

Educator's

Handbook

on the theme of fire prevention

for private and public daycare centres

for use with
flashTM



2009-2010 Edition



Prepared by students enrolled in the Technique d'éducation à l'enfance program at Collège Édouard-Montpetit, under the supervision of Sylvie Melsbach • Instructor and Education Professional at the Regroupement des centres de la petite enfance de la Montérégie

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Message to early childhood and private day care educators

Québec's educational program for childcare services was first introduced ten years ago. Ten years of work and ideas during which a variety of factors have shaped the system: changes in family and society, new childhood information and development of a day care system. Recent changes to legislation also led to a reform in 2007 entitled, **Meeting Early Childhood Needs**, which details the importance of providing each child quality services.

This educational program improvement was an opportunity for the *Flash* committee to return to action! Since 2002, childhood educators have had the opportunity to use teaching aids to introduce children to safety rules at home. All of these documents, which centre around the *Flash Junior* newsletter, have been produced by the *Service de sécurité incendie de Montréal*, in partnership with fire departments, the ministère de la Sécurité publique, ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and the ministère de la Famille et des Aînés. The newsletter and accompanying educator's handbook is aimed at children ages 3 to 5 who attend Québec childcare services. To incorporate the changes in the childcare services educational program, the *Flash* committee has updated its educator's handbook.

Last year, we have reorganized activities published in previous handbooks to include changes that are in keeping with the **Meeting Early Childhood Needs** program. The challenge of updating the handbook was entrusted to a group of early childhood education students, under my supervision.

The advantage of working with these future educators was the diversity of the student population, which included a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Students also had a variety of prior educational experiences and held a paid position in an early childhood centre, public day care or worked as a private day care centre supervisor. The group of students was comprised of adults who were returning to studies and educators who were updating educational information. We therefore had all of the right ingredients to publish an educator's handbook adapted to actual day care situations. Response to the challenge was enthusiastic and the handbook complies fully with the educational program.

The handbook contains activities that encourage overall childhood development because it allows each child to develop all aspects of his or her individuality. The activities proposed encourage fire prevention, but also provide an environment that fosters development of a healthy lifestyle and personal well-being. Activities in the handbook include detailed instructions about how to structure the proposed activities, how an area should be laid out and how to interact with parents, consistent with the principles and orientations of the **Meeting Early Childhood Needs** education program.



Message to early childhood and private day care educators (continued)

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Glossary

Adapted from "Play Safe! Be Safe!" *

Suggestions

To pique the children's curiosity, display *Chief's* poster in a prominent place in the classroom before they arrive. Listen and observe the children's reactions and invite them to come together as a group. Then introduce *Chief*. Use the *Chief* puppet (see Appendix I) to introduce new vocabulary and to ask children questions. It may be of interest to bring in a smoke alarm to allow children to examine and listen to it.

Firefighter equipment

When there is a fire, smoke prevents you from breathing. That is why firefighters wear a face mask to protect them from smoke and a protective suit to protect them from heat. The face mask is attached to an air tank to help them breathe.

Smoke alarm

Smoke alarms "smell" the air all day and all night. If there is smoke in a room, they beep very loudly to warn us. Everyone should have at least one smoke alarm on each floor of their house. Some smoke alarms operate with a battery; so, it's important to check the battery regularly to ensure that it's working properly. A smoke alarm also gets old and should be replaced every ten years.

Escape plan

It is important to plan two exits to get out quickly and safely in a fire emergency. An escape plan can be a simple drawing of the building, with a line showing which way to go out (doors and windows). Everybody in the house should know about the fire escape plan.

Meeting place

If there is a fire, once everyone is outside, they must meet together to ensure no one is left inside. Show the children where they should meet outside the day care centre.

* Awareness program to educate children ages 3 to 5 about fire safety promoted by Bic Corporation.
Telephone: 450 681-6757



Fire Station Visit

● Educational objective:

- To encourage participation in an activity as a large group and to establish relationships with community resources. (Social functions)

● Secondary focus:

- To encourage abilities to walk two by two. (Physical and motor dimension)
- To encourage confidence in personal abilities. (Emotional dimension)
- To maintain verbal expression and discussion. (Language dimension)
- To learn new information and become familiar with fire station equipment. (Cognitive dimension)

● Material:

- One *Flash Junior* newsletter per child.
- Paper and pencils.
- One diploma per child. (see Appendix II)



● Organization:

Take advantage of snack time to sit comfortably with children around a table and platter of fruit they can snack on quietly as they talk with one another or an adult. This creates a calm atmosphere that will encourage children to help prepare a list of questions they can ask firefighters during the visit.

● Implementation:

Firefighters invite you to visit their fire station. Prepare a list of questions you would like to ask them. Then walk over to the fire station for the visit.

