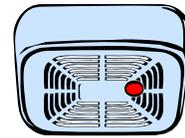


SMOKE ALARM DISTRIBUTION GUIDE



This Guide is intended for Sleep Safe Program Coordinators to use when distributing smoke alarms provided by the Sleep Safe Program. Using this Guide, Sleep Safe Program Coordinators will learn practical issues to consider when planning for the installation of smoke alarms in homes of families with Head Start children. In addition, Coordinators will learn about important follow-up activities they can conduct after smoke alarms have been installed in homes.

In the past, some Head Start families have not wanted to use smoke alarms because they have experienced them going off frequently due to false alarms from cooking. To address this concern, the Sleep Safe Program provides **photoelectric** smoke alarms, which are less likely to be set off by cooking vapors. In addition, these alarms have 10-year, lithium batteries, which eliminate the need to change the battery every year. However, it is still necessary to follow-up with families who have received photoelectric alarms to ensure that the alarms are properly installed and maintained. Families also still need to test photoelectric smoke alarms regularly.

Outcomes:

Upon reviewing this Guide, participants will be able to:

- Discuss different ways of distributing smoke alarms, including ideas on identifying when and to whom to give smoke alarms.
- Discuss the importance of having trained staff install smoke alarms.
- Identify trained staff who can install smoke alarms.
- Discuss the need to conduct follow-up visits to homes receiving smoke alarms.
- Complete a Smoke Alarm Distribution Tracking Sheet.

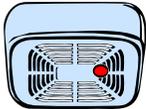
Key Concepts:

- Families are more likely to use a smoke alarm if someone installs it.
- Smoke alarms should be installed by trained personnel.
- Safety information about the maintenance of smoke alarms (need to test and change batteries) should be provided to families receiving smoke alarms.
- Once smoke alarms have been distributed to families, it is important to follow-up to see if the alarms are being used properly and are operable.

Developing a Smoke Alarm Distribution Plan:

There are five important questions to answer when developing a Sleep Safe Program Smoke Alarm Installation Plan:

1. **WHO** should get the smoke alarms?
2. **HOW** should the smoke alarms be installed?
3. **WHAT** information and equipment should be taken on home visits?
4. **WHEN** should smoke alarms be installed?
5. **HOW** should I track who receives smoke alarms?
6. **WHAT** should I do after the smoke alarms have been installed?

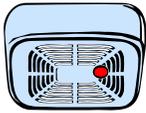


1. WHO Should Get Smoke Alarms?

When deciding **WHO** should get alarms, Sleep Safe Coordinators have used different approaches, including distributing them based on any combination of the following factors:

- Homes where children stay – homes selected to receive smoke alarms should be those where children receive childcare. For example, if a child sleeps over at his/her grandparent's home, then you should consider providing a smoke alarm to the grandparent's home in addition to the parents' home.
- Financial need – families in greater financial need receive alarms first.
- Location of houses – rural homes get alarms first because they are located farther away from fire department services.
- Housing issues – trailers and older houses get alarms first because the risks of injury or death due to fire are greater. Or, non-HUD homes get alarms first, because Housing Authorities are already required to install smoke alarms in their homes (in this case, a referral should be made to the Tribal Housing Authority).
- Number of people living in a household (particularly children) – households with more people/children get smoke alarms before others.
- Parent meeting attendees – families/parents who attend Sleep Safe Program meetings/presentations (as described in the *Staff & Childcare Provider's Training Guide*) receive alarms before others.

These are just a few examples of how to decide who should get alarms. We encourage you to think of other ideas and include them as appropriate as you develop your Smoke Alarm Installation Plan.



2. HOW Should Smoke Alarms Be Installed?

While there are several ideas on **HOW** to distribute smoke alarms provided by the Sleep Safe Program, public health/injury prevention literature indicates that, by far, **THE MOST EFFECTIVE** way of providing smoke alarms to families is to actually have a trained person install them in homes.

This approach is far more effective than simply giving a family a smoke alarm at parent meetings, health fairs, or during a home visit, because families often don't take or have the time to install the alarms themselves, or they may install them incorrectly. Only as a last resort due to a scheduling conflict or the insistence of the family should a smoke alarm be given to the family to install.

IMPORTANT!

