

Iowa School Fire Safety Education Program

Operation EDITH

For Emergency Use—
BEFORE IT HAPPENS

EDITH stands for **Exit Drills In The Home**. It trains families to escape from fires.

The ABCs of the Need for EDITH

A. An average of 800 fires strike residential buildings each day in the United States. More than 6,000 people die each year from fire—more than half of them children and old people. The majority of these deaths are in home fires.

B. Although fire drills are required by schools, hospitals, and many places of employment, they are neglected in many homes.

C. Exit drills reduce chances of panic and injury in fires. Also, trained and informed people have a much better chance to survive fires.

Before Fire Strikes

Install smoke detectors to warn in case of fire.

What Will You Do if Fire Strikes?

Plan Ahead

Call your family together and appoint a “fire chief.” When a parent is home, the parent is chief; otherwise a teenaged son or daughter, even the babysitter.

Next, your family visits each bedroom and figures out two escape routes—one the normal exit, the other a different door, or a window.

Plan how each member of your family can reach the ground using the emergency route.

Next, decide on a meeting place outside the house.

Then, make a floor diagram of each floor. Mark the regular and emergency escape routes, as well as the location of windows, doors, stairs, halls. Put copies of this diagram in places where they will be a constant reminder.

Help EDITH Save Your Life

Once every member of your family knows the basic formula for survival in a home fire, practice Operation EDITH. Here's how.

- Before the family “fire chief” gives a predetermined emergency signal, all members of your family are to be in their respective rooms.
- The “chief” gives the signal.
- A member of your family repeats the alarm.
- Members of your family then close the doors between their rooms and the main exit.
- All members check their emergency exit.
- Whenever possible, members of your family evacuate. Time the evacuation—it will improve with practice.

• After the evacuation, your “fire chief” reassembles the family. The chief stresses the value of keeping calm, closing doors, and testing doors to closed rooms for heat before opening them.

Escape Rules

- Keep calm.
- If you smell smoke, arouse the family with the emergency signal.
- Close doors against smoke and heat.
- If your door is closed, test it before you open it by feeling near the top. If the door is hot, use your emergency exit.
- If your room is filled with smoke, keep down close to the floor where you can breathe more easily.
- Never re-enter a burning building.
- Assemble at the predetermined meeting place outside and then notify your fire department.

For further information contact your local extension office or fire department.

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and justice for all

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A blueprint to save your life.

Sample floor plan

Symbols to be used

Normal Exit Route:
Solid line



Emergency Exit Route:
Dotted line



Doors:



Windows:



Porches:



Smoke detector:



Write "Yes" or "No" Concerning Your Own Bedroom

1. Are smoke detectors installed and maintained?

2. Are there two ways to escape? _____

3. Can you reach the ground? _____

4. Can you get out the window? _____

5. Can you open the storm window? _____

6. Can you close the door to fire? _____

7. Is there a porch to climb onto? _____

