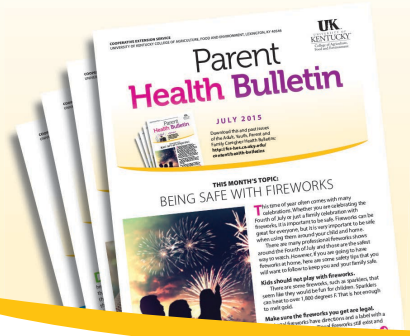
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT, LEXINGTON, KY 40546

UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY
College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

Parent Health Bulletin



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[NAME] County
Extension Office
222 Street Road
City, KY
Zip
(859) xxx-xxxx

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

BEING SAFE WITH FIREWORKS

This time of year often comes with many celebrations. Whether you are celebrating the Fourth of July or just a family celebration with fireworks, it is important to be safe. Fireworks can be great for everyone, but it is very important to be safe when using them around your child and home.

There are many professional fireworks shows around the Fourth of July and those are the safest way to watch. However, if you are going to have fireworks at home, here are some safety tips that you will want to follow to keep you and your family safe.

Kids should not play with fireworks.

There are some fireworks, such as sparklers, that seem like they would be fun for children. Sparklers can heat to over 1,800 degrees F. That is hot enough to melt gold.

Make sure the fireworks you get are legal.

Legal fireworks have directions and a label with a manufacturer's name. Illegal fireworks still exist and

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More than 40 percent of all firework injuries happen to children under the age of 15.

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many of them account for the injuries. You should never use homemade fireworks.

Fireworks should be stored in a cool, dry place.

If you get fireworks before your celebration, make sure you are storing them safely.

Fireworks should only be used outside.

You want to make sure they are lit in a place away from homes and other flammable places such as fields of grass or a place with lots of trees. It is important to have a water bucket close by to stop any flames that may start.

Light fireworks away from other people.

Sometimes fireworks are pointed in one direction but then they go in a different direction. It is best if everyone stays away from where fireworks are being lit.

Light fireworks one at a time.

Although professional shows often have a big finish with lots of fireworks going off at the same time, it is important to only light one at a time at home. The big shows have professionals who are setting up the fireworks. At home, the fireworks may have different size wicks or take various times to go off. You cannot tell how much time you have from one firework to another. By only lighting one firework at a time you can make sure that you are safe.

If a firework does not light, do you try to relight it?

Sometime fireworks are duds, meaning they do not go off. If that happens, instead of trying to light again, you should put some water on it and set it aside.

After you have lit all the fireworks, do not let your child pick up the pieces.

Those pieces could still be hot and may cause serious burns. It is a good idea to pour water on all firework pieces before you put them in the trash can.

If you have pets, know that they may be sensitive to the loud noises that fireworks make.

If your pet is outside they may try to run and hide from the fireworks. You may want to consider bringing them in or making sure your pet is secured and cannot run free.

We want your family to have a fun-filled holiday celebration, but it is important to be safe when fireworks are around. Please take these precautions so that everyone in your family has a good time and enjoys the beautiful fireworks.

SOURCES:

- Fireworks pose dangerous risks especially to children. Accessed from: http://www.kidsgrowth.com/resources/articledetail.cfm?id=2531
- Nemours. Kidshealth.org. Finding out about fireworks safety. http://kidshealth.org/kid/watch/out/fireworks.html

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Written by: Nicole Peritore
Edited by: Connee Wheeler
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com