestart and stop themselves before they act on them. This graphing technique is used in conjunction with short-term psychotherapy focused on helping youth understand the general patterns of their feelings and how they influence and guide their behavior. One follow-up study revealed that a group of juveniles participating in this type of psychotherapy evidenced a 7% recidivism rate. Unfortunately this study did not include a control group, therefore it is difficult to make any definitive conclusion about the relative effectiveness of this psychotherapy.

There are a number of behavior therapy approaches reported as effective in abating firesetting. The predominant behavior therapy methods employed either alone or in combination are punishment, reinforcement, negative practice, or satiation, and operantly structured fantasies. Two case studies report the successful application of various methods of punishment which include the use of threats, such as work penalties. Sometimes the use of punishment is coupled with positively reinforcing youth when they find and return to their parents conspicuously hidden empty matchbooks. Negative practice procedures, such as scrubbing the fire residue from a metal basin, coupled with the use of positive reinforcement to encourage more socially appropriate behaviors, also have been reported as successful in stopping severe and recurrent firestarting behavior. One behavior therapy case study avoided the application of punishment methods or negative fire experiences by utilizing a positive reinforcement program coupled with the implementation of operant structured fantasies. While data indicate that these procedures are effective in eliminating firesetting behavior, this evidence emerges from

single case studies. Consequently, until replication studies are conducted, the widespread application of these procedures should remain guarded.

Family Treatment. There are only three cases reported in the literature utilizing brief (three to six sessions) family psychotherapy to successfully treat juvenile firesetters. Two of the three cases employed the method of teaching family members how to safely ignite and extinguish matches in a controlled setting within the therapist's office. This controlled firestarting task was used as a vehicle to restructure the existing patterns of family communication and interaction. In particular, attention was focused on restoring the appropriate amount of parenting authority and re-establishing communication between children and their parents regarding household rules designed for the safety and protection of the family. In the third case, the child's firesetting was viewed as the overt symptom of a dysfunctional family system. Family therapy sessions were focused on a recognition of the underlying distress and helping family members to identify the changes that needed to happen to reshape the nature of their interactions. In all three cases, follow-up studies indicated the successful elimination of firesetting behavior, and a higher level of satisfaction among family members regarding patterns of communication and interaction. While these clinical reports are encouraging, the success of family psychotherapy in treating firesetting cases deserves more systematic application and evaluation.

Group Treatment. There is a recently developed group therapy program designed specifically for firesetting youth and their families call **Flame Out**. There are two possible formats for this group therapy program. The first format is designed for parents of young (under six years) firesetting children. It is intended to be implemented in six weekly two-hour group sessions. Each week's group has a particular focus or theme, starting with a general orientation, and moving to such topics as fire safety education and prevention, effective parenting skills, expression of feelings, and home behavior management. The second format is a parents' and children's group, which is designed for juvenile firesetters ranging in age from 7 to 12 and their parents. These groups run for 10 weeks, beginning with a combined introductory session with both parents and children, and moving to separate groups for each. During these group sessions both parents and children learn various strategies for managing the stress which is hypothesized to be directly related to the occurrence of firesetting behavior. In addition, information on fire safety education is reviewed in the group session. These group therapy approaches and the stress management methods employed to treat juvenile firesetters and their families are well-documented in a training manual cited in the Resource Directory at the end of this component. To date, two pilot programs have been completed. While there have been some individual reports from families participating in **Flame Out** that firesetting behaviors have abated,

more rigorous data must be compiled to determine the long-term effects of this program in eliminating firesetting behavior and improving the quality of life for these children and their families.

Group therapy for adolescents engaged in firesetting is also conducted in Providence, Rhode Island. The task of the treatment is to facilitate the management of issues such as poor self-esteem, generalized helplessness, and relationships with others. Education about the dynamics of firesetting is also a key component. The Resource List contains the contact for additional information.

B. Inpatient Intervention

Inpatient treatment programs for firesetting youth have been influenced by two major types of therapeutic philosophies. The first is a more traditional, psychodynamic approach where the treatment emphasis is on the nature of the therapeutic alliance formed between children and program staff. Both individual and family psychotherapy are the techniques employed and the treatment program is long-term (ranging from six months to two years). The second theoretical approach is behavioral, where specific behaviors are identified for change and discrete interventions are designed to adjust these behaviors. The firesetting youth are the primary focus of the behavior therapy methods, with parents and family members included in the therapeutic endeavor once the firesetting behavior has been eliminated. Behavior therapy programs tend to be relatively short-term (four to eight weeks) and are currently the most widely offered inpatient approach to the treatment of juvenile firesetters.

The most recently developed inpatient program designed specifically for juvenile firesetters and their families is comprised of three major phases. In the first phase, youth enter a hospital setting for a four week stay. During this time, they participate in a series of behavioral exercises in which a choice must be made between toys and firestarting materials. These exercises are observed by therapists out of the view of the children. If they choose matches and lighters as opposed to other non-fire-related toys, the therapist intervenes and conducts a debriefing. The debriefing focuses on helping the children realize the experienced emotions associated with choosing firestarting materials. The result of these exercises is that children are left with a mild aversion to firestarting materials. During the second phase intensive family psychotherapy is employed while the children are still hospitalized to adjust those environmental conditions within the family which are associated with the emergence of firesetting behavior. The third phase focuses on reentry into the family and community. Outpatient family psychotherapy is used and an intensive effort is made to provide special community support services such as schooling and structured activities. At the end of the third phase,

it is expected that children will return to the family and social environment, not participate in firestarting activities, and function adequately within their interpersonal and social milieu. Although one source indicates that there have been no relapses in 100 cases treated in a two-year period, there have been no formal clinical or empirical studies conducted to examine the relative effectiveness of this inpatient approach in treating firesetting youth.

Decision Grid

Table 3.4 presents the grid summarizing the outpatient and inpatient treatment programs for juvenile firesetters. There are a number of effective treatment approaches which can be used to abate recurrent firestarting. Users can select the method which best suits their professional orientation and style of working.

Table 3.4
Core Intervention Decision Grid Mental Health Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
Outpatient Treatment				
Cognitive-Emotive Therapy	Recognition and interruption of the urge to firestart using the interview graphing technique	Widely applied not only with firesetters, but with other delinquent populations	Reportedly low (7%) recidivism with difficult (recurrent) firesetters	No information on relative effectiveness of method
Behavior Therapy	Abate firesetting behavior using punishment, reinforcement, negative practice, or fantasies	Applied in single-case studies	Highly effective in cases with reported follow-up	Not applied beyond single case studies
Family Therapy	Improving and restructuring patterns of communication and interaction	Three single case studies reported	Effective in all cases with follow-up	Small number of applications
Group Therapy	**Flame Out** teaches stress and home management skills with fire safety instruction	Pilot-tested	Reported successful in preliminary stages	New and untested method
Inpatient Treatment				
Behaviorally Oriented Juvenile Firesetter Treatment Program	Short-term inpatient evaluation and treatment using satiation, family therapy, and re-entry activities	Private psychiatric hospitals in California and Oregon	Reported effective with low recidivism	Labor and cost intensive; no follow-up or impact studies reported

Probation and Juvenile Justice

When law-enforcement agencies arrest juveniles for arson, the juveniles enter the probation and juvenile justice system. Although the specific methods of these systems vary form state to state, the general procedure is

that firesetters and their families receive a comprehensive evaluation by probation counselors. The primary objective of this assessment is to determine whether the firesetting behavior represents criminal intent. If there is reasonable doubt regarding the criminal intent of the firesetting behavior, probation counselors will strongly recommend to families to seek counseling. In essence, counseling becomes the condition of probation. Families are warned that if they do not comply with the counseling requirement, then formal charges can be brought against their children. In addition, it may be recommended that these children become involved in restitution or payback programs. These strategies are typically referred to as diversion programs in that they help juvenile firesetters avoid detention and incarceration mandated by the juvenile justice system.

There are two major types of diversion program models for firesetting youth. The first type are those programs operated for the general group of first-time offenders, regardless of the nature of their criminal activity. Although there may be no activities directed specifically at the firesetting problem, these programs focus on teaching juveniles and their parents certain skills which will help them avoid future involvement with law enforcement and the juvenile justice system. The second type of program model are those diversion efforts which offer interventions aimed specifically at the firesetting or arson-related activity. The majority of these interventions are juvenile firesetter programs operated by fire departments. Some local fire departments have agreed to focus part of their juvenile firesetter program activities on youth involved in serious firesetting. One example of general diversion programs and one example of firesetting diversion programs follow. The Resource List at the end of this component outlines who to contact for more information about these programs.

For those juveniles for whom diversion programs have failed or whose firesetting clearly represents arson, detention or incarceration according to the requirements of the law in a juvenile justice facility becomes the remaining intervention option. There is one juvenile firesetter program designed specifically for convicted and incarcerated young arsonists. This program is described and the Resource Directory at the end of this component lists who to contact for more information. Other than this particular program, there appears to be no systematic effort underway to provide any special counseling or treatment aimed at stopping the involvement of incarcerated youth in future firesetting activities.

At the end of this section a decision grid is presented which summarizes the major features of programs designed to help arrested or incarcerated firesetters. Probation and juvenile justice personnel can select an appropriate approach for implementing an effective diversion or education intervention for arsonists.

A. General Diversion Programs

The First Offender Program, Dallas Texas. Juveniles who are arrested for arson, but who do not have a history of other delinquent activities or arrest have the option of participating in the First Offender Program rather than going to juvenile court. The First Offender Program has two major components. After an intake evaluation, youth are referred to one of these two components based on their need and the severity of their firesetting and other psychosocial problems.

The first program component is short-term and involves two group meetings. During the first meeting children are taught decisionmaking skills. The underlying principle of this approach is that children do know right from wrong but they have made some bad decisions, which have led them into trouble. At the same time, parents are introduced to some parenting methods, which will help them increase their management skills in the home. During the second meeting a video presentation is given which reinforces the importance of parental control and the consequences of bad decisions on the part of juveniles. A group discussion follows and the parents and children are released from the program.

The second program component is long-term and involves three phases. The first phase, intake, involves a comprehensive assessment which takes place over four meetings between counselors and juveniles and their families. This assessment focuses on evaluating the home, school, friends, and free-time of youth, and determining their strengths an weaknesses. Also, specific goals are defined for helping children and their families. The second phase, treatment, consists of five weekly group meetings in which juveniles and parents meet separately and together. The topics of these meetings include control and communication, discipline contracting, and praise. Parents work on home management skills while children learn to set specific goals for themselves. These goals involve three areas: physical, such as a regular exercise program; emotional, such as learning how to deal effectively with authority figures or controlling angry feelings; and intellectual, such as establishing regular study habits and improving study skills. The third phase of the program, follow-up, involves three to four monthly group meetings. The skills and goals parent and children learn and set are evaluated and reinforced. Through the use of audio-visual methods the program encourages families to continue applying what they have learned. Families are released from the program at the need of the follow-up period when program staff are satisfied that families have successfully met their treatment objectives.

Juveniles and families completing the First Offender Program are awarded a certificate of merit. The program has no additional contact with the families. Statistical studies show that the local juvenile delinquency rate of 50% declines to 22.6% when juveniles complete this program.

B. Juvenile Firesetter Diversion Programs

Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland. The state of Maryland has enacted two strong state laws regarding juvenile firesetting and arson. The first law requires restitution for the first $500 in damages caused by fires set by juveniles. The second law holds juveniles responsible for their firesetting. The age of accountability for fireplay and firesetting is seven; at which time youth can be charged with the crime of arson. Enforcement of this law provides the police department and the juvenile justice system with the power to ensure youth and family participation in Operation Extinguish as an alternative to arrest and prosecution. Participation in the program also may come about as a result of being found guilty of firesetting or arson. In either case, participation can be combined with restitution and alternative community service.

Juveniles participating in Operation Extinguish are between the ages of nine and fourteen, they have a significant history of fireplay and firesetting, they do not comprehend the seriousness of their firesetting behavior, and their parents do not understand the seriousness of their problem. Participation in Operation Extinguish lasts three months. During this time, juveniles attend three two hour fire safety classes. These classes have been described in detail in a previous section on early intervention evaluation, education, and referral programs. In addition, juveniles and their families attend six or more family counseling sessions designed to improve communication skills and prevent further participation in delinquent activities. Juveniles involved in fires which cause serious damage or those who have been found guilty of arson, participate in restitution and community service programs. Upon satisfactory completion of the program, cases are closed and the juvenile records of these youth are expunged.

C. Juvenile Firesetter Programs for Incarcerated Arsonists

Juvenile Firesetter Program, Upper Arlington, Ohio. One component of the Juvenile Firesetter Program in Upper Arlington, Ohio is a specific effort to educate juveniles incarcerated for the crime of arson. A 12 week educational program is offered to convicted arsonists which includes fire education safety inspections of facilities, field trips to fire stations, and visits to Children's Hospital (which includes a Burn Center), where children give fire hats to patients. These youth also participate in other fire safety activities. For example, they become involved in writing letters to the governor and the heads of facilities citing fire hazards, such as noting the absence of smoke detectors, sprinkler systems, and escape plans. As a result of these letter writing efforts many of these problems are rectified. Another example of their activities is the writing and staging of play on fire safety. These educational efforts are focused on teaching

these youth the value of helping others. In addition, an emphasis is placed on exploring and developing more appropriate skills for functioning in their home and school environments once they are released from detention. This is a unique educational program focused on a high-risk group of youth. If these efforts can be shown to successfully abate firesetting in this population of youth, then similar programs should be encouraged on a nationwide basis.

Decision Grid

Table 3.5 presents the decision grid summarizing probation and juvenile justice programs for juvenile firesetters. The major feature of these programs are outlined so that users can assess the impact and risk of implementing these procedures. It is suggested that youth participating in one of these effective diversion or education programs are less likely to continue to engage in firesetting or other delinquent activities.

Table 3.5
Core Intervention Decision Grid Probation and Juvenile Justice Programs

Method	Purpose	Acceptability	Impact	Limitations
The First Offender Program, Dallas, Texas	General diversion offering assessment, treatment, and followup intervention	For first offenders, viable alternative to incarceration	Decline of delinquency rate from 50% to 22.6%	Missing or diverting seriously disturbed offenders
Operation Extinguish Montgomery County, Maryland	Evaluation education, family counseling, restitution, and community service	Acclaimed as a model program, but not yet replicated	Reportedly low recidivism rates	Serious commitment of resources, but may be worth the outlay
Juvenile Firesetter Program Upper Arlington, Ohio	Fire safety education program for incarcerated arsonists	Supported by local agencies, but not replicated in other communities	Well-received by juveniles and local participating community agencies	No data on effectiveness

RESOURCE LIST

Primary Prevention

School Curriculum and Programs

1. **CTW's Fire Safety Project**
   Sesame Street Fire Safety Resource Book

   Contact: Children's Television Workshop
   1 Lincoln Plaza
   New York, NY 10023
   (212) 595-3456

2. **Learn Not to Burn**

   Contact: National Fire Protection Association
   1 Batterymarch Park,
   P.O. Box 9101
   Quincy, MA 02269
   (617) 770-3000

3. **Knowing About Fire**

   Contact: Paul Schwartzman
   National Fire Service Support Systems, Inc.
   20 North Main St.
   Pittsford, NY 14534
   (716) 264-0840

4. **Fire Safety Skills Curriculum**

   Contact: Judy Okulitcy
   Program Manager
   Office of the State Fire Marshal
   3000 Market Street, NE, #534
   Salem, OR 97310
   (503) 378-3473

5. **The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum**

   Contact: Public Relations Department
   The St. Paul Companies
   385 Washington Street
   St. Paul, MN 55102

6. **Follow the Footsteps to Fire Safety**

Contact: City of St. Paul
Department of Fire and Safety Services
Fire Prevention Division
100 East Eleventh Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 228-6203

7. **Project Open House**

Contact: Richard A. Marinucci
Farmington Hills Fire Department
28711 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-2525
(313) 553-0740

8. **Kid's Safe Program**

Contact: Fire Safety Education Curriculum for Preschool Children
Oklahoma City Fire Department
Public Education
820 N.W. 5th
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
(405) 297-3314

Fire Service Programs

1. **National Fire Prevention Week**

2. **Curious Kids Set Fires**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

3. **Big Fires Start Small**

Contact: National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park,
P.O. Box 9101
Quincy, MA 02269
(617) 770-3000

4. **Firebusters**

Contact: Earl Diment
Office of Community Relations
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

5. **Public Fire Education Today**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Fire Department Programs In Schools

1. **Slide Presentations**

Contact: Office of the Fire Chief
Fourth Floor East
Largo Government Center
9201 Basil Court
Landover, MD 20785

2. **Films**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
Fire Marshal's Office
301 2nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

3. **Assemblies**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
Fire Marshal's Office
301 2nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

Contact: Captain Henry Begroot
Fire Prevention
San Jose Fire Department
4 North 2nd Street, Suite 1100
San Jose, CA 95113
(408) 277-4444

Law-Enforcement Programs

1. **McGruff**

Contact: The National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Early Intervention

Evaluation Education and Referral Programs

1. **The Juvenile Firesetter Program, Columbia, Ohio**

Contact: Lonnie Poindexter
Juvenile Firesetter Program
Bureau of Fire Prevention
300 N. Fourth Street
Columbia, OH 42315
(614) 645-7641

2. **Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland**

Contact: Mary Marchone
Division of Fire Prevention
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 271-2442

3. **Fire Related Youth (FRY) Program, Rochester, New York**

Contact: Jerold Bills
FRY Program
Rochester Fire Department
Room 365
Public Safety Building
Civic Center Plaza
Rochester, NY 14614
(716) 428-7103

4. **Juvenile Firesetter Program, Portland Oregon**

Contact: Don Porth
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

Counseling Programs

1. **Juvenile Firesetting Counseling Program, Dallas Texas**

Contact: Inspector Carnell Mays
Arson and Fire Inspection
Fire Department
2014 Main Street, Rm. 404
Dallas, TX 75201
(214) 670-4312

2. **Cease Fire Club, Huston Texas**

Contact: Alfred Taylor
Juvenile Firesetters Prevention Program Houston
Cease Fire Club
1205 Dart Street
Houston, TX 77027
(713) 247-1000

3. **The Firehawk Children's Program**

Gaynor, J., et al. (1984). *The Firehawk Children's Program: A Working Manual*. San Francisco: The National Firehawk Foundation.

Core Intervention

Mental Health Programs

Outpatient Programs

1. **Cognitive-Emotive Psychotherapy**

Bumpass, E.R., Brix, R.J., & Preston, D. (1985). A community-based program for juvenile firesetters. *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, 36(5), 529-532.

Bumpass, E.R., Fagelman, F.D., & Brix, R.J. (1983). Intervention with children who set fires. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 37, 328-345.

2. **Behavior Therapy**

Carstens, C. (1982). Application of a work penalty threat in the treatment of a case of juvenile firesetting. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 13, 159-161.

Holland, C. J., (1969). Elimination by the parents of firesetting behavior in a 7-year old boy. *Behavior Research and Therapy*, 7, 135-137.

Kolko, D.J. (1983). Multicomponent parental treatment of firesetting in a developmentally disabled boy. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 14, 349-353.

Stawar, T.L. (1976). Fable mod: Operantly structured fantasies as an adjunct in the modification of fire-setting behavior. *Journal of Behavior and Experimental Psychiatry*, 7, 285-287.

3. **Family Psychotherapy**

Eisler, R.M. (1974). Crisis intervention in the family of a firesetter. *Psychotherapy: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 9, 76-79.

Madanes, C. (1981). *Strategic family therapy*. San Francisco; Jossey-Bass.

Minuchin, S. (1974). *Families and family therapy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

4. **Group Therapy**

Monaco, C. (1988). *Flame Out*. Unpublished manuscript. Phoenix, Arizona.

Joseph Richardson
Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program
Department of Public Safety
209 Fountain Street
Providence, RI 02903
(401) 272-3121 (Ext. 2431)

Inpatient Treatment

Birchill, L.E. (1984). Portland's firesetter program involves both child and family. *American Fire Journal*, 23, 15-16.

Probation and Juvenile Justice

A. **General Diversion**

The First Offender Program, Dallas, Texas

Contact: Dallas Police Department
Youth Section
106 S. Harwood Street
Room 225
Dallas, Texas 75201

B. **Juvenile Firesetter Diversion Programs**

Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland

Contact: Mary Marchone
Division of Fire Prevention
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 271-2442

C. **Juvenile Firesetter Programs for Incarcerated Arsonists**

Juvenile Firesetter Program, Upper Arlington, Ohio

Contact: City of Upper Arlington
Division of Fire
3600 Tremont Road
Upper Arlington, Ohio
(614) 457-5080

COMPONENT 4: REFERRAL MECHANISMS

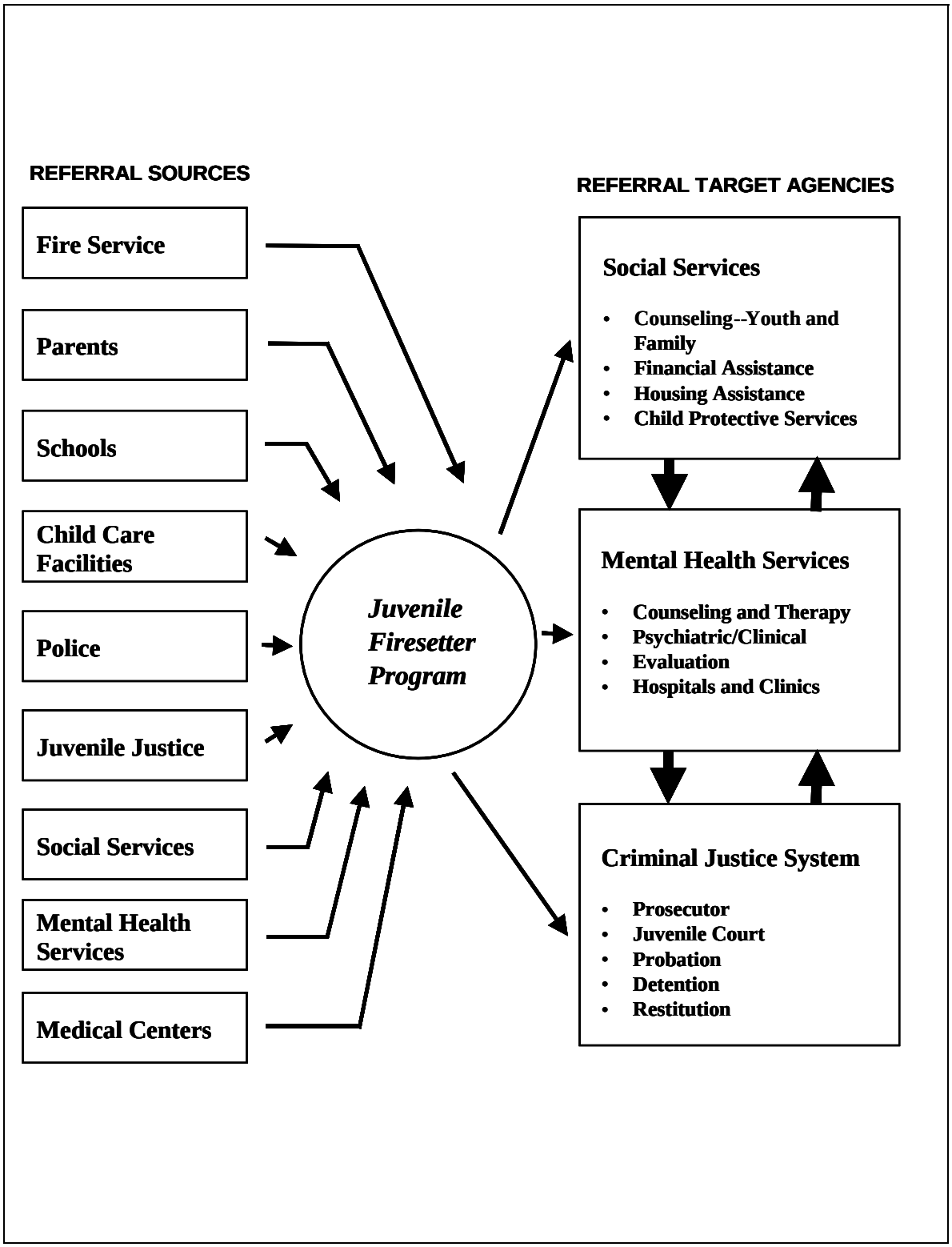
Introduction

Juvenile Firesetter Programs should occupy a central position between the sources of juvenile firesetter (fire service, schools, parents)--the people who detect the firesetter--and the target agencies (counseling services, juvenile court, etc.)--the agencies or people who provide specialized treatment or sanctions to the juvenile firesetter.

In most programs a substantial number of firesetters will be detected by fire service personnel and brought to the program (which is usually located within the fire service) for some education/intervention; consequently, many of the "referrals" occur within the fire service and do not require the assistance of others, either in finding the firesetters or addressing their problems. The typical case of this kind is the young child without any significant pathology who is identified by a fire investigator, refereed to the program, "treated" in some fashion, and released. In many jurisdictions these may be the most frequent kind of cases. However, all other cases require effective referral systems so that (a) people outside the fire service will bring the firesetter to the attention of the program, and (b) the juvenile firesetter who exhibits serious problems of adjustment or delinquency can receive the appropriate additional resources. The screening and intervention activities conducted within the program represent the very heart of any program, but they are not at all sufficient to ensure that all firesetting youths are receiving the help (or sanctions) they deserve. Indeed, without a wide range of referral sources the program will never see a sizable segment of the juvenile firesetter population, and without the appropriate agencies and individuals to whom youths can be sent for additional help, many firesetters (especially the more troubled youths) will never receive the services they need.

A graphic depiction of the desired referral network is shown in Figure 4.1. Typical sources of referrals are shown on the left, with the fire service typically providing most of the referrals, followed by parents, schools, etc. On the right are the major types of referral targets, agencies that can provide the appropriate additional services to the juvenile firesetter and the family.

Figure 4.1
Juvenile Firesetter Referral Network



Implementation

Several points of this figure deserve special attention. First, it shows a large number and variety of possible referral sources an target agencies. Although these may vary widely across jurisdictions, it is important that the program give serious consideration to developing referral arrangements with all such agencies and groups. Second, two of the three key target agencies--social services and mental health agencies--may also serve as referral sources as well. Third, this depiction is necessarily an over simplification of the actual sequence of events involved in many referrals. For example, as shall be discussed below, the arrangements among the criminal justice agencies, the program, and the mental health and social service agencies can be quite complicated, involving several decision points and transfers for any one case. Fourth, some referral mechanisms will be for the purpose of merely recording and tracking juvenile firesetter cases that are not actually seen by the program.

Identifying Referral Sources and Target Agencies

The foundation for the referral mechanisms is laid in the early stages of program planning and development. Indeed, because the initial establishment of effective referral mechanisms occurs in the planning and coordination stage, the reader is encouraged to consult that section of the *Guidelines* for additional information on the initial development of referral sources (e.g., parents) requires an effective public relations campaign, the section on publicity and outreach is also very relevant to this topic.

The first step in the development of effective referral mechanisms is the identification of all potential referral sources and target agencies. The types of agencies and groups shown in Figure 4.1 should serve as a start for the identification of referral sources and agencies to be developed. Once a list of referral types is developed, the program should complete a worksheet providing the names of specific organizations, a description of the preferred referral arrangement, the individuals who will serve as the primary contact or liaison to the program, and their addresses and telephone numbers.

To some degree, much of the identification process will have been accomplished during the planning and coordination stage. However, the individuals from the various agencies who will serve as the functional contacts for referrals may be different from those who are first involved in planning and coordination and the actual approval of the referral relationship. Therefore, it is likely that at least two levels of agency officials will be involved in the development of these mechanisms: (1) Relatively high-level officials with the authority to bind the agency to a referral agreement, and (2) individuals who will have continuing responsibility for the operation of the referral mechanism.

Although the selection of referral agencies will depend on the particular nature of the juvenile firesetter problem in the area, virtually all programs in jurisdictions of medium-to-large size should explore the possibility of referral arrangements with all the types of agencies listed in Figure 4.1. The only exceptions will be small jurisdictions that do not have social and mental health service agencies or the multiple levels of the criminal justice system. If counseling and therapy services are not available locally, the program should investigate the possibility of referral arrangements with such agencies in neighboring towns and cities.

The target agencies selected will also be dependent, at least to some degree, on the nature and severity of the problems of the juvenile firesetters; e.g., the extent to which the youths display serious problems of adjustment and delinquency, whether family counseling is required, etc. We suggest, however, that the referral mechanism be arranged (at least the groundwork laid) for all the major target agencies so that if the need arises, the resources will be there.

When soliciting source referral agencies, one need not be as concerned with the quality of the particular agency as with target agencies (although the quality of source agencies is also important). Target referral agencies--places to which the firesetters are to be sent for special services--should be screened carefully or quality. If they are government operated (e.g., a community mental health center) there is less concern about quality, since these organizations typically have to meet standards that are carefully developed and regularly monitored. Private social service and mental health organizations (which are increasing in number) and individual practitioners should be carefully screened before sending them referrals. Practitioners should be certified and/or licensed in their respective fields--social worker, psychologist, etc. If the organizations have referral relationships with other programs or institutions in the area, you can call them and ask for their opinion of the quality of services.

You should also examine the particular capabilities and capacities of the target referral agencies--are they equipped to handle the cases you may be sending them?

Contacting Referral Agencies

The source and target agencies should first be contacted by telephone and mail to present the basic idea to them. The emphasis should be placed on the special needs of the firesetter population and the mutual benefits of a referral arrangement for the program, the agency, the firesetter and his/her family, and the community at large. Face-to-face meetings should then be arranged to discuss the desired referral arrangement. The central purpose

of these meetings is twofold: (1) To convince the agency of the importance of a referral arrangement; and (2) to communicate the nature of the referral relationship. For source referrals, it is important to provide detailed guidance on the characteristics of the youths to be sent to the program and the circumstances under which they are to be referred. For target agencies, it is important to describe the types of youth that will sent to them and the services they are likely to need.

Some juvenile firesetter programs have gone to extreme lengths to convince agencies to send referrals to the program. In Rochester, the program told agencies that if they did not agree to send referrals to the program, "the next death caused by a juvenile firesetter would be on their conscience." Although this tactic is not appropriate for all circumstances, programs should adopt a programmatic approach, doing whatever works (within ethical boundaries). Another approach is to make use of the personal and political connections that the program has with influential securing the cooperation of other public safety officials. Once the program has gained a toehold in the mental health or educational community, supportive members of those communities can be helpful in recruiting other individuals and agencies into the referral network.

Developing Detailed Referral Agreements

After the agencies have agreed in principle to the referral arrangement and the details of the arrangement have been discussed, a written agreement should then be drawn up that specifies clearly the nature of the relationship and the specific responsibilities of each party. These agreements need not be elaborate legalistic documents; in most situations a single-page agreement will suffice. In some instances, initial agreements may be unwritten, oral agreements, but written statements of understanding should be developed at some point.

