

SLEEPOVER FIRE SAFETY FOR KIDS

If you think upset tummies and lack of sleep are the biggest risks when your child is spending the night at his or her friend's house—think again. Before you permit your child to sleep over with a friend, talk to the child's parents. Depending on what you learn, it can either uncover serious fire dangers or give you peace of mind during your child's sleepover. Use the NFPA's [Sleepover Checklist](#).

If you don't know for certain that the friend's home is equipped with working smoke alarms, and that the sleepover will be supervised by an adult, don't take the risk; reverse the invitation and have the sleepover at your own home.

The NFPA also recommends teaching children about the importance of fire escape planning in a positive, non-threatening style. Ideally, your child is already well versed in home fire escape planning and drills in your own home. Before you permit a sleepover at a friend's, discuss the importance of knowing how to escape from a fire wherever you are, including friends' homes. Parents are urged to empower children to ask friends and their parents about fire safety in their home, and to report to you anything that makes them feel unsafe.

And when it's your turn to have other children stay overnight in your home, make sure they all know what your home's fire escape plan is.

SLEEPOVER CHECKLIST

A checklist to help parents and caregivers consider hazards and make decisions about slumber parties and sleepovers.

Before you say "yes"

How well do you know the home?

Is the home clean? Does it appear to be structurally sound?

Is the home in a safe area?

If the home has [security bars on doors and windows](#), do you know for certain that the bars have quick release devices inside, so your child could get out in an emergency?

Is your child comfortable in the home and with all the occupants?

Are you comfortable leaving your child in the home overnight?

How well do you know the parent(s)/care-givers?

Are they mature, responsible, and conscientious?

Will they supervise the children throughout the stay?

Are they cautious with [smoking materials](#), matches, lighters, and candles?

Ask the parents/care-givers

Are there working [smoke alarms](#) on every level, inside and outside each sleeping area? Are the alarms interconnected?

Do they have a well-rehearsed [fire escape plan](#) that includes two ways out and a meeting place outside?

Where will your child be sleeping? Is there a smoke alarm in the room? Are there two escape routes from the room?

Will the parents walk through their escape plan with your child?

Do the parents prohibit bedroom [candle](#) use by children?