In 2012, nearly 400 Kern County children, including more than 200 children under age 5, were injured due to a fire or burn & treated in emergency rooms.

Fire & burn injuries are one of the leading causes of child injury in Kern County. Kern Cares reminds all adults that burns are preventable & everyone—including parents, health care providers, educators, & community members—can take steps to prevent burn injuries where they live, work, & play.

If You Have A Few Minutes:
• The kitchen is the most dangerous room for young children. Use safe cooking practices, such as never leaving food unattended on the stove or holding a child while cooking. Make sure to block a child’s access to the stove, keep pot handles turned inward on the stove top & away from the stove’s edge.
• Children learn by touching things, including those that can be dangerous. Keep an eye on appliances such as irons, curling irons or hair dryers that can heat up quickly or stay warm after use. Unplug appliances when not in use.
• Preventing burns in children can be as simple as knowing potential hazard spots in your home. For example, keep coffeepots & cups away from the edge of the table & counters.
• Most people associate burns with fire, but scald burns caused by hot liquids are actually the most common cause of severe burns in children. Before bathing children, run cool water in the bathtub first, followed by hot water then test the water with your wrist or elbow before you put the child in the tub.
• One of the leading causes of scald burn injury in children & teens comes from tipped prepackaged instant ramen & noodle soups. Choose instant soups with containers that have a wide base. Avoid the possibility of a spill by pouring the heated soup into a traditional bowl.
• During meal time, place hot items in the center of the table, at least 10 inches from the edge. If you have a toddler or small child at home, avoid using a tablecloth. The child may pull on the corner of the tablecloth causing potentially hot objects to fall on them.
• In the summer, use a cloth cover on your child’s car seat & test the temperature of the seat & seat belt before putting a child in the seat.
• Working smoke alarms reduce the chance of dying in a home fire by half. Ensure your home has working smoke detectors by changing the thermostat on hot water heaters to 120° F to prevent hot-water scalds. If you can’t control the water temperature, put an anti-scald device over the faucet (you can find them at baby & hardware stores).
• Learn how to administer first aid techniques to children or burns. -American Red Cross 661-324-6427 & www.kernredcross.org
• Disseminate fire & burn safety messages. These can include information on the importance of properly using smoke alarms, practicing a fire escape plan, safe cooking practices & reducing the thermostat on hot water heaters to 120° F.
- Kern Cares www.kerncares.org
- American Burn Association www.ameriburn.org
- Burn Prevention Foundation www.burnprevention.org
- Safe Kids Worldwide www.safekids.org/fire

If You Have More Time:
• According to the National Fire Protection Association, only 1 of every 3 US households have actually developed & practiced a home fire escape plan. Write, discuss & practice a fire evacuation plan with your family at least twice a year.
• Teach older, responsible youth how to cook safely. Teach them never to leave the kitchen while they are using the stove or oven. Don’t forget that the #1 cause of home fires is unattended cooking.
• Provide presentations on scald injury prevention, burn safety & summer burn safety at your workplace, place of worship or community organization with customized, English/Spanish power point presentations & educators’ guides.
• Champion local organizations that are addressing burn prevention in the community & providing treatment & support services to child burn victims by serving on their boards, providing financial or in-kind support.
  - Grossman Burn Center www.sjch.us/services-and-programs/grossman-burn-center
  - American Red Cross 661-324-6427 & www.kernredcross.org