**ACTIVITY: Fire safety**

**Activity idea**

In this activity, students discuss a number of scenarios involving fire risk, become familiar with the school fire safety plan and create a plan for their own home.

By the end of this activity, students should:

* know what to do in the event of home fire
* be aware of fire safety issues
* understand the importance of a home escape plan.

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**Introduction/background**

These activities involve students in thinking about fire safety – discussing and deciding what they should do about particular fire risk situations and thinking about a fire escape plan for their own home.

They should relate this to fire behaviour and be aware of fire risk areas of their home.

**What you need**

* Scenario cards

**What to do**

1. Cut up and hand out one or two [scenario cards](#scenario) for students to discuss in pairs, as groups and/or as a class.
2. Ask students what the class would do if there is a fire in the school. Establish that there is a plan in place for the school. Talk about some of the things in place in the school plan – moving immediately, taking a particular route (depending on possible fires), meeting together at a specified place, accounting for all people.
3. Ask if students have a plan for home. Many people die in home fires in New Zealand every year. The students should have an escape plan for their own home.
* What things would they need to consider in their own home?
* Where are the possible danger areas?
* Where would be the quickest and best escape route from a number of areas in the house? Why?
* Where should the family meet? (Pick a safe and easy to remember place outside the home to meet the rest of the family.)
* Are there other considerations – an elderly grandparent, someone in a wheelchair, house on more than one level?
1. Have students draw a bird’s eye view of their home and mark out three escape routes. Doors and windows should be included in the diagrams – emphasise that the first way out should be through a door. One escape route should be from their bedroom and two other escape routes should be from places in the house where the student spends time, for example, the kitchen or main living area. They should include any smoke alarms in the plan, showing where they are in the house. Encourage students to take the plan home and discuss it with their family.
2. Talk about what to do in the event of a fire:
* Before opening any door, students should be aware that they should feel it first with the back of their hand. (People have a tendency to fall forward if they put their palm onto something. However, if they use the back of the hand, they have a tendency to pull away if it’s hot). If it’s hot, there may be a fire on the other side. Try to get out another way.
* Crawl low on the floor to avoid smoke and heat. Both smoke and heat can kill. Smoke often contains poisonous gases (particularly carbon monoxide).
* Call 111 after escaping from the fire. Use a cell phone or the neighbour’s phone.
* Stay outside no matter what – don’t go back for anything.
1. Ask students write a short story explaining how they would escape and why they chose particular exits in terms of what they have learned about fire behaviour.
2. Remind students to practise their home escape plans with an adult when they go home.

**Scenario cards**

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| 1. A friend gives you some matches that he found hidden in the kitchen. He wants to know whether you want to learn how to do a trick with a lit match. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You find some fireworks left over from Guy Fawkes. Your brother dares you to light some at the back of the house. What do you do?
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| 1. You are walking to the bus stop in the morning and hear a neighbour’s smoke alarm. You can see your bus heading to your stop. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You see some older kids playing around a fire alarm. One kid breaks the glass and pretends he is going to flick the switch. What do you do?
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| 1. Your mum is cooking some chips in the kitchen and leaves to get the mail. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You wake up to the sound of a smoke alarm, but you don’t see any smoke. What do you do?
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| 1. You decide that you want some popcorn. You place the package in the microwave. Suddenly, the bag catches fire. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You are playing with your little brother. He wants some noodles. Your parents told you not to use the stove. Your brother starts crying. What do you do?
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| 1. It’s midnight. You wake up coughing to the sound of a smoke alarm. You turn on the light but you can’t see anything because the smoke is so thick. What do you do?
 |  | 1. Your house had a fire and your family has safely made it to your meeting place. You suddenly realise that your dog is nowhere to be found. What do you do?
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| 1. Your home does not have any smoke alarms. What do you do?
 |  | 1. After a storm, you decide to go outside for some fresh air. You notice a broken electrical wire on the ground outside your house. What do you do?
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| 1. You are spending the night at a friend’s house. There are no smoke alarms and the bedroom windows are nailed shut. What do you do?
 |  | 1. Your mum has taken a tray of biscuits out of the oven. You grab the tray to take a better look at the biscuits. You drop the tray. Your hands are burning. What do you do?
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| 1. Your friend wants to show you how you can make a matchbox ‘bomb’. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You and some friends see a rabbit run under the roots of an old tree. One friend says he can smoke the rabbit out and lights a small fire at the base of the tree with some matches. What do you do?
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| 1. Your family does not have a home fire escape plan. What do you do?
 |  | 1. You can’t remember the last time the smoke alarms in your home were tested. What do you do?
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| 1. You walk into the kitchen to discover that the stove and surrounding area is on fire. At the same time, your older sister yells at you to ring 111. What do you do?
 |  | 1. Friends are ‘experimenting’ in the garage, igniting small amounts of substances on the floor to see how flammable they are. What do you do?
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