At some point in the discussions, the liability issue should be discussed in some detail with the agency. Written waivers of liability may be appropriate in certain cases. If in doubt about the proper course of action with respect to liability, you may want to consult a knowledgeable attorney.

The referral agreements will vary according to the particular agency and the nature of the relationship. In some cases the agency may agree simply to provide the names of the youths and pertinent information on their case/ e.g., a juvenile court handling an older, multiple offender. With major institutions like the school system, the agreement may include a description of the types of youths to be referred, along with a plan for disseminating information about the referral arrangements throughout the

system. Indeed, an important part of the development of agreements with large, complex institutions like the schools and the criminal justice system will be a careful examination of the flow of juvenile firesetters through the system--how and by whom they are identified--in order to ensure that the organization itself can identify and refer nearly all juvenile firesetters.

The establishment of a referral agreement is only the beginning of a referral relationship between the program and the agency. The arrangement will be effective only so long as it is cultivated and maintained through continuing contact with agency officials. In particular, it is important to provide timely informative feedback to the source referral agencies about the status of youths referred to the program--results of screening, intervention outcomes, referrals out to other agencies, etc. Periodic meetings with the representatives of all agencies who are part of the juvenile firesetter referral network will also help to maintain the relationships, and will also provide a vehicle for addressing any problems before they become serious. Case conferences are one possible strategy for maintaining communication and strengthening the referral network.

Some juvenile firesetter program have parents sign waivers allowing the referral agencies (both referral source and target referral agencies) to share information with juvenile firesetter program. These waivers or releases (see the end of this chapter for example) permit the juvenile firesetter program to inform the referral source that the youth was assessed by the program staff and allows the program to forward the results of their assessment to a treatment agency. In addition, these releases allow target agencies, such as mental health facilities and child protective services, to apprise the juvenile firesetter program of the status of a case. This exchange of information will enable program staff to monitor each case and ensure that referral linkages are successfully accomplished and no youth falls between the cracks. Problems have developed in some jurisdictions when youths are referred to the juvenile firesetter program and the referral source is never informed about the outcome of the case.

Differences Across Types of Jurisdictions

As with virtually any facet of the juvenile firesetter program, the nature and extent of referral mechanisms will be dependent upon the characteristics of the community in which it operates. Key characteristics influencing the referral mechanism include: (a) the nature and severity of the juvenile arson problem, (b) the size of the jurisdiction, and (c) the availability of relevant resources.

The central factor in this regard is probably the size of the jurisdiction, which may range from small towns in rural areas to major metropolitan areas. The discussion above is most relevant to the medium-to-large cities where most of the juvenile firesetting is concentrated. In small, rural towns the problem of juvenile firesetting is likely to be less severe than in the larger cities--both the incidence of firesetting and the seriousness of the youth's problem--so a huge network of complex referral networks will probably be neither needed nor available. The major types of referrals as shown in Figure 4.1 are applicable to small towns as well, although the sheer number of agencies and individuals will be considerably fewer than in the larger cities. Consequently, the work of developing and maintaining the referral network is likely to be less difficult and time-consuming. On the other hand, many of the target agencies where the youths are sent for special services may be located in other towns and cities. Identifying these agencies and working out practical referral arrangements with them may require considerable time and effort tracking down the best and most appropriate resources. With respect to the counseling and therapy resources, the program may consider identifying one or two individual therapists (rather than entire agencies) who could provide most of the services.

RESOURCE LIST

Cole, R.E., et al. (1984). *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project***.** New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R.E., et al. (1986). *Children and Fire, Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project***.** New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

COMPONENT 5: PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Purpose

The Publicity and Outreach component will describe how juvenile firesetter programs can develop a public information and education campaign to raise the public awareness about juvenile firesetting and the juvenile firesetter program. Surprisingly, many communities are often unaware of the juvenile firesetter problem or misinformed about the characteristics of firesetters. Parents may be reluctant to obtain help for their children suspected of firesetting for fear that they will be "put away." What many parents do not realize is that the majority of fires set by

children are set out of curiosity. Without proper identification and education, however, simple curiosity can have deadly consequences.

The juvenile firesetter program has a responsibility to the community to inform them that a program exists to help juvenile firesetters. It is important for the community to understand that juvenile firesetter programs are designed to provide education for young firesetters and identify and refer troubled firesetters to counseling if necessary. Many juvenile firesetter programs are hindered because the community is unaware of the services they provide. This component will outline strategies that can be used to inform and educate the public about the program and the services it provides.

A note of caution--juvenile firesetter programs must be fully prepared to handle the request for information and referrals generated from a publicity campaign. Programs must take care not to publicize anything they are not prepared to provide. The juvenile firesetter program will lose credibility quickly if the program staff say they can provide prompt assessment and education to firesetters and then place juveniles on waiting lists because they do not have adequate staff.

Strategies

Pamphlets, brochures, and posters. At a minimum, juvenile firesetter programs should develop a simple brochure to describe the program and provide parents and other members of the community with a telephone number to call for additional information. Examples of juvenile firesetter brochures can be found at the end of this chapter. For brochures, pamphlets, and posters, the old adage "less is more" applies. The materials should be simple, with one or two major messages. These materials should briefly highlight the juvenile firesetter program's services and provide a contact for individuals to call. The juvenile firesetter program staff should consider soliciting funds, services (e.g., printing), or in-kind contributions from local businesses to defray the cost of design, production, and mailing. The coordinating council described in the Program Management component may help the juvenile firesetter program with fund-raising for these types of public relations activities.

The brochures can be distributed through the schools, local Parent/Teacher Associations, pre-schools, day-care centers, and pediatricians' offices. Stores may allow the brochure or poster to be displayed in a store window or cashier's desk. Brochures or pamphlets should also be sent to all community organizations, service organizations, hospitals, physicians, and government agencies that work with juveniles.

Newspaper, TV, and radio exposure. The most effective way to publicize a juvenile firesetter program is through local news media exposure. For example, Columbus, Ohio's juvenile firesetter program was suffering because the public was unaware of its existence. With the help of the local television news media and newspapers, the fire department was able to inform the public about the problem of juvenile firesetting and the services offered by the program. Program staff gave interviews about the local juvenile firesetter problem and explained how the community could use the Columbus Juvenile Firesetter Program.

The juvenile firesetter program staff cannot wait for the media to come to them. They must go to local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. If the juvenile firesetter program wants to use the local media, the program coordinator or spokesperson will have to call or meet with news reporters, assignment editors, and local news show producers. It is the spokesperson's job to "sell" the story to local media, explaining the importance of getting information about the juvenile firesetter program to the community. The spokesperson needs to have a clear understanding of the message the program wants to convey to the public and be able to convey that message to the local media.

The spokesperson should have three or four key pieces of information to convey. Examples may include messages such as, 1) the majority of firesetters are curious children who need education, 2) the key to providing services to firesetters, whether curious or troubled, is identification and assessment, 3) children playing with fire is a very real and dangerous problem, 4) parents should not be afraid to seek assistance if they suspect that their children are playing with fire, or 5) the juvenile firesetter program is designed to provide assessment, education and referral jurisdiction. A second key requirement is knowing the target audience. A message targeting parents may be different than a message targeting community agencies. The issue of target audience will be discussed further in the section on Public Service Announcements.

Juvenile firesetter programs should consider writing brief act sheets and press releases, which can be made available to the local media. Fact sheets can be used to give the media background information about the juvenile firesetter program. Fact sheets are usually brief and can be updated as necessary. A press release is a brief (one page) announcement of a newsworthy story or event. The release gives the important information about the event to the media. Every release should have the name, address and telephone number of the juvenile firesetter program. Examples of fact sheets and press releases can be found at the end of this chapter.

An excellent resource on how to work with the media was written and published by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC). The book, *Ink and Airtime*, provides ideas and step-by-step guidelines on how to write press releases, fact sheets and articles. The book also tells readers how to get their information on radio and television and how to systematically develop a media campaign.

Juvenile firesetter programs can also benefit from the information in media kits developed by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The USFA's "Curious Kids Set Fire" and the NFPA's "Big Fires Start Small" are described in the Intervention Services component. Both media kits contain information on the nature and extent of juvenile firesetting, which can be used to educate communities about the problem of juvenile firesetting.

One way to get media's attention is when a juvenile firesetting incident has occurred. Parental interest and media awareness are heightened after such an event. A description of the program and its services can be used as a sidebar to the story about the incident. In addition, if the juvenile firesetter program staff have identified themselves to the media, they may be interviewed and asked to give an expert opinion about juvenile firesetting. This is again an excellent opportunity to discuss the juvenile firesetter program (see the end of the chapter for examples of articles). The important thing to remember is that no juvenile firesetting incident should be reported in the media without also mentioning the juvenile firesetter program.

In addition to newspapers, radio, and television, juvenile firesetter programs can also use community newsletters or magazines, newsletters of major corporations, and university and college newspapers to publicize the program. The program staff can write short articles about the juvenile firesetter problem and the steps the program has taken to alleviate the problem (an example of a short feature article can be found at the end of the chapter). Program staff can then meet with the editors of the newsletters and magazines to discuss the articles. These types of publications are designed to serve the community and highlight community programs and activities and can be an excellent way to educate the community about the juvenile firesetter program.

Public Service Announcements. Public service announcement (PSA's) can also be used to inform the community about the juvenile firesetter program. They have the potential to reach a wide audience. PSA's provide information about a problem or program without trying to sell a product. One of the greatest advantages of PSA's is that the radio and television time are donated by the media. Competition for media time and space, however, is very tough and stations are cutting back on the amount

of airtime they are willing to devote to PSA's. PSA's must, therefore, be well thought out and creative.

Several fire departments and the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) have developed "generic" or open-format PSA's. These are PSA's that describe the problem of juvenile firesetting in general, but allow the local program to "customize" the PSA by leaving space at the end for information about how to contact the local juvenile firesetter program. The PSA developed by the NFPA entitled, "Got a light, keep it out of sight," can be ordered through local NFPA representatives. The Phoenix Fire Department also has an open-format PSA developed by Fire-Pal. The Phoenix Fire Department has made the PSA available to local juvenile firesetter programs for a reproduction fee.

Juvenile firesetter programs may want to develop their own PSA's. Before developing a PSA, the juvenile firesetter program staff must decide who they want to reach--their target audience--and the best way to reach them. Two of the largest, relatively untapped, sources of referrals are parents and school personnel. PSA should be designed to capture the attention and support of these two groups.

The juvenile firesetter program staff will need to decide on the content of their message. PSA's are usually short, 15-30-second ads that focus on a specific message. The content of the PSA message will vary according to a number of different criteria, including target audience (parents, children, teachers, etc.), nature of the juvenile firesetting problem in the community, and the goal of the PSA (education, referral to the program, etc.). Some PSA's, targeted toward parents, describe misconceptions about juvenile firesetters. One such misconception is that they are "bad" kids or that they have deep-rooted psychological problems. Although some juvenile firesetters are troubled and need counseling, the majority are young children who need fire safety education. Other PSA's are used to inform the public that juvenile firesetting is a real and deadly problem that, in many cases, can be avoided. Still others may address kids and warn them about the dangers of playing with matches and lighters. Regardless of the message, the PSA should give the audience a specific name and telephone number to contact for more information.

Unfortunately, although the media donates PSA time and space, developing a PSA is not a low cost venture. Programs with limited funds will need to look to the community for funds or services. Companies may be able to donate paper, tapes, personnel, video equipment, or other valuable materials in lieu of money. Programs unfamiliar with producing audio and videotapes may want to consider using PSA's, which have already been developed. The vehicle used to promote the juvenile firesetter program (radio or television) will depend largely on the amount of resources available.

If the resources and expertise are available, the juvenile firesetter program will still have to compete with other agencies for the media time and space. Program personnel should address this problem directly by going to local newspapers and radio and television stations and meeting with the public service staff. The juvenile firesetter program director or another staff member will need to explain the severity of the problem and the importance of eliciting community support for the juvenile firesetter program. *Ink and Airtime* advises program staff to go the these meetings armed with all of the information available, including local and national statistics, evidence of program success, and endorsements from prominent members of the community.

Speakers bureaus, hot lines, and other services. The juvenile firesetter program or the coordinating council can establish other services to promote the program. For example, juvenile firesetter programs in Columbus, Ohio and San Jose, California have established speakers bureaus. These bureaus are comprised of individuals who have expertise in one or more areas of fire safety and prevention. These individuals volunteer their time to speak to community groups, schools, services organizations, and other interested groups. The speakers can provide valuable information and promote the use of the juvenile firesetter program.

The Juvenile Firesetter Prevention Task Force, Inc. in Columbus, Ohio also maintains a Juvenile Firesetter Care Line where parents can receive information and help for their children. Volunteers from the community can be trained to man the hot-line and assist parents.

Partnerships

The nature and extent of the juvenile firesetter program publicity and outreach campaign will be limited to the resources available to the program. Programs with limited money and manpower have formed partnerships with community organizations and local businesses to acquire the necessary services, materials, and funds. The community can offer an unlimited wealth of resources. Corporations may donate money or sponsor specific promotional activities or products. As noted in the Program Structure component, the juvenile firesetter program staff should appeal to a corporation's sense of civic mindedness and self-interest when attempting to solicit donations from corporations. Contributing money to better the community is basically good business. The juvenile firesetter program coordinator should also request assistance from individual community members. Individuals with expertise in writing, advertising, audio and visual communications, design, and other skills can be asked to donate their skills. The problem of juvenile firesetting is a **community** problem that cannot be alleviated without the assistance of the community.

RESOURCE LIST

Ink and Airtime

National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)
1700 K. Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Public Service Announcements

Fire Pal
c/o Phoenix Fire Department
520 West Van Buren
Phoenix, AZ 85003

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Media Kits

"Curious Kids Set Fires"

U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

"Big Fires Start Small"

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Newsletters

"Hot Issues"
State Fire Marshal
4760 Portland Road, N.E.
Salem, OR 97305

COMPONENT 6: MONITORING SYSTEMS

The purpose, content, format, and use of systems for monitoring juvenile firesetters and firesetting incidents are covered in this component. While many juvenile firesetter programs have developed some internal system to monitor their caseloads, others simply maintain individual case files with no systematic way to track cases, determine final dispositions, report to funding agencies, etc. Very few have systems capable of being used for evaluation purposes. As described in this component, simple monitoring systems are recommended for all juvenile firesetting programs regardless of size. They need not be elaborate, expensive, semi-comprehensible computerized systems; both manual and simplified computer systems can be perfectly adequate for careful monitoring.

Purpose

Monitoring systems serve different purposes, depending on the information they contain and the uses to which they are put. At the most elemental level, a management information system is needed for case tracking, caseload analysis, and reporting of program operations and results. A Management Information System (MIS) should include case characteristics of the firesetter and the firesetting incident, services rendered, dates of key events, and the final disposition of the case. It is used as a management tool to monitor individual cases. Determining the status of each case at any given point and ensuring that needed treatment has been completed. An MIS provides the means for summarizing and analyzing the program's caseload (the number of cases handled, case type, firesetter characteristics, number and type of services rendered, etc.), tracking and reporting the number and type of program activities (presentations given, etc.), and providing data for annual reports, evaluations, and funding agencies. Most juvenile firesetter programs maintain some version of an MIS, or at least have the basic ingredients (such as case records) for the making of one.

Extending the MIS to include recidivism and other follow-up data provides the basic building blocks for an evaluation system. An evaluation system would contain all of the information above plus follow-up data on firesetting recidivism and other problems such as delinquency, school or family problems, etc. The evaluation system is an extension of the MIS, rather than a separate system. Much of the data in such an evaluation system may come from the program's routine follow-up contacts with families of firesetters and the referral agencies to which they are referred. It provides the basic data needed for self-evaluation and program monitoring, as well as those needed for an independent evaluation of the program. Some juvenile firesetter programs, such as

Houston's have routinized systems for tracking recidivism and judging the effectiveness of program efforts, and will be used to illustrate the purposes and use of an evaluation system.

The third type of monitoring system suggested for juvenile firesetter programs is an incidence reporting system. The purpose of an incidence reporting system is to record basic information on **all** known juvenile firesetting incidents, whether or not the firesetter is identified and handled by the juvenile firesetter program. This system would provide the basic data needed to monitor jurisdiction-wide rates of juvenile arson and firesetting and gauge the effectiveness of education extension of the routine records kept by fire service officials, and ideally, would include firesetting incidents that have not come to the attention of law enforcement and fire officials.

Central Elements of the Monitoring Systems

The case information and other data to be kept in each of the proposed three systems are described in this section. The development, form, and use of the systems--data collection issues, whether systems should be manual or computerized, which agency should maintain the system, analysis and reporting, etc.--are described in the following section, "System Development and Use."

Management Information System. The data to be included in the Management Information System are drawn from the individual case files, primarily form intake, screening, and assessment instruments, and from other program records (perhaps newly created for this purpose). There are four categories of data included in an MIS:

I. Case characteristics

a. Source of referral

b. Age, sex, race, family status of firesetter

c. Details of the firesetting incident--motive, presence of others, location of fire, materials used, damage estimate, injuries, deaths

d. Past firesetting incidents

e. Initial assessment after screening (e.g., little, definite, or extreme risk)

II. Services rendered

Dates, content, and length of educational sessions; dates, purposes, and agencies of referral(s); number and type of counseling sessions; details of other services (mentor pairing, restitution, community service, visits to burn units, etc.

III. Case disposition

a. Dates and outcomes of all services rendered, gathered through routine reporting by all cooperating agencies or direct follow-up

b. Status of case in criminal justice system

IV. Program Activities

a. Education/Prevention activities, school-based or community or other--type, number, attendance, content

b. Training for others in the field--type, curriculum, number trained

c. Resource/Materials development

d. Other--Media coverage, Task Force participation, etc.

The first three categories, case characteristics, services rendered, and case disposition information, are the most important elements of the Management Information System. The data will be as accurate and complete as the individual case files and other program records. Each case should have a case file, which would contain intake forms, screening instruments, and disposition information in each case file. Several examples of forms used by exemplary programs can be found at the end of the chapter (Upper Arlington forms, A.1; Columbus, A-2; Fort Worth, A-3; and Charlotte, A-4). Screening instruments are reviewed and presented in Component 4.

Evaluation system. Data for an evaluation system requires follow-up activities with police, fire, prosecution, courts, and probation agencies; schools; parents; social service agencies; and private treatment facilities. Data collection procedures are discussed in the following section; the following information on all cases handled is to be included in the evaluation system.

- Firesetting recidivism--information on any further firesetting incidents.

- Delinquency--any and all acts of vandalism, stealing, etc.

- School problems--truancy, chronic tardiness, disciplinary problems, academic and behavioral problems, etc.

- Family/home problems--running away, lack of parental control, etc.

- Personal and interpersonal problems--emotional and behavioral problems, poor peer relationships, etc.

Incidence reporting system. Like the evaluation system, the incidence reporting system requires information from a variety of sources, although the fire department is clearly the primary source. The incidence reporting system should cover the jurisdiction of the juvenile firesetter program--e.g., a city, county, etc. It will include all known or suspected juvenile firesetting incidents, whether or not they are reported to the authorities (data collection is discussed in the following section). The system would include information on:

- Firesetting incidents--date, location, ignition materials used, items/structures ignited, damage estimate, injuries, death, reported or not, reasons for not reporting if known.

- Known or suspected firesetters--age, sex, motive, presence of others, past incidents.

System Development and Use

Management information and evaluation systems. The development and use of the management information and evaluation systems will be covered here under one heading. The evaluation system should be considered simply an extension of the MIS because the data collection, computerization, and other issues are quite similar. The fire department is best equipped to build and maintain these systems, and in most instances is the home of the juvenile firesetter program. Programs outside the formal law enforcement system (which may include those housed in the fire service) may have problems obtaining data due to confidentiality concerns and may not have sufficient expertise or equipment, especially if the system is computerized. In Houston, however, where the juvenile firesetter program is outside the law enforcement system, confidentiality appears to pose no problems for data collection and information sharing.

Contractual agreements between the agencies involved spell out the services required.

Cooperation and coordination from all agencies is needed to build and maintain a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. The responsibility of each agency in regard to reporting requirements and providing data should be spelled out in interagency agreements. For a developing program, monitoring issues should be identified from the start and built into discussions among involved agencies from the inception of program planning. These issues include confidentiality, policies or regulations that prohibit sharing information, routinized data collection procedures, and resistance to participating in data collection because of time constraints of lack of resources.

Each agency may have confidentiality concerns, at minimum, or statutory regulations that limit the individual information they may share with others. Schools, in particular, will be very concerned about releasing any information on students. Law-enforcement agencies, particularly probation and the courts, are severely limited in the extent to which any information on juveniles can be provided to outsiders, and in some jurisdictions, the fire and police departments are considered outsiders. While these concerns may be mitigated if the monitoring system is maintained by fire officials within the juvenile firesetter program, confidentiality protections should be reviewed and safeguarded. Access to records should be reported outside of the program.

Each agency involved in the juvenile firesetter program must make a commitment to inform the program about particular events concerning youth in the program. The data collection effort should not be burdensome; simple reporting forms can be developed to facilitate case tracking and disposition (see the end of the chapter for examples). In Houston, for example, counseling agencies submit monthly reports on clients referred to them by the juvenile firesetter program (see B.1) and Child Protective Service reports quarterly on the number of family sessions held and progress made. When a family terminates counseling, the entire case file kept by the counselor is returned to the juvenile firesetter program. In Portland, the program follows up with both the parents and the referral agencies within a month or two after referral to confirm that the recommended contact has occurred.

The management information and evaluation system may be kept manually, but since personal computers have become increasingly prevalent in the workplace, computerization is advised. A manual system may suit a small program perfectly, if its caseload is not large and its reporting requirements are small. Simple logs, carefully organized and kept up to date, will provide a small program with basic information very

quickly. Computerization is needed when either the caseload is too large to handle summary computations easily and accurately or when reporting requirements are frequent and/or detailed, making interim computations and status reports cumbersome to produce. When a program reaches somewhere between 75 and 100 cases per year, computerization is probably warranted.

If operating on a manual system, key information from case files should be placed on monthly activity logs that enable summaries to be easily calculated. For example, the sample log on the following page will tell you at a glance the number of cases handled in July, their referral sources, and initial intervention steps. With minor calculations, the average age and other information about the firesetter and firesetting incident can be summarized. A program developing a manual MIS should decide what information is to kept on logs, after reviewing their management information (dates, referral sources, individual, and incident characteristics) and one to record referral, intervention, and disposition data. A log should be used as a "tickler system," enabling program staff to quickly view the status of a case and monitor it for the delivery of intervention services. The log used by the Portland program (see the end of the chapter) can be used to monitor cases, noting when referrals were made and when follow-up is needed.

In a computerized system, information from case records would be entered directly into a computer using a database management program (e.g., dBase). Simple queries on a case-by-case basis can be made through the database program, such as the date of referral to the program, and many database programs enable more complex queries to be made easily, such as the number of cases referred to the Community Mental Health Center. Tables, summary statistics, and routine reports can be produced by programming through the database program. Statistical packages such as Systat or SPSS are probably not needed for monitoring purposes, although their statistical capabilities may be helpful in producing specific information needed by a juvenile firesetter program.

One advantage of a computerized system is that it provides a basic database from which information can be drawn, sliced anyway the program desires. For example, manually kept logs can provide a program with a running total of the year's caseload. But if new questions or needs arise--to look at referral sources during a given quarter or investigate whether kids 13 or over have caused more serious fires than those under 13, for example--the hand tallies can become burdensome and inaccurate. Such information would be at your fingertips in a computerized system. To maintain an MIS capable of providing a full picture of juvenile firesetting in a given jurisdiction, computerization is needed. A computerized database can contain much more information than a manual

system (the results of screening tests and details of the firesetting incident, for example) and therefore answer much more complex questions (such as do second-time firesetters do better with inpatient or outpatient treatment?). Without a computerized system, these questions require the hand culling of individual case files. On the other hand, computerized systems take care and feeding; data must be entered on a timely basis and one must know how to get information out of it without expending substantial time in training or programming.

July 1993

Name	Age	Sex	Fire Location	Property damage amount	Injury Y/N	Screened Y/N	Intervention	Referred from	Referred to

A generic computer system could be developed by a central agency (such as the U.S. Fire Administration/FEMA) at relatively low cost and tailored to each program as needed. Alternatively, a juvenile firesetter program might hire local experts (or find volunteers among local computerniks) to develop a computer program. We feel most juvenile firesetter programs will have the in-house expertise needed to enter data and operate the system on an ongoing basis. It should not be a time-consuming job; rather only an hour or two a week should keep the system current.

The analysis produced via the computerized system or summarized manually in regard to the management information system should enable a program to answer questions such as the following:

1. How many cases have been handled this year relative to last year?
2. What are the individual and family characteristics of the juveniles handled?

3. What are the characteristics of the fires set by the juveniles handled by the program?
4. Which referral agencies are used the most?
5. How long, on the average, are juveniles and families in treatment?

To extend the MIS to become an evaluation system, follow-up activities must take place with a number of key agencies to determine the long-term effectiveness of the intervention strategies in terms of recidivism. For evaluation purposes, a program needs to know, minimally, of any recurrence of firesetting behavior, and should want to know about juvenile delinquency, continued problems at school or home, etc. Quarterly contacts should be made with the family and key agencies for a year or two after the precipitating incident to inquire about recidivism and related problems. In the Houston program, cross-reference checks are made among participating agencies to look for recidivists and the program director makes monthly phone calls to the family for a year to check on the juvenile's progress. Other programs have formally conducted surveys of families to explore recidivism issues and what the family felt about the juvenile firesetter program and the referral services that may have been offered. Follow-up forms used by the Portland (D.1), Upper Arlington, 9D.2), and Columbus (D.3) programs are can be found at the end of the chapter.

The key agencies include the police and fire departments, courts and probation, schools, parents, social service agencies, and public treatment facilities. The follow-up may consist of routine reporting as done in Houston or periodic phone calls to determine if the agency has had any further contact with the juvenile and, if so, for what reasons. Parents are probably the best single source of follow-up information, if sufficient rapport has been built to enable the parents to report any additional delinquent behaviors or other problems. Telephone contact should be made with the parents rather than sending an impersonal form.

These recidivism data should be added to the computerized database or manual logs as they are gathered. Together with the MIS data, this information forms the basis for a comprehensive evaluation. The information is obviously valuable to the program, to assess its own effectiveness and the effectiveness of participating agencies. An independent evaluator will want to verify the information and collect more detailed information on treatments and outcomes, but the MIS will provide the basic building blocks for an outside evaluation. Finally, the MIS data are easily available when preparing annual reports, proposals, news releases, etc.

Incidence reporting system. Incidence reporting system, as discussed previously, are valuable for analyzing the full problem of juvenile

firesetting and determining where services are needed and where services (education, particularly) have been effective. Since fire departments will place the basic systems in place needed to maintain an incidence reporting system, the real challenge is in data collection. In too many jurisdictions, there is no means to identify fires set by juveniles among all fires set.

A juvenile firesetting incidence reporting system should contain fire and individual information as previously presented. The data should be gathered via existing records or new forms developed for this purpose, from all fire departments covering jurisdictions of interest depending on the areas served by the juvenile firesetter program. The Portland, Oregon, program is building a statewide database on juvenile firesetters. The form used by participating fire departments can be found at the end of the chapter. Portland has also conducted a risk analysis of the city to identify high-risk areas for juvenile firesetters and implement education/ intervention strategies as appropriate. The State of New York, in conjunction with the Rochester program, is also developing a statewide computer system.

In addition to gathering and analyzing reported juvenile firesetting incidents, methods to assess the incidence of unreported fires are needed. Several options are available. One way is to identify and survey organizational entities (primarily schools and parents organizations) that record firesetting incidents that are small and not reported to the fire department.

Another, more basic assessment of the juvenile firesetting problem is to survey youth directly to gather information on their firesetting behavior. Juvenile firesetting is substantially underreported, and many youth set fires that never come to the attention of parents or authorities. Anonymous surveys of students in the schools (as conducted by the Rochester program) are probably the best single source of information on juvenile firesetting incidents as well as fireplay activities that do not result in actual fires. Strict anonymity must be upheld for truthful self-reports to result. This type of survey will provide information on the full extent of the juvenile firesetting problem in a jurisdiction and is as valuable as reported fire statistics.

Because of the volume of data and need for summary statistics, the incidence reporting system should be computerized. In many departments, the creation of this system will be relatively easy. Fire incidence reports that are routinely computerized may be sorted to reflect just the juvenile problem.

Summary

This component describes three types of monitoring systems: management information systems, evaluation systems, and incident reporting systems. Monitoring systems, such as the Management Information Systems (MIS) described in this component enable the juvenile firesetter program to track individual cases and determine the status of a case to ensure that needed services have been provided. In addition, such systems provide a means for summarizing caseloads, which can be used in annual report, evaluations, and funding agencies. Monitoring systems do not have to be elaborate computerized systems to provide the program with the information it needs. Simple manual systems can enable programs to carefully monitor their cases. Evaluation systems are extensions of the MIS and include information on firesetting recidivism and other problems such as delinquency, school, and family problems, etc. This information can be used for program self-evaluation and monitoring to determine the effectiveness of the juvenile firesetter program. Incident reporting systems allow jurisdictions to accurately record information on all juvenile firesetting incidents regardless of whether they are referred to the juvenile firesetting incidents regardless of where they are referred to the juvenile firesetter program.

All juvenile firesetter programs, regardless of size, should have some system for monitoring their cases. As the component notes, monitoring systems can provide valuable information about case status and can assist programs assess to effectiveness of their services.

COMPONENT 7: DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The juvenile firesetter program needs to develop relationships with all of the key agencies that work with juvenile firesetters. As noted in the Referral Mechanisms component, these agencies include police, social services, schools, mental health, and the juvenile justice system. It is the relationship with the juvenile justice system, which will be the focus on this component. Too often juvenile firesetters are referred to the juvenile justice system and never come to the attention of the juvenile firesetter program. Juvenile firesetter programs need to be aware of all incidents of firesetting so that no juvenile firesetter falls through the cracks. The juvenile firesetter program is in a unique position of being able to assess all firesetters and track them through referral agencies. In addition the juvenile firesetter program can be a resource for probation, juvenile court, and correctional facilities. The juvenile firesetter program's potential as a resource to the juvenile justice system, however, is based on strength of relationship between the program and the justice agencies.

Purpose

The purpose of this component is to provide information to assist programs in developing effective relationships between the juvenile firesetter program and the justice system. Specific objectives of this component are the following:

- to help the juvenile firesetter program identify and treat the delinquent firesetter;
- to develop working relationships between the juvenile firesetter program and specific agencies of the criminal justice system including probation, family court, prosecutor's office, and juvenile court; and
- to help the juvenile firesetter program better assist delinquent firesetters in residential correctional facilities.

