Safety Educator

September 2015

Welcome Back School Friends and Families!

Greetings! We hope you all had a memorable and safe summer with friends and family doing many of the fun activities that the State of New Hampshire has to offer. We are excited to be part of your school year by offering this ***Safety Educator*** monthly newsletter. This informative newsletter is created for students in grades Preschool-Grade 4 and their families. This newsletter is delivered statewide electronically with the encouragement for it to be shared via email, website and/or social media. It contains important fire and life safety information that families can read and share together to ensure that their home, as well as relatives and friends' homes, are kept as safe as possible.

As our lives get busier with school, after school activities and sports, as well as work schedules we understand that we are all going in a number of directions to keep up. It is our hope that the families of NH take every precaution to prevent, prepare and protect their families and home in the event of an emergency. Parents/Guardians, read through each newsletter then share and discuss with your children. Have them assist in seeing that the topics discussed are in place at your home. For example: Disaster Preparedness should be a task every household member participates in. This includes the gathering of necessary materials to how they are stored and when they may be necessary to use. Teaching children the importance of being prepared in the event of a Natural Disaster will help them know what to do and to remain calm. Together we all can become educated and safer.

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact your local fire department. ***Have a SAFE and FUN school year!***

HEY 3rd Grade STUDENTS… this contest is for you!

Every year the NH State Fire Marshal's Office and the NH Fire Prevention Society hold an Annual Fire and Life Safety Calendar Contest. This contest is open to ALL 3rd grade students in public, private and home school settings. We encourage students to research the monthly topics, pick the one that is most interesting, and design the most clear colorful poster with an important safety message. We look forward to receiving your entry!

LEARN MORE!

SEPTEMBER: FIREFIGHTERS ARE HELPERS
by Sydney Provencal

Sydney, from Pittsfield Elementary School, would like to remind us during the month of September that firefighters are helpers in our community. They put out fires. Teach fire prevention. That it is important not to hide from firefighters when they are trying to help us and that they are there to help 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Thank you Sydney for your important message!

Inside this issue:

Wheels on the Bus: School Bus Safety	2
Child Car Seat Safety	2
Sept: National Preparedness Month	3
Kid Friendly Websites	4

WHEELS ON THE BUS… School Bus Safety

School buses are the safest mode of motorized transportation for getting children to and from school, but injuries can occur if kids are not careful and aware when getting on and off the bus. Parents/Guardians be sure to take a moment to review these essential safety rules with your student(s).

•Walk with your kids to the bus stop and wait with them until it arrives. Tell kids to stand at least three giant steps back from the curb while waiting and as the bus approaches. Board the bus one at a time.

•Teach kids to wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before standing up from being seated. **NEVER** walk behind the bus.

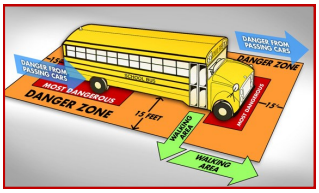
•If your child needs to cross the street after exiting the bus, he or she should take five giant steps in front of the bus, make eye contact with the bus driver and cross when the driver indicates it's safe. Teach kids to look left, right and left again for stopped cars and before crossing the street.

•Instruct younger kids to use handrails when boarding or exiting the bus. Be careful of clothing and bag straps or drawstrings that could get caught in the door. If your child drops something, they should tell the bus driver and make sure the bus driver is able to see them before they pick it up.

DRIVER SAFETY & AWARENESS: With students heading back to school it is important that we all stay alert and aware.

► When backing out of driveway, watch for children walking or bicycling.
► Be alert as children arriving late for the bus may dart into the street without looking.
► **YELLOW** flashing lights indicate that the bus is preparing to stop.
► **RED** flashing lights and extended arms indicate that the bus has stopped and that children are getting on/off.
► Motorists ***MUST STOP*** their vehicle and wait until the red lights stop flashing, the extended stop sign is withdrawn and the bus begins moving again.

Learn more about bus safety and statistics by clicking any of the pictures below:



CHILD CAR SEAT SAFETY

As the school year begins parents/guardians are suddenly aware of how quickly their children are growing up! As of January 2014 NH Law requires that children ride in an appropriate seat until they are 7 years of age or 57 inches tall (whichever comes first). Using a child safety seat with a harness or a booster seat will meet this requirement. When is your child ready to use only the vehicle seat belt?

1. Can your child sit all the way back against the vehicle seat?
2. Do your child's knees bend comfortably at the edge of the vehicle seat?
3. Does the lap belt cross the shoulder between the neck and the arm?
4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
5. Can the child stay seated for the whole trip?

