

Key Points from the American Red Cross School Safety Initiative Survey on
Safety Knowledge, Behavior and Attitudes
Preliminary Results and Red Cross Resources

Calling for help in an emergency

K-Grade 2

- ✓ Students in urban schools had a significantly higher recall of the telephone number to dial in an emergency (911). There was a significant leap in call 911 knowledge between kindergarten and first grade in all survey sites.

Grade 3-Grade 5

- ✓ Although 97% of the students knew the importance of calling 911 immediately if someone was badly hurt, 28% believed that they should hang up the phone as soon as they had told the operator about their emergency.

Grade 6 –Grade 8

- ✓ One quarter (25%) of the students believed that they should hang up the phone as soon as they had told the operator about their emergency.

Grade 9-Grade 12

- ✓ Seventeen percent did not know they should not hang up the phone as soon as they had told the operator about their emergency.

American Red Cross Resources

“Check (check the scene), call (call for help), care (give care)” are among the first steps the American Red Cross teaches one to take in an emergency situation. To help reinforce this important step in children, parents and educators can turn to their local Red Cross chapter for resources “BAT: A Basic Aid Training” or visit <http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/eduinfo/lp1-3.html> to access tools like “The Notagains Disaster Preparedness and Response CD-ROM for Children.

Fire prevention and response

K-Grade 2

- ✓ While most students (over 95%) easily identified what items were and were not safe for them to play with or handle (items like matches, knives, balls, gas cans, stoves and teddy bears were included in this list) when they were asked what to do when the lights went out, almost 14% of students thought it was appropriate to use candles for light.

Grade 3-Grade 5

- ✓ Sixty-six percent incorrectly responded that water should be thrown on a kitchen fire and less than 1% thought it could be blown out. Only 32% correctly knew that the fire should be covered with a pan or pan lid to put it out.

Grade 6-Grade 8

- ✓ Forty-two percent believed that a person who directly touched electricity would not get burned. Eighty-two percent responded that it was okay to light candles when the electricity goes out.

Grade 9-Grade 12

- ✓ Only 35% believed that a person who directly touched electricity would not get burned.

American Red Cross Resources

Fires and burns are the leading cause of residential death for children under the age of 15 and one-third of fire-related deaths of young children result from children playing with fire.

Masters of Disaster®: Fire Prevention and Safety was developed to help reduce unintentional deaths and injuries to children caused by residential fires. Ready-to-go lesson plans, activities and demonstrations that can be incorporated within core subject areas makes learning about fire prevention and safety fun and informative. Parents and educators can visit <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/masters/firesafety/> for more information.

Recognizing and knowing what to do in a natural disaster

- ✓ While kindergarteners through fifth graders showed an increase in disaster knowledge every year until the fifth grade, after the fifth grade, disaster knowledge actually appeared to decrease as did the students' overall ability to react to disaster situations.
- ✓ Knowledge of first aid and responding to disasters decreased slightly over time. First aid scores were consistently higher than disaster scores – illustrating that first aid training seems to still be taught in middle school and high school.

American Red Cross Resources

Disaster may strike quickly and without warning. These events can be frightening for adults, but they are traumatic for children if they don't know what to do. Children may become anxious, confused, or frightened.

The Red Cross believes the best way to make families and communities safer is to be prepared where we live, learn and work BEFORE disaster strikes. For advice and tools on helping kids get prepared, visit: http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_503_00.html. The Red Cross web site developed the “Interactive Zone” a virtual games and activity area developed especially for kids which can be found at: <http://www.redcross.org/services/youth/izone/>