Model approaches that have been used in three cities--Rochester, NY, Charlotte, NC, and Portland, OR--are summarized below and detailed descriptions of these approaches can be found at the end of this component. Recognizing that each program will differ in such areas as State law, program structure, and manpower, programs should review these models and consider the procedures most appropriate to their particular program and jurisdiction.

Rochester, New York

All fires set by juveniles are investigated by fire investigators assigned to the Fire Related Youth (FRY) Program. Investigators approach every case of juvenile firesetting as a criminal investigation. After collecting information about the case, the investigators meet with the youth and provide fire safety education. In Rochester, all juvenile firesetters come to the attention of the FRY program prior to being referred to other agencies, including juvenile justice. Cases may be referred to prosecution as a last resort to get services to children in need or when the child has engaged in numerous other delinquent activities. The FRY investigators work very closely with the Probation Office and the Presentment Agency. The Probation Intake Unit will handle the case first. Intake Unit staff will decide whether the case can be "adjusted" without going to court or whether the case will be referred for prosecution. If adjustment is being considered, the probation department will consider the youth's risks and strength. Probation staff may refer the juvenile to a mental health or social service facility. Cases referred to prosecution are petitioned through the Presentment Agency to Family Court. The presentment attorneys work very closely with the FRY investigators and rarely lose a case sent to prosecution. Before a case gets to court, the judge assumes that every

effort has been made to keep the youth out of court. If the judge finds that there is enough evidence to justify the charge, he/she will ask Probation to conduct a family evaluation and make a recommendation to the court. Often the judge will also consider the FRY investigator's recommendation.

Charlotte, North Carolina

All arson or suspicious fires are investigated by the Arson Task Force. If a juvenile is suspected, the Task Force members often try to persuade the youth to confess to setting the fires. How the case proceeds often depends on whether the juvenile confesses. If the juvenile does not confess, the case is referred to the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. If the juvenile does confess, the Task Force then decides whether to proceed with prosecution or refer the juvenile directly to the juvenile firesetter program which is housed in another division of the fire service. The decision is based on a number of considerations including whether the incident is a first offense and whether the youth destroyed another's property. If the youth is referred to court, the case is referred to a Court Intake Counselor. The intake officer will meet with the parents and the youth and decide whether the petition for prosecution is warranted. The intake officer can recommend a deferred sentence under the condition that the youth participate in the juvenile firesetter program. If the case goes to court, the youth is interviewed by a court counselor who makes a recommendation to the court. The court counselor can also recommend that the youth participate in the juvenile firesetter program. If such a recommendation is accepted by the court, it then becomes a court order. The judge may also court order the youth to other agencies or facilities.

Portland, Oregon

In Portland, Oregon, all juvenile firesetters are reported to and investigated by the Portland Fire Bureau. In 1986, the Fire Bureau developed a program to reduce the incidence of juvenile firesetting. Juveniles apprehended for fire related offenses may be referred **directly** to the juvenile firesetter program or they may be referred to the program via the juvenile justice system. Those referred to the justice system are more likely to be the older juvenile who has been 1) involved in a more serious incident, 2) identified as a "troubled firesetter," or 3) identified as a repeat offender. If a youth is referred to juvenile court, the case is assigned to an intake probation officer. The intake officer will review all of the records and make a decision to close the case; divert the case to the juvenile firesetter program, social service agency, mental health professional, or another diversion program; or refer the case to the District Attorney's Office. If the district attorney chooses to prosecute the case, a petition of

charges is filed with the juvenile court. At this point the case is assigned to an adjudication officer, who prepares the case summary and recommendations. If the judge finds that a crime was committed, he/she must decide whether to sentence the juvenile to a correctional facility, mental health facility, or place the juvenile on probation. As a condition of probation, the juvenile may be court ordered to attend fire safety education through the juvenile firesetter program, or participate in mental health counseling.

Relationships with the Probation Department

Within the justice system, a representative of the probation department (intake unit) is usually the first person to encounter the juvenile firesetter. Therefore, the juvenile firesetter program must inform and educate the probation department, especially those assigned to the intake unit, about the program. For example, a representative from the juvenile firesetter program should make an in-service education presentation to the staff of the probation department.

The staff of the probation department should receive periodic updates, fact sheets, newsletters, or yearly updates as to the status of the juvenile firesetter program. Prepared by the juvenile firesetter program staff, these communications can contain statistics, case studies, intervention techniques, list of placement facilities, referral methods, etc. The updates are designed to keep the probation department abreast of what the juvenile firesetter program is doing.

The juvenile firesetter program should plan and coordinate a procedure by which the probation department refers all juvenile firesetters to the program for an evaluation if such an evaluation is warranted. This process will ensure that all juveniles are identified and evaluated and offered educational intervention, if appropriate. One way to plan and coordinate such a procedure which has been used is some jurisdictions would be for the probation department to assign a particular probation officer (most likely in the intake unit) to handle all cases involving juvenile firesetters. That intake officer would be able to work closely with the juvenile firesetter program staff.

In addition, a representative from the juvenile firesetter program routinely should be present at all conferences concerning the treatment and/or placement of a juvenile firesetter. Input from the juvenile firesetter program will be invaluable in discussions with child protection agencies, mental health agencies, correctional facilities, and representatives from community placements.

Relationship with the Law-Enforcement, Legal, and Judicial Community

The members of the law-enforcement, legal (prosecutive and defense), and the judicial community must be aware of, and educated about, the juvenile firesetter program. Certainly, the juvenile firesetter program can be an invaluable referral source for the district attorney's office, trial lawyers, and juvenile judges.

Effective methods of informing and educating the members of these professional communities include supplying them with brochures explaining the program, conducting in-service education seminars, and sending fact sheets, periodic newsletters, and annual reports about the activities of the program. These methods will not only inform and educate, but will also continue to enhance the professional image of the juvenile firesetter program. Such an image is imperative if the professional community is to use the services of the juvenile firesetter program.

Relationships with the Juvenile Correctional Institutions

Some juvenile firesetters will be placed in juvenile correctional institutions for rehabilitation. The juvenile firesetter program can also educate the various correctional institutions about the existence and the contents of the program. Similar relations should be fostered with the correctional institutions as with the probation department.

For example, the juvenile firesetter program should be aware that a juvenile firesetter is being held at a particular correctional institution. Also, the juvenile firesetter program, once it is aware that a juvenile firesetter is to be admitted to a correctional institution, should inform the institution that the program has evaluated and/or treated the juvenile. A dual waiver, which is signed by the juvenile firesetter's parent or guardian, would allow the juvenile firesetter program to share information they may have about the juvenile with the correctional facility and allow the facility to share information with the program.

The juvenile firesetter program should provide periodic in-service education programs to appropriate staff of the correctional facilities, many of whom are likely to hold inaccurate perceptions of the juvenile firesetter. For example, the overwhelming majority of correctional facilities, as well as community placements such as halfway houses, believe that the juvenile firesetter is a highly dangerous individual. They perceive the juvenile firesetter as one who is always on the verge of acting out and starting a fire. In actuality, the juvenile firesetter is less likely to act out

by starting a fire once he/she is placed in a structured environment and away from the psychological and sociological factors that helped produce the original firesetting behaviors.

The juvenile firesetter program should maintain an open line of communication with the correctional facilities. Correctional facilities rarely maintain specific treatment programs for juvenile firesetters. One such program, which is described in detail in the Intervention Services component, is operated by the Upper Arlington, Ohio Juvenile Firesetter Program. The Upper Arlington program offers a 12-week educational program to juvenile incarcerated for arson. Juvenile firesetter programs should encourage and participate in the development of similar programs for juveniles. If a structured program is not possible within the correctional facility, then juvenile firesetter programs should make its staff readily available to the staff of the correctional facility to establish individual treatment plans for specific cases.

Summary

Overall, a coordinated link between the juvenile firesetter program and the justice system is imperative. The juvenile firesetter program can be an important asset to the Probation Department, District Attorney's Office, Juvenile Court, and Department of Corrections. Unfortunately, many juveniles "slip through the cracks." In many cases, the juvenile firesetter program is unaware when a juvenile has be diverted to juvenile justice and the justice system is often unaware that a juvenile firesetter program exists in their jurisdiction. The juvenile firesetter program can play a vital role in ensuring that all juvenile firesetters are identified and evaluated and can be a vital source of educational services and information to the juvenile justice system.

RESOURCE LIST

Cole, R.E., et at. (1984). *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention. Report of the Rochester, New York FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

Cole, R.E., et al. (1986). *Children and Fire, Second Report of the Rochester, New York Fire Department FRY Program Development Project*. New York: Department of State Office of Fire Prevention and Control.

TRAINERS' GUIDE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This Trainers' Guide is designed to be used with *The Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program Guidelines for Implementation*. These materials were produced as part of a two-year developmental initiative designed to assess, develop, test, and disseminate information on promising approaches for the control and prevention of juvenile firesetting and arson. The *Guidelines for Implementation* outlines specific strategies for program management, screening and evaluation, intervention services, referral mechanisms, publicity and outreach, monitoring systems, and developing relationships with the justice system. It also provides resource materials gathered from many juvenile firesetter programs.

The Trainers' Guide describes how to use the information in *Guidelines for Implementation*, as well as other resources, to develop a comprehensive juvenile firesetter prevention training workshop for the various agency professionals who work with juvenile firesetters. The Trainers' Guide includes a detailed curriculum for the training program and provides strategies for modifying the curriculum to meet specific needs, selecting instructors, selecting participants, and using instructional materials.

PART I: HOW TRAINERS CAN USE AND MODIFY THIS CURRICULUM

A. Introduction

Firesetting by juveniles is a very serious national problem. Recent statistics reported by the FBI indicate that close to half of all arson arrestees are juveniles. We also know that many juveniles--especially the younger ones--are not arrested for their firesetting acts but are handled in other ways by juvenile justice and mental health organizations. As a result, the real incidence of juvenile firestarts is surely in excess of the number suggested by the FBI arrest figures.

The process by which juvenile firesetters are dealt with varies from one community to the next, and involves a diverse mixture of professionals, paraprofessionals, and volunteers. Not long ago, it was the firefighter or arson investigator who functioned as the "first responder" to this unique problem. More recently, the range of specialized disciplines ahs grown to include diagnostic personnel, psychologists and psychiatrists, juvenile justice officials, and probation officers. Regardless of the length of the list of professionals available to contribute to a juvenile firesetter program in a community, each process begins with a "needs analysis" to determine the kind of expert attention juvenile firesetters may need. In many

communities, limited resources may result in a wide range of services being provided by fire service professionals while other services may not be provided at all. In other more developed programs, the fire service professional provides assessment and education, and, when more extensive services are needed, can refer the firesetter to the appropriate agency (mental health, juvenile justice, etc.).

The scope and quality of services, together with the experts who provide them in a jurisdiction, form the basic ingredients that are available as components of each program. Some jurisdictions will have all the ingredients in the form of multi-agency and professional commitment to the program; others may have to strain just to come up with the resources to interview the firesetters in their jurisdiction. In general, those who develop firesetters intervention programs are dependent on mental health, fire service, and juvenile justice experts who are readily accessible in the community—and willing to become involved in the program.

In general, there are a limited number of new programmatic ingredients available in a community that can go into its firesetter intervention program. A primary resource, often overlooked because of its simplicity, is **coordination**. Coordination involves not the creation of new resources but the bringing together of existing ones into a unified firesetter intervention program. Many equal partners from public agencies and private disciplines must be brought together in order to bring about enough coordination so that the firesetter program meets the needs of its diverse clientele. At first, it may seem like a difficult task to make the different professionals aware of their essential roles, while still acknowledging their professional or organizational autonomy. Something other than organizational authority is needed to knit the various disciplines together.

A logical first step is to heighten the sensitivity of the diverse professionals through an educational program, which here is discussed as a comprehensive training exercise. This training experience can serve many purposes, all of which address the need to approach the issue of coordination informally through a spirit of cooperation and a process of continuing communication. In addition, the training exercise can serve as a springboard to identify processes by which different disciplines and agencies can interact more effectively, based on application of those principles in other "model" firesetter intervention programs.

This guide addresses the educational requirements that form the foundation of a **comprehensive** firesetter program. The guide covers the question of how to set into motion each of the components in a unified manner, so that after training, the requisite services are performed by individuals with an idea of how to work together better and more

productively than before. In order to speak to the broadest possible audience, the guide is written for personnel who either function full-time as trainers or who will, as one of their many tasks, oversee the development of a firesetter training program in their agency or professional organization.

Fire intervention programs involve specialized and diverse disciplines. IN one community, for example, diagnostic and treatment services may be provided by two specialists; in another, by a single generalist covering more than one base. Therefore, the guide focuses on discussing what should be done and why, without specifying which specialist, or what agency, should be responsible for providing each service or fulfilling each function. The guide is intended as a blueprint for building a training program around a coordinated juvenile firesetter intervention program, piece by piece, and then presenting it to an audience of specialists or generalists.

The curriculum guide presents a process that unites the responsibilities of the fire service with those of law enforcement, juvenile justice, and mental health agencies and professionals. Local needs for juvenile firesetter programs will vary from one community to another, as will resources that are available for conducting the training and for augmenting the local firesetting program. Therefore, this basic curriculum may require some paring and modification when it is used as a basis for local training.

A major challenge is to retain as much of the core program as possible while realizing that time, instructional resources, and other constraints may result in paring more of the program than its sponsors might prefer. In order to help trainers organize and deliver this instructional program, this curriculum guide covers the central issues on how to modify and condense the training, as well as finding instructional resources to fully round out the training program.

B. Adapting the Curriculum to Meet Specific Needs[1]

This curriculum is designed to orient fire service, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and mental health personnel to the requirements of interacting with juvenile firesetters and their immediate families in a coordinated manner. This program begins by stressing the interdependence of the fire service, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and

[1] For background reading on developing a curriculum through refining educational and training objectives, see Robert F. Mager, *Preparing Instructional Objectives*, 2nd ed. (Belmont, California: Feardon Publishers, 1975). Development of a training program that addresses a somewhat related problem is covered in *Model Curriculum and Trainer's Guide: The Detection and Investigation of Arson-for-Profit*, by Clifford L. Karchmer, (Washington, D.C.: National Technical Information Service, 1981). Available from the National Technical Information Service (NTIS), Springfield, VA 22161; Accession No. PB82-140682; $17.00 (paper).

mental health disciplines on the firesetting issue, and maintains that emphasis throughout. Because of this focus, the curriculum is best suited to instructional setting which utilize "process oriented" training; that is, an instructional approach in which the coordination of the interactions and relationships between and among professional experts is as important as the technical substance of the firesetting issue.

Personnel in specialized assignments will probably find some topics in this curriculum more germane to their work than others. Agency sponsors should try to develop a sensitivity to the issue of the relevance of the curriculum to all members of the audience. In order to adapt the curriculum to the needs of personnel with highly specialized functions (e.g., psychiatrists, juvenile probation officers, or administrations of custodial treatment programs), sponsors might poll the participants when they are invited or as soon as they confirm their attendance. General questions could include the reasons for attending the proceeding, their expectations for skill development, and in general, what they hope to gain from attendance. If the sponsoring agency has the time, its personnel might administer a structured questionnaire. However, friendly telephone calls can accomplish the same objective, and offer the advantage of personal communication with a potential participant who may not have made up his or her mind about signing up for the proceeding.

Another way to speak to the needs of specialized personnel is to include reading material or provide advanced or highly technical bibliographic references on the range of issues that the trainees notify the sponsor are prominent issues of concern to them. One way to modify the curriculum for a particular group is to plan early to select instructors most directly suited to the needs of that distinct group. Special break-out sessions or workshops can be added for this purposes.

C. Finding, Recruiting and Orienting Instructors

Finding instructors who are qualified to address each of the juvenile firesetting curriculum topics can be a difficult task. One of the best ways to match instructors with training needs is to begin by listing several candidates. Then, jointly with someone who is either working on development of the course or engaged directly in juvenile firesetter treatment or counseling, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. Always remember that it is important to select instructors on the basis of explicitly criteria--including reputation as a speaker and ability to deliver technical information in a manner that is understandable to non-specialists in the audience. Above all, it is essential to review the backgrounds of instructors as **communicators** of knowledge, as well as their records as investigators, therapists, etc.

Programs should consider inviting a local official (e.g., Fire Chief, Public Safety Director, or State Fire Marshal) or local expert (clinical psychologist, juvenile court judge) to speak at the training workshop. Such speakers can add appeal to the seminar by providing specific information about the jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter problem. Key officials, such as the heads of agencies, can also add credibility to the program and the training seminar by pledging their support in a keynote address.

Some people who make the rounds of lecture circuits are popular because they have developed reputations as colorful speakers, capable of raising interest and bringing people from different agencies or disciplines together around a common purpose. However, although exciting presentations can be important, some of those types of lectures can be seriously devoid of technical content. One way to anticipate this situation is to look for an exciting speaker with a persuasive style and message, and place that person early in the program or for a featured luncheon address. Once the stage is set with that "cooperation" and "coordination" message, the program can get on with the real business of training, and begin to unfold the technical knowledge that participants will need once the program is over.

Regardless of whether instructors will be paid or volunteer their services, it is essential to set forth for them a clear, concise statement that covers **exactly** what you want them to cover in their presentation. This is not a minor issue, because instructors with busy schedules often have little time to prepare new material, and without prompting of some sort by the sponsoring agency, may end up delivering a standard lecture that misses your course objective. One way to approach this matter is to communicate what you want the speaker to discuss as clearly and with as much detail as possible--summarize what you want covered in one paragraph in a letter of invitation or confirmation. It is also immensely helpful to each speaker to receive summaries of what all the other speakers will cover. This is usually done in order to avoid duplication and enable each speaker to think of ways of reinforcing the material that other speakers will be covering.

Conscientious instructors usually appreciate efforts to help them structure their presentations. For one thing, a well-received lecture will enhance the reputation of the speaker in his or her professional sphere. However, as busy as such speakers may be, they usually find the time to prepare for a course if they understand what is expected of them.

If instructors work under a contractual arrangement or some type, it should be possible (an is certainly advisable) to include a contract provision that covers both expected preparation and prior mutual agreement on subject matter. Many training programs pay instructors for a day of preparation.

If the agency's training budget can support these provisions, it is a worthwhile investment of time and money.

In many locations, local fire service agencies and mental health organizations have sponsored programs on arson issues, ranging from cause and origin determination to arson fraud and juvenile firesetting intervention. Key organizations to touch base with initially are the state and local chapters of the International Association of Arson Investigators (IAAI) and the county mental health association. Local offices and chapters can often provide information on experts who may be able to serve as program developers and instructors.

D. Selecting Participants

Whether your juvenile firesetter training course maintains a selective admission policy depends upon local conditions of interest, personnel availability, funding, and time. Assuming that it will be possible to select a short list of participants from a longer list of applicants, Table 1 presents some criteria to consider.

Table 1
Participant Selection Criteria

Criterion	Decision
Length of involvement in juvenile firesetter prevention	Novice personnel may be the ideal audience you are seeking, or may be too new to be able to appreciate the material.
Prior relevant training	Students may have attended other courses as basic or advanced as the one you are planning, and therefore may derive little or not benefit.
Degree and type of specialization	Some specialist may have little if anything in common with the other participants. Their jobs may be so specialized that parts of the seminar may not apply to their work and may be uninteresting to them.

In many cases, participants who are more advanced than the majority of the other attendees should still be encouraged to attend. They may be very helpful to the sponsor for several important reasons. First, they may serve as competent evaluators of the course for the sponsor, in the event that the sponsoring agency wants to conduct repeat training sessions. Because of their experience, these participants are often good judges of the value of each instructional segment for less experienced participants. Second, they can make sure of their peer status with other participants to assist the less experienced attendees in absorbing the course material--both formally in class and informally at meals and during free time. Finally, they can also act as effective teachers or contributors to the seminar, providing detailed information on how their agencies handle juvenile firesetters.

There are many viewpoints on ways to divide course attendees into workshop or discussion groups. Some education experts maintain that it is more helpful to "track" attendees by placing into each workshop those participants with similar terms of service or specialized duties. Attendees who are separated by their level of familiarity with juvenile firesetters may be more able to discuss problems at their respective levels of familiarity and in terms of shared mutual concerns. In all fairness, there are contrary viewpoints as well. Others believe that it is best to mix participants together in order to avoid segregating the attendees from each other, and form valuable interaction. A multi-disciplinary audience is recommended if the goal is sharing information from a variety of agencies and promote interagency cooperation. As a compromise, on might consider having some workshops and discussion groups consisting of a mix of all types of participants, and others made up of participants who are assigned according to their specialties (e.g., police with prosecutors, or psychologists with psychiatrists).

Whatever method of workshop organization is chosen, it is important to be guided by a thorough assessment of the backgrounds and needs of the participant body. Clearly, concerns about workshop assignments in a seminar for arson unit chiefs and supervisors are very different from those involved in training investigators and prosecutors. As a rule of thumb, it helps early on to develop a **profile** of course participants that covers their backgrounds, specialties, experience levels, and perhaps other factors (e.g., geography) that are salient to each group of participants. One option to consider is to aim each course at the largest number of specific types of professionals attending. Then, time can be set aside to address the needs of special groups (e.g., novices, advanced, and/or highly specialized participants).

E. Obtaining Instructional Materials

Much of the instructional material needed for the training can be found in the prototype program produced for this OJJDP-USFA project: *National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control Prevention Program: Guidelines for Implementation* and the *Users' Guide* that accompanies those volumes. In particular, the *Guidelines* contains substantial information on the development of firesetter intervention programs, and is organized from program management, through the processes of screening, evaluation and intervention services, to relationships with the juvenile justice system. Also included are "hands-on" materials that instructors can use as examples when presenting various elements of the juvenile firesetter program.

In addition, federal agencies that conduct training programs and develop their own material on this subject should be contacted. Those agencies include the U. S. Fire Administration, as well as local and state agencies that have either received USFA or Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) juvenile firesetting funding—or have developed materials under their own juvenile firesetter programs.

A compendium of fairly recent material that has been produced by or under the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program, or earlier by the U. S. Fire Administration, is attached as Appendix B. Several of the resources noted in the compendium contain detailed bibliographies of instructional and clinical literature that may be suitable for certain training programs rather than others--again, determined by the needs of each audience.

Materials published in government reports include earlier studies supported by the U. S. Fire Administration, LEAA, or Bureau of Justice Assistance, and compiled by organizations such as the Institute for Social Analysis, Battelle Institute, or the National Firehawk Foundation. Most of the materials are not protected by copyright but are so-called public domain documents, having been produced as a result of government sponsored research and demonstration activities. Such materials can usually be obtained easily from the issuing organization or reproduced inexpensively. There is also a wealth of other material that is protected by copyright. Copyright permission can often be obtained from the copyright holders; usually in a routine manner from technical journals that do not expect to earn royalties from non-profit organizations or government agencies. Often, a simple letter of request is enough to obtain the required copyright permission. Be sure to note that the proceeding is for public agency personnel, or otherwise is a non-profit undertaking. In view of federal copyright laws that carry severe penalties, this is a very important issue to be addressed in preparing materials for training programs.

The curriculum which follows provides a model for agencies to follow in conducting training on a prevention and control of juvenile firesetting. As noted in the introduction at the beginning of the curriculum, the curriculum follows the organization to the two volume prototype and *Users' Guide* and covers each of the seven components described in those materials. Agencies that are unfamiliar with conducting training can use this model curriculum as a guide for developing their own training workshops. Agencies familiar with providing juvenile firesetting prevention training can use the information to supplement existing training programs.

PART II: THE JUVENILE FIRESETTER/ARSON CONTROL AND PREVENTION PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Model Curriculum

Communities wanting to establish and maintain a Juvenile Firesetter/ Arson Control and Prevention program (JFACPP) will have to provide participating agencies and personnel with adequate training and skills to perform their various functions. The following curriculum contains materials designed to train the many professionals who are likely to work with juvenile firesetters.

This curriculum is organized to correspond to the manuals documenting the operations of JFACPP's. These manuals include *The JFACPP Guidelines for Implementation* and the accompanying *Users' Guide*. The manuals are designed to be used as the major resource materials for this curriculum.

This curriculum consists of seven components which represent the major operations of a JFACPP. These components contain a great deal of information about the various types of JFACPP's. It is advised that trainers select from these components the materials relevant to their particular audience's needs or to a specific type of JFACPP. Tailoring the curriculum to the goals and objectives of specific workshops or training seminars is highly recommended. This approach will ensure that the material presented is most relevant and useful to the target audience.

Each of the seven components contain four sections. They are a specification of the instructional goal; a summary of the curriculum content; recommended teaching strategies, and suggested resources. These sections are designed to help trainers organize a comprehensive presentation of the materials contained in each component.

Component 1: Program Management

Instructional Goal

To teach program management how to plan, develop, and maintain an effective JFACPP.

Curriculum Content Summary

There are two primary phases of setting-up a JFACPP. The first phase is program planning. This phase consists of seven key elements which are outlined in Table 1.1 of the *Users' Guide*. They are defining the program of juvenile firesetting in a particular community; identifying specific leadership responsible for the program; selecting the type of services to be offered; determining the primary location for service delivery; specifying the geographic boundaries of service delivery; securing necessary staffing, and estimating the cost of service delivery. If each of these key elements are executed by program management, then the groundwork has been laid for establishing an effective JFACPP.

The second phase is program development. Program development consists of seven key tasks which are summarized in Table 1.3 in the *Users' Guide*. They are defining program goals; establishing program operations; developing a community coordinating council; securing financial support; conducting orientation and training seminars; defining potential legal and financial risks, and establishing referral linkages. Once these tasks are completed, then the doors of the JFACPP can be open for business.

Recommended Teaching Strategies

There are two teaching methods recommended for communicating information on program management. The first strategy is the lecture-discussion format. To accompany this format, it is suggested that slides outlining the key elements of program planning (Table 1.1) and the tasks of program development (Table 1.3) be used for visual aids. It is important that the audience understand the steps which must be executed to set-up an effective JFACPP. This didactic teaching approach offers a straightforward method for transmitting this information.

The second recommended teaching method is a panel discussion. The panel should be composed of participants who potentially may be responsible for setting-up a JFACPP in their community. They should be given the task of planning and developing such a program for their

community. One panel member should be elected as the recorder. On a blackboard, the recorder can write down the steps the panel identifies as relevant for developing their JFACPP. The trainer should guide this process and ask specific questions to move the discussion along and identify the program planning and development tasks. The discussion should last no longer than thirty minutes. Trainers should wrap-up the panel discussion by helping the participants identify which, if any, planning and development activities they can actually implement to develop a JFACPP in their community.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on program management methods:

   Giegold, W.C. (1978). *Management By Objectives.* New York: McGraw Hill, 1978.

Component 2: Screening and Evaluation

Instructional Goal

To identify the various approaches and methods for providing screening and evaluation services to juvenile firesetters.

Curriculum Content Summary

The psychosocial characteristics defining the severity of the firesetting behavior in juveniles must be understood prior to the implementation of various screening and evaluation procedures. There are three major categories of juvenile firesetters, each with distinct individual, social, and environmental characteristics. The first is the young (age seven and under), curiosity firesetter, whose primary motivation for firesetting is experimental or accidental. These children are well-adjusted and come from a solid and supportive family and social environment. Their firesetting is most probably a first-time of single-episode event, and with educational intervention, is not likely to recur. The second type of juvenile is the recurrent firesetter, who has a history of firesetting incidents as well as an unstable personal, family, and social background. These youngsters typically are candidates for both educational intervention as well as psychological treatment. The final category is the adolescent firesetter, whose firesetting can represent a range of disturbances from mischievous behavior to serious intention to harm or destroy. The majority of these youngsters frequently have accompanying

psychological problems which require immediate attention. The prognosis for adolescent firesetters is less promising than for younger firesetters.

There are a number of community agencies that are likely to screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters. The predominant agencies are the fire service, mental health, law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice. Each of these agencies is likely to employ screening and evaluation methods which best fit within their existing system of operations. Communities wanting to set-up screening and evaluation procedures must identify the targeted population of juvenile firesetters, designate one or more service agencies to provide services, and select and implement the appropriate methods. Tables 2.4, 2.5, and 2.6 of the *Users' Guide* outline the most widely used screening and evaluation procedures for the fire service, mental health, law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice. These Tables are designed to help select the most appropriate methods for specific agencies by providing information on the purpose, output, impact, and risk of the various screening and evaluation approaches. Maximizing the selection of the screening and evaluation methods will result in an effective intervention system for juvenile firesetters. More detailed information about these instruments can be found in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

Recommended Teaching Strategies

It is critical that information regarding the psychosocial characteristics of juvenile firesetters be presented fairly early in the workshops and training seminars. The audience needs a comprehensive understanding of the target population as well as a precise description of the various severity levels of firesetting behavior. This information can be presented in a number of different ways. The lecture-discussion format has been used successfully, and the material generally is presented by a mental health expert who has experience working with juvenile firesetters. There are some visual and audio-visual aids that will help illustrate the types of behaviors most typical of juvenile firesetters. Slides describing the three categories of firesetters (Table 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 in the *Users' Guide*) can be developed. Also, the Suggested Responses at the end of this Component lists video tapes which can be used to demonstrate the psychosocial characteristics of juvenile firesetters.

The presentation of the remaining content, with respect to specific screening and evaluation procedures, will depend on the type of audience attending the workshops or training seminars. For example, if the participants are predominantly fire service, then those screening and evaluation methods which are employed by the fire service should be reviewed in detail. The lecture-discussion format is the best instructional

approach, and can be accompanied by slides illustrating the specific procedures. In addition to the presentation of screening and evaluation methods, information should be introduced on how to interview juvenile firesetters and their families. Since the majority of the screening and evaluation procedures employ this strategy, it is important to teach participants basic interviewing skills.

It is recommended that the audience receive "hands-on" experience with both the screening and evaluation procedures as well as interviewing skills. One format is to break the workshop participants into small groups (no more than eight to a group) and ask one member in each group to describe one of their cases of juvenile firesetting. (In most every workshop there will be several participants who already have worked with these youngsters.) This case then becomes the basis for information that is used to review specific screening and evaluation methods. Copies of the actual instruments can be distributed to each group member and they can begin to construct the necessary information about the juvenile firesetter. For example, copies of the USFA Interview Schedules can be distributed to firefighters so that they can learn how to use these instruments to interview juvenile firesetters. In this way, the audience becomes familiar with the application of screening and evaluation procedures.

To illustrate effective interviewing skills, volunteers can be asked to role play their juvenile firesetter case in front of the entire workshop. The trainer takes the role of the interviewer to show the correct style and approach of interviewing. The workshop participant takes the role of the juvenile firesetter, and there may be other volunteers in the group to assume the role of different family members. The role playing exchange should demonstrate how to make the juvenile firessetter and their family feel comfortable in the interview situation so that accurate and reliable information can be learned to help alleviate the firesetting problem. Not everyone is comfortable with role playing activities, therefore the trainer must take an active part in leading the actions of the situation. It is important that enthusiastic volunteers be used as the actors and actresses so that a relatively lively exchange can occur. A discussion should follow the role playing event emphasizing the various interviewing techniques which were demonstrated and their impact on producing a successful interview.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on the psychosocial characteristics of juvenile firesetters:

Gaynor, J., & Hatcher, C. (1987). *The Psychology of Child Firesetting, Detection and Intervention.* New York: Brunner/Mazel, Publishers.

