

# 4 A's of Teaching Your Child How to Handle Fire.

**LEARNING HOW TO HANDLE FIRE** is an important milestone for children. But fire, in the hands of an unprepared young person, is very dangerous and can be lethal. Here are the 4 A's you should consider as you teach your children fire safety:

## **A** Adult Supervision

This is the most important "A." Children should never have access to anything that can start a fire, and should only handle fire when you are with them and supervising – this means in every situation, from lighting candles to lighting the grill. Consequences for handling fire without your supervision need to be very severe.

## **A** Age Appropriate

Children under the age of 10 should never handle fire. Period. As kids get older and more mature, you must make the decision of when, and to what degree, they should have that responsibility.

## **A** Acclimation

There is no one right order of progression to teaching your kids about fire, but the general rule is to start with something simple and unlikely to harm them. Lighting birthday candles with a fire starter is a good first step, then let them progress to helping light the fireplace or grill. Building campfires outdoors should be the last step you teach. These are the trickiest fires because you must weigh the possible presence of dry conditions and wind shear; using lighter fluid is another factor to consider.

## **A** Attitude of Respect

It's very important that kids respect the innate power of fire and how quickly it can blaze out of control; point out news stories that show the consequences of mishandling fire – wildfires, burn victims, and structure fires. Instill a healthy respect, but not fear, for fire in your kids.



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