

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



SA families benefit from child fire safety assistance

Wednesday, 26 September 2012

A helping hand has been given to a team of Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters who specialise in helping families deal with the issue of child fire play.

These MFS firefighters are specially trained as practitioners in the Juvenile Firefighters Intervention Program (JFLIP).

Thanks to the generous support of Telstra, SANTOS, the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation and community group ITShare, 30 refurbished laptop computers and 30 state of the art Next G™ modems have been donated for use in the Program. In a productive partnership, business and not for profit organisations have worked together to achieve a great outcome.

MFS Commander of Community Education, Allan Foster said the support of all the organisations involved is greatly appreciated.

“The wonderful generosity of these organisations will help our JFLIP practitioners communicate using technology that children and young people relate to. Practitioners will also be able to source the most up-to-date information and utilise interactive education sites from all over the world.

“I’d like to extend my thanks to Telstra, SANTOS, the Australian Professional Firefighters Foundation and ITShare for their support, which will benefit many children, families and the wider community,” Commander Foster said.

Over the past two decades, JFLIP has successfully worked with many families dealing with the problem of child fire lighting. The program has a success rate over 95 percent.

Commander Allan Foster said **JFLIP is a free, confidential program** open to families in metropolitan Adelaide and in regional South Australia.

“Parents or guardians who are concerned about their child’s fascination with fire should ring the MFS on 1300 737 637 during business hours,” Commander Foster said.

The MFS recommends the following safety tips for parents, carers, friends and relatives:

- **Keep matches, lighters and gas lighters well out of reach of children.** Storage above average adult shoulder height and out of sight is recommended.
- Teach young children that they must never touch matches and lighters. They must notify an adult if they see them lying around. Praise your children when they do so.
- Wherever possible avoid using candles if you have young children. Torches and battery powered artificial candles are recommended as a safer option.
- If you have to use candles, keep candles up high, out of reach of children. Never leave a child in a room with a candle burning. A child should not sleep in a room with a lit candle.
- Ensure your family has a Home Fire Escape Plan. Practise evacuating with the children so that everyone understands what to do if there is a fire.

The MFS urges families to combine the above safety tips with interconnected, photo-electric smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old.

For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

www.mfs.sa.gov.au