

**Preparing for Emergency**  
February 2009

# Parenting *Rules!*

## Harsh Winter Weather...



New England has experienced some harsh weather already this winter. The Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency suggests that families create a **Winter Disaster Supply Kit** and a **Family Emergency Communication Plan**. Being prepared and having a plan can help ensure the safety of your family in the event of a severe storm.

Your Winter Disaster Supply Kit should include:

- ✓ Flashlights (**not candles**)
- ✓ A portable radio
- ✓ A charged cell phone
- ✓ A stocked first aid kit
- ✓ Essential prescription medications
- ✓ Non-perishable food (canned goods)
- ✓ A non-electric can opener
- ✓ Gallons of water
- ✓ Baby items
- ✓ Pet food
- ✓ Blankets/sleeping bags
- ✓ A fire extinguisher
- ✓ Extra batteries

Your Family Emergency Communication Plan should include:

1. Ask an out-of-town/state relative to be the **family contact person**.
2. Make sure everyone in the family has the **contact information** for this person.
3. Decide on a **meeting place** outside of your neighborhood/town.
4. **Know the emergency plans** at your workplace and your child's school.

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## **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning...**

Carbon monoxide is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas which is produced by burning fuel such as oil, natural gas or propane. Fire departments across the country respond to thousands of calls each year when carbon monoxide reaches dangerous levels. Carbon monoxide poisoning can lead to unconsciousness and death if not caught before levels reach deadly amounts.



Take the following steps to protect your family from the harmful effects of carbon monoxide:

- **Install carbon monoxide detectors** outside of each sleeping area and on each level of your home.
- **Test the detectors** once a month and change the batteries twice a year.
- Have your fuel burning equipment **checked every year**.
- **Do not** run engines or motors indoors.
- If your carbon monoxide detector goes off, **leave your home immediately** and call the fire department from a neighbor's house.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are:

- Shortness of breath
- Nausea/vomiting
- Dizziness
- Light headedness
- Headache
- Unconsciousness

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## Children and Fire...

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Children, particularly preschoolers, are responsible for hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries every year after playing with fire. Teaching your children the dangers of fire at an early age is the key to ensuring this doesn't happen to your family.

Protect your children:

- Store lighters and matches in a **locked cabinet**.
- **Never** use matches/lighters as a source of amusement.
- Only use lighters with a **child safety feature**.
- Teach children to bring matches/lighters they find **immediately to an adult**.
- **Never** leave lighters/matches out where children can reach them.

## **Every family should be prepared with an emergency escape plan in the event of a fire.**

Here are some tips to keeping your family prepared:

- Draw a **map** of your house and create an escape plan for each room.
- **Practice** your escape plan with the whole family at least twice a year.
- Be sure your plan includes **two ways out** of every room.
- **Install smoke detectors** inside each bedroom and on every level of your home.
- Agree on an **outside place to meet** in the event of a fire.
- Store **escape ladders** for upper level rooms in an easy to access place.
- When your children sleep over a friend or relative's house, be sure that family has a fire escape plan. **Have the family show your child the fire escape plan.**

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**Resources for Families...**

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**Rhode Island 211**

Contact for information and help 24 hours, 7 days a week.  
Dial 2-1-1 on your phone or go to [www.211ri.org](http://www.211ri.org)

**Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency**

Contact for an emergency escape planning grid.  
645 New London Avenue Cranston, RI 02920  
401.946.9996 [www.riema.ri.gov](http://www.riema.ri.gov)

**Rhode Island Fire Marshal**

Contact for smoke and carbon monoxide detector information.  
118 Parade Street Providence, RI 02909  
401.462.4200 [www.fire-marshal.ri.gov](http://www.fire-marshal.ri.gov)

**Center for Emergency Preparedness & Response**

Contact for an Emergency Preparedness Guide.  
Rhode Island Department of Health  
3 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908  
1.800.942.7434 [www.health.state.ri.gov/cepr/index.php](http://www.health.state.ri.gov/cepr/index.php)

**National Fire Protection Agency**

Contact for tips on fire safety, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide.  
1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169  
617.770.3000 [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**United States Fire Administration**

Contact for activities and tools for teaching children fire safety.  
16825 South Seton Avenue  
Emmetsburg, MD 21727  
310.447.1000 [www.usfa.dhs.gov/kids](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/kids)

**ABOUT PARENTING RULES! E-NEWS...**

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Rhode Island

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Prevent Child Abuse

Rhode Island

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**Prevent Child Abuse** Rhode Island  
500 Prospect Street Pawtucket, RI 02860  
ph: 401.728.7920 fax: 410.724.5850  
[www.preventchildabuse-ri.org](http://www.preventchildabuse-ri.org)

Please share this information with the families in your programs. Thank you!