Wooden, W.S. & Berky, M.L. (1984). *Children and Arson, America's Middle-Class Nightmare.* New York: Plenum Press.

2. Video tapes illustrating the psychosocial characteristics of juvenile firesetters:

Hedrick, S. (1988). Juvenile Arson Mini-Documentary. Aired on KCTS-TV, Seattle, Washington.

Portland Fire Bureau (1987). Beyond Burned Fingers, Interviewing and Counseling Juvenile Firesetters.

Portland Fire Bureau (1988). Who is the Juvenile Firesetter? A Conversation with Dr. Jessia Gaynor.

3. Additional reading on the development of effective interviewing skills:

Cormer, W. (1985). *Interviewing Strategies for Helpers: Fundamental Skills and Cognitive Behavioral Interventions.* Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

4. Additional reading on how to conduct role playing situations:

Van Ments, M. (1983). *The Effective Use of Role Play. A Handbook for Teachers and Trainers.* London: Kogan Page.

Component 3: Intervention Services

Instructional Goal

There are three types of program models representing intervention services for juvenile firesetters and their families. They are primary prevention, early intervention, and core intervention. The goal of primary prevention programs is to deter first-time, unsupervised fireplay and firesetting by teaching the rules of fire safety and prevention. There are a variety of primary prevention programs offered in the schools and by the fire service. They are presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2 of the *Users' Guide.*

Early intervention programs focus on the identification of first-time firesetters. The goals of these programs are early screening and evaluation of the firesetting and other accompanying problems and immediate intervention. The majority of these programs are operated by the fire service. There are a number of different types of programs including evaluation, education, referral, and counseling. These programs are summarized in Table 3.3 in the *Users' Guide*.

Core intervention programs are designed to treat youngsters with recurrent firesetting problems. There are two primary systems which handle these children. The first intervention approach is mental health. The majority of firesetting youth can benefit from metal health treatment, because, for the most part, their firesetting represents underlying psychological problems. There are several types of mental health interventions. They are presented in Table 3.4 of the *Users' Guide*. The second system is law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice. If the firesetting behavior is determined to represent a serious intention to harm or destroy, then youngsters can be arrested for the crime of arson. If it is a first offense, then frequently probation will recommend a diversion or counseling program for youngsters and their families. If the diversion or counseling recommendation is not followed, and the firesetting behavior is a recurrent offense, the youngsters can receive sentencing to a residential or correctional facility. Table 3.5 in the *Users' Guide* presents the program types for law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice. Component 3 of the *Guidelines for Implementation* provides more extensive information about the three types of intervention services.

Recommended Teaching Strategies

A summary of the three intervention program models and the corresponding program types is the most important information to be presented to participants of workshop and training seminars. In addition to information on screening and evaluation procedures, information on intervention services represents the foundation of JFACPP's.

A lecture-discussion format is suggested for presenting this material, with slides used as visual aids. All participants should receive a comprehensive overview of all intervention models and corresponding program types. Tables 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 3.4; and 3.5 in the *Users' Guide* can be transposed into slides to illustrate the material. The background of the participants will determine which intervention models and corresponding program types will be reviewed in greater detail. For example, if the majority of the participants are from the fire service, then primary prevention and early intervention program models should be the center of attention. The material should be presented by someone with experience in setting-up or

running these types of programs, so that discussions can focus on the pragmatics of operating an effective JFACPP.

Participants also should receive some "hands-on" experience in directing juvenile firesetters to the most appropriate kinds of intervention services. For this purpose, a small group can be given a case study to analyze and discuss. Appendix D contains a number of case students which can be used for this purpose. Each small group should receive a different case for review. The small group participants should focus their discussion on what kinds of screening and evaluation procedures they would employ and what types of intervention services they would recommend for each case. Each small group should elect a spokesperson to report their recommendations to the larger group. About twenty minutes should be allotted for the small group discussions, after which time the spokesperson for each group should be prepared to present their recommendations to the entire workshop. Each case study should be read to all the participants, and then recommendations should be presented. The participants should discuss various screening, evaluation, and treatment options for each case. The purpose of this exercise is to give participants experience in handling a variety of juvenile firesetter cases.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on primary prevention programs:

   Public Fire Education Today
   National Fire Academy
   16825 South Seton Avenue
   Emmitsburg, MD 21727

2. Additional reading on early intervention programs for the fire service:

   Fineman, K. et al. (1980). *Child Firesetter Handbook. Ages 7 and Under*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

   Fineman, K. et al. (1984). *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 7 to 13*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

   Gaynor, J. et al. (1988). *Adolescent Firesetter Handbook. Ages 14-18*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

3. Additional reading on mental health core intervention programs:

Gaynor, J. et al. (1990). Firesetting. In M. (Ed.) *The Comprehensive Textbook of Child Psychiatry*. New York: Williams and Wilkins.

Component 4: Referral Mechanisms

Instructional Goal

To describe the network of community services that provide linkages of JFACPP'S.

Curriculum Content Summary

An effective JFACPP will have strong linkages to a network of service agencies in the community. These community agencies will identify juvenile firesetters and route them to the screening and evaluation services of the JFACPP. These agencies serve as referral sources and can include the fire service, schools, law enforcement, social services, mental health, and medical centers. Parents also can refer their children to JFACPP's. JFACPP's cannot always provide all of the necessary intervention services for juvenile firesetters and their families. In many cases, children need to be referred to other community agencies for different types of service. These target referral agencies include social services, mental health, and the criminal justice system. Figure 4.1 in the *Users' Guide* presents a summary of the juvenile firesetter referral network. The JFACPP is one part of a community network designed to provide comprehensive services to firesetting youngsters and their families.

Recommended Teaching Strategies

A lecture-discussion format is the best method for presenting an overview of the JFACPP and its community network of referral services. Figure 4.1 in the *Users' Guide* can be transposed into a slide to be used as a visual aid.

However, it also is important for the participants of the workshops and training seminars to begin to identify the most relevant referral agencies in their own community. Hopefully, representatives from a number of these different community agencies have been asked to participate in the workshops or training seminars. During the discussion of referral agencies, representatives from various community agencies should

identify themselves by name. These participants should be encouraged to use the break-time and lunch hour to get to know one another and begin their own networking activities.

To foster interagency communication and cooperation, it might be helpful to allow some time for representatives of local community services to give a brief (five to ten minute) talk describing the potential roles and responsibilities of their agency in helping juvenile firesetters and their families. For example, if there was a representative from the local community mental health center, they might want to describe what would happen in firesetting youth and their families once they were referred to their agency for mental health services. In this way, participants can begin to work out how different types of community agencies can provide various types of services to support the effective operation of their JFACPP.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on networking:

   Lipnack, J., & Stamps, J. (1986). *The Networking Book: People Connecting with People.* New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Component 5: Publicity and Outreach

Instructional Goal

To outline methods for developing effective publicity and community outreach activities to inform the community about the availability of their JFACPP.

Curriculum Content Summary

There are two primary methods of increasing community awareness about the availability of juvenile firesetter programs. The first is publicity activities. There are four major types of media which can be employed to increase community awareness. They are newspapers and magazines, television and radio, press conferences, and general communications. Within each of these modalities, there are various strategies and their related impact are outlined in Table 5.1 in the *Users' Guide*. Publicity efforts should be mounted only when all of the operations of the juvenile firesetter program have been established and are working effectively.

The second method of increasing public awareness is through community outreach activities. There are a number of different types of activities including the development of pamphlets and brochures; the distribution of posters; publishing newsletters, operating a Speaker's Bureau; staffing a Hot Line, and encouraging partnerships with other relevant programs and organizations. These activities and their potential impact are summarized in Table 5.2 in the *Users' Guide*. JFACPP's can benefit greatly from effective community outreach efforts. Examples of brochures, press releases, newspaper articles, etc., can be found in the resource section of Component 5 of the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

Recommended Teaching Strategies

The material on publicity and outreach activities can be presented using a lecture-discussion format. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 in the *Users' Guide* illustrating these activities and their intended effect can be transposed into slides. Frequently, local programs have begun developing some types of publicity or community outreach activities, such as the production of pamphlets and brochures. These programs should be encouraged to share these materials with workshop participants. Trainers also may want to bring in examples of various publicity activities, such as media kits or public service announcements describing JFACPP's, so that the audience can have a firsthand look at these materials. The Suggested Resources at the end of this component lists a Public Service Announcement video that can be used to illustrate this type of media activity. Workshop participants should have an understanding of the various options available to them in helping to inform their community about their JFACPP.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading for producing public activities:

   Ink and Airtime
   National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)
   1700 K Street, NW, Second Floor
   Washington, DC 20006

2. Public Service Announcement video:

   Portland Fire Bureau (1987). Juvenile Firesetter PSA's.

Component 6: Monitoring Systems

Instructional Goal

To provide an overview of the various types of monitoring systems which can be used to track the level and volume of JFACPP activity.

Curriculum Content Summary

There are three major types of monitoring systems which track program operations for JFACPP's. The first is a Management Information System (MIS). An MIS provides timely information on the number and types of cases handled by the program. It can range from a basic, hand-calculated logging system to a more sophisticated automated system. The range of MIS's are described in detail in Component 6 of the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

The second type of monitoring system is an evaluation system. A program evaluation system is an extension of an MIS in that it uses the data generated by the MIS to analyze program operations and outcome. In addition to caseload information, an effective evaluation system will include data on firesetting recidivism and followup information on caseload disposition.

The third type of monitoring system is an incidence reporting system. Frequently, individual JFACPP's will report their juvenile firesetting rates to a county, jurisdiction, statewide, or federal data system. There are a number of these systems operating in several states and also at the federal level. They are described in detail in Component 6 of the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

Recommended Teaching Strategies

The participants of workshops or training seminars should be introduced both to the concept of monitoring program operations as well as to the application of the three different types of tracking systems. This can be accomplished in a lecture-discussion format. In addition, information on data monitoring systems relevant to local JFACPP's should be reviewed. For example, if a local JFACPP is underway, then some type of monitoring system already may be operational. If this is the case, then trainers should ask local program managers to describe their system. Also, trainers should be aware of state and federal data reporting systems in which local JFACPP's may participate. The audience should be convinced that developing a monitoring system for their JFACPP will not

only ascertain the level and extent of the juvenile firesetting problem, but it will also demonstrate the effectiveness of their program efforts in controlling and abating the problem. An effective monitoring system can ensure the longevity of the JFACPP.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on MIS's:

   Federico, P. (1980). *Management Information Systems and Organizational Behavior*. New York: Prager.

Component 7: Developing Relationships with the Juvenile Justice System

Instructional Goal

To understand how to develop a working relationship between JFACPP's and the various operations of the juvenile justice system.

Curriculum Content Summary

Although the majority of juvenile firesetting cases handled by JFACPP's will receive evaluation, education, and some special types of intervention services, there will be a small percentage of them which will be classified as arson because of the seriousness of the firesetting behavior or the significance of the damage or loss resulting from the fire. In these cases, it becomes important for the JFACPP to have open pathways of communication and linkage to their juvenile justice system. Even though cases of juvenile firesetting may be classified as arson, this does not necessarily preclude them from obtaining services from the JFACPP. There are a number of ways in which JFACPP's and the juvenile justice system can work together, and examples of these efforts are outlined in Component 7 of the *Guidelines for Implementation*. The specific nature and extent of the referral linkages between local JFACPP's and their juvenile justice system can be worked out on an individual jurisdiction basis.

Recommended Teaching Strategies

The primary objective of this component is to encourage JFACPP's to learn about their local juvenile justice system. This is best accomplished

in a lecture-discussion formation. It is suggested that trainers invite representatives from the probation and/or juvenile courts system to give brief talks about their procedures for handling juvenile firesetters. In particular, it is important for workshop and seminar participants to be informed about the local and state laws as they relate to the crime of juvenile arson. Discussions can focus on how the JFACPP and juvenile justice can best work together in providing comprehensive services to juvenile firesetters.

Suggested Resources

1. Additional reading on juvenile arson laws:

Committee on the Judiciary (1985). *The Problem of Arsons Committed by Juveniles*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. *The National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program Assessment Report,* Institute for Social Analysis (Washington, D.C., September, 1989).

   Assessment of the problem of juvenile firesetting and intervention programs. Reviews of literature and description of the central issues included.

   Address: Institute for Social Analysis
   1625 K Street, N. W. Suite 1000
   Washington, D.C. 20006

2. *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook (Ages 0-7),* U.S. Fire Administration in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (FA-83/December 1988).

   Teaches fire service personnel how to recognize and interview young children (ages 0-7) that have firesetting tendencies. Provides methods and strategies for appropriate counseling and mental health assistance for firesetter.

   Address: U.S. Fire Administration
   16825 South Seton Avenue, Building N, Suite 311
   Emmitsburg, MD 21727

3. *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook (Ages 7-13),* U.S. Fire Administration in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (FA-82/December 1988).

   Teaches fire service personnel how to recognize and interview young children (ages 7-13) that have firesetting tendencies. Provides methods and strategies for appropriate counseling and mental health assistance for firesetter.

   Address: U.S. Fire Administration
   16825 South Seton Avenue, Building N, Suite 311
   Emmitsburg, MD 21727

4. *Preadolescent Firesetter Handbook (Ages 14-18),* U.S. Fire Administration in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Chiefs (FA-80/August 1988).

   Describes the psychology of adolescence to determine which juveniles are at risk to become firesetters. Provides procedures for evaluating adolescent firesetters (ages 14-18) and intervention techniques to stop firestarting and remedy accompanying psychological problems.

Address: U.S. Fire Administration
16825 South Seton Avenue, Building N, Suite 311
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

5. *Juvenile Firesetter Intervention*, First Report of the Rochester, New York, Fire Department-Fire Related Youth Program Development Project, State of New York-Department of State, Office of Fire Prevention and Control (New York, 1974).

Describes how to build an effective program with cooperating community agencies. Details identification, assessment, and treatment of children.

Address: Fire Related Youth Program
Rochester Fire Department
Room 306
Public Safety building
Civic Center Plaza
Rochester, New York 14614

6. *Children and Fire*, Second Report of the Rochester, New York, Fire Department-Fire Related Youth Program Development Project, State of New York-Department of State, Office of Fire Prevention and Control (New York, 1986).

Extension of the First Report, **Juvenile Firesetter Intervention**. Provides recommendations based on a large scale study of children referred to the Fire Related youth project in the city of Rochester. (1983)

Address: Fire Related Youth Program
Rochester Fire Department
Room 306
Public Safety building
Civic Center Plaza
Rochester, New York 14614

7. *The Psychology of Child Firesetting Detection and Intervention*, Jessica Gaynor & Chris Hatcher (Brunner/Mazel, New York, N.Y.).

Demonstrates how to evaluate and treat child and adolescent firesetters. Detection of firesetters as well as the psychopathological affects are addressed.

Address: Brunner/Mazel Publishers
19 Union Square
New York, N.Y. 10003

8. *The Therapeutic Assessment of Firesetting (TAF) Questionnaire,* Terrence Neary (1987).

   Questionnaire to assist in psychotherapy, empirical research, and the planning for rehabilitation of firesetters.

   Address: Terrence Neary, Ph.D.
   Clinical Psychologist
   Forest Hospital
   Des Plaines, Illinois

9. *Arson Resource Directory,* Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States Fire Administration (FA-74/May 1988).

   Provides explanation and identification of organizations and individuals concerned with arson prevention and control.

   Address: Federal Emergency Management Agency
   P.O. Box 8181
   Washington, D.C. 20024

10. *The Government Executive's Guide to Arson Prevention and Control: A Handbook on Information Systems and Action Programs,* Clifford L. Karchmer, Batelle Human Affairs Research Centers, Law and Justice Study Center (Seattle, Washington, 1981).

    Assists government leaders to develop comprehensive plans to prevent and control arson. Identifies type of arson prevention techniques which police, fire, housing, mental health and other agencies might implement cooperatively.

    Address: Federal Emergency Management Agency
    P.O. Box 8181
    Washington, D.C. 20024

11. *Juvenile Firesetter and School Arson Prevention Programs,* Clifford L. Karchmer, Battelle Memorial Institute, Law and Justice Study Center, Aetna Arson Prevention Series (Washington, D.C.).

    Provides information on developing programs on the local level to stop juvenile firesetting. A resource guide and bibliography of technical information (including a psychological and psychiatric literature) is enclosed.

    Address: Aetna Life and Casualty Company
    Arson and Frau Unit
    151 Farmington Avenue
    Hartford, CT 06156

12. *The Psychology of Firesetting: A Review and Appraisal*, R.G. Vreeland and M. B. Waller, sponsored by U.S. Department of Commerce, National Bureau of Standards (Washington, D.C., December 1978).

    Examines the psychological factors involved in firesetting. Classifies firesetters into four categories: antecedent environmental conditions, organismic variables, actual firesetting behavior, consequences of firesetting.

    Address: National Bureau of Standards
    Department of Commerce
    Center for Fire Research
    Washington, D.C. 20234

13. *The School Team Approach-Phase I Evaluation*, Executive Summary, Social Action Research Center (January 1980).

    Report of the first year evaluation of a local program designed to reduce school crime and disruption. Findings indicated such a program can reduce the amount of victimization reported by students as well as the level of tension, fear, and danger perceived by students.

    Address: Social Action Research Center
    18 Professional Center Parkway
    San Rafael, California 94903

14. *School Crime and Disruption: Prevention Models*, The National Institute of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (June 1978).

    A series of papers on the study, design, and implementation of effective prevention programs for school crime. The causation of school crime and specific programs for reducing school crime as presented. (Note: Juvenile arson is not specifically covered.)

APPENDIX B: EFFECTIVE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF PRESENTATIONS

I. Introduction

This handbook is a practical guide to increasing the effectiveness of short oral presentations. While it would be nice to offer a "quick" solution to the problem, experience has shown that single solutions generally do not work. This handbook suggests alternative ways to thinking and alternative practices--techniques that have been considered and tested by highly experienced speakers and researchers. It provides a method that can assist you in delivering a concise, interesting, and effective prevention, as well as guidelines for selection and use of audio-visual aids and suggestions for physical delivery of the presentation.

This main ideas presented in this handbook were condensed from several sources: "Effective Business and Technical Presentations" by George L. Morrisey (1968): "Communication and Instruction" by Ronald E. Bassett and Mary-Jeanette Smith (1979); "Educator's Handbook" edited by Virginia Richardson-Koehler (1987); and W.A. Mambert's "Effective Presentation" series (1976). These sources should be consulted for additional information on the topic covered.

II. Steps in Preparing a Presentation

Preparation of an oral presentation can be broken down into a series of six steps. Following these steps likely will result in your spending less time on preparation, and in producing a clearer, more concise presentation. In addition, it will increase the likelihood that your ideas will be accepted by your audience. The six steps are:

1. Establish objectives for the presentation.
2. Analyze your audience.
3. Prepare a preliminary plan for the presentation.
4. Select resource material.
5. Organize material for effective delivery.
6. Practice the presentation in advance.

Step 1: Establish objectives for the presentation

Objectives are statements of purposes, goals, and desired results. The statements should be specific, and should answer the following questions:

- Why am I giving this presentation?

- What do I want to happen as a result of my presentation?

- If the presentation is to impart a body of knowledge, one or more objectives should be qualified in terms of expected results, for example: I want to tell about … so that … will take place.

In addition to being specific, objectives stating expected results should be achievable. They should be:

- **Realistic in scope**. Can your objectives be accomplished in the preparation time and presentation time available? Delivering a lecture in well-prepared, digestible segments often is a key to acceptance of the ideas presented.

- **Realistic in terms of what you can reasonably expect to accomplish**. Are you objectives achievable? If not, your audience may be reluctant to accept the ideas and principles you present.

- **Realistic view of the audience's knowledge and background.** Do members of the audience have the knowledge and background necessary to achieve the results you want?

- **Realistic in view of the audience's ability to act.** Do members of the audience have the authority to make the decisions necessary to achieve the objectives?

Step 2: Analyze your audience

The most successful presentations are prepared with a particular audience in mind, and one tailored to suit that audience. What do members of the audience already know? What are their attitudes, likes, and dislikes? How will they react? Awareness of your audience can give you an idea of how best to angle your presentation, and can provide insight into the kind of overall approach most likely to achieve your objectives.

You can get information about your audience in a variety of ways:

- Speak with others who have made presentation before this audience.

- Review reports from or about some members of your audience.

- Seek information directly or indirectly from selected members of the audience or others associated with them.

- Conduct a debriefing after your presentations to assess audience reaction.

Step 3: Prepare a preliminary plan for the presentation

A preliminary plan is similar to a blueprint. It serves as a framework on which to build a presentation. It is not a speaking outline, but a conceptual approach to what most logically will lead to achievement of your objectives.

A preliminary plan serves two basic functions:

- It forces you to determine carefully the direction you plan to take, guides you in selecting the subject matter, keeps your flow of ideas channeled, and indicates where you can best place your emphasis.

- It serves as a guide for support personnel, who may provide backup data, prepare charts, or assist in some way with the presentation. A preliminary plan gives a specific written basis from which you and those supporting you can work.

Step 4: Select resource material

For most presentations, finding enough resource material is not a problem. Rather, the problem is one of proper selection, deciding what material, and how much to include in the presentation. These decisions can be guided by your preliminary plan (Step 3) and based on the answers to the following questions.

- What is the purpose of the presentation? Is your presentation to be persuasive, explanatory, instructional, or a report? Do you want to arouse interest, test an idea, recommend action, inform, or resolve problems?

- What should be covered? What can best be eliminated? Resource material should be eliminated unless it contributes significantly to the achievement of an objective.

- What amount of detail is necessary? The appropriate amount of detail varies greatly according to your objectives, and to such factors a presentation time available, the audience and its interests, and how much detail the audience must know so the objectives can be achieved. You may want to have the detailed information available in the event you're asked about it, although you do not use it in the actual presentation.

- What must be said if the objectives are to be achieved? What resource material is essential if your main ideas are to be accepted by the audience?

- What is the best way to make your point(s)? Considering the characteristics of your audience, what types of subject matter and what method of presentation will be most effective in getting across your main ideas?

- For each item, why is it needed? Look at your material objectively. Examine each item selected for inclusion in the presentation and ask: Why should this be used? What contribution will it make to achievement of my objectives? Items that cannot withstand this critical examination should be eliminated.

Step 5: Organize the material for effective presentation

Most presentations can be broken down into three major parts: the introduction, in which the idea is stated; the body in which the idea is developed; and the conclusion, in which the idea is restated. Each part serves a specific function, and thus requires a distinct approach.

Starting the idea (Introduction). The first purpose of the introduction is to sell the audience on the idea of listening to your presentation. The second and more obvious purpose is to state the idea. It is important to use simple and precise words, and to make this part of your presentation interesting and brief. The approach you choose will depend upon the subject matter, the time allowed, the audience, and your own personality and preferences. Listed below are a few ways in which a subject can be introduced:

- **Direct statement** of the subject and why it is important to the audience.

- **Indirect opening** involving a vital interest of the audience (for example, a statement connecting your objective with that vital interest).

- **Vivid example** or comparison leading directly to the subject.

- **Strong quotation** relating to the subject, one that will be particularly meaningful to the audience and will establish rapport between you and them.

- **Important statistics** having to do with the subject.

- **Story** illustrating the subject, provided it has a **direct** application and is not merely contrived for entertainment purposes.

Normally, you should use just one approach to introduce your subject. Whichever you select, you should keep in mind the two tasks of your introduction: to sell your audience on listening to your presentation, and to introduce the subject.

Developing the idea (Body). In the body of the presentation the idea should be explained in whatever detail is necessary to achieve the objectives of the presentation. An effective way to present the body of the material to be covered is to use audio-visual aids (discussed specifically later in this handbook).

Illustrations give impact and emphasis to the major points. In addition, you might use some of the following:

- **Examples** illustrating the idea in operation (for example, flow charts, anecdotes, and specific results).

- **Reiteration** of the main idea in the same words or in different words to help summarize and to ensure that the listeners will remember the point.

- **Statistics** used sparingly and presented as simply as possible.

- **Comparisons** with similar or dissimilar types of operations, ideas, and so forth.

- **Testimony** of experts, witnesses to events, or users of the product or procedure. (Such testimony should not be overused and the expert being cited must be a credible source who has a firm reputation in the field.)

Another decision to be made regarding the development part of your presentation is when to accept audience questions. Do you want to field questions at any point during your presentation, or at some specific point(s)? Or do you want to restrict questioning to the close of the presentation?

Restating the idea (Conclusion). The conclusion gives you an opportunity to sum up and stress the main ideas you want the audience to remember, to integrate and tie together various conclusions, and to suggest appropriate action. Restating the ideas you want your audience to remember is essential. The conclusion should not be lengthy, but it should be vivid and long enough to cover the important points you want your audience to carry away with them.

It is good to give your audience a clear indication of when you're starting the conclusion. You can do this by using such phrases as "Let's review the main points we've covered," "To sum up these factors …," "Our prime purpose today has been to …," or "Reflecting on what we've discussed …" Using such a phrase makes it evident that you're winding up your presentation and helps bring the audience back on target.

Each of the three parts of a presentation described here has a specific purpose and needs specific attention. Regardless of which format you choose for presentation of your material, you will find that your presentation has essentially the same three parts: (1) Introduction stating the idea, (2) Body developing the idea, and (3) Conclusion restating the idea.

Step 6: Practice the presentation in advance

Most speakers have had the experience of planning a good presentation on paper only to have it fall flat when actually delivered. Many factors are responsible for such failure. The most common ones include:

- The spoken words don't flow as smoothly as they seemed to on paper.
- The presenter loses continuity (because of some distraction).
- The mechanics of handling audio-visual aids interfere with the presentation flow.
- The presenter is not as knowledgeable about the subject matter as he thought he was.
- Someone in the audience asks a question that the presenter is not prepared to answer.
- The audience is cold and unresponsive.
- The place where the presentation is given does not lend itself to the type of presentation planned.

All but the last two of these factors can be attributed to a lack of sufficient preparation or practice on the part of the presenter. Even the last two problems can be minimized to a degree, through foresight.

Practice will not guarantee success. However, it can (and should):

- Give the presenter more self-confidence, making the audience more willing to view the subject matter as credible.
- Identify flaws and/or gaps in the material.
- Provide familiarity with the material, so that the presentation appears to be naturally and spontaneously delivered.
- Allow the presenter to use audio-visual aids so that they will enhance (rather than interfere with) the actual presentation.
- Make it easier to anticipate potential questions, particularly ones that might prove troublesome.

There are three primary methods of practicing a presentation. Using any one, or a combination of the three, can be very valuable to the presenter.

- Give the presentation aloud to yourself. Imagine your audience is there, and deliver your presentation just as if you would were they there. Use your notes and the audio-visual aids you plan on using.

- Use a tape recorder. This will give you an opportunity to hear how you sound, and to see whether your ideas are coming through as you want them to. Listen to the tape objectively by assuming the audience's viewpoint.

- Give a "dry run." Have some knowledgeable friends or co-workers sit in on your practice presentation. This is probably the most effective practice method, if your dry-run audience is able to react in a manner typical of the individuals you expect to be in your actual audience (that is, your dry-run audience adopts the same background of knowledge, interests, and attitudes).

Unfortunately, "Practice makes perfect" is not an accurate statement in this context, since practice rarely makes a **perfect** presentation. However, "No practice makes disaster" is quite a realistic statement. It is a rare individual who can make a well-timed and forceful presentation without first practicing it.

III. Selection and Use of Visual Aids

Audio-visual aids (for example, charts and handouts) can add significantly to the impact of your presentation and the understanding your audience will gain. However, the idea itself must always precede the aids that support it.

Guides for Selecting Aids

The following basic principles and guidelines should be considered when selecting audio-visual aids for use with your presentation:

- **Audibility and visibility.** Is the aid right for the audience size and room size? Will everyone be able to see and hear it? In addition to size of room and audience, consider the seating arrangement, lighting, and other factors that might affect audibility or visibility. An aid that cannot be properly seen or heard is much worse than no aid at all, as it will annoy and distract your audience.

- **Accessibility and availability.** Are the necessary equipment and facilities available to you? Is so, make certain the aid does not distract the audience if it's left in view throughout the presentation. For example, you can insert blank sheets of paper between chart sheets so that the chart will be covered when you want to turn the audience's attention to something else.

- **Adaptability**. Does the aid fit the presentation? Don't make your points fit the aid you have available. Also, make sure you know how to use the aid, as any difficulties you have with it will distract your audience and detract from your message, and diminish its effectiveness.

- **Attention-capturing quality**. Will the aid gain attention and keep it on the subject matter rather than on the aid itself? The aid should emphasize the subject matter you want remembered. It does not have to be flashy. The use of color (in moderation), heavy lettering, underlining, arrows, and other such methods can emphasize the points you wish to bring out.

- **Auxiliary nature**. The most important thing to keep in mind is that the aid should be just what the word implies--it should support the presentation, not be the center of attention. A good presentation should be able to stand on its own without any aids. Aids should be used only to enhance what you are saying.

Types of Aids and Equipment

Some of the more frequently used types of aids and equipment are listed below:

Charts

Charts are the most frequently used type presentation aid. There are various methods of displaying charts:

- **Flip charts**. Prepared on large sheets of paper and attached (by a clamp) to an easel. An advantage of flip charts is that usually they can be rolled up and carried fairly easily.

- **Chart cards**. Similar to flip charts, except they are prepared on posterboard or heavy cardboard. Thus, they are sturdier, look neater, and last longer than flip charts; however, they are more costly and are clumsy to carry.

- **Slides.** Can be prepared to photographing charts. This aid is effective for large groups. However, slides usually require a darkened room, which means loss of eye contact with your audience. Use of slides also requires knowledge of how to use the particular projector available.

- **Overhead transparencies.** Becoming increasingly popular, because they are practical, inexpensive, and versatile. Transparencies can be projected onto a screen or a light-colored wall, and can be used with room lights on. In addition, the presenter can write on the transparencies much as he would on a chalkboard. Disadvantages include possible blocking of view by the projector and occasional difficulties in adjusting transparencies. These drawbacks, however, are minor compared with the advantages.

Given below are some tips for selecting and preparing charts.

- All charts should be **needed**; many presentations include too many charts.
- Charts should present highlights only.
- Each chart should clarify an idea better than the oral presentation alone could.
- Charts should be kept simple in detail.
- Charts should be large enough for all to see, and should stand high enough so that lettering at the bottom isn't blocked by the audience.
- Charts should be lettered in large, clear, bold, uncrowded letters and lines.
- Generally, each chart should contain no more than 10 lines, an at least two minutes should be allowed for its use.
- Color should be used only to highlight important points.
- Charts should be made carefully, not thrown together, they should be neat and reflect creditably on you, your department, and the idea you want to project.

