

# Children & Smoke Alarms

## Recognizing the Sound of a Smoke Alarm

The National Fire Prevention Association is aware of research indicating that sleeping children don't always wake up when a smoke alarm activates. While this research is worrisome, we should not allow it to obscure the fact that smoke alarms are highly effective at reducing fire deaths and injuries.

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## Value of Smoke Alarms

NFPA would like to reaffirm the value of the smoke alarms already available to protect people from home fire deaths and voice its concern about the number of U.S. households without these early warning devices. While 96 percent of American homes have at least one smoke alarm, no smoke alarms were present or none operated in 2 in 5 (41 percent) of the reported home fires between 2003-06. Almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms.

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## Practicing Your Home Fire Escape Plan

NFPA emphasizes the need to continue planning and practicing home fire escape plans and to make sure everyone in a home can be awakened by the sound of the smoke alarm. NFPA suggests practicing the escape plan during which the smoke alarm is activated so all family members know its sound.

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## Roles of Family Members

Every home fire escape plan is different, and every family should know who will and who won't wake up at the sound of the smoke alarm. If someone doesn't wake up when the alarm sounds during a drill, the family should design an escape plan that assigns a grown-up who is easily awakened by the alarm to wake the sleepers, perhaps by yelling "fire," pounding on the wall or door or blowing a whistle.