If you answered NO to any of these questions, as much as your child wishes, they are not ready to use only the vehicle seatbelt. Kids in a booster seat or other child safety seat can see out the window and are usually more comfortable too!

Want to learn more about car seat safety including infant car seat installation? Click to visit these sites:

Check with your local fire department for a child safety seat inspection site near you.

FACT: ***According to NHTSA, children seated in a booster seat in the back seat of the car are 45% less likely to be injured in a crash than children using a seat belt alone.***

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

September is National Preparedness Month. Take time this month to ensure that you, your family, and your pets are prepared with not only a preparedness kit for natural disasters but for home emergencies as well.

Disasters and emergencies are unpredictable and because they can occur at any time they can be especially frightening for children (and adults!). Being prepared can help lessen fears and anxieties before, during and after a disaster. Steps taken to prepare for any disaster can reduce the chance of harm and increase the chance for survival. We strongly encourage families to include ALL members living within the home in preparedness conversations and preparations in advance of these potential disasters. Be sure to have your home preparedness plans in place by following these links and recommendations below.

TYPES OF DISASTERS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE: (click photos for more information)

FLOODS: Floods are one of the most common hazards in the U.S. While most people don't believe that they could be impacted by flooding, floods impact New Hampshire annually and are likely to occur in many jurisdictions.

HURRICANES: A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone or severe tropical storm. A typical cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorm, and a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface. A hurricane has maximum sustained winds of 74 mph or higher. A tropical storm has sustained winds of 39-73 mph.

POWER OUTAGES: Blackouts/power outages can happen anywhere, and to anyone, which is why it is so important to be prepared. Power loss is often caused from one of the following: snow, ice storms, hurricanes, tornadoes or other storms with high winds. They can all cause severe damage that can lead to power outages. Flooding, animals and vehicle or construction accidents can also cause power outages.

WINTER STORMS: Winter storms can knock out heat, power and communications, sometimes for days at a time. Winter storms include a variety of weather, including snow or subfreezing temperatures, strong winds and even ice or heavy rain storms. People are injured or killed in traffic accidents on icy roads, or suffer from hypothermia due to prolonged exposure to the cold.

CREATE YOUR PREPAREDNESS KIT:

In a disaster there is no time to get ready. Get ready **now** by taking the essential step of preparing your emergency kit.

Your emergency kit should contain basic items that you, your family and pets may need in the event of an emergency. Take the first step towards getting ready now: prepare an emergency kit. At a minimum, plan to have at least a 3-day supply, of food, water and medicine. Create a kit for your home and your car.

It is important to remember to review the content of your kit on a regular basis. Some items can expire – like bottled water. Taking action means checking your kit and exchanging these items for fresh supplies. You can always use supplies to swap out before they expire for lunch or dinner.

Create your preparedness kits with your family members by using one of these checklists

Click on RESOURCES: **ReadyNH.Gov** **American Red Cross** **Ready.gov**

NH ALERTS

Please take a moment to visit this link. Fill in the appropriate information to receive public safety notices issued by the State of New Hampshire and severe weather warnings directly from the National Weather Service.

Safety Educator

The New Hampshire State Fire Marshal's Office

J. William Degnan

NH State Fire Marshal

Mary MacCaffrie
Public Education Administrator

Sheryl Nielsen
Public Education Specialist

Department of Safety
33 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03305
Phone: (603)223-4289
Arson Hotline:
1-800-400-3526

A message from Fire Marshal Degnan:

Every school year fire and life safety educators do their part in educating your child about fire and life safety awareness. These safety concerns are ones that they may encounter in their daily lives, both at home and away. But no matter how much your child learns at school, they need support in sharing what they have learned by seeing that these practices are discussed and performed within their home. This month our newsletter impresses upon the importance of school bus safety, car seat safety as well as being prepared for times of natural disasters. Natural disasters are unpredictable and do occur within the state of New Hampshire. Through educating your child on how to be prepared, assisting in creating/up keeping your preparedness kit, anxieties can be reduced during times of emergency. I ask that you take a few minutes to read over the content included in this month's newsletter which is to aid you in making sure the environment as well as your student(s) is as safe as possible. Then please share and discuss this information with all of your family. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact your local fire department.

J. William Degnan
NH State Fire Marshal

Child Friendly & Parent Approved Websites

While we encourage students to disconnect and enjoy safe outdoor play, when it comes to computer time try one of these family fun fire and life safety websites. Just click picture to open the links and play!

Find Us on the Web:

Www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/

Any questions or comments regarding this newsletter please feel free to contact:

Sheryl Nielsen,
Public Education Specialist
Sheryl.Nielsen@dos.nh.gov 603-223-4289