The following are some tips working with slides and overhead transparencies:

- Place all material in order, handy to the projection area, before the start of the presentation.
- Position the first slide or frame to be used and check for proper focus.
- If there is an interval during the presentation when projection materials in not being used, do something to reduce attention on the projector. Turn off the light on an overhead projector. If using a slide projector, cut a piece of cardboard the size of a slide and place it between the frames to make a break. This will cause a temporary "blackout" and make it unnecessary to turn off the machine.

Handouts

Handouts in connection with a presentation can be an effective means of increasing learning and retention by your audience if careful thought has been given to their preparation and use. The following guidelines may help:

- Normally, handouts should be made available following the presentation, unless you intend for the audience to refer to specific portions of them during the presentation. Otherwise, you're inviting the audience to look at the handouts when you want them to be listening to you.

- Make copies of charts **only** if they are vital for later reference. The smaller the number of handouts, the greater the likelihood of their being used for future reference.

- Leave plenty of space on the handouts for note-taking.

- Include a list of suggested related readings if possible.

- Include your name, title of lecture, date, and phone number so members of your audience can reach you later if they have questions.

Chalkboard

The chalkboard is about the most useful, most valuable, and least expensive form of visual-aid equipment you can use in a presentation. However, it is not easy to use, and requires advanced planning and practice if it is to be used effectively.

Some of the advantages of using a chalkboard are:

Flexibility. A chalkboard offers plenty of space, and can be changed relatively easily.

Feeling of spontaneity. The audience can get the feeling that you are giving them the latest information—so current, in fact, that a chart could not have been prepared. In addition you can make modifications based on questions or comments during the course of the presentation.

Progressive development. An initial step or idea can be developed progressively on the chalkboard as you explain each step.

Audience interest. Writing on a chalkboard helps maintain audience interest, and also gives them a chance to make notes.

The following are some tips for using a chalkboard:

- Write neatly and much larger than usual.
- Hold chalk at a 45 degree angle. If the chalk squeaks, break it in half.
- Avoid (as mush as possible) talking to the board. (Avoid writing a lot of material on the board).
- Erase material written on the board when it is no longer needed.

IV. Making the Presentation

Careful planning of the content and judicious selection for accompanying audio-visual aids lay the groundwork for an effective presentation. The final consideration is the actual delivery of the presentation.

Platform Techniques

Several platform techniques can improve your ability to get your message across. These involve interaction with your audience, use of lecterns and pointers, and body language.

Relationship to Audience

- **Eye contact.** A vital part of good communication is effective eye contact. A presenter who speaks to an inanimate spot on the back of the wall loses out on a valuable means of determining whether his message is getting across--visual feedback. In addition, looking your audience in the eye increases the audience's confidence in you and your message.
- **Focus on listener.** Remember to deliver your presentation in a manner that is understandable, interesting, and meaningful **from the point of the listener.**

Presentation Tools

Presentation tools include lecterns and pointers:

- Lecture (or Speaker's stand). The lectern can serve several purposes in addition to the obvious one of being a place for your notes.
- Provides out-of-sight storage space for aids and handouts.

- Serves as a resting place for your hands (but avoid gripping it tensely).

- Can be used to establish a particular type of relationship with the audience. For example, speaking from behind the lectern establishes a formal relationship, which at times is desirable. Moving to the side or front of the lectern tends to remove the "barrier," making for a closer, more informal relationship with the audience. Moving behind the lectern is a good way of focusing attention on the summary as a more formal part of the presentation.

- **Pointer**. A pointer is a valuable tool in drawing attention to specific items on a chart. However, it is all too frequently a distracting toy. Put it down when you're not using it!

Use of Body

The manner in which you handle yourself during the presentation has a significant effect on the audience. The following suggestions should be kept in mind:

Poise. A poised speaker appears self-confident, relaxed, and capable of doing whatever the situation calls for. By paying attention to the following details, even an insecure speaker can give this impression:

- Dress should be in good taste, clean, and comfortable. When your relationship with the audience is formal, it is generally not a good idea to take off your jacket, loosen your tie, or roll up your sleeves.

- Approach your position before the audience in a deliberate, unhurried fashion. Pause a few moments before beginning to speak; this gives your audience a chance to focus on you and feel that they don't frighten you (even though they may!).

- Do what feels most comfortable for you with our hands, but don't keep them in motion! Hands should be relaxed, and should not draw attention.

- Posture should be relaxed without being sloppy, and dignified without being stiff.

Movements. Deliberate, well-timed movements can:

- Relieve tension.

- Draw attention away from a visual aid and back to you.

- Break the hypnotic effect a stationary body has on an audience.

- Change the mood or pace of the presentation.

Facial Expression. Your face should reflect the mood you want to create in your audience. Lacking some facial expression, you will not inspire interest.

Vocal Techniques

By giving careful attention to certain basic elements of speaking, most presenters can increase their effectiveness substantially.

- **Pitch.** Refers to the tone level of the voice. A voice pitch different from a person's normal speaking voice usually betrays nervousness and it is distracting to an audience. Another problem related to pitch is voice drop at the end of a sentence. Without realizing it, many speakers let the last few words in a sentence trail off to a point where they become difficult to hear. Often, merely by being aware of this, the voice-drop problem can be overcome.

- **Intensity.** Refers to the force or loudness with which you project. The volume must be loud enough so that everyone can hear you, but not loud enough to overpower them. Variations in intensity add dynamics--a soft voice can, at times, command more attention than a loud one.

- **Pace.** Refers to rate of speech. Variation in rate can add considerably to the effectiveness of a presentation, provided the rate is always consistent with the mood you are trying to convey. A tape recorder can be very helpful in showing you how good your timing is.

- **Pauses.** Can be effective in drawing attention to points that you consider particularly important. Pauses should be used deliberately, however, so that you do not give the impression that you are groping for words.

Audience Retention

Audience retention refers to your audience's ability to retain, or remember, what you said after your presentation is over. Audience **retention** not **attention**, is the concern. The two are related, but are not identical.

Curiosity will make the introduction gain a reasonably high degree of both attention and retention. Even with a good presentation, sharp drop in retention occurs after the introduction. For this reason, you must repeat important points during the body of your presentation. The use of summary phrases (suggested in section II) helps increase retention at this stage. Audience members who have

done some mental wandering will usually make a conscious effort to get back on track and carry something of value away from the presentation.

What have studies of the audience-retention function told us?

- Audience retention is lowest during the body of the presentation, which is the part that normally takes the most time and effort to prepare. This does not mean that you should give it less attention. It does mean, however, that the body of your presentation is not the place to introduce a key point and then drop it, if you want the point to be well-remembered by your audience.

- The introduction and particularly, the conclusion require as much careful preparation as the body--possibly even more. Since these portions of your presentation are more likely to be retained the key points you want your audience to remember must be covered here.

- You should give attention to methods for simulating your audience during the body of your presentation--for example, changes of pace and wise use of audio-visual aids.

Once you have soundly prepared your material, careful attention to the points covered in this section will make your presentation more meaningful, and will make it more likely that you will achieve your objectives.

V. Conclusion

At the heart of an effective presentation is **meaningful content**, as covered in "Steps in preparing a short presentation" (section II). Supporting the content are audio-visual aids, discussed in "selection and use of audio-visual aids" (section III). Careful selection and use of such aids can provide clarification, a change of pace, and stimulus during the body of the presentation. Section IV, "Making the presentation," highlights the importance of platform, vocal, and audience-retention techniques. Together, these things--meaningful content, appropriate aids, and good delivery style--will help you get your message across in a manner that will achieve the objectives of your presentation.

APPENDIX C: SAMPLE WORKSHOP EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Day 1

We would like your evaluation of the workshop to be anonymous. Please provide the following information, however, to help us apply the information you provide to improving the materials and future workshops:

Position: _____

Agency: _____

Years involved in juvenile firesetting: _____

Brief summary of your role in the prevention/intervention of juvenile firesetting/arson:

We would like you to evaluate **each** session of the workshop:

1. Please rate the following elements of the workshop session, **The Juvenile Firesetter: Personality Profiles**.

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a.	Usefulness of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Clarity of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Opportunity to ask questions	←	←	←	←	←
d.	Opportunity to participate	←	←	←	←	←
e.	Pace and amount of information covered	←	←	←	←	←

f. What were the strongest or most useful aspects of the session (i.e., what was good about it?)?

g. What were the weakest or least useful aspects of the session?

h. When you return to work, how useful will this session be to you in developing or improving a juvenile firesetter/arson program?

← Extremely useful
← Very useful
← Average; added little to current practice or knowledge
← Not very useful
← Not useful at all

i. What would you **add** or **eliminate** from the session to improve its usefulness?

2. Please rate the following elements of the workshop sessions, **Screening and Evaluating Juvenile Firesetters.**

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a.	Usefulness of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Clarity of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Opportunity to ask questions	←	←	←	←	←
d.	Opportunity to participate	←	←	←	←	←
e.	Pace and amount of information covered	←	←	←	←	←

f. What were the strongest or most useful aspects of the session (i.e., what was good about it?)?

g. What were the weakest or least useful aspects of the session?

h. When you return to work, how useful will this session be to you in developing or improving a juvenile firesetter/arson program?

← Extremely useful
← Very useful
← Average; added little to current practice or knowledge
← Not very useful
← Not useful at all

i. What would you **add** or **eliminate** from the session to improve its usefulness?

3. Please rate the following elements of the workshop session, **How to Interview Juvenile Firesetters.**

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a.	Usefulness of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Clarity of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Opportunity to ask questions	←	←	←	←	←
d.	Opportunity to participate	←	←	←	←	←
e.	Pace and amount of information covered	←	←	←	←	←

f. What were the strongest or most useful aspects of the session (i.e., what was good about it?)?

g. What were the weakest or least useful aspects of the session?

h. When you return to work, how useful will this session be to you in developing or improving a juvenile firesetter/arson program?

← Extremely useful
← Very useful
← Average; added little to current practice or knowledge
← Not very useful
← Not useful at all

i. What would you **add** or **eliminate** from the session to improve its usefulness?

Day 2

We would like your evaluation of the workshop to be anonymous. Please provide the following information, however, to help us apply the information you provide to improving the materials and future workshops:

Position: _____

Agency: _____

Years involved in juvenile firesetting: _____

Brief summary of your role in the prevention/intervention of juvenile firesetting/arson:

We would like you to evaluate **each** session of the workshop:

4. Please rate the following elements of the workshop session, **Intervention Services and Referral Mechanisms**.

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a.	Usefulness of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Clarity of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Opportunity to ask questions	←	←	←	←	←
d.	Opportunity to participate	←	←	←	←	←
e.	Pace and amount of information covered	←	←	←	←	←

f. What were the strongest or most useful aspects of the session (i.e., what was good about it?)?

g. What were the weakest or least useful aspects of the session?

h. When you return to work, how useful will this session be to you in developing or improving a juvenile firesetter/arson program?

← Extremely useful
← Very useful
← Average; added little to current practice or knowledge
← Not very useful
← Not useful at all

i. What would you **add** or **eliminate** from the session to improve its usefulness?

5. Please rate the following elements of the workshop sessions, **Program Management, Publicity and Outreach, Monitoring Systems**.

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a.	Usefulness of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Clarity of the information presented	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Opportunity to ask questions	←	←	←	←	←
d.	Opportunity to participate	←	←	←	←	←
e.	Pace and amount of information covered	←	←	←	←	←

f. What were the strongest or most useful aspects of the session (i.e., what was good about it?)?

g. What were the weakest or least useful aspects of the session?

h. When you return to work, how useful will this session be to you in developing or improving a juvenile firesetter/arson program?

← Extremely useful
← Very useful
← Average; added little to current practice or knowledge
← Not very useful
← Not useful at all

i. What would you **add** or **eliminate** from the session to improve its usefulness?

6. Please rate the group discussions based on case studies (Harry, Mark, Angie, etc.) on the following elements:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a. Usefulness of discussion	←	←	←	←	←
b. Potential for improving working relationships among participants	←	←	←	←	←

7. Please rate the panel discussion regarding **Building an Effective Firesetter Program** on the following elements:

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
a. Usefulness of discussion	←	←	←	←	←
b. Potential for improving working relationships among participants	←	←	←	←	←

The next nine questions relate to the workshop as a whole.

8. a. How did the workshop compare with other similar activities you have attended?

← Much better than most
← Somewhat better than most
← About the same, average
← Somewhat worse than most
← Much worse than most

b. What other workshops or training activities have you attended in regard to the juvenile firesetting/arson problem?

9. In regard to the overall value of the workshop in terms of assisting you in your work with juvenile firesetters, was the value of the workshop:

← Outstanding, exceeded expectations
← Excellent, very helpful
← Average, met basic expectation
← Met minimum requirements, little else
← Unsatisfactory, left many questions unanswered

10. What might have been done differently, or included, to improve the workshop?

11. Was the workshop:

← Too short--more time was needed to cover additional topics or details.
← The right length
← Too long--information was "old hat," covered little new information.

12. Was the workshop pertinent to your needs and interests?

← Yes
← No
← Partially

13. a. Were there specific areas in which you gained new knowledge or skills?

← Yes
← No
← Some

b. If yes, in what areas?

14. What portion(s) of the workshop are apt to be most helpful to you in the future? Why?

15. What portion(s) of the workshop are least apt to be helpful to you in the future? Why?

16. Was the workshop:

← Too basic
← Just right
← Too advanced

The following questions pertain to the three documents distributed for the workshop.

17. Please rate the potential usefulness of each document:

		Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Haven't reviewed yet
a.	Users' Guide	←	←	←	←	←	←
b.	Volume I: Guidelines for Implementation	←	←	←	←	←	←
c.	Volume II: Resource Materials	←	←	←	←	←	←

18. Please rate each program component (considering the material in all three documents) in terms of its value to you in regard to your work in juvenile firesetting:

		Value to work (circle rating)					
		High		Average		Low	Haven't reviewed yet
a.	Program Management	5	4	3	2	1	←
b.	Screening, Evaluating, and Developing the Implementation Plan	5	4	3	2	1	←
c.	Intervention Services	5	4	3	2	1	←
d.	Referral Mechanisms	5	4	3	2	1	←
e.	Publicity and Outreach	5	4	3	2	1	←
f.	Monitoring Systems	5	4	3	2	1	←
g.	Developing Relationships with the Justice System	5	4	3	2	1	←

19. Which components will be most useful to you, and why?

20. Which components will be least useful to you, and why?

Thank you very much for your comments.

Because this workshop is part of a developmental effort, we will follow-up in two ways:

(1) Sending all participants a follow-up questionnaire covering the actual use and value of the workshop and materials, and

(2) Conducting telephone interviews with a sample of participants, to explore the extent of program implementation or changes due to the workshop and materials.

Please be sure your name, address, and phone number have been provided to the workshop trainers.

APPENDIX D: CASE STUDIES

HARRY

Case 1. Harry is eight-years-old and lives with his parents in a comfortable suburban community. Harry, an only child, is a quiet boy who prefers playing alone than with his neighborhood friends. He is very bright and does well in school, especially in math and science. Harry says he wants to be an engineer when he grows up. Teachers describe Harry as shy and not very athletically-inclined. They report that he is very cooperative in school and well-liked by his classmates. His parents both say there are times when Harry becomes demanding, however they feel that this is his way of asking for attention. Harry and his parents spend a great deal of time with one another, especially on the weekends. One afternoon Harry was playing alone in his room with his new science kit. He was beginning the dissection of a frog. Curious about the somewhat thick skin of the frog, he decided to see if it were combustible. He went to the kitchen, found some matches and returned to his room. He struck one match and held the flame near the frog. The match dropped from his hand, fell to the floor and caught his bedroom curtains on fire. Harry ran from his room to tell his mother.

FRANK

Case 2. Frank is ten years old and lives with his mother and his eleven year old sister in a lower-middle income urban area. Frank's mom and dad have been divorced for eight years. Frank never has really known his father. For the last two years, Frank's mom had been living with a man whom, she says, was very generous to her family. He liked to spend time with her children, but he could be extremely rigid and overly punitive, particularly when Frank did something which displeased him. Recently, the mother separated from him because he physically abused her. Frank witnessed this abuse several times, and may also have been a victim. However, when asked, both mom and Frank deny that any of the physical abuse was directed at Frank.

During the time of the separation, Frank's mom began to notice some behavior problems in her son. His ability to concentrate dramatically decreased, and reports came from school that he was involved in fights with his peers. At home, Frank had frequent temper outbursts during which he would become so angry that he would physically destroy his toys. Also, Frank was verbally aggressive and belligerent toward his sister. He was being generally disruptive both at school and at home. His mom reported this was unusual behavior for Frank and that she was very concerned for his well-being.

Frank's mom noted that he had been curious about fire since the age of three, when she found him playing with matches in their kitchen. At that time she taught him how to correctly strike a match. Together they would practice striking matches, blowing them out and throwing them in the fireplace. He was told never to play with matches. He also was encouraged to come to his mom if he ever felt the urge to strike a match, and they would do it together. Despite these rules about firestarting, during the past few weeks

Frank's mom found some scraps of burned newspaper in their fireplace. She became angry, describing the possible consequences of what could happen if the flaming newspaper accidentally caught the house on fire.

Frank's most recent fire episode involved igniting his model airplane on the gas stove and running with it to the fireplace. Unfortunately, he did not reach the fireplace in time, and the burning airplane fell on the carpet, starting a small fire. Frightened and confused, Frank ran to his mother for help. Luckily she was nearby and able to extinguish the fire. Shortly after this incident, she call her local fire department for help in dealing with Frank's firesetting activities.

CARL

Case 3. Sixteen-year-old Carl lives with his father and younger brother in an upper-class urban neighborhood. His mother and father divorced when Carl was twelve, and the mother recently remarried. Carl's father, a prominent attorney, leaves for work early, comes home late and does a great deal of traveling. While Carl's father is absent much of the time, a loving but elderly aunt, as well as a housekeeper, share the responsibility for the two boys. Carl's mother lives in another city a few hundred miles away and visits the two boys on an irregular basis.

Carl's father describes his son as "basically a good kid," but wishes he were more obedient and respectful. His mother says he is hard to talk to and never takes her seriously. Carl's aunt describes him as a charming boy who always seems to get into trouble. Although Carl is very bright, he has been expelled from several private schools because of his inability to follow the rules. These schools characterize him as the class bully and ringleader, and he always seems to be responsible for major class disruptions. Carl currently is attending a private day school, where his grades are average and his conduct marginally acceptable.

Carl has a history of antisocial and delinquent behavior which began around the time of puberty. Shortly after his mother and father separated, Carl began missing several days of school for unexplained reasons. He would leave home early in the morning and return by dinner offering no explanation of where he had been or what he had been doing while not attending school. After talking with school officials, it was decided to move Carl to another educational environment. Several months later, Carl's father received a late night telephone call from the local police reporting that they had caught Carl and a few friends slashing car tires at a nearby shopping mall. Carl's father was able to convince the police not to press charges. In addition, there have been two incidents of shoplifting, one from a local drugstore and one from a large sporting goods store. On both occasions apologies were accepted, and no punishment or retribution was implemented. Carl has an apparent knack for getting into trouble and an ability to avoid experiencing the consequences of his antisocial activities.

Carl's fire behavior emerged at age nine when he was caught setting trash can fires at school. Both his father and the school authorities admonished him, and shortly thereafter Carl was asked to leave the school because of constant fighting with his peers. The latest firestart was of a more serious nature. Carl had been invited to spend the night at the house of his friend Kevin. Kevin's parents went out for the evening, and the two boys decided to drink the beer which they found in the refrigerator. Both of the boys together consumed about two six-packs of beer. They then left the house and rode their bikes down to the local park and recreation area. They thought it would be easy and fun to break into the building and steal the petty cash from the park director's desk. Once they had entered the building through an open window, they worked for several minutes to break into the desk where the petty cash was kept. Unsuccessful and frustrated by their attempt to obtain the money, they spotted a lighter on a nearby counter and ignited the papers in the trash can. They fled from the building on their bikes without attempting to extinguish the fire. On their way home they heard the sound of fire engines and assumed that they were responding to the fire they had set at the park and recreation building.

MARK

Case 4. Mark is the middle of three sons living with his mother and father in a suburban middle class neighborhood. He is eleven-and-a-half and he is in the fifth grade. His home environment is generally positive and supportive, and with a religious orientation. There is a strong degree of cohesion and achievement motivation. In addition, discipline methods are appropriate and there is adequate supervision. All of the members of the family spend time together focused on child-related activities such as going to baseball games and other recreational outings. Socially, Mark appears to be accepted by his peers, although his best friend recently died. Mark failed the first grade, and has been placed in special education classes. His teachers report that he has numerous academic problems and is starting to display conduct problems in school.

Mark has had several "small" firesetting incidents over the last five years. His parents report that Mark has left over 50 burn marks on items around the house. Both parents smoke, and ignition sources, such as matches and lighters, are readily available. The last fire Mark set was in his own room. He found matches in the house, went to his room and set fire to some paper and furniture. He extinguished the fire himself. Just prior to the fire, he had been told by his mother that he could not attend an overnight at his friend's house because the friend's parents would not be at home. No significant damages resulted from the fire. Mark's parents claim that he sets fires when he is angry or upset. As a result of setting this last fire, Mark was disciplined by his parents. The eliminated his after-school baseball practice for two weeks. Mark was not happy about this punishment, and he is threatening to set another fire.

ANGIE

Case 5. Angie is a fifteen-year-old black female who is the oldest of three sisters. She lives with her mother and father, both of whom are highly successful professionals in the entertainment industry. The family environment is somewhat positive, however, there are reports by the mother of a high degree of tension and discord between she and Angie. The mother also reports that Angie often displays aggressive behavior (arguing, hitting, etc.) toward her younger sisters. There appears to be adequate discipline and supervision, with a moderate level of imposed punishment. The family typically does not spend a great deal of time together participating in recreational activities. Angie has many friends with whom she spends the majority of her time. She claims that all her friends smoke and she also enjoys it. Her school reports that she has a very high IQ, but her grades and conduct are well below average.

Angie has a significant psychiatric history. Two years ago she was hospitalized for three months for depression and a suicide attempt. At the time she received major tranquilizers and antidepressant medications. Her recovery was excellent and she has been in outpatient psychotherapy on an irregular basis since that time. There appears to be no recurrence of that type or degree of psychopathology. Currently she is not on medication nor in psychotherapy.

Angie's firesetting behavior was first noticed by her parents when she was eight. Her parents reported that she was found playing with matches without adult supervision. She was punished, and told not to engage in that type of behavior again. However, shortly thereafter, the housekeeper noticed several small items around the house with burn marks, including parts of a carpet and a section of Angie's bedroom curtains. Her parents again admonished her, and punished her by not letting her watch television for one week. There were no known firesetting incidents until recently.

Angie's current firesetting incident occurred when she burned a book with a lighter she found in the house. She said she had been feeling sad, lonely, and anxious before setting the fire, she set the fire because "she felt like it," and she felt great afterward. She described it as an impulsive act, she had not planned the fire, nor had she thought about potential consequences. Her parents felt that by setting the fire Angie wanted to cause physical harm and damage to their household.

FIRE SERVICE GUIDE TO A JUVENILE FIRESETTER EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In Passaic, New Jersey, a firefighter was killed and hundreds of people lost their homes in a fire started by a group of teenage boys. In Roanoke, Virginia, a seven-year-old boy set fire to a chair in an abandoned building. The fire spread to an adjacent house and trapped an elderly woman. In Rochester, New York, a two-year-old, playing with matches, started a fire that took his life and the lives of five family members. Unfortunately, these tragic events are not isolated incidents, but are repeated virtually every day in cities and towns across the United States. Arson fires kill hundreds of people every year and cause over one **billion** dollars worth of damage annually.

It is estimated that approximately 40% of all arsons are set by juveniles. These fires cause hundreds of millions of dollars in damages annually and thousands of needless injuries and deaths. The rate of juvenile fireplay and firesetting--short of arson as determined by fire investigators--may also be quite high. Studies have shown that the majority of normal children possess an interest in fire and nearly half have engaged in fireplay. While the majority of the child-set fires are set out of curiosity not malice, the damage they cause, both in economic and human costs, are real and devastating.

Clearly the problem of juvenile firesetting and arson is a costly, often deadly, problem. Whether the result of a curious child playing with matches or the malicious act of a troubled delinquent, juvenile firesetting is a serious and vexing problem that requires a special response from the community.

In recognition of the seriousness of the juvenile firesetter problem nationally, the Institute for Social Analysis was contracted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the U.S. Fire Administration to conduct the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program (NJF/ACPP). This developmental initiative is designed to assess, develop, test, and disseminate information about promising approaches for the control and prevention of juvenile firesetting and arson.

ISA initially planned to develop one "model" program. However, we quickly realized that a program suited to a small, volunteer fire department in rural Minnesota would not be appropriate for a large, paid department in the Bronx and vice versa. Instead, ISA developed a modular or components model. The components describe how to develop, implement, and operate a juvenile firesetter program. These components highlight seven different aspects of a program, including program management, screening and evaluation, intervention services, referral mechanisms,

publicity and outreach, monitoring systems, and developing relationships with the justice system. ISA, with assistance from its subcontractors and consultants developed three program manuals. The *Guidelines for Implementation* contains a broad range of information about each of the components. The *Users' Guide* provides step-by-step guidelines on how to use the information in the *Guidelines* to implement a juvenile firesetter program. The *Trainers' Guide* describes how to use the information in the *Guidelines* as well as other resources to develop a comprehensive juvenile firesetter prevention training workshop. The guide provides a detailed curriculum for the training program and provides strategies for modifying the curriculum to meet specific needs.

As noted above, the *Guidelines for Implementation* contains a vast range of information. It includes information not only for the fire service, but also for mental health, juvenile justice, and child protective services agencies. In writing that manual, ISA attempted to provide the reader with the widest variety of program information and purposely did not specify the type of program in jurisdiction should implement. However, we have found that an "evaluation, education, and referral program" model is the one most often implemented by juvenile firesetter programs across the country. After the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program was evaluated, it became clear that a shorter manual specifically devoted to the development of an early intervention program was needed.

In writing this manual we have culled the information from the *Guidelines for Implementation* and presented what we believe to be the most effective program for the fire service to implement. Not every recommendation will pertain to all jurisdictions, and program planners should refer back to the *Guidelines* for the most complete information on alternative approaches. Like the other program materials, this manual is written primarily for the fire service--the agency most likely to house a firesetter program.

ISA advocates an "evaluation, education, and referral program"--where the fire service provides initial screening and evaluation of firesetters who have been identified, early intervention/fire safety education for curiosity firesetters or other firesetters who may benefit from such education, and referral to mental health or other appropriate agencies for more troubled firesetters. Although some programs include a "counseling" component within the fire service, ISA has found that the fire service is best equipped to screen juvenile firesetters, generally using the screening tools developed by the U.S. Fire Administration, and provide fire safety education when appropriate. Any additional counseling is usually best handled by mental health or child protective services agencies.

ISA believes that the fire service should not have to tackle the problem of juvenile firesetting alone. Other agencies including schools, mental health agencies, juvenile justice agencies, child protective services, and other agencies that work with youth, need to work with the fire service to help identify juvenile firesetters and provide the appropriate services so that these juveniles do not continue to set fires. In most communities, the initial impetus to develop a juvenile firesetter program comes from the fire service, but as this volume indicates, the fire service should solicit assistance from these other agencies--often in the context of developing a coordinating council--to provide all the necessary services.

This manual follows the format of the other materials developed under this program. It will discuss an early intervention and referral program in the context of the seven components ISA feels are critical to the success of any juvenile firesetter program. These components include 1) Program Management, 2) Screening and Evaluation, 3) Intervention Services, 4) Publicity and Outreach, 5) Referral Mechanisms, 6) Monitoring Systems and 7) Relationships with the Juvenile Justice System.

CHAPTER 2: PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Program Planning

Juvenile firesetter programs often originate out of the concern of one inspired individual. These individuals may be members of the fire service who have a genuine interest in children or have seen, first hand, the damage and pain caused by juvenile firesetting. (If a program is established, they often serve as program coordinators). Once the interest is generated, the next step is to acquire a detailed understanding of the juvenile firesetter problem in the particular jurisdiction. Local fire departments are the first place to go to obtain the necessary information. Fire incident reports, arson investigation reports, and other records should provide data on the extent and nature of the juvenile firesetter problem. Information on property loss, injuries, and deaths, if available, give added meaning to the numbers. Additional information and arrest data is often available from hospital burn units and police departments.

Once data on the extent of the local juvenile firesetter problem is collected, the person interested in the problem will need to meet with fire chiefs, community representatives, local city councils, and others to determine if the magnitude of the juvenile firesetting problem constitute a serious enough issue to warrant community action. These meetings often center around: (1) the cost of the problem versus the cost of the solution, (2) whether fires set by juveniles are a significant proportion of the fires set in the community and (3) whether the numbers of fires set by juveniles

is disproportionally high given the numbers of juveniles in the community. Deciding whether the issue of juvenile firesetting is a significant problem will probably take many meetings and discussions. Do not be discouraged if the process takes longer than expected. Many juvenile firesetter programs have been created because one individual had the tenacity to keep going back and presenting his or her case.

If juvenile firesetting is not considered a problem, the path is easy. If, however, the community decides that juvenile firesetting is a threat to the community, the next issue is deciding how to address the problem. The community may decide that the problem is severe enough to establish a complete juvenile firesetter program. Communities wishing to implement such a program can use the guidelines described in these components and can seek assistance from other juvenile firesetter programs. If a separate juvenile firesetter program is beyond the resources of a particular community, the fire service may choose to bolster existing programs by implementing one or more of the components. Each jurisdiction is unique and has its own unique problems and resources. Only the members of that community can decide what constitutes a serious problem and which strategies will be most effective to address the problem.

Program Structure

If the members of the community feel that the juvenile firesetter program is serious enough to warrant a juvenile firesetter program, they must decide what kind of program would best serve their jurisdictional needs and then develop such a program. As indicated earlier, ISA advocates an early intervention program directed by the fire service for single jurisdictions (we will briefly discuss the special case of multiple jurisdiction programs later.). The following sections are designed to provide information on how to establish a juvenile firesetter program. The remainder of this component provides information on such issues as location, staffing, training, funding, and establishing interagency links.

Location

Fire Service. The primary site for a juvenile firesetter program should be within the fire service. The results of the Institute for Social Analysis' (ISA) survey of juvenile firesetter programs throughout the country reveal that 87% of the programs are administered by the fire service. These programs are located in different branches of the fire service, including the Office of the Fire Chief, Fire Investigation, and the Fire Marshal. The primary reason why juvenile firesetter programs should be established within the fire service is the fire service's capacity to identify large

numbers of firesetters. The fire service is usually the first agency to respond to a fire and many of the firesetters are identified at the scene. Indeed, the majority of juvenile firesetter referrals to existing programs are from within the fire service, usually followed by parents and then school and mental health organizations.

