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CHILDREN PLAYING WITH MATCHES RESPONSIBLE FOR HOUSE FIRE

Glendale, Ariz. — Glendale Fire Investigators say a house fire at 4800 West Hatcher Road on the night of January 6 was caused by two children playing with matches in a bedroom.

The children, ages three and five, set a stack of clothes on fire. The fire then spread to a stereo speaker and other items in the room. The mother, who quickly grabbed the clothes and put them in a bathroom sink while another family member attempted to extinguish the fire with a garden hose, sustained a minor burn to her forearm and was treated on scene.

Fires started by children account for a national average of 56,300 fires with associated losses of 110 civilian deaths, 880 civilian injuries and \$286 million in direct property damage per year.

The Glendale Fire Department's Youth Firesetter Intervention Program provides customized educational interventions in situations like this house fire. The primary goal of the intervention program is to detect children at risk for participating in unsupervised firesetting incidents and then provide educational intervention to stop the firesetting behavior. The program is free and is available to any Valley youth between the ages of 3 and 17. The curriculum includes fire safety education, fire science, and the consequences of firesetting, burn injuries, choices, and arson and fireworks laws.

The program, managed by Dr. Janet A. Boberg, is recognized by the U.S. Fire Administration as one of the top programs in the nation. According to the USFA website, Glendale Fire's intervention program is one of only eight successful programs in the country.

As always, the Glendale Fire Department urges parents to teach their children that fire is a tool, not a toy. Always keep matches and lighters out of reach and set a good example by properly using matches, lighters and fire. The most important thing a parent or caregiver can do is to always supervise young children.

For more information regarding Glendale Fire Department's Youth Firesetter Intervention program, please visit <http://www.glendaleaz.com/education/youthfiresetterintervention.cfm>.

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