



## How to Conduct a Child Care Fire Drill

*Prepared by Child Care Aware® of North Dakota*

A fire escape plan and regular practice drills help children learn how to respond appropriately and not hide under a bed or in a closet if a fire occurs. It is important that a fire drill is not a scary experience for children.

Conduct a fire drill once a month. Do the drill at different times, such as nap time, meal time, play time etc., to help children and staff learn fire escape routes from various parts of your facility.

### Example of a well-executed fire drill

1. Forewarn the children that a fire drill is about to happen to ease their worries. Sound your alarm, ring a bell or make a specific noise to signal a fire drill. Tell children that when they hear that sound it means there is a fire drill. A smoke detector test button may be used as your practice alarm.
2. Explain to the children that when they hear the fire alarm or noise, they must get up quickly and leave everything behind.
3. Point out all the exits to the children. Tell the children to follow their child care provider outside to the quickest exit and file in line behind the adult. Explain what to do if they get separated from the group. Test alternate escape routes that may require use of an escape ladder or exiting through egress windows.
4. Grab the attendance list on the way out.
5. Shut the door behind you after you are sure everyone has exited.
6. Have a specific spot the children should meet outside when there is a fire drill and explain to them that they have to go to this place.
7. Gather at the agreed upon meeting spot. Make a quick head count to ensure everyone has made it out safely.
8. Notify Fire Department from outside the home. Call 911 or ask a neighbor to call 911.

### Tips and warnings

- If the children are worried about a fire drill or are uncooperative, try making it into a game. Still explain the importance of the drill, but most children are willing to participate in a game and it may help get their minds off the scariness and thought of a possible fire.
- Document your monthly Fire Drill using a log sheet
- Practice the escape plan until all the children know it completely.
- Practice **STOP, DROP and ROLL**
- Teach the children to **STAY LOW** if smoke is present
- If there are young children unable to walk, you will have to grab them first in a fire drill and make sure they get out. You can purchase infant evacuation aprons at [SafeBabiesAprons.com](http://SafeBabiesAprons.com).
- Notify Fire Department from outside the home by calling 911 in the event there is a real fire.