The fire service's knowledge of fire cause and origin facilitates their ability to identify youthful firesetters. The fire service can track a case from the identification of the firesetter through the fire investigation, assessment, and intervention (education, counseling, prosecution, etc.). In addition, many fire departments have established links with some of the crucial referral agencies. In the course of their investigations, fire investigators often communicate with police, probation, social service, and justice personnel. These links are vitally important to the success of a juvenile firesetter program (see the Referral Mechanisms Component).

Although the overwhelming majority of juvenile firesetter programs are housed within the fire service, there is still some concern that such a program will fall prey to departmental politics. The greatest concern is that the program would be terminated when the Fire Chief who instituted it leaves. Most departments feel that a juvenile firesetter program is too valuable to have such a tenuous existence. Another concern is that firefighters and investigators may be hesitant to use the juvenile firesetter program. To overcome these potential problems, juvenile firesetter programs must be institutionalized within the fire service. Their existence cannot rely solely on the motivation and drive of one individual. To survive, the juvenile firesetter program must receive support from all levels within the fire service and community.

To gain the support of all the fire service personnel, the program director should brief the chief and all the division heads about the juvenile firesetter program. Brief memos can be circulated to each fire service division describing the juvenile firesetter program services. Each firefighter, fire investigator, fire educator, etc., should know about the program and understand how it works. The Publicity and Outreach component will describe how to inform the general public about the juvenile firesetter program.

Multi-jurisdictional Approach

The majority of the juvenile firesetter programs surveyed by ISA functioned at the local level. More recently, however, a number of programs are considering a county or larger, multi-jurisdictional approach. Indeed, during the implementation and evaluation phase of the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and Prevention Program, the three sites

selected for implementation all chose to implement a multi-jurisdictional approach. One of the greatest advantages of such an approach is that many of the referral agencies that work with the juvenile firesetter program (e.g., mental health, probation, juvenile court, etc.) are county, not local, agencies. A multi-jurisdictional program may span many towns and allow these communities to combine their resources instead of competing for the limited resources of county agencies with whom they work.

The multi-jurisdictional approach, however, requires additional planning and coordinating. The national evaluation of the NJF/ACPP, conducted by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), concluded that while "the fire service agency may still be the proper location for screening, education, and referral services for individual juveniles, …it may not be the best choice for achieving regional coordination." Using the experiences of the three implementation sites, AIR suggests, "An agency that already spans the boundaries of the region and that already has experience building and maintaining networks that may be a more effective program vehicle than an individual fire department," for managing a regional approach.

In one of the implementation sites, the program management was operated out of the Council of Government's office. The Council had exactly the type of networking experiences necessary to implement a regional juvenile firesetter program. The Council had extensive contacts over the four county area and was able to bring over twenty fire departments together. As AIR points out, the Council also had a proven track record with the area's public officials. In another site, a non-profit organization worked with the District Attorney's Office to develop a firesetter program that encompassed numerous fire districts within one judicial district. The non-profit agency was able to take advantage of the District Attorney's district-wide network in bringing together the appropriate agencies. One advantage of using a non-fire service agency to manage a multi-jurisdictional juvenile firesetter program is that you can avoid inter-departmental rivalries that can sometimes impede the progress of a program.

If a site chooses to develop a multi-jurisdictional program, it will need to establish detailed guidelines for referral and feedback to each fire department/station within the juvenile firesetter program jurisdiction. Each fire department/station within the jurisdiction served by the program should be briefed about the program's purpose and services. As is true for local juvenile firesetter programs, the multi-jurisdictional program will be responsible for assessment, intervention, referral, case tracking and follow-up.

The feasibility of a multi-jurisdictional program will be based on the extent of the juvenile firesetter problem in a given jurisdiction and the resources available to ameliorate the problem. In some cases, the structure of the fire service or referral agencies may make such an approach untenable. Each jurisdiction will need to assess which approach is most appropriate to meet the needs of the community.

Staffing and Responsibilities

Fire Service Personnel. Programs located within the fire service should be coordinated by an individual with a genuine interest in the juvenile firesetter issue. Ideally that individual should be a senior ranking fire official. As noted earlier, programs need support from the highest level in the fire service. Many programs are administered by the Office of the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal with the coordinators answering directly to the Fire Chief or Fire Marshal. The coordinators would be responsible for the day-to-day activities of the juvenile firesetter program. They would be in charge of assessment and intervention, either directly or by supervising others who are assigned to provide the assessment and intervention services. The coordinators would also be primarily responsible for facilitating communication between the juvenile firesetter program and other agencies. The coordinators should be viewed as managers who are responsible for not only the mechanics of running the juvenile firesetter program, but also for the leadership and direction of the program.

In larger departments, additional fire service staff should also be assigned to the program. Firefighters, fire investigators, and fire educators can provide screening and evaluation services, fire education, and referral services. Fire service personnel can be trained to screen juvenile firesetters using standard screening instruments. In addition, fire service personnel can provide fire safety education to juvenile firesetters. Many fire departments employ fire educators who have the responsibility to teach fire safety in the schools. Providing fire safety education to the juvenile firesetters is often seen as an extension of that responsibility.

Staffing Issues and Concerns

The staffing structure presented above can be implemented by jurisdictions that have the manpower resources available to staff a juvenile firesetter program. Smaller jurisdictions, however, may not have the resources or the need to establish an actual juvenile firesetter program. These jurisdictions may simply want to incorporate some of the services provided by a juvenile firesetter program into existing agencies. Although it is recommended that jurisdictions establish a "program" within the fire

department, an alternative possibility for some jurisdictions is to have interested people in various agencies take on the responsibilities of the juvenile firesetter program staff. These individuals would be responsible for assessment, education, referral, and tracking.

Jurisdictions must also decide whether the juvenile firesetter program will be operated by full-time or part-time staff and whether the staff will be paid or volunteer. Ideally, a juvenile firesetter program should be staffed by at least one full-time, paid fire service employee. Many fire departments have separate budgets for the juvenile firesetter program, which includes full-time personnel. In other jurisdictions, fire service personnel provide juvenile firesetter assessment, education, and referral in addition to other responsibilities, such as, fire investigations, fire inspections, or school fire safety education. Still other jurisdictions rely entirely on fire service personnel who volunteer their off-duty time to help provide assessment and education to juvenile firesetters. (In later sections, this component will discuss liability concerns surrounding the practice of having paid fire service staff volunteer their time to the juvenile firesetter program).

Training

Regardless of the staff background, all program staff should receive training in juvenile firesetting and child related issues. At a minimum, the training should include the following topics:

Characteristics of juvenile firesetters
How to identify juvenile firesetters
Developing and managing a juvenile firesetter program
Screening/assessment techniques
Interviewing and educating the juvenile firesetter
Referral and follow-up
Normal child development
Juvenile delinquency
Child Abuse/Neglect
Legal Issues

National experts in the field of juvenile firesetting can provide training in the characteristics of juvenile firesetters and information on how to identify, assess, interview, educate, and refer firesetters. Local fire service personnel can provide specific information about the jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter problem.

Personnel from local social services agencies and mental health facilities can provide training in child related issues, such as child development,

delinquency, abuse, and neglect. Training in these child related issues is important to understanding juvenile firesetters. For example, in some cases, more seriously disturbed firesetters engage in other acts of juvenile delinquency. In other cases, youth will set a fire to draw attention to parental abuse or neglect. Juvenile firesetters represent a broad spectrum of youth, from developmentally normal children who are simply curious about fire to very seriously disturbed youth who require specialized treatment. The juvenile firesetter staff need this diverse training because they will come in contact with a wide range of juveniles in the course of their work.

Information about the legal issues surrounding juvenile firesetting can be obtained through the local prosecutor's office. Program staff need to be aware of the arson laws, including the age of accountability. The staff should also know how juvenile firesetters are handled by the justice system.

Once the juvenile firesetter program has been established and the program staff have received training, the program coordinator or other staff should provide an orientation to all fire service personnel, especially arson investigators and upper level command staff. This may be done in the form of an in-service meeting or one day seminar. (If the resources are available, these personnel may also be included in the training seminar). All fire service personnel should be aware of the program and the services it provides. In addition, all fire service personnel should understand the procedures used to refer a firesetter to the program. Questions and concerns of the fire service personnel about the program should be addressed at this time. An example of a Juvenile Firesetter Training Workshop can be found in the *Trainers' Guide*.

In addition to the fire service orientation, the program coordinator should prepare briefings for the Chief and Deputy Chief to enhance their understanding of the problem and gain their support. As the program continues, the coordinator should provide the Chief and Deputy Chief with brief updates on the progress of the juvenile firesetter program.

Funding

As noted earlier, the nature and extent of any juvenile firesetter program will depend, to a large extent on the resources available to the program. Programs with limited money and manpower have gone to the community to acquire the necessary services, materials, and funds. The community can offer an unlimited wealth of resources. Corporations may contribute money or sponsor specific activities or products. When looking for corporate donations, juvenile firesetter program staff should appeal to the

corporation's sense of civic mindedness and self-interest. Contributing money to better the community and help eliminate a costly and deadly problem is basically good business. The juvenile firesetter program should consider establishing local public/private partnerships. These partnerships, which include representatives from local businesses and public agencies (such as the fire service), have been useful in other government programs. Local businesses can donate more than money or equipment--they can contribute their management, fund-raising expertise, and other in-kind contributions.

One potential resource for the juvenile firesetter program is local insurance companies. Where they may not always be able to offer monetary contributions, they may be able to provide in-kind assistance. Several juvenile firesetter programs have received generous help from the insurance industry regarding public relations activities, such as, printing brochures or publishing an article on the problem of juvenile firesetting and the promising program solutions. Insurance agencies can be a valuable resource because they have a vested interest in facilitating the reduction of juvenile firesetting.

Prior to approaching insurance agencies or other local businesses, the juvenile firesetter program should gather as much statistical information as possible about the juvenile firesetter problem in their community. Information about the cost of juvenile firesetting in economic and human terms will help support funding efforts. The most important element of juvenile firesetting that needs to be stressed is that the problem is a **community** problem that cannot be alleviated without the assistance of the community.

One additional source of funding can be investigated by the juvenile firesetter program. In some jurisdictions the restitution paid by a juvenile firesetter as part of a court sentence is not claimed by the insurance industry. Often this is because the cost of claiming that money is more than the actual amount of the restitution. The program coordinator should talk to the court and the insurance agencies about the possibility of earmarking those funds for the juvenile firesetter program.

Liability

Another financial (and legal) concern is the issue of liability. Liability refers to the potential for programs or referral agencies to be "at risk" for legal action because of the actions of a juvenile firesetter. Program staff need to take steps to ensure that referral agencies will not be held liable for the actions of the juveniles referred to them. Liability waiver forms are often used to counter these concerns. The liability waivers should be

reviewed by attorneys to make sure they address all the concerns of the juvenile firesetter program and the referral agencies. Parents will need to read and sign these waivers (which usually release the program or the referral agencies from responsibility for the actions of their children). The juvenile firesetter program and the program's referral agencies need to be able to address the needs of the firesetters but will be limited if they are going to be held accountable for the actions of the firesetter.

Another liability issue arises when fire service personnel volunteer their time to work with juvenile firesetters. As mentioned earlier, paid fire service personnel sometimes volunteer their time to assist juvenile firesetters. The new Fire Labor Standards Act (FLSA) may limit this practice. Many states are interpreting the FLSA to mean that the fire service is liable for fire service personnel when they are conducting fire service related activities regardless of whether they are on- or off-duty. Juvenile firesetter programs that use volunteers from the fire service as part of their program need to carefully review their state's interpretation of the FLSA and how it affects the program.

How to Establish Interagency Links

Regardless of how the fire service chooses to tackle the juvenile firesetter problem, they will need the assistance of the key community agencies which work with juveniles (e.g., police, probation, justice, schools, mental health, and social services). The following section will describe techniques for gaining support from these community agencies and establishing interagency relationships.

Coordinating Council. Strong interagency relationships and referral networks are vital when establishing a juvenile firesetter program. Because these relationships are so critical to the success of a program, the creation of a coordinating council is essential. Such coordinating councils or task forces have been established in Portland, Oregon; Upper Arlington, Ohio; Central Oklahoma, and other programs around the country. The juvenile firesetter program coordinating council should be composed of representatives from all agencies in the jurisdiction whose responsibilities relate to juvenile firesetters. At a minimum, the council should include representatives from the fire service, police, probation, juvenile court, children's protective services, district attorney's office, schools, and mental health agencies. These agencies represent the avenues through which juveniles are referred to the juvenile firesetter program, as well as, resources for the program. Including all of the key agencies on the coordinating council will ensure that no juvenile falls through the cracks and that all firesetters are identified, evaluated, and receive appropriate

interventions. Ideally, the council should meet once a month to discuss the problems or concerns and develop future plans for the program.

The coordinator of the juvenile firesetter program will have the primary responsibility for recruiting the council representatives. If the coordinator is a member of the fire service, he/she may also represent the fire service on the council. The coordinator should contact the administrator of each agency to explain the juvenile firesetter program and the role of the council. The coordinator may want to have background materials, such as, statistics on the local juvenile firesetter problem and examples of how each agency is affected. It is important to stress that the problem of juvenile firesetting is a community problem that touches every agency mandated to provide services for juveniles. One program coordinator caught the attention of other agencies--and ultimately won their support--by telling them that the next child to die in a fire was their responsibility, not his. Descriptions of how other programs work may also help convince agencies that juvenile firesetter programs work, if they receive the support of other agencies. If the head of the agency is unable to participate on the council, he/she should suggest a representative, preferably the person most likely to have contact with juvenile firesetters.

Role of the Council. The primary role of the juvenile firesetter program coordinating council is to facilitate multi-agency cooperation to plan, implement, and maintain the juvenile firesetter program. The coordinating council should institute procedures for referrals to and from the juvenile firesetter program and should define the roles of each agency. For example, the juvenile firesetter program would be chiefly responsible for providing assessment and education, while child protective services and mental health agencies would provide counseling services for more troubled firesetters. Each agency representative could work toward providing the necessary procedures for acquiring services for juveniles referred by the juvenile firesetter program, such as, sliding fees, if necessary.

The council will be responsible for developing specific referral agreements between the juvenile firesetter program and different agencies. These referral mechanisms, which will be described in detail later in the Referral Mechanisms Component, should include procedures for information exchange between the program and the referral agencies. Dual waivers and contracts enable the program staff to learn the status of the juveniles they refer for additional services. Referral agencies should also be able to learn the status of juveniles referred to the program.

One of the most important functions of the council representatives is to educate the other council members about their agency's strengths and limitations. Misunderstandings and problems between agencies often

develop because one agency is not familiar with how the other agency operates. The fire service, for example, is designed for immediate response, but social service organizations are often not able to respond with the same speed. The workshop described below is designed to help personnel in different agencies understand how their counterparts work. The council will maintain communication between agencies and troubleshoot when necessary. If a firesetter is not receiving the services recommended by the juvenile firesetter program, the council or appropriate representatives can intervene to find out why.

Finally, council representatives will also be called upon to help identify other agencies or individuals who work with juvenile firesetters. Council representatives should disseminate information about the juvenile firesetter program to their agencies and the community and promote the program. The goal of the council is to gain support for program form all agencies that work with juveniles and to ensure that all those who work with juvenile firesetters understand the function of the juvenile firesetter program.

Juvenile Firesetter Program Workshop

As noted earlier, different agencies have different working cultures. To help agencies learn about each other, the juvenile firesetter program should sponsor a one-day workshop for employees of each of the agencies represented on the council. During the workshop, which is based on a seminar sponsored by Rochester, New York's FRY program, the members of the coordinating council will serve as a panel to moderate the workshop. Members of the key agencies who work with juvenile firesetters should be invited to attend. The workshop will give participants the opportunity to meet their counterparts in different agencies and learn how different agencies operate.

The juvenile firesetter program may want to have the State Fire Marshal or other representative give opening remarks or a keynote address. After the welcoming remarks, the program coordinator can begin the workshop by describing the characteristics of juvenile firesetters, the nature and extent of the problem in what jurisdiction, and the role of the juvenile firesetter program. The panel representatives can then be asked to describe how their agency works with juvenile firesetters. Attendees can be asked to share their experiences with juvenile firesetters. Participants should be encouraged to ask the panel members how they might handle a particular case.

After a break for lunch, attendees should be assigned to different groups. Each group should include at least one member from each of the different

agencies attending the workshop. Each group should be given a description of the different agencies attending the workshop. Each group should be given a description of a juvenile firesetting case and instructed to discuss how they would handle the case. Each group member would then be responsible for describing how his/her agency handles such cases. Participating in this activity gives each attendee the opportunity to see how different agencies handle the same case. Understanding different work styles and philosophies is essential if agencies are going to be asked to work together to solve the juvenile firesetter problem. The workshop can close with a discussion of the role of the juvenile firesetter program coordinating council and what the program needs from each agency.

The workshop should be conducted after the juvenile firesetter program has been established and the staff has been trained. It is designed to give the referral and resource agency staff a formal opportunity to learn about the juvenile firesetter program and meet their counterparts in other agencies.

Jurisdictional Characteristics

The structure of any jurisdiction's juvenile firesetter program will be affected by: 1) the size and nature of the juvenile firesetter problem; 2) the resources (e.g., manpower, money, space, etc.); and 3) the availability of private funding, if necessary. As noted earlier, no one program structure is best or even feasible for every jurisdiction. Large fire departments with the necessary people and funds can staff full-time juvenile firesetter programs and provide all of the necessary services using multiple personnel. Smaller departments or those with limited funds may be able to fund one full-time position or may have different fire service personnel assume some of the juvenile firesetter program responsibilities in addition to their other duties.

Like many juvenile firesetter program activities, recruiting representatives to serve on the coordinating council takes time. For some programs, especially smaller programs, it may take more time than the coordinator can supply. At a minimum, the program coordinator should contact each potential referral agency and describe the grogram. Referral networks need to be established if the juvenile firesetter program is going to meet the needs of the youth it sees. Each referral agency needs to understand that juvenile firesetting is a community problem and they must be willing to be part of the solution.

The juvenile firesetter program staff must also be prepared to handle the turf issues that may exist between agencies. These issues are often deeply-rooted, and preclude agencies from working together. One of the

major functions of the coordinating council is to maintain communication between agencies. Recruiting representatives from all of the key agencies listed above will help gain support for the program. All of the agencies must be involved in the planning and coordination state of a juvenile firesetter program. This involvement will give each agency a vested interest in the success of the program and assist in breaking down the barriers that may arise over turf issues.

CHAPTER 3: SCREENING AND EVALUATION

Objectives

There are four major objectives to be achieved in the screening and evaluation of firesetting youth and their families. The first is the assessment of firesetting risk. A complete firesetting history must be taken to determine the extent and nature of the problem. In addition, a detailed description of the motives and circumstances surrounding the most recent firestart must be documented to ascertain the severity of the presenting problem. Based upon current information, an estimate must be made of the likelihood that firesetting behavior will recur.

The second objective is the evaluation of the psychosocial and environmental features related to firesetting behavior. Firestarting episodes do not happen as isolated incidents. Although the majority of juvenile firestarts are estimated to be the result of curiosity or accident, about one-third of juvenile fires are started by troubled and conflicted children. Therefore, for a selected proportion of firesetting youth, there must be an assessment of the underlying psychosocial features, which accompany their firesetting behavior.

The third objective is the determination of criminal intent. If juveniles are involved in significant fires resulting in property loss, personal injury or death, then they are at risk for being arrested for the crime of arson. Several factors are taken into consideration for determining criminal intent, including whether firesetters have reached the age of accountability, the nature and extent of their firesetting histories, and the motive and intent of their firesetting. Although legal definitions of arson vary from state to state, if an evaluation reveals that there is sufficient evidence indicating malicious and willful firesetting, then the youth can be arrested for arson.

The final objective is the development of an intervention plan. The result of a comprehensive evaluation is the development of an effective intervention plan. Intervention plans must identify the specific steps to be taken to eliminate firesetting behavior and to remediate the accompanying

psychosocial problems. In addition, adequate incentives must be set in place to ensure that juvenile firesetters and their families will follow through with the recommended interventions.

The Target Populations

There are three general groups of juvenile firesetters, which must be targeted for screening and evaluation. The first group is young children under seven years of age. The fires started by the majority of these children are the result of accidents or curiosity. In general, they do not exhibit significant psychological problems and their family and peer relationships are intact and stable. (There are a small number of children involved in firesetting who exhibit severe psychopathology, and these children are generally referred immediately for psychological evaluation and treatment.)

The second group of firesetters is made up of children ranging in age from eight to twelve. Although the firestarting of some of these children is motivated by curiosity or experimentation, a greater proportion of their firesetting represents underlying psychosocial conflicts.

The third group of firesetters is adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18. These youths tend to have a long history of undetected fireplay and firestarting behavior. Their current firesetting episodes are either the result of psychosocial conflict and turmoil or intentional criminal behavior.

There are a number of different community agencies that screen and evaluate juvenile firesetters and their families. Based on their broader role in the network of community services, each of these agencies will have different functions regarding their work with firesetters. Consequently, the screening and evaluation methods they select will vary depending on their specific needs. We will concentrate here on the fire service and the screening and evaluation methods used by fire service personnel.

As noted earlier, the fire service is frequently viewed as the lead agency in the community for screening and evaluation juvenile firesetters. The primary role of the fire service is the early identification of firesetting youth and their families. There are a number of different ways in which juvenile firesetters are identified by the fire service. First, parents may discover firestarting behavior and voluntarily seek help for their children. Second, other community agencies may look to the fire service as the experts in working with juvenile firesetters and refer their cases to them. Third, fire and arson investigation efforts may reveal the involvement of juveniles in significant fires. Finally, if firesetters are arrested for arson, probation and juvenile justice may refer them to the fire service for an

evaluation of the severity of their firesetting problem. Hence, the fire service is likely to see the entire range of juvenile firesetters from young children under seven who firestart out of curiosity to adolescents involved in recurrent firesetting.

Frequently the fire service will have two levels of screening and evaluation procedures. The first level involves preliminary screening to determine the immediate severity of the firesetting problem. This generally is done by telephone interview. If there appears to be no imminent risk, basic information is obtained and appointments are made for additional evaluation sessions. A complete interview with firesetters and their families follows and represents the second level of evaluation. The primary goals of these interviews are to analyze the severity of the firesetting behavior and describe the psychosocial environment. This two level system facilitates the handling of emergency problems and establishes the conditions necessary for a comprehensive evaluation system.

Fire Service Procedures

The following instruments and methods are used as screening and evaluation procedures by the fire service.

Telephone Contact Sheet

When parents or community agencies call the fire department to request help for firesetting youth and their families, this sheet is used as a preliminary screening mechanism. Basic information is gathered such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, a brief summary of the firesetting problem, and a description of the steps to be taken, which frequently includes the dates and times for setting-up personal interviews or the other follow-up procedures which are to be implemented for particular cases.

USFA's Interview Schedules

These interview schedules are designed to provide the juvenile firesetter program with systematic methods for evaluating juvenile firesetters and their families. The interview schedules consist of a series of questions, which are asked of firesetting youth and their families in personal interviews. The application of these interview schedules yields information regarding the severity of the firesetting problem and preliminary data on the psychosocial environment of juvenile firesetters and their families. The USFA interview schedules have been widely used

by a number of fire departments throughout the country and represent standard practice for many fire departments and juvenile firesetter programs. With minimal training, these procedures can be used by fire service personnel to screen, evaluate and refer juvenile firesetters and their families to appropriate service agencies in the community. There are three manuals describing in detail the application of these interview schedules. These manuals can be obtained by, calling or writing the U.S. Fire Administration in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

These interview schedules and the manuals, which describe their application, are divided into three age groups. The first manual outlines the interview schedules and methods for working with children seven and under. The second manual describes the interview schedules and methods to be applied to children ages seven to thirteen. The third manual contains the interview schedules and procedures for working with adolescent firesetters. The implementation of the procedures in each of these three manuals allows fire departments to screen and evaluate the entire range of juvenile firesetters.

These interview schedules and accompanying manuals are used by fire departments extensively throughout the United States. Many departments have established juvenile firesetter programs following the guidelines suggested in these manuals. The interview schedules also contain information, which may be useful to mental health professionals regarding the severity of the firesetting problem and the conditions of the psychosocial environment. Juvenile firesetters and their families are interviewed alone and together for approximately ninety minutes by fire service personnel using the interview schedules. The interview schedules are organized and presented in slightly different ways depending on the age of the firesetter. For children under seven, the interview schedule is divided into two sections. Section one focuses on questions regarding firesetting behavior and section two requires observations to be made regarding the home and the parents. For children seven through thirteen, the interview schedule is divided into three sections. The first section asks questions related to firesetting history, the second section presents questions related to the home and family, and the third section asks questions regarding school and peers. For adolescent firesetters the interview schedule is divided into two main sections. Section one asks questions related to firesetting history and details of the most recent firesetting incident. Section two asks questions regarding the psychological environment, including information about physical health, the home, the family, peers, and school. For all age levels, parents are asked to complete a questionnaire, which contains observations about the psychological behavior of their children.

The interview schedules have scoring procedures, which classify firesetting youth and their families according to risk levels. These risk levels refer to the probability that the juvenile firesetters are likely to participate in future firesetting incidents. There are three levels of risk--little, definite, and extreme--representing increasingly severe firesetting behavior. In general, children classified as little risk firestart by accident or out of curiosity, and require educational intervention to remediate their problem. Juveniles classified as definite and extreme risk firestart because of psychological conflict, family difficulties, or as part of a pattern of anti-social and delinquent behavior. They require mental health or juvenile justice intervention. Hence, the interview schedules yield a specific method for classifying juvenile firesetters according to the severity of their presenting problem. This classification system also suggests the type of interventions most likely to be beneficial to firesetting youth and their families.

The primary advantage of the interview schedules is that they provide systematic procedures for fire service personnel to evaluate the entire range of juvenile firesetters and their families. In addition, these interview schedules yield a quantifiable method for classifying the severity of the firesetting problem and for recommending specific types of interventions. Also, only a brief training period is required to teach fire service personnel how to use these interview schedules. Their application is well documented in three manuals and they are widely accepted and applied throughout the fire service.

The major disadvantage of these interview schedules is that their validity and reliability have not been investigated. Therefore, the accuracy and consistency of the information which they yield remains open to question. A primary concern is that children identified as little risk may actually be exhibiting signs of more serious firesetting behavior. One way to address this problem is to monitor little risk firesetters for a period of time subsequent to their evaluation and educational intervention. Also, in cases where definite and extreme firesetting youth have been identified, it is recommended that other assessment strategies be used in conjunction with the interview schedules. For example, as a general rule these types of cases should be referred for additional evaluation by mental health professionals. While these interview schedules provide an important first step in screening and evaluating juvenile firesetters, virtually nothing is known about the quality of the information they yield. Therefore, back-up procedures must be set in place. In many cases, this includes being able to consult with a mental health practitioner for cases, which need additional clarification. This will ensure that juvenile firesetters and their families receive appropriate assessment and intervention.

CHAPTER 4: INTERVENTION SERVICES

Purpose

The Intervention Services component presents the primary intervention strategies designed to reduce the incidence of juvenile involvement in firesetting behavior and arson-related activities. These strategies reflect three major intervention approaches. The first strategy is primary prevention. The goal of primacy prevention is to provide substantial fire safety and educational experience to juveniles so that they develop fire-competent behaviors and avoid participation in unsupervised firestarts. The second strategy is early intervention. Youth participating in fireplay and firesetting behavior motivated by accident, curiosity or experimentation can be identified and educated to reduce the likelihood of their future involvement in unsupervised firestarts. The third strategy is core intervention. Recurrent firesetters frequently experience significant psychological and social conflict and turmoil related to their firestarting activities. It is hypothesized that if these psychosocial problems can be adjusted or remediated, then not only are the chances of involvement in future firesetting episodes greatly reduced, but the quality of life is likely to improve for these juveniles and their families. ISA recommends that such core intervention be delivered by mental health or other social service providers.

The three intervention strategies--primary prevention, early intervention, and core intervention--are aimed at reducing juvenile involvement in the entire range of unsupervised fireplay and firesetting activities. Each of the strategies has specific intervention objectives and they are aimed at particular target populations. Primary prevention efforts involve several community agencies including the schools, the fire service, and law enforcement. The fire service is the lead community agency providing early intervention services. They use many different types of program models to work with juvenile firesetters. Core intervention services involve mental agencies and professionals and the probation and juvenile justice systems.

Each of the three intervention strategies are designed to achieve specific objectives. Primary prevention efforts are intended to reduce the incidence of first-time unsupervised fireplay and firesetting in populations of otherwise normal youth. This is accomplished by providing children of all ages with educational experiences focused on the rules of fire safety and prevention and understanding the consequences of fireplay and firesetting.

Early intervention programs are focused on identifying both children at-risk for fireplay or firesetting activities and those involved in first-time

fireplay and firesetting episodes. In addition, their objective is to prevent the recurrence of fireplay and referral mechanisms within the fire service and other supporting community agencies are designed to meet these objectives.

Core intervention services are aimed at eliminating recurrent firesetting behavior and providing treatment and remediation for the contributing psychosocial determinants. Mental health intervention is the primary method used to stop recurrent firesetting and treat the underlying causes of the behavior. Probation and juvenile justice efforts provide legal incentives to youth and their families to pursue treatment for their patterns of antisocial and delinquent behavior. If treatment recommendations are not followed, the juvenile justice system can implement legal consequences and punishments related to firesetting and arson offenses.

Situational Influences

The design and implementation of juvenile firesetter programs will depend upon the commitment of time and resources participating agencies are willing to make in their community. For example, schools must decide whether primary prevention programs designed to teach fire safety are a high priority for their curriculum. Fire departments, heavily committed to suppression activities, will need to direct their focus to the prevention aspect of fighting fires. Law enforcement, probation and juvenile justice must elect to pay particular attention to the firesetting population of juveniles, as opposed to other groups of delinquent youth. Frequently additional program efforts aimed at specific problems areas or target populations can be incorporated into existing operations, thereby keeping costs at a minimum. Nevertheless, the level of time and resources committed to juvenile firesetter intervention programs is directly related to their content, utility, and effectiveness.

Juvenile firesetting must be viewed as a community problem, and as such, it deserves community-wide attention. Although fire departments may take the lead role in developing programs for juvenile firesetters, their efforts alone will not resolve the problem. It is crucial that there be working linkage established between the various community agencies capable of helping juvenile firesetters and their families. Schools, the fire service, law enforcement, juvenile justice and mental health must all establish open communication channels with one another so that an organized effort is mounted to reduce juvenile involvement in firesetting and arson-related activities.