● Resource persons:

- Parents who can come along, education assistant or trainee.
- Firefighters.

● Instructions:

After handing out and reading the *Flash Junior* newsletter to the group, the educator suggests that the day care centre contact firefighters who work in the community to ask if they could visit the fire station. This is an opportunity to introduce children to fire safety rules.

The educator can encourage the children to come up with questions by them asking questions or information but not give the answer. Children can prepare a series of questions by making drawings and using them during the visit.



Fire Station Visit

(continued)

● **Questions to encourage ideas for questions based on the *True Story* and the newsletter**

- Did you like this story?
- What did Jeremy want?
- How can a firefighter help you?
- What did Audrey do?
- What are some things that can start a fire that firefighters have to put out?
- What was the picture on the billboard that Jeremy remembered?
- Have you seen a billboard like this on the side of the road in your neighbourhood?
- Who was hurt in the story?
- What kind of injury did he have?
- What type of damage can flames cause?
- How can you prevent burns?
- How and what do firefighters use to put out a fire?
- What can smoke do to you?
- How can you protect yourself from smoke?
- Etc.

On the day of the visit, the educator should ensure that children are properly dressed for the weather to walk to the fire station for a visit.

Prior to the fire station visit, you can make an arrangement with firefighters to hand out junior firefighter diplomas to children at the end of the visit.

The educator should photograph these special moments (ensure that you have parental consent) so that children can use these pictures later to tell their family about the experience or to discuss the visit.



Chief's Fire Station

- **Educational objective:**

- To encourage independence by allowing children to make choices. (Emotional dimension)

- **Secondary focus:**

- To encourage the manual dexterity of children by providing opportunities to practise it. (Physical and motor dimension)
- To maintain verbal and non-verbal expression of children during discussion with peers as activities are carried out. (Language dimension)
- To encourage the ability of children to get along with others. (Social function)
- To encourage learning new concepts, characteristics and details that deal with fire prevention. (Cognitive dimension)

- **Material:**

Art corner:

- Paint, brushes, bowls of water.
- Modeling clay, clean work table.
- Paperboard, scissors and other material to encourage children to express their artistic talents.

Make-believe corner:

- Firefighter costumes and accessories (hats, hoses, trucks, etc.).
- A variety of costumes (women, men to invent characters).
- Items that allow children to explore higher places (set up cubes they can climb onto) and imagine new play opportunities.
- Digital camera.

Reading corner:

- Books and stories about fires placed on a table or bookshelf.
- Picture cards with words that children can use to trace the letters of the word on the card.

- **Layout of the premises:**

The layout of these three separate areas will allow children to take part in activities freely and encourage imagination. This type of setup will allow a child to see all the activity areas and move from one to another.



Chief's Fire Station (continued)

This natural separation of children into subgroups (two, three, four children), depending on likes and dislikes while encouraging interpersonal relationships, will provide them with the space they need to fully develop their imaginary play abilities, etc.

The reading corner should be calm and isolated. The make-believe corner should allow children to talk loudly and express themselves fully and the art corner should allow children to concentrate if they wish.

● **Period:**

The activity should be allowed to continue long enough to allow each child enough time to play, explore, question, handle and discover at their own pace. Allow each child enough time to complete his or her activity and display it if necessary. This transition time can be used to review the activities that were carried out and enable them to compile information to share their experience with parents when they arrive.

● **Implementation:**

Today, we will be taking part in fire safety activities so we can learn as much about fire as *Chief* knows.

- In the art corner you can paint, play with modeling clay or draw pictures of the fire equipment you liked most during your visit to a fire station.
- In the make-believe corner you can play firefighter.
- In the reading corner you can read stories about firefighters and write or trace the words or pictures in these books.

● **Instructions:**

Children should go to the corner set aside for the activity they choose. The educator supervises the children to get them started and offers help when necessary.

Children should organize themselves to prepare for their activity and share material to expand on a situation. The educator stands by to assist children and ensures first that they can handle a situation themselves. The educator provides assistance if necessary.

The educator encourages children to express themselves verbally and non-verbally and to explore new ways of using material. The educator encourages them to persevere when working with new material and provides support during difficult tasks if necessary.

During the activities, the educator encourages children to use the right vocabulary for the situations they create. The educator helps them understand and use new words and the correct words to encourage more accurate and meaningful self-expression. For example, Maxime tells the educator that he is playing in the firefighter house. The educator could correct him by saying: "Oh! You're playing in the fire station!" and leave it at that. Over the course of the day, by repeating the word "station", the children will also begin to use this word rather than "firefighter house".



Chief's Fire Station (continued)

The educator also allows the children to display their creations, if they wish (for example: paintings made in the art corner, words written in the reading corner and photos taken in the make-believe corner). This allows them to review the activities carried out during the day. Naturally, children will be more likely to tell their parents about their day and what they accomplished. The educator should encourage this self-expression process.



