

# Fire Safety And Your Student

(NAPSA)—More than 10.2 million young adults ages 18 to 24 head to college each fall, leaving parents to wonder about the issues their children will face—crime, academic pressure and social activities that may involve alcohol. Parents often overlook a problem that strikes college towns every year: fire.

Since January 2000, 88 people have died in on- and off-campus-related fires. Nearly 80 percent of these fatal fires occurred in off-campus housing, where most students live.

A common factor in fires involving college students is alcohol consumption, which may limit response to traditional smoke alarms. A recent study found that young adults who went to sleep under the influence of alcohol took nearly twice as long to wake to a smoke alarm than when they were sober. In that same study, more than one-third of participants under the influence never woke up.

Disabled smoke alarms, careless disposal of cigarettes and lack of automatic fire sprinklers also contribute to the college fire problem.

"It is vital that students learn how to protect themselves and their friends from fire," said Ed Comeau, director of the Center for Campus Fire Safety, a nonprofit organization devoted to reducing the loss of life and property from campus-related fires. "It's important for parents to ask the questions and make sure their child's housing is equipped with smoke alarms and fire extinguishers. If you aren't concerned about fire safety, you can't expect your kids to be."

Before your kids pack their bags and head to school, discuss these important fire safety tips with them:

## COMMON CAUSES OF FATAL COLLEGE FIRES

Lack of automatic fire sprinkler systems

Missing or disabled smoke alarms

Careless disposal of smoking materials

Alcohol consumption

**10** students died in fires during the 2005-06 academic year

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preventable deaths since  
January 2000 – that's more **» 88**  
than 1 per month  
.....

**79%**

of campus-related fires occur in off-campus housing where  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the nation's college students reside



Source: Center for Campus Fire Safety

- Install UL-listed smoke alarms in every room of a rental property. Battery-powered wireless smoke alarms, such as the Kidde Wireless System, link together so that when one alarm sounds, all of the alarms sound. This immediate response helps provide early warning no matter where the fire starts, giving more time to escape.

- Test smoke alarms monthly and replace batteries as needed.

- Never disable smoke alarms by removing the batteries or by covering them.

- Know two ways out of every building—your residence hall, apartment, nightclub, restaurant or movie theater. A Kidde fire escape ladder can provide an alternate exit from second- or third-floor rooms.

- Properly dispose of smoking materials in ashtrays.

- After parties, check chair and couch cushions for smoldering cigarettes.

- Purchase a fire extinguisher and learn how to use it BEFORE a fire breaks out.

- Install UL-listed carbon monoxide alarms on every floor and near sleeping areas.

- Use UL-listed extension cords and electrical appliances properly. Don't overload electrical outlets.

- Never leave candles unattended and keep them away from flammable items. Be sure to extinguish candles before going to bed.

For more information about campus fire safety, visit [www.campusfire.org](http://www.campusfire.org).