Critical Issues

The success of juvenile firesetter intervention programs depends on several factors. First, the community must be educated about the problems of juvenile firesetting. An effective public relations campaign must be developed to teach parents and adults how to recognize the problem in children and where and how to go for help to resolve it. Regardless of the level of intervention, from primary prevention to core intervention, the public must understand the seriousness of juvenile involvement in firesetting and they must be knowledgeable enough to take the first steps to get the appropriate help.

Each community agency focusing their attention on the problem of juvenile firesetting is likely to have slightly different roles and responsibilities, depending on the nature and extent of their services. Those agencies and professionals involved in helping juvenile firesetters must be trained in how to work with this special population of youth. Although training needs will vary according to the type of services offered, designing and implementing intervention programs often requires special expertise and information. Education manuals coupled with training seminars are important resources for establishing and maintaining effective intervention services.

Primary Prevention

Primary prevention programs are aimed at reducing juvenile involvement in first-time unsupervised fireplay and firesetting incidents. The basic premise of these programs is that if children understand the rules of fire safety and prevention and the consequences of firestarting, they are less likely to initiate or participate in non-productive firesetting. Primary prevention efforts are educational programs designed to teach children of all ages fire safety and survival skills.

There are several different educational models used in primary prevention programs. The models employed largely depend on the sites which operate the programs. Primary prevention programs are found in the schools, the fire service, and law enforcement. Schools can offer a wide range of prevention activities including fire safety education curriculum and activities, slide presentations, films, and assemblies. The fire service can mount national and local media campaigns, use district fire houses to provide tours and educational seminars for youth, and work with their school districts to present unique educational experiences. Law enforcement can incorporate fire safety education as part of their general anti-crime efforts aimed at youth. Primary prevention programs can use a variety of different learning strategies and activities to accomplish the

common objective of teaching youth how to develop fire-safe and competent behaviors.

It is recommended that community organizations or agencies launch a comprehensive fire prevention effort designed to reach a broad age-range of children. Educational programs for preschool children should be explored as well as programs aimed at elementary, middle, and high school aged youth. Schools are the obvious site where maximal efforts can be focused to reach the majority of children. The amount of time set aside for teaching fire prevention and safety will depend on the level of effort schools are willing to commit. A minimal effort might consist of a fire education presentation to youth coupled with the distribution of printed material to parents. A more comprehensive approach might be the adoption of a fire safety curriculum. There are several excellent packages of fire safety and prevention programs already developed for schools. The particular program or set of programs developed depends on the available resources and the range and depth of desired services. It is strongly recommended that schools integrate primary prevention efforts into their ongoing curriculum plans.

Fire service efforts can be important adjuncts in helping to promote the development of fire safety behaviors in children and their families. For example, parents who first notice their children's interest in fire or who have found their children playing with matches may instinctively call their local fire department for help. Fire departments can offer to talk with these youth, have them tour the local fire house and provide short-term educational services designed to teach fire prevention to children and their families. In addition, the fire service can work with their local schools to enrich fire prevention programs by offering classroom visits or assemblies, slide presentations, and films designed to communicate information on fire safety and prevention. Finally, local fire departments can support national programs, such as National Fire Prevention Week, by mounting active print and television media campaigns designed to promote fire safety.

There are a wide variety of primary prevention programs currently operating in communities throughout the country. A sample of these programs include: 1) Learn Not to Burn, developed by the National Fire Prevention Association; 2) Knowing About Fire, developed by the National Fire Service Support System; 3) Fire Safety Skills Curriculum, developed in St. Paul, Minnesota; and 5) Kid's Safe Program, used by the Oklahoma City Fire Department. These and other programs are listed in the Resource List at the end of this chapter. Programs are encouraged to contact the U.S. Fire Administration and juvenile firesetter programs around the country.

Early Intervention

The fire service is the leading community agency involved in the development of early intervention programs for juvenile firesetters. The primary objective of early intervention programs is to identify children at-risk for participating in unsupervised fireplay and firesetting incidents. In addition, these programs are aimed at preventing the recurrence of first-time firesetting episodes motivated by accident, curiosity, or experimentation. These objectives are accomplished by setting-up short-term evaluation, education, counseling, and referral services designed to stop firesetting behavior and identify related psychosocial problems.

As noted earlier, ISA advocates an evaluation, education, and referral program model. This approach is the one most frequently employed by fire departments across the country and is the recommended strategy for building effective juvenile firesetting programs. To implement this model, fire departments must establish methods for screening and evaluating the firesetting risk of children and their families. The recommended screening methods are discussed in the Screening and Evaluation chapter. The identification of risk levels allows fire departments to determine the most appropriate strategies for remediating the current firesetting problem. If children are identified as little risk, then it is likely that short-term education intervention will stop any further firesetting behavior. Fire departments have successfully implemented a number of different educational programs. If youth are identified as definite or extreme risk, while they may benefit from educational programs, they are likely to need core intervention services. Fire departments must know how to refer firesetters and their families to the appropriate service agencies.

Again there are many programs that have implemented evaluation, education, and referral programs. The following programs are examples of evaluation, education, and referral interventions for juvenile firesetters which have operated in fire departments across the country. They were selected because certain features of these programs represent outstanding or exceptional aspects of the evaluation, education and referral program model. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the programs listed in the Resource List at the end of this component.

A. The Juvenile Firesetter Program, Columbus, Ohio

The primary purpose of this Juvenile Firesetter program is to prevent juveniles who are setting fires and playing with matches and lighters from starting additional fires. The majority of these juveniles are referred from fire investigators, with a smaller number coming from children's services and mental health agencies. These children and their families are evaluated using USFA's interview Schedules. All youth attend 4-6

educational sessions. This educational segment of the program is one of the outstanding features of its operation. Those youth identified as definite or extreme risk are referred for further core intervention services. Follow-up evaluation forms are sent every six months for two years to participating families and the resulting data indicate a 7% recidivism rate.

While the format of this juvenile firesetter program represents a standard example of the evaluation, education, and referral program model, the educational feature of this approach deserves special mention. Prior to their participation in the educational sessions, juveniles complete written pretests designed to assess fire safety knowledge. They then attend 4-6 educational sessions at their local firehouse, depending on their age and the history of their firesetting behavior. Audio-visual teaching aids are used extensively. The Official Fire Safety Manual, containing games and puzzles designed to each fire safety and prevention rules, is used with all youth. Separate manuals have been developed for children 4-6 years, 7-9 years, and 9-12 years. In addition, the family does homework, including designing a Home Fire Escape plan and conducting a home fire safety inspection. In the final educational meeting, children complete post-tests to assess the amount of increased knowledge of fire safety and prevention accrued from the program. This represents a comprehensive approach by fire service personnel to provide educational experiences for children at the firehouse.

B. Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland

Operation Extinguish is one of the programs run by the Montgomery County Fire Department's Division of Fire Prevention. Youth are referred to fire prevention by their parents, from the youth division of the police department, and from the juvenile services administration. All juveniles are evaluated using family assessment methods and following the guidelines recommended by USFA's Interview Schedules. All children also attend fire safety classes conducted by the division of fire prevention. These classes represent an outstanding feature of this program. Families of juvenile firesetters are referred to a private mental health agency for at least six family counseling sessions. This also is a unique program feature. Firesetters and their families are referred for other services on an as-needed basis. Release from Operation Extinguish is contingent upon completion of the prescribed intervention plan.

Operation Extinguish has two unique program features. The first is a highly structured format of fire education classes. Three two-hour fire safety classes are run for groups of juvenile firesetters. Firesetters attend the first two classes and may bring their siblings. Parents also attend the last class. Audio-visual aids are used along with a manual, *A Question of Burning*. Week one covers the history of fire facts. Fire prevention,

recognition of fire hazards, escape planning and survival techniques are discussed. Arson and arson laws in the state of Maryland are reviewed. The homework, to be completed by week three, is assigned and consists of developing a home fire escape plan. Week two focuses on burn injuries. Children participate in writing exercises designed to help them think about the potential consequences of firesetting. Week three summarizes fire safety rules for parents. Escape plans are reviewed and the importance of knowing how to react in fire emergencies is discussed. By the end of the third session, both children and parents report being satisfied with the educational experience.

The second unique program feature is that the majority of firesetters and their families are referred for at least six family counseling sessions. The entire family is encouraged to participate in these sessions, since it is likely that siblings also may be involved in fireplay and firesetting activities. Counseling sessions are tailored to meet the individual needs of families. Families participating in these sessions report that their communication is greatly improved as a result of these counseling sessions.

C. Fire-Related Youth (FRY) Program, Rochester, New York

The FRY program is housed in the Rochester Fire Department. It receives the majority of its referrals from within the fire department. When the program receives referrals, fire investigators conduct complete investigations of the firesetting incidents. In addition to investigating the scene and conducting a records check, investigators interview children and their parents. The interview are not designed to draw definite conclusions about the psychosocial functioning of juveniles, rather they are intended to provide investigators with more information about the fire. The USFA Interview Schedules are used as guidelines during these interviews. After interviewing the parents, investigators meet with the child to talk about the incident and provide fire safety education. The exact nature of the education depends on the age of the child. The majority of juvenile firesetters interviewed are referred for additional services.

There are two outstanding features of the FRY program. The first is their well-established linkages with numerous service agencies within their community. The FRY program can refer juvenile firesetters to one of four mental health agencies, the Police Department's Family and Crisis intervention team, Child Protective Services, Probation, or Family Court. This referral system also includes a dual waiver form that allows a free flow of information between the FRY program and all referral agencies. The solid referral network established by the FRY program ensures that children and their families will receive the services necessary to stop firesetting and remediated the related psychosocial problems.

The second exceptional program feature is the complete documentation of the FRY program in two sequential manuals. These manuals not only describe the operation of the program, but they report investigative studies concerning a number of different topics including a complete description of the population of firesetting juveniles and explanations of their firestarting behavior. These manuals provide visibility and credibility for the FRY program.

D. Operation Fire S.A.F.E., Oklahoma City Oklahoma

Operation Fire S.A.F.E. was one of the three implementation sites selected to participate in the National Juvenile Firesetter/Arson Control and prevention Program National Evaluation. The program is targeting the Central Oklahoma area, which includes four counties (Oklahoma, Canadian, Cleveland, and Logan) and thirty-five fire departments. The program has established an Operational Committee comprised of the area fire departments and the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG). This committee has primary responsibility for developing the program. Individual members or subcommittees have taken responsibility for the developing specific aspects of the program, including video development, site selection, logo development/selection, development of the initial contact and evaluation forms, and working with the mental health guidance centers and the District Attorney's Office.

Operation Fire S.A.F.E. is targeting a very large, diverse area with multiple fire service, mental health, juvenile justice, human service, and police agencies. Operation Fire S.A.F.E. established twelve geographically diverse sites to provide assessment and fire safety education to the area's juveniles. Fire departments in the central Oklahoma area that are not equipped to handle juvenile firesetters can refer them to one of the seven sites. Each site will have 1) a set of U.S.F.A. screening instruments; 2) a video library; 3) TV/VCR; 4) standardized forms developed by Operation Fire S.A.F.E. (initial contact, interview form, information release waiver, summary form); and 5) toys.

Operation Fire S.A.F.E. is fortunate to have the support of the area's mental health professionals. The program has been working with the county guidance centers to develop a consistent regional system for referring families in a need of mental health counseling. The Guidance Center Coordinator developed a six-month pilot referral program for the Oklahoma City Fire Department, which is being implemented. That department refers families to one guidance center for 12-week group therapy. The remaining fire departments are continuing to refer families to the other area guidance centers, clinics, and individual practitioners. After the pilot program is evaluated, it may be picked up by the other guidance centers.

In addition, the Oklahoma County Guidance Center completed a five-part training series for the Oklahoma City Fire Department Fire S.A.F.E. interviewers on effective interviewing techniques. The guidance center counselors have offered the same course to other area departments involved in Operation Fire S.A.F.E. The guidance center will also be offering a monthly discussion group for Fire S.A.F.E. interviewers to discuss their feelings and frustrations.

The program has also been working with the Oklahoma County District Attorney's office. One area of concern was Operation Fire S.A.F.E.'s policy statement which asserted that any information collected as part of the Operation Fire S.A.F.E. assessment be kept strictly confidential and not be used for fire investigation. Although the statement has been accepted, the program has been cautioned that the fire investigators should complete their investigations before referrals to the program are made. Operation Fire S.A.F.E. is also trying to establish a mechanism that would provide "motivation" for parents who refuse or are reluctant to have their child participate in the program after a fire has been set. The program is working with the Department of Human Services to encourage involvement. When parents are extremely reluctant, the case is treated as a "neglect" case by DHS.

One key component of the juvenile firesetter program is the development of a video describing operation Fire S.A.F.E. The eleven minute video, developed as part of this program, will provide information to the media, school administrators and counselors, parents, mental health professionals, and other agencies that work with juvenile firesetters on the purpose of the program, how to access the program, the locations of assessment/ education sites, etc. Operation Fire S.A.F.E. also developed a program brochure and poster to accompany the video which will be used as part of the program's public education campaign.

Core Intervention

Children and adolescents involved in recurrent firesetting behavior and displaying serious psychopathology are candidates for core intervention services. In addition, youth whose firesetting is willful or malicious and an expression of criminal intent also are likely participants for core intervention. Core intervention services are those modalities which provide long-term help for juvenile firesetters and their families to eliminate firesetting behavior and remediated the accompanying psychopathology. There are two major modalities of core intervention, mental health treatment and the probation and juvenile justice system. If the juvenile firesetter program believes that a child they have screened is in need of core intervention services, that child should be referred to the

appropriate agencies. Establishing referral mechanisms in covered in the next chapter.

Other Considerations

When developing an early intervention program, juvenile firesetter programs will have a vast amount of educational materials from which to choose those most appropriate for their service needs. Program staff should consider contacting the U.S. Fire Administration, the National Fire Protection Agency, and other fire departments to inquire about available materials. Although ISA does not advocate one set of materials over another, we do feel strongly that certain approaches should be avoided. We do not believe that scare tactics or the use of graphic pictures of burn victims are an effective way to teach fire safety education. Although some programs do use these techniques, we do not feel they are appropriate, especially for young children. In general, programs have moved away from having children visit burn victims in local burn units. Such visits are not seen as fair to the burn victim or as an effective educational tool for the firesetter. On a different note, programs also sometimes have children tour the local fire station and sit on the fire truck. Children usually enjoy these tours and they can be viewed as a reward. Tours should only be given AFTER the child has completed their fire safety education. Children should not be rewarded for setting a fire, but could participate in a fire station tour at the completion of their intervention.

One final factor to consider in developing intervention services is ensuring follow-through by firesetters and their families. At the very least, agencies referring juveniles and families for additional intervention can follow through on their own with telephone calls to the referral agency to ascertain whether the recommended contact actually occurred. Different community agencies may have various ways of providing incentives or creating leverages so that follow-through with the intervention plan is more likely to occur. For example, fire departments can offer children a tour of the firehouse or visit with the fire chief if they pursue their educational intervention. Law enforcement, probation, and juvenile justice can help youth avoid arrest and incarceration by diverting them to mental health counseling. Mental health can suggest to firesetting youth and their families that their quality of life is likely to improve as a result of participation in treatment. Schools can refuse to accept firesetters in their classrooms. There are a number of leverages which can be successfully implemented in certain circumstances to help insure follow-through with the intervention plan.

RESOURCE LIST

School Curriculum and Programs

Primary Prevention

1. **CTS'S Fire Safety Project**
   Sesame Street Fire Safety Resource Book

   Contact: Children's Television Workshop
   1 Lincoln Plaza
   New York, NY 10023
   (212) 595-3456

2. **Learn Not to Burn**

   Contact: National Fire Protection Association
   1 Batterymarch Park,
   P.O. Box 9101
   Quincy, MA 02269
   (617) 770-3000

3. **Knowing About Fire**

   Contact: Paul Schwartzman
   National Fire Service Support Systems, Inc.
   20 North Main Street
   Pittsford, NY 14534
   (716) 264-0840

4. **Fire Safety Skills Curriculum**

   Contact: Judy Okulitch
   Program manager
   Office of the State Fire Marshal
   3000 Market Street, NE, #534
   Salem, OR 97310
   (503) 378-3475

5. **The Juvenile Crime Prevention Curriculum**

   Contact: Public Relations Department
   The St. Paul Companies
   385 Washington Street
   St. Paul, MN 55102

6. **Follow the Footsteps to Fire Safety**

Contact: City of St. Paul
Department of Fire and Safety Services
Fire Prevention Division
100 East Eleventh Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
(612) 228-6203

7. **Project Open House**

Contact: Richard A. Marinucci
Farmington Hills Fire Department
28711 Drake Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331-2525
(313) 553-0740

8. **Kid's Safe Program**

Contact: Fire Safety Eduction Curriculum for Preschool Children
Oklahoma City Fire Department
Public Education
820 N.W. 5th
Oklahoma City. OK 73106
(405) 297-3314

Fire Service Programs

1. **National Fire Prevention Week**

2. **Curious Kids Set Fires**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

3. **Big Fires Start Small**

Contact: National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park,
P.O. Box 9101
Quincy, MA 02269
(617) 770-3000

4. **Firebusters**

Contact: Earl Diment
Office of Community Relations
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

5. **Public Fire Education Today**

Contact: U.S. Fire Administration
National Fire Academy
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

Fire Department Programs in Schools

1. **Slide presentations**

Contact: Office of the Fire Chief
Fourth Floor East
Largo Government Center
9201 Basil Court
Landover, MD 20785

2. **Films**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
Fire Marshal's Office
301 2nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

3. **Assemblies**

Contact: Juvenile Firesetter Program
Fire Prevention Division
301 2nd Avenue South
Fire Marshal's Office
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-6670

Contact: Captain Henry Begroot
Fire Prevention
San Jose Fire Department
4 North 2nd Street, Suite 1100
San Jose, CA 95113
(408) 277-4444

Law-Enforcement Program

1. **McGruff**

Contact: The National Crime Prevention Council
1700 K Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Early Intervention

Evaluation Education and Referral Program

1. **The Juvenile Firesetter Program, Columbia, Ohio**

Contact: Lonnie Poindexter
Juvenile Firesetter Program
Bureau of Fire Prevention
300 N. Fourth Street
Columbia, OH 42315
(614) 645-7641

2. **Operation Extinguish, Montgomery County, Maryland**

Contact: Mary Marchone
Division of Fire Prevention
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 271-2442

3. **Fire Related Youth (FRY) Program, Rochester, New York**

Contact: Jerold Bills
FRY Program
Rochester Fire Department
Room 365
Public Safety Building
Civic Center Plaza
Rochester, NY 14614
(716) 428-7103

4. **Juvenile Firesetter Program, Portland Oregon**

Contact: Don Porth
Portland Fire Bureau
55 Southwest Ash
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 823-3700

5. **Operation Fire S.A.F.E.**

Contact: Jane Sutter
Association of Central Oklahoma Governments
6600 North Harvey Place, Suite 200
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
(405) 848-8961

CHAPTER 5: REFERRAL MECHANISMS

Introduction

Juvenile Firesetter Programs should occupy a central position between the sources of juvenile firesetter (fire service, schools, parents)--the people who detect the firesetter--and the **target agencies** (counseling services, juvenile court, etc.)--the agencies or people who provide specialized treatment or sanctions to the juvenile firesetter.

In most programs a substantial number of firesetters will be detected by fire service personnel and brought to the program for some education/ intervention; consequently, many of the "referrals" occur within the fire service and do not require the assistance of others, either in finding the firesetters or addressing their problems. A typical case of this kind is the young child without any significant pathology who is identified by a fire investigator, referral to the program, screened by the fire service, provided fire safety education, and released. In many jurisdictions these may be the most frequent kind of cases. However, all other cases require effective referral systems so the (a) people outside the fire service will bring the firesetter to the attention of the program, and (b) the juvenile firesetter who exhibits serious problems of adjustment or delinquency can receive the appropriate additional resources. The screening and intervention activities conducted within the program represent the very heart of any program, but they are not at all sufficient to ensure that all firesetting youths are receiving the help (or sanctions) they deserve. Indeed, without a wide range of referral sources the program will never see a sizable segment of the juvenile firesetter population, and without the appropriate agencies and individuals to whom youths can be sent for additional help, many firesetters (especially the more troubled youths) will never receive the services they need.

A graphic depiction of the desired referral network is shown in Figure 4.1. Typical sources of referrals are shown on the left, with the fire service typically providing most of the referrals, followed by parents, schools, etc. On the right are the major types of referral targets, agencies that can provide the appropriate additional services to the juvenile firesetter, and the family.

Several points of this figure deserve special attention. First, it shows a large number and variety of possible referral sources and target agencies. Although these may vary widely across jurisdictions, it is important that the program give serious consideration to developing referral arrangements with all such agencies and groups. Second, two of the three key target agencies--social services and mental health agencies--may also serve as referral sources as well. Third, this depiction is necessarily an over simplification of the actual sequence of events involved in many referrals. For example, as shall be discussed below, the arrangements among the criminal justice agencies, the program, and the mental health and social service agencies can be quite complicated, involving several decision points and transfers for any one case. Fourth, some referral mechanism will be for the purpose of Fig. 4.1 here merely recording and tracking juvenile firesetter cases that are not actually seen by the program. Although we feel that the juvenile firesetter program should be able to screen all firesetters, often they do not. At a minimum, ISA feels that the juvenile firesetter program should be aware of every fire set by a juvenile in its jurisdiction.

Identifying Referral Sources and Target Agencies

The foundation for the referral mechanisms is laid in the early stages of program planning and development. The first step in the development of effective referral mechanisms is the identification of all potential referral sources and target agencies. The types of agencies and groups shown in Figure 4.1 should serve as a start for the identification of referral sources and agencies to be developed. Once a list of referral types is developed, the program should complete a worksheet providing the names of specific organizations, a description of the preferred referral arrangement, the individuals who will serve as the primary contact or liaison to the program, and their addresses and telephone numbers.

To some degree, much of the identification process will have been accomplished during the planning and coordination stage. However, the individuals from the various agencies who will serve as the functional contacts for referrals may be different from those who are first involved in planning and coordination and the actual approval of the referral relationship. Therefore, it is likely that at least two levels of agency

officials will be involved in the development of these mechanisms: (1) Relatively high-level officials with the authority to bind the agency to a referral agreement, and (2) individuals who will have continuing responsibility for the operation of the referral mechanism.

Although the selection of referral agencies will depend on the particular nature of the juvenile firesetter problem in the area, virtually all programs in jurisdictions of medium-to-large size should explore the possibility of referral arrangements with all the types of agencies listed in Figure 4.1. The only exceptions will be small jurisdictions that do not have social and mental health service agencies or the multiple levels of the criminal justice system. If counseling and therapy services are not available locally, the program should investigate the possibility of referral arrangements with such agencies in neighboring towns and cities.
The target agencies selected will also be dependent, at least to some degree, on the nature and severity of the problems of the juvenile firesetters; e.g., the extent to which the youths display serious problems of adjustment and delinquency, whether family counseling is required, etc. We suggest, however, that the referral mechanism be arranged (at least the groundwork laid) for all the major target agencies so that if the need arises, the resources will be there.

Target referral agencies--places to which the firesetters are to be sent for special services--should be screened carefully for quality. If they are government operated (e.g., a community mental health center) there is less concern about quality, since these organizations typically have to meet standards that are carefully developed and regularly monitored. Private social service and mental health organizations (which are increasing in number) and individual practitioners should be carefully screened before sending them referrals. Practitioners should be certified and/or licensed in their respective fields--social worker, psychologist, etc. If the organizations have referral relationships with other programs or institutions in the area, you can call them and ask for their opinion of the quality of services.

You should also examine the particular capabilities and capacities of the target referral agencies--are they equipped to handle the cases you may be sending them?

Contacting Referral Agencies

The source and target agencies should first be contacted by telephone and mail to present the basic idea to them. The emphasis should be placed on the special needs of the firesetter population and the mutual benefits of a referral arrangement for the program, the agency, the firesetter and his/her

family, and the community at large. Face-to-face meetings should then be arranged to discuss the desired referral arrangement. The central purpose of these meetings is twofold: (1) To convince the agency of the importance of a referral relationship; and (2) to communicate the nature of the referral relationship. For source referrals, it is important to provide detailed guidance on the characteristics of the youths to be sent to the program and the circumstances under which they are to be referred. For target agencies, it is important to describe the types of youth that will be sent to them and the services they are likely to need.

Some juvenile firesetter programs have gone to extreme lengths to convince agencies to send referrals to the program. In Rochester, the program told agencies that if they did not agree to send referrals to the program, "the next death caused by a juvenile firesetter would be on their conscience." Although this tactic is not appropriate for all circumstances, programs should adopt a programmatic approach, doing whatever works (within ethical boundaries). Another approach is to make use of the personal and political connections that the program has with influential officials at the agencies. For example, the Fire Chief can be very influential in securing the cooperation of other public safety officials. Once the program has gained a toehold in the mental health or educational community, supportive members of those communities can be helpful in recruiting other individuals and agencies into the referral network.

Developing Detailed Referral Agreements

After the agencies have agreed in principle to the referral arrangement and the details of the arrangement have been discussed, a written agreement should then be drawn up that specifies clearly the nature of the relationship and the specific responsibilities of each party. These agreements need not be elaborate legalistic documents; in most situations a single-page agreement will suffice. In some instances, initial agreements may be unwritten, oral agreements, but written statements of understanding should be developed at some point.

At some point in the discussions, the liability issue should be discussed in some detail with the agency. Written waivers of liability may be appropriate in certain cases. If in doubt about the proper course of action with respect to liability, you may want to consult a knowledgeable attorney.

The establishment of a referral agreement is only the beginning of a referral relationship between the program and the agency. The arrangement will be effective only so long as it is cultivated and maintained through continuing contact with agency officials. In

particular, it is important to provide timely and informative feedback to the source referral agencies about the status of youths referred to the program--results of screening, intervention outcomes, referrals out to other agencies, etc. Periodic meetings with the representatives of all agencies who are part of the juvenile firesetter referral network will also help to maintain the relationships, and will also provide a vehicle for addressing any problems before they become serious. Cases conferences are one possible strategy for maintaining communication and strengthening the referral network.

Some juvenile firesetter program has parents sign waivers allowing the referral agencies (both referral source and target referral agencies) to share information with the juvenile firesetter program. These waivers or releases permit the juvenile firesetter program to inform the referral source that the youth was assessed by the program staff and allows the program to forward the results of their assessment to a treatment agency. In addition these releases allow target agencies, such as mental health facilitie's and child protective services, to apprise the juvenile firesetter program of the status of a case. This exchange of information will enable program staff to monitor each case and ensure that referral linkages are successfully accomplished and no youth falls between the cracks. Problems have developed in some jurisdictions when youth are referred to the juvenile firesetter program and the referral source is never informed about the outcome of the case.

Differences Across Types of Jurisdictions

As with virtually any facet of the juvenile firesetter program, the nature and extent of referral mechanisms will be dependent upon the characteristics of the community in which it operates. Key characteristics influencing the referral mechanisms include: (a) the nature and severity of the juvenile arson problem, (b) the size of the jurisdiction, and (c) the availability of relevant resources.

The central factor in this regard is probably the size of the jurisdiction, which may range from small towns in rural areas to major metropolitan areas. The discussion above is most relevant to the medium-to-large cities where most of the juvenile firesetting is concentrated. In small, rural towns the problem of juvenile firesetting is likely to be less severe than in the large cities--both the incidence of firesetting and the seriousness of the youth's problem--so a huge network of complex referral networks will probably be neither needed nor available. The major types of referrals as shown in Figure 4.1 are applicable to small towns as well, although the sheer number of agencies and individuals will be considerably fewer than in the larger cities. Consequently, the work of developing and maintaining

the referral network is likely to be less difficult and time-consuming. On the other hand, many of the target agencies where the youths are sent for special services may be located in other towns and cities. Identifying these agencies and working out practical referral arrangements with them may require considerable time and effort tracing down the best and most appropriate resources. With respect to the counseling and therapy resources, the program may consider identifying one or two individual therapists (rather than entire agencies) who could provide most of the services.

CHAPTER 6: PUBLICITY AND OUTREACH

Purpose

This chapter describes how juvenile firesetter programs can develop a public information and education campaign to raise the public awareness about juvenile firesetting and the juvenile firesetter program. Surprisingly, many communities are often unaware of the juvenile firesetter problem or misinformed about the characteristics of firesetters. Parents may be reluctant to obtain help for their children suspected of firesetting for fear that they will be "put away." What many parents do not realize is that the majority of fires set by children are set out of curiosity. Without proper identification ad education, however, simple curiosity can have deadly consequences.

The juvenile firesetter program has a responsibility to the community to inform them that a program exists to help juvenile firesetters. It is important for the community to understand that juvenile firesetter programs are designed to provide education for young firesetters and identify and refer troubled firesetters to counseling if necessary. Many juvenile firesetter programs are hindered because the community is unaware of the services they provide. This component will outline strategies that can be used inform and educate the public about the program and the service it provides.

A note of caution--juvenile firesetter programs must be fully prepared to handle the requests for information and referrals generated from a publicity campaign. Programs must take care not to publicize anything they are not prepared to provide. The juvenile firesetter program will lose credibility quickly if the program staff say they can provide prompt assessment and education to firesetters and then place juveniles on waiting lists because they do not have adequate staff.

Strategies

Pamphlets, brochures, and posters. At a minimum, juvenile firesetter programs should develop a simple brochure to describe the program and provide parents and other members of the community with a telephone number to call for additional information. For brochures, pamphlets, and posters, the old adage, "less is more" applies. The materials should be simple, with one or two major messages. These materials should briefly highlight the juvenile firesetter program's services and provide a contact for individuals to call. The juvenile firesetter program staff should consider soliciting funds, services (e.g., printing), or in-kind contributions from local businesses to defray the cost of design, production, and mailing. The coordinating council described in the Program Management component may help the juvenile firesetter program with fund-raising for these types of public relations activities.

The brochures can be distributed through the schools, local Parent/Teacher Associations, pre-schools, daycare centers, and pediatricians' offices. Stores may allow the brochure or poster to be displayed in a store window or cashier's desk. Brochures or pamphlets should also be sent to all community organizations, service organizations, hospitals, physicians, and government agencies that work with juveniles.

Newspaper, TV, and radio exposure. The most effective way to publicize a juvenile firesetter program is through local news media exposure. For example, Columbus, Ohio's juvenile firesetter program was suffering because the public was unaware of its existence. With the help of the local television news media and newspaper, the fire department was able to inform the public about the problem of juvenile firesetting and the services offered by the program. Program staff gave interviews about the local juvenile firesetter problem and explained how the community could use the Columbus Juvenile Firesetter Program.