Chief's Rules

● Educational Objective:

- To introduce children to fire safety rules. (Cognitive dimension).

● Secondary focus:

- To encourage play in a large group. (Social dimension)
- To provide muscle control challenges. (Physical and motor dimension)
- To encourage expression through singing. (Language dimension)
- To encourage confidence in personal abilities. (Emotional dimension)

● Materials:

- A parachute or large bed sheet.
- A firefighter hat.
- A recording of the song "Fire! Fire!".
- A smoke alarm.
- A music triangle.



● Layout of the premises:

Plan for a space large enough to allow a group of 10 children to move freely around the parachute.

● Period:

The period of the activity, which may vary, can be carried out following the mid-morning snack until meal preparation time.

● Implementation:

We are going to practise *Chief's* safety rules.

● Instructions:

After you have read the *Flash Junior* newsletter and after the fire station visit, the educator gathers the children around the parachute.

Explain to children that they should pretend the parachute is smoke. The educator encourages the children to gently move the parachute up and down as they hold onto it near the floor (approximately 30 cm above the floor). As the group listens to the song "Fire! Fire!", each child takes a turn crawling or walking on his or her hands and knees below the smoke.

Chief's Rules (continued)

Children then take a second turn, but this time they stop beside the parachute, lay on the floor under the parachute and roll across the floor below the parachute.

The educator also takes part in the activity.

And the game begins:

One child plays the role of *Chief* and wears a firefighter's hat. *Chief* taps the shoulder of another child at random. The child chosen performs the action based on the sound *Chief* makes.

- Sound of a smoke alarm: Crawl on you hands and knees below smoke.
- Sound of the triangle: Stop, drop and roll on the ground.

The child who emerges from the parachute takes a turn playing *Chief*. This child taps some-one else's shoulder and makes one of the sounds and the game proceeds in the same manner.



Pretending Game

- **Educational Objective:**

- To encourage the learning of fire safety rules. (Intellectual dimension)

- **Secondary focus:**

- To encourage interactive relationships with peers through role playing in a large group. (Social dimension)
- To provide physical and motor challenges. (Physical and motor dimension)
- To promote non-verbal expression. (Language dimension)
- To encourage children to take initiatives. (Emotional dimension)

- **Materials:**

- Appendix IV: The Eight Fire Safety Tips.
- A box containing slips of paper on which the rules children have to act out have been written.
- Different objects for use in the pretending activity.

- **Layout of the premises:**

This is an activity that can be carried out in an outdoor space. A grass area with trees and shrubs for shade is an ideal spot for this activity.

- **Period:**

The length of the activity, which may vary, can cover the period following a snack until each child has had the opportunity to choose a slip paper from the box and act out the safety rule.

This game can also be used as a transition activity for continuity between activities throughout the day.

- **Implementation:**

We are going to play a pretending game: Each person will take turns and you have to act out the safety rule written on the slip of paper and the others will try to guess the safety rule.

- **Instructions:**

The educator should display an enlarged copy of Appendix IV on the wall: The Eight Fire Safety Tips. The educator encourages the interest of the children and chooses them one at a time to act out the fire safety tips that have been prepared.



Pretending Game (continued)

Each child chooses a slip of paper. The educator reads it and whispers the rule in the child's ear. The child acts out the safety rule using movements and material the educator has supplied. The other children try to guess the safety rule. Children are encouraged to express themselves freely, but can ask for help from the educator if they run out of ideas.

● A few examples of pretending activity situations

- I crawl on my hands and knees below smoke.
- My clothes catch fire, I stop, drop and roll on the ground.
- I am pretending to be a firefighter spraying water on a fire.
- I am climbing a ladder.
- I am coming down a ladder with a cat.
- I have found some matches and give them to an adult.
- I stay away from a burning candle.
- I hear the sound of a smoke alarm and find the nearest exit.
- I do not put my toys near a heater.
- I know the fire escape plan for my day care centre.



Appendices



Appendix I - Information Letter for Parents



Dear Parents,

For a number of years now, the Service de sécurité incendie de Montréal has published the *Flash Junior* newsletter in cooperation with fire departments, the ministère de la Sécurité publique, ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport and the ministère de la Famille et des Aînés.

Today, your child has brought home a copy of the 2009 edition of the *Flash Junior* newsletter. The purpose of publishing the newsletter is to introduce children ages 3 to 5 to fire safety.

We trust you will help reinforce the new information your child has learned by taking the time to play the games in the newsletter.

The day care centre will be taking part in a number of activities that will enable your child to explore fire safety rules. We encourage you to discuss the new information your child has explored.

In the days to come, we will be practising a fire drill. Each child already knows that he or she must calmly leave the building when the fire alarm rings and knows the meeting place outside.