Smoke alarms should be **INSTALLED**, rather than simply handed out

Taking this into consideration, remember that there are several different people or groups in your local community who may be willing or able to install the smoke alarms for your Head Start families, including:

- IHS/Tribal Environmental Health Officers
- Local Fire Department workers/volunteers
- Head Start Center staff
- Community Health Representatives (CHRs)
- IHS/Tribal Safety Officers
- Tribal Housing Authority workers
- Parents/Volunteers
- Public Health Nurses

Each Coordinator should use her or his own best judgment when deciding who to ask to help install smoke alarms. While installing smoke alarms might seem easy, it is very important to understand some key principles about placement on ceilings and location in homes for smoke alarms. Some of these principles are discussed in the *Staff & Childcare Provider's Training Guide (Activity #3: Choosing, Installing and Maintaining Smoke Alarms)*. The guidelines on this Activity Handout should also be used when installing the smoke alarms in homes. Again, it is important for trained people to be the ones to install smoke alarms in your Head Start Center homes.

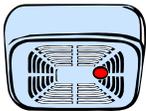
Coordinators should conduct training session(s) on how to properly install smoke alarms to whoever installs them. Your local IHS/Tribal Environmental Health Officer should assist with this training. Conducting this type of training will ensure that smoke alarms are properly installed

and help to build linkages and community partnerships between your Head Start Center and other community groups. Materials that can be used for these training sessions are included in the *Staff & Childcare Provider's Training Guide* (Activity #3).

If a home already has a working smoke alarm...

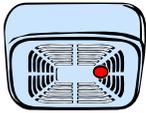
If you visit a home that already has a working smoke alarm, please choose from the following options on how to proceed:

- Replace the existing alarm if it is over 10 years old and/or if it is excessively dirty or damaged.
- Install a smoke alarm on a different level in the home (if applicable), preferably a level where people sleep.
- Install a smoke alarm in a bedroom (especially if a mobility impaired person sleeps in that room).
- Install a smoke alarm in the home of a different family member who provides childcare for the Head Start-aged child (e.g., a grandparent's house).



3. WHAT information and equipment should be taken on home visits?

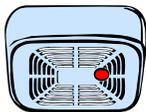
Information to provide during home visits. In order to alert a family to a house fire, smoke alarms need to be in good working condition. It is important to provide information to childcare providers about the importance of properly locating and maintaining their smoke alarm. Proper maintenance includes regular testing of smoke alarms, changing batteries as needed, and periodic cleaning. Educational material should be presented to families during home visits to install smoke alarms and can also be presented during parent meetings. The *Staff & Childcare Provider's Training Guide* includes educational materials that can be tailored to meet your own community's needs. The most important component of this Guide to present is Activity #3, Choosing, Installing, and Maintaining Smoke Alarms (there is an educational handout that goes with this Activity). Activities #1 and 2 should also be presented if time permits.



5. HOW Should I Track Who Receives Smoke Alarms?

In order to keep track of who has received smoke alarms, Sleep Safe Coordinators should use the attached Smoke Alarm Installation Tracking Sheet. One of these Tracking Sheets should be filled out for each home that receives a smoke alarm during the time of the initial visit and also during follow-up visits.

At the end of each reporting period (December 31, 2008; and June 30, 2009), Sleep Safe Coordinators will use information collected on all Tracking Sheets to provide cumulative smoke alarm installation information in progress reports (see *Forms/Data Guide* for progress report templates). Sleep Safe Coordinators should therefore review each Tracking Sheet turned in by smoke alarm installers to ensure that they are completely and accurately completed.



6. WHAT Should Be Done After Smoke Alarms Are Installed?

It is very important to conduct a follow-up home visit with families at least **2 months** after they have received their smoke alarm(s) (but before the end of the school year). This follow-up should be conducted by visiting homes. Use the Smoke Alarm Installation Tracking sheet to document follow-up visits conducted (these are in the *Forms/Data Guide*).

Please remember that when follow-up visits are conducted at homes to assess smoke alarm operability, a family's tracking sheet used on the **Initial Visit** should be used again to collect information during the follow-up visit. The "Initial Visit" and "Follow-up Visit" sheets for that specific home are on the same page. Data from the Initial and Follow-up Visits should be entered using the Survey Monkey program (see *Forms/Data Guide* for instructions).

If several trained individuals will be installing smoke alarms, it is helpful to make quality assurance (QA) visits to homes—random visits to ensure that smoke alarms are properly placed and that families are receiving smoke alarm training. Sleep Safe Coordinators may do these QA visits, and your local Environmental Health Officer should be able to assist.

Sleep Safe Smoke Alarm Installation Liability Waiver

For Sleep Safe sites who may experience concerns from Tribal staff about liability issues, use the following text to create a liability waiver for your smoke alarm installations.

Liability Waiver

In signing this form, you are giving permission to the volunteer to install smoke alarms in your home. The volunteer has received training on proper installment. The volunteer or Head Start Center is not responsible for improper installment, malfunctioning smoke alarms, or non-working batteries. The volunteer or Head Start Center is not responsible for maintaining the smoke alarm.

Please sign below if you have read, understand, and agree to the above.

Name

Date