The juvenile firesetter program staff cannot wait for the media to come to them. They must go to local newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. If the juvenile firesetter program wants to use the local media, the program coordinator or spokesperson will have to call or meet with news reporters, assignment editors, and local news show producers. It is the spokesperson's job to "sell" the story to local media, explaining the importance of getting information about the juvenile firesetter program to the community. The spokesperson needs to have a clear understanding of them message the program wants to convey to the public and be able to convey that message to the local media.

The spokesperson should have three or four key pieces of information to convey. Examples may include messages such as, 1) the majority of

firesetters are curious children who need education, 2) the key to providing services to firesetters, whether curious or troubled, is identification and assessment, 3) children playing with fire is a very real and dangerous problem, 4) parents should not be afraid to seek assistance if they suspect that their children are playing with fire, or 5) the juvenile firesetter program is designed to provide assessment, education ad referral for firesetters. Local communities may have messages that apply to their specific jurisdiction. A second key requirement is knowing the target audience. A message targeting parents may be different than a message targeting community agencies. The issue of target audience will be discuss, further in the section on Public Service Announcements.

Juvenile firesetter programs should consider writing brief fact sheets and press releases which can be made available to the local media. Fact sheets can be used to give the media background information about the juvenile firesetter program. Fact sheets are usually brief and can be updated as necessary. A press release is a brief (one page) announcement of a newsworthy story or event. The release gives the important information about the event to the media. Every release should have the name, address, and telephone number of the juvenile firesetter program.

An excellent resource on how to work with the media was written and published by the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC). The book, *Ink and Airtime*, provides ideas and step-by-step guidelines on how to write press releases, fact sheets and articles. The book also tells readers how to get their information on radio and television and how to systematically develop a media campaign.

Juvenile firesetter programs can also benefit from the information in media kits developed by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Both media kits contain information on the nature and extent of juvenile firesetting which can be used to educate communities about the program of juvenile firesetting.

One way to get media attention is when a juvenile firesetting incident has occurred. Parental interest and media awareness are heightened after such an event. A description of the program and its services can be used as a sidebar to the story about the incident. In addition, if the juvenile firesetter program staff have identified themselves to the media, they may be interviewed and asked to give an expert opinion about juvenile firesetting. This is again an excellent opportunity to discuss the juvenile firesetter program. The important thing to remember is that no juvenile firesetting incident should be reported in the media without also mentioning the juvenile firesetter program.

In addition to newspapers, radio, and television, juvenile firesetter programs can also use community newsletters or magazines, newsletters of major corporations, and university and college newspapers to publicize the program. The program staff can write short articles about the juvenile firesetter problem and the steps the program has taken to alleviate the problem. Program staff can then meet with the editors of the newsletters and magazines to discuss the articles. These types of publications are designed to serve the community and highlight community programs and activities and can be an excellent way to educate the community about the juvenile firesetter program.

Public Service Announcements. Public service announcements (PSA's) can also be used to inform the community about the juvenile firesetter program. They have the potential to reach a wide audience. PSA's provide information about a problem or program without trying to sell a product. One of the greatest advantages of PSA's is that the radio and television time are donated by the media. Competition for media time and space, however, is very tough and stations are cutting back on the amount of airtime they are willing to devote to PSA's. PSA's must, therefore, be well-thought-out and creative.

Several fire departments and the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) have developed "generic" or open-format PSA's. These are PSA's that describe the problem of juvenile firesetting in general, but allow the local program to "customize" the PSA by leaving space at the end for information about how to contact the local juvenile firesetter program. The PSA developed by the NFPA entitled, "Got a light, keep it out of sight," can be ordered through local NFPA representatives. The Phoenix Fire Department also has an open-format PSA developed by Fire-Pal. The Phoenix Fire Department has made the PSA available to local juvenile firesetter programs for a reproduction fee.

Juvenile firesetter programs may want to develop their own PSA's. Before developing a PSA, the juvenile firesetter program staff must decide who they want to reach—their target audience—and the best way to reach them. Two of the largest, relatively untapped, sources of referrals are parents and school personnel. PSA's should be designed to capture the attention and support of these two groups.

The juvenile firesetter program staff will need to decide on the content of their message. PSA's are usually short, 15-30 second ads that focus on a specific message. The content of the PSA message will vary according to a number of different criteria, including target audience (parents, children, teachers, etc.), nature of the juvenile firesetting problem in the community and the goal of the PSA (education, referral to the program, etc.). Some PSA's, targeted toward parents, describe misconceptions about juvenile

firesetters. One such misconception is that they are "bad" kids or that they have deep-rooted psychological problems. Although some juvenile firesetters are troubled and need counseling, the majority are young children who need fire safety education. Other PSA's are used to inform the public that juvenile firesetting is a real and deadly problem that, in many cases, can be avoided. Still others may address kids and warn them about the dangers of playing with matches and lighters. Regardless of the message, the PSA should give the audience a specific name and telephone number to contact for more information.

Unfortunately, although the media donates PSA time and space, developing a PSA is not a low cost venture. Programs with limited funds will need to look to the community for funds or services. Companies may be able to donate paper, tapes, personnel, video equipment or other valuable materials in lieu of money. Programs unfamiliar with producing audio and video tapes may want to consider using PSA's which have already been developed. The vehicle used to promote the juvenile firesetter program (radio or television) will depend largely on the amount of resources available.

If the resources and expertise are available, the juvenile firesetter program will still have to compete with other agencies for the media time and space. Program personnel should address this problem directly by going to local newspapers and radio and television stations and meeting with the public service staff. The juvenile firesetter program director or another staff member will need to explain the severity of the problem and the importance of eliciting community support for the juvenile firesetter program. *Ink and Airtime* advises program staff to go to these meetings armed with all of the information available, including local and national statistics, evidence of program success, and endorsements from prominent members of the community.

Speakers bureaus, hot lines, and other services. The juvenile firesetter program or the coordinating council can establish other services to promote the program. For example, juvenile firesetter programs in Columbus, Ohio and San Jose, California have established speakers bureaus. These bureaus are comprised of individuals who have expertise in one or more areas of fire safety and prevention. These individuals volunteer their time to speak to community groups, schools, service organizations, and other interested groups. The speakers can provide valuable information and promote the use of the juvenile firesetter program.

The Juvenile Firesetter Program Task Force, Inc. in Columbus, Ohio also maintains a Juvenile Firesetter Care Line where parents can receive

information and help for their children. Volunteers from the community can be trained to man the hot-line and assist parents.

Partnerships

The nature and extent of the juvenile firesetter program publicity and out-reach campaign will be limited to the resources available to the program. Programs with limited money and manpower have formed partnerships with community organizations and local businesses to acquire the necessary services, materials, and funds. The community can offer an unlimited wealth of resources. Corporations may donate money or sponsor specific promotional activities or products. As noted in the Program Management component, the juvenile firesetter program staff should appeal to a corporation's sense of civic mindedness and self-interest when attempting to solicit donations from corporations. Contributing money to better the community is basically good business. The juvenile firesetter program coordinator should also request assistance from individual community members. Individuals with expertise in writing, advertising, audio and visual communications, design, and other skills can be asked to donate their skills. The problem of juvenile firesetting is a **community** problem that cannot be alleviated without the assistance of the community.

RESOURCE LIST

Ink and Airtime:

National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC)
1700 K. Street, N.W., Second Floor
Washington, DC 20006

Public Service Announcements:

Fire Pal
c/o Phoenix Fire Department
520 West Van Buren
Phoenix, AZ 85003

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Media Kits:

"Curious Kids Set Fires"

U.S. Fire Administration
16825 South Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727

"Big Fires Start Small"

National Fire Protection Association
1 Batterymarch Park
Quincy, MA 02169
(617) 770-3000

Newsletters:

"Hot Issues"

State Fire Marshall
4760 Portland Road, N.E.
Salem, OR 97305

CHAPTER 7: MONITORING SYSTEMS

The purpose, content, format, and use of systems for monitoring juvenile firesetters and firesetting incidents are covered in this component. While many juvenile firesetter programs have developed some internal system to monitor their caseloads, others simply maintain individual case files with no systematic way to track cases, determine final dispositions, report to funding agencies, etc. Very few have systems capable of being used for evaluation purposes. As described in this component, simple monitoring systems are recommended for all juvenile firesetting programs regardless of size. They need not be elaborate, expensive, semi-comprehensible computerized systems; both manual and simplified computer systems can be perfectly adequate for careful monitoring.

Purpose

Monitoring systems serve different purposes, depending on the information they contain and the uses to which they are put. At the most elemental level, a management information system is needed for case tracking, caseload analysis, and reporting of program operations and

results. A Management Information System (MIS) should include case characteristics of the firesetter and the firesetting incident, services rendered, dates of key events, and the final disposition of the case. It is used as a management tool to monitor individual cases, determining the status of each case at any given point and ensuring that needed treatment has been completed. An MIS provides the means for summarizing and analyzing the program's caseload (the number of cases handled, case type, firesetter characteristics, number and type of services rendered, etc.), tracking and reporting the number and type of program activities (presentations given, etc.), and providing data for annual reports, evaluations, and funding agencies. Most juvenile firesetter programs maintain some version of an MIS, or at least have the basic ingredients (such as case records) for the making of one.

Extending the MIS to include recidivism and other follow-up data provides the basic building blocks for an evaluation system. An evaluation system would contain all of the information above plus follow-up data on firesetting recidivism and other programs such as delinquency, school or family problems, etc. The evaluation system is an extension of the MIS, rather than a separate system. Much of the data in such an evaluation system may come from the program's routine follow-up contacts with families of firesetters and the referral agencies to which they are referred. It provides the basic data needed for self-evaluation and program monitoring, as will as those needed for an independent evaluation of the program. Some juvenile firesetter programs have routinized systems for tracking recidivism and judging the effectiveness of program efforts, and will be used to illustrate the purposes and use of an evaluation system.

The third type of monitoring system suggested for juvenile firesetter programs is an incidence reporting system. The purpose of an incidence reporting system is to record basic information on all known juvenile firesetting incidents, whether or not the firesetter is identified and handled by the juvenile firesetter program. This system would provide the basic information on all known juvenile firesetting incidents, whether or not the firesetter is identified and handled by the juvenile firesetter program. This system would provide the basic data needed to monitor jurisdiction-wide rates of juvenile arson and firesetting and gauge the effectiveness of education and outreach efforts of the program. The incidence reporting system would be an extension of the routine records kept by fire service officials, and ideally, would include firesetting incidents that have not come to the attention of law enforcement and fire officials.

As noted earlier, we believe that, at a minimum, the juvenile firesetter program should be aware of every juvenile-set fire in its jurisdiction. Sometimes schools and other agencies choose to handle a juvenile

firesetter internally without contacting the juvenile firesetter program, particular if the fire did not warrant fire suppression. It is very important for the juvenile firesetter program to have that information, because if a child ultimately does set a fire that warrants the attention of the fire department, it is likely that the fire service will treat that individual case differently if they believe it is a first offense versus if they know that the child in question has been lighting numerous fires in school. In order to provide the child with the services he or she needs, the juvenile firesetter program needs to be aware of the child's firesetting history. Developing strong referral networks should facilitate obtaining the necessary information.

Central Elements of the Monitoring System

The case information and other data to be kept in each of the proposed three systems are described in this section. The development, form, and use of these systems--data collections issues, whether systems should be manual or computerized, which agency should maintain the system, analysis, and reporting, etc.--are described in the following section, "System Development and Use."

Management Information System. The data to be included in the Management Information System are drawn from the individual case files, primarily from intake, screening, and assessment instruments, and from other program records (perhaps newly created for this purpose). There are four categories of data included in an MIS:

I. Case characteristics

a. Source of referral
b. Age, sex, race, family status of firesetter
c. Details of the firesetting incident—motive, presence of others, location of fire, materials used, damage estimate, injuries, deaths
d. Past firesetting incidents
e. Initial assessment after screening (e.g., little, definite, or extreme risk)

II. Services rendered

Dates, content, and length of educational sessions; dates, purposes, and agencies of referral(s); number and type of counseling sessions; details of other services (restitution, community service, etc.)

III. Case disposition

a. Dates and outcomes of all services rendered, gathered through routine reporting by all cooperating agencies or direct follow-up
b. Status of case in criminal justice system

IV. Program Activities

a. Education/prevention activities, school-based or community or other--type, number, attendance, content
b. Training for others in the field--type, curriculum, number trained
c. Resource/materials development
d. Other--media coverage, Task Force participation, etc.

The first three categories, case characteristics, services rendered, and case disposition information, are the most important elements of the Management Information System. The data will be as accurate and complete as the individual case files and other program records. Each case should have a case file, which would contain intake forms, screening instruments, and disposition information in each case file.

Evaluation system. Data for an evaluation system requires follow-up activities with police, fire, prosecution, courts, and probation agencies; schools; parents; social service agencies; and private treatment facilities. Data collection procedures are discussed in the following section. The following information on all cases handled is to be included in the evaluation system:

- Firesetting recidivism--information on any further firesetting incidents.
- Delinquency--any and all acts of vandalism, stealing, etc.
- School problems--truancy, chronic tardiness, disciplinary problems, academic and behavioral problems, etc.
- Family/home problems--running away, lack of parental control, etc.
- Personal and interpersonal problems--emotional and behavioral problems, poor peer relation ships, etc.

Incidence reporting system. Like the evaluation system, the incidence reporting system requires information from a variety of sources, although

the fire department is clearly the primary source. The incidence reporting system should cover the jurisdiction of the juvenile firesetter program--e.g., a city, county, etc. It will include all known or suspected juvenile firesetting incidents, whether or not they are reported to the authorities (data collection is discussed in the following section). The system would include information on:

- Firesetting incidents--date, location, ignition materials used, items/structures ignited, damage estimate, injuries, death, reported or not, reasons for not reporting if known.

- Known or suspected firesetters--age, sex, motive, presence of others, past incidents.

System Development and Use

Management information and evaluation systems. The development and use of the management information and evaluation systems will be covered here under one heading. The evaluation system should be considered simply an extension of the MIS because the data collection, computerization, and other issues are quite similar. The fire department is best equipped to build and maintain these systems.

Cooperation and coordination from all agencies is needed to build and maintain a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system. The responsibility of each agency in regard to reporting requirements and providing data should be spelled out in interagency agreements. For a developing program, monitoring issues should be identified from the start and built into discussions among involved agencies for the inception of program planning. These issues include confidentiality, policies or regulations that prohibit sharing information, routinized data collection procedures, and resistance to participating in data collection because of time constraints or lack of resources.

Each agency may have confidentiality concerns, at minimum, or statutory regulations that limit the individual information they may share with others. Schools, in particular, will be very concerned about releasing any information on students. Law enforcement agencies, particularly probation and the courts, are severely limited in the extent to which any information on juveniles can be provided to outsiders, and in some jurisdictions, the fire and police departments are considered outsiders. While these concerns may be mitigated if the monitoring system is maintained by fire officials within the juvenile firesetter program, confidentiality protections should be reviewed and safeguarded. Access to records should be controlled whether the system is manual or

computerized, and only grouped results should be reported outside of the program.

Each agency involved in the juvenile firesetter program must make a commitment to inform the program about particular events concerning youth in the program. The data collection effort should not be burdensome; simple reporting forms can be developed to facilitate case tracking and disposition. In one program, for example, counseling agencies submit monthly reports on clients referred to them by the juvenile firesetter program and Child Protective Services reports quarterly on the number of family sessions held and progress made. When a family terminates counseling, the entire case file kept by the counselor is returned to the juvenile firesetter program. In another program, the program follows up with both the parents and the referral agencies within a month or two after referral to confirm that the recommended contact has occurred.

The management information and evaluation system may be kept manually, but since personal computers have become increasingly prevalent in the workplace, computerization is advised. A manual system may suit a small program perfectly, if its caseload is not large and its reporting requirements are small. Simple logs, carefully organized and kept up to date, will provide a small program with basic information very quickly. Computerization is needed when either the caseload is too large to handle summary computations easily and accurately or when reporting requirements are frequent and/or detailed, making interim computations and status reports cumbersome to produce. When a program reaches somewhere between 75 and 100 cases per year, computerization is probably warranted.

If operating on a manual system, key information from case files should be placed on monthly activity logs that enable summaries to be easily calculated. For example, the sample log on the following page will tell you at a glance the number of cases handled in July, their referral sources, and initial intervention steps. With minor calculations, the average age and other information about the firesetter and firesetting incident can be summarized. A program developing a manual MIS should decide what information is to be kept on logs, after reviewing their management and reporting needs. Perhaps two logs will be needed, one to describe basic case information (dates, referral sources, individual and incident characteristics) and one to record referral, intervention, and disposition data. A log should be used as a "tickler system," enabling program staff to quickly view the status of a case and monitor it for the delivery of intervention services.

In a computerized system, information from case records would be entered directly into a computer using a database management program (e.g., Dbase). Simple queries on a case by case basis can be made through the database program, such as the date of referral to the program, and many database programs enable more complex queries to be made easily, such as the number of cases referred to the Community Mental Health Center. Tables, summary statistics, and routine reports can be produced by programming through the database program. Statistical packages such as SPSS are probably not needed for monitoring purposes although their statistical capabilities may be helpful in producing specific information needed by a juvenile firesetter program.

One advantage of a computerized system is that it provides a basic database from which information can be drawn, sliced anyway the program desires. For example, manually kept logs and provide a program with a running total of the years' caseload. But if new questions or needs arise--to look at referral sources during a given quarter or investigate whether kids 13 or over have caused more serious fires than those under 13, for example--the hand tallies can become burdensome and inaccurate. Such information would be at your fingertips in a computerized system. To maintain an MIS capable of providing a full picture of juvenile firesetting in a given jurisdiction, computerization is needed. A computerized database can contain much more information than a manual system (the results of screening tests and details of the firesetting incident, for example) and therefore answer much more complex questions (such as do second-time firesetters improve more with inpatient or outpatient treatment). Without a computerized system, these questions require the hand-culling of individual case files. On the other hand, computerized systems require more care. Data must be entered on a timely basis and one must know how to get information out of it without expending substantial time in training or programming.

July 1993

Name`	Age	Sex	Fire Location	Property damage amount	Injury Y/N	Screened Y/N	Intervention	Referred from	Referred to

A generic computer system could be developed by a central agency (such as the U.S. Fire Administration/FEMA) at relatively low coat and tailored to each program as needed. Alternatively, a juvenile firesetter program might hire local experts (or find volunteers among local computerniks) to develop a computer program. We feel most juvenile firesetter programs will have the in-house expertise needed to enter data and operate the system on an ongoing basis. It should not be a time-consuming job; rather only an hour or two a week should keep the system current.

The analysis produced via the computerized system or summarized manually in regard to the management information system should enable a program to answer questions such as the following:

1. How many cases have been handled this year relative to last year?
2. What are the individual and family characteristics of the juveniles handled?

3. What are the characteristics of the fires set by the juveniles handled by the program?
4. Which referral agencies are used the most?
5. How long, on the average, are juveniles and families in treatment?

To extend the MIS to become an evaluation system, follow-up activities must take place with a number of key agencies to determine the long-term effectiveness of the intervention strategies in terms of recidivism. For evaluation purposes, a program needs to know, minimally, of any recurrence of firesetting behavior, and should want to know about juvenile delinquency, continued problems at school or home, etc. Quarterly contacts should be made with the family and key agencies for a year or two after the precipitating incident to inquire about recidivism and related problems. In the Houston program, cross-reference checks are made among participating agencies to look for recidivists and the program director makes monthly phone calls to the family for a year to check on the juvenile's progress. Other programs have formally conducted surveys of families to explore recidivism issues and what the family felt about the juvenile firesetter program and the referral services that may have been offered. Examples of these surveys can be found in the *Guidelines for Implementation.*

The key agencies include the police and fire departments, courts and probation, schools, parents, social service agencies, and public treatment facilities. The follow-up may consist of routine reporting or periodic telephone calls to determine if the agency has had any further contact with the juvenile and, if so, for what reasons. Parents are probably the best single source of follow-up information, if sufficient rapport has been built to enable the parents to report any additional delinquent behaviors or other problems. Telephone contact should be made with the parents rather than sending an impersonal form.

These recidivism data should be added to the computerized database or manual logs as they are gathered. Together with the MIS data, this information forms the basis for a comprehensive evaluation. The information is obviously valuable to the program, to assess its own effectiveness and effectiveness of participating agencies. An independent evaluator will want to verify the information and collect more detailed information on treatments and outcomes, but the MIS will provide the basic building blocks for an outside evaluation. Finally, the MIS data are easily available when preparing annual reports, proposals, news releases, etc.

Incidence reporting system. Incidence reporting systems, as discussed previously, are valuable for analyzing the full problem of juvenile firesetting and determining where services are needed and where services (education, particularly) have been effective. Since fire departments will

have the basic systems in place needed to maintain an incidence reporting system, the real challenge is in data collection. In too many jurisdictions, there is no means to identify fires set by juveniles versus those set by others.

A juvenile firesetting incidence reporting system should contain fire and individual information as previously presented. The data should be gathered via existing records or new forms developed for this purpose, from all fire departments covering jurisdictions of interest depending on the areas served by the juvenile firesetter program. The Portland, Oregon program is building a statewide database on juvenile firesetters. Portland has also conducted a risk analysis to the city to identify high-risk areas for juvenile firesetters and implement education/intervention strategies as appropriate. The state of New York, in conjunction with the Rochester program, is also developing a statewide computer system.

In addition to gathering and analyzing reported juvenile firesetting incidents, methods to assess the incidence of unreported fires are needed. Several options are available. One way is to identify and survey organizational entities (primarily schools and parents organizations) that record firesetting incidents that are small and not reported to the fire department.

Another, more basic assessment of the juvenile firesetting problem is to survey youth directly to gather information on their firesetting behavior. Juvenile firesetting is substantially underreported, and many youth set fires that never come to the attention of parents or authorities. Anonymous surveys of students in the schools (as conducted by the Rochester program) are probably the best single source of information on juvenile firesetting incidents as well as fireplay activities that do not result in actual fires. Strict anonymity must be upheld for truthful self-reports to result. This type of survey will provide information on the full extent of the juvenile firesetting problem in a jurisdiction and is as valuable as reported fire statistics.

Because of the volume of data and need for summary statistics, the incidence reporting system should be computerized. In many departments, the creation of this system will be relatively easy. Fire incidence reports that are routinely computerized may be sorted to reflect just the juvenile problem.

CHAPTER 8: DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The juvenile firesetter program needs to develop relationships with all of the key agencies that work with juvenile firesetters. As noted in the Referral Mechanisms component, these agencies include police, social

services, schools, mental health, and the juvenile justice system. It is the relationship with the juvenile justice system which will be the focus of this component. Too often juvenile firesetters are referred to the juvenile justice system and never come to the attention of the juvenile firesetter program. Juvenile firesetter programs need to be aware of all incidents of firesetting so that no juvenile firesetter falls through the cracks. The juvenile firesetter program is in a unique position of being able to assess all firesetters and track them through referral agencies. In addition, the juvenile firesetter program can be a resource for probation, juvenile court, and correctional facilities. The juvenile firesetter program's potential as a resource to the juvenile justice system, however, is based on the strength of relationship between the program and the justice agencies.

Purpose

The purpose of this component is to provide information to assist programs in developing effective relationships between the juvenile firesetter program and the justice system. Specific objectives of this component are the following:

- To help the juvenile firesetter program identify delinquent firesetter;
- To develop working relationships between the juvenile firesetter program and specific agencies of the criminal justice system including probation, family court, prosecutor's office, and juvenile court; and
- To help the juvenile firesetter program better assist delinquent firesetters in residential correctional facilities.

Model approaches to have been used in three cities--Rochester, NY, Charlotte, NC, and Portland, OR--are summarized below. Recognizing that each program will differ in such areas as state law, program structure and manpower, programs should review these models and consider the procedures most appropriate to their particular program and jurisdiction.

Rochester, New York

All fires set by juveniles are investigated by fire investigators assigned to the Fire Related youth (FRY) Program. Investigators approach every case of juvenile firesetting as a criminal investigation. After collecting information about the case, the investigators meet with the youth and provide fire safety education. In Rochester, all juvenile firesetters come to the attention of the FRY program prior to being referred to other agencies, including juvenile justice. Cases may be referred to prosecution as a last

resort to get services to children in need or when the child has engaged in numerous other delinquent activities. The FRY investigators work very closely with the Probation Office and the Presentment Agency. The Probation Intake Unit will handle the case first. Intake Unit staff will decide whether the case can be "adjusted" without going to court or whether the case will be referred for prosecution. If adjustment is being considered, the probation department will consider the youth's risks and strength. Probation staff may refer to juvenile to a mental health or social service facility. Cases referred to prosecution are petitioned through the Presentment Agency to Family Court. The presentment attorneys work very closely with the FRY investigators and rarely lose a case sent to prosecution. Before a case gets to court, the judge assumes that every effort has been made to keep the youth out of court. If the judge finds that there is enough evidence to justify the charge, s/he will ask Probation to conduct a family evaluation and make a recommendation to the court. Often the judge will also consider the FRY investigator's recommendation.

Charlotte, North Carolina

All arson or suspicious fires are investigated by the Arson Task Force. If a juvenile is suspected, the Task Force members often try to persuade the youth to confess to setting the fires. How the case proceeds often depends on whether the juvenile confesses. If the juvenile does not confess, the case is referred to the District Attorney's Office for prosecution. If the juvenile does confess, the Task Force then decides whether to proceed with prosecution or refer the juvenile directly to the juvenile firesetter program which is housed in another division of the fire service. The decision is based on a number of considerations including whether the incident is a first offense and whether the youth destroyed another's property. If the youth is referred to court, the case is referred to a Court Intake Counselor. The intake officer will meet with the parents and the youth and decide whether the petition for prosecution is warranted. The intake officer can recommend a deferred sentence under the condition that the youth participate in the juvenile firesetter program. If the case goes to court, the youth is interviewed by a court counselor who makes a recommendation to the court. The court counselor can also recommend that the youth participate in the juvenile firesetter program. If such a recommendation is accepted by the court, it then becomes a court order. The judge may also court order the youth to other agencies or facilities.

Portland, Oregon

In Portland, Oregon, all juvenile firesetters are reported to and investigated by, the Portland Fire Bureau. In 1986, the Fire Bureau developed a program to reduce the incidence of juvenile firesetting. Juveniles

apprehended for fire related offenses may be referred **directly** to the juvenile firesetter program or they may be referred to the program via the juvenile justice system. Those referred to the justice system are more likely to be the older juvenile who has been 1) involved in a more serious incident, 2) identified as a "troubled firesetter," or 3) identified as a repeat offender. If a youth is referred to juvenile court, the case is assigned to an intake probation officer. The intake officer will review all of the records and make a decision to close the case; divert the case to the juvenile firesetter program, social service agency, mental health professional, or another diversion program; or refer the case to the District Attorney's Office. If the district attorney chooses to prosecute the case, a petition of charges is filed with the juvenile court. At this point the case is assigned to an adjudication officer, who prepares the case summary and recommendations. If the judge finds that a crime was committed, s/he must decide whether to sentence the juvenile to a correctional facility, mental health facility, or place the juvenile on probation. As a condition of probation, the juvenile may be court ordered to attend fire safety education through the juvenile firesetter program, or participate in mental health counseling.

Relationships with the Probation Department

Within the justice system, a representative of the probation department (intake unit) is usually the first person to encounter the juvenile firesetter. Therefore, the juvenile firesetter program must inform and educate the probation department, especially those assigned to the intake unit, about the program. For example, a representative from the juvenile firesetter program should make an in-service education presentation to the staff of the probation department.

The staff of the probation department should receive periodic updates, fact sheets, newsletters or yearly updates as to the status of the juvenile firesetter program. Prepared by the juvenile firesetter program staff, these communications can contain statistics, case studies, intervention technique, list of placement facilities, referral methods, etc. The updates are designed to keep the probation department abreast of what the juvenile firesetter program is doing.

The juvenile firesetter program should plan and coordinate a procedure by which the probation department refers all juvenile firesetters to the program for an evaluation if such an evaluation is warranted. This process will ensure that all juveniles are identified and evaluated and offered educational intervention, if appropriate. One way to plan and coordinate such a procedure which has been used in some jurisdictions would be for the probation department to assign a particular probation officer (most

likely in the intake unit) to handle all cases involving juvenile firesetters. That intake officer would be able to work closely with the juvenile firesetter program staff.

In addition, a representative from the juvenile firesetter program routinely should be present at all conferences concerning the treatment and/or placement of a juvenile firesetter. Input from the juvenile firesetter program will be invaluable in discussions with child protection agencies, mental health agencies, correctional facilities, and representatives from community placements.

Relationships with the Law Enforcement, Legal, and Judicial Community

The members of the law enforcement, legal (prosecutive and defense), and the judicial community must be aware of, and educated about, the juvenile firesetter program. Certainly, the juvenile firesetter program can be an invaluable referral source for the district attorney's office, trial lawyers, and the juvenile judges.

Effective methods of informing and educating the members of these professional communities include supplying them with brochures explaining the program, conducting in-service education seminars, and sending fact sheets, periodic newsletters, and annual reports about the activities of the program. These methods will not only inform and educate, but will also continue to enhance the professional image of the juvenile firesetter program. Such an image is imperative if the professional community is to utilize the services of the juvenile firesetter program.

Relationships with the Juvenile Correctional Institutions

Some juvenile firesetters will be placed in juvenile correctional institutions for rehabilitation. The juvenile firesetter program can also educate the various correctional institutions about the existence and the contents of the program. Similar relations should be fostered with the correctional institutions as with the probation department.

For example, the juvenile firesetter program should be aware that a juvenile firesetter is being held at a particular correctional institution. Also, the juvenile firesetter program, once it is aware that a juvenile firesetter is to be admitted to a correctional institution, should inform the institution that the program has evaluated and/or educated the juvenile. A dual waiver, which is signed by the juvenile firesetter's parent or guardian, would allow the juvenile firesetter program to share information they may

have about the juvenile with the correctional facility and allow the facility to share information with the program.

The juvenile firesetter program should provide periodic in-service educations programs to appropriate staff of the correctional facilities, many of whom are likely to hold inaccurate perceptions of the juvenile firesetter. For example, the overwhelming majority of correctional facilities, as well as community placements such as halfway houses, believe that the juvenile firesetter is a highly dangerous individual. They perceive the juvenile firesetter as one who is always on the verge of acting out and starting a fire. In actuality, the juvenile firesetter is less likely to act out by starting a fire once he/she is placed in a structured environment and away from the psychological and sociological factors that helped produce the original firesetting behaviors.

The juvenile firesetter program should maintain an open line of communication with the correctional facilities. Correctional facilities rarely maintain specific treatment programs for juvenile firesetters. One such program, is operated by the Upper Arlington, Ohio Juvenile Firesetter Program. The Upper Arlington program offers a 12 week educational program to juveniles incarcerated for arson. Juvenile firesetter pogroms should encourage and participate in the development of similar programs for juveniles. If a structured program in not possible within the correctional facility, then juvenile firesetter programs should make its staff readily available to the staff of the correctional facility to establish individual treatment plans for specific cases.