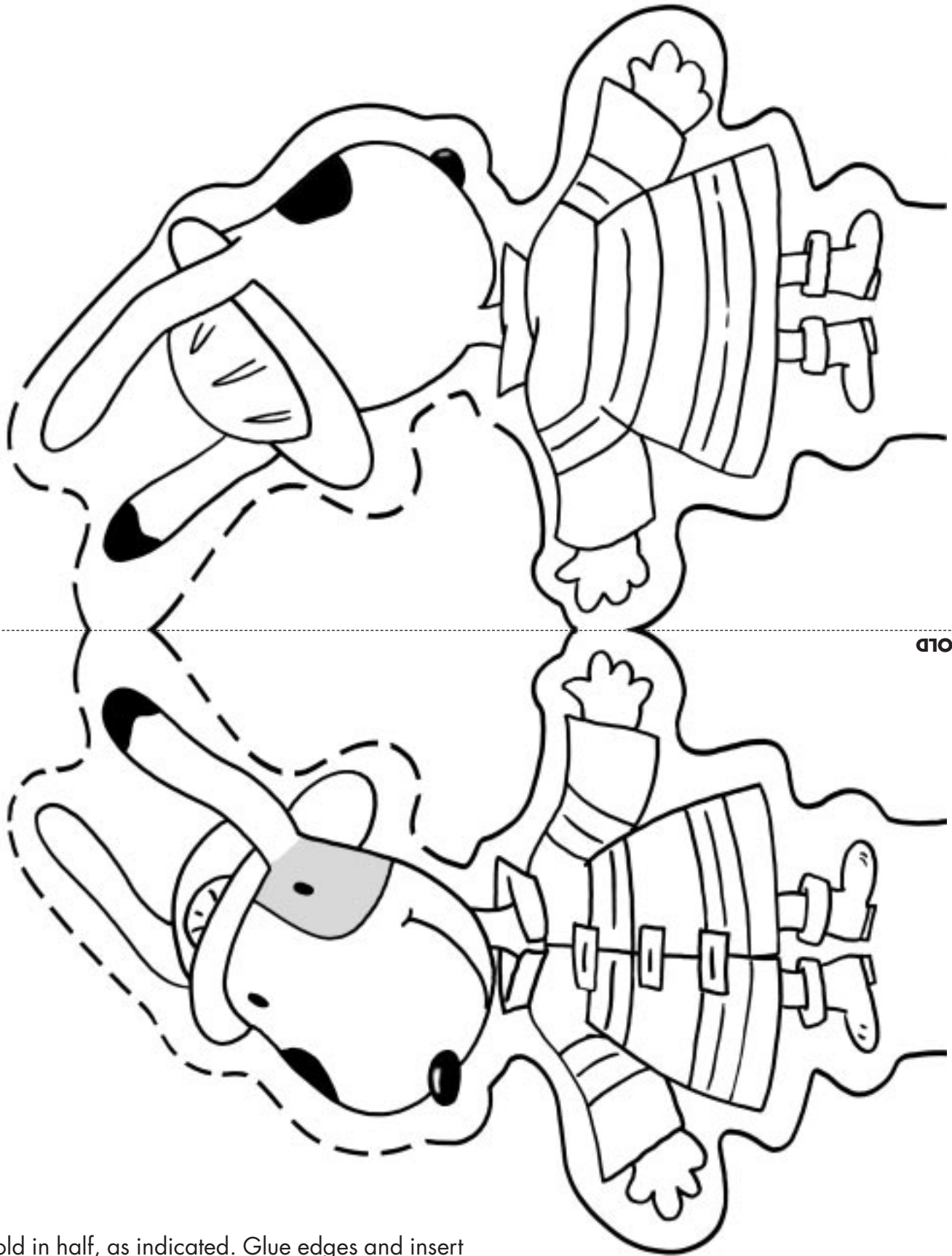
We are certain your child will have a lot to tell you after the fire drill.

We urge you to encourage your child to discuss what he or she has learned from this experience to validate his or her understanding of the situation.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Your child's educator





FOLD

Fold in half, as indicated. Glue edges and insert at the bottom of a wooden stir stick.



Congratulations to

Chief is pleased to award you this diploma
as a

JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER

Remember *Chief's* fire safety tips.



Congratulations to

Chief is pleased to award you this diploma
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JUNIOR FIREFIGHTER

Remember *Chief's* fire safety tips.



Here are eight key fire safety tips

that you should know

Stay away from hot things that can burn!



Tell a grown-up if you find a lighter or matches!



Stop, drop and roll if your clothes catch on fire!



Cool a burn with cold water and tell a grown-up!



Crawl low under smoke!



Recognize the sound of a smoke alarm and get out!



Practise using an escape plan!



Consider a firefighter a friend!



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