



HOT WATER BURNS LIKE FIRE

HEALTH BASED ACTIVITIES ON A SAFETY MANAGEMENT THEME TO HELP STUDENTS IDENTIFY AND MANAGE THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH HOT LIQUID BURN INJURY

Curriculum Strands:

- **Health & Physed:** Personal Health/Safety Management

Key Messages:

- Hot water burns like fire
- Never hold a cup of hot liquid when carrying a baby, or near a baby
- Young children should be supervised at all times.
- Actions we can all take to help prevent hot water injuries.

Multi Level Activities. Links to English, The Arts

TEACHER BACKGROUND

A study by *Safekids New Zealand* – the child injury prevention service of *Starship Children’s Health* has shown that burns from hot liquids such as tea, coffee, and soups result in over half the reported cases of severe burn hospital admissions among babies (1-2yrs) in New Zealand. The study also reported that burns from hot water cause three times the number of hospitalizations of children 0–14 years, compared to fire and flame. Teachers can use the following ideas to help their students identify and manage the risk around hot liquids, spread the safety message to other students, at school and to family and younger children at home. It is also important that students know the simple first aid measures to take in the event of a hot water burn injury.

HOT WATER BURNS LIKE FIRE

- Have any students or their family members suffered a burn injury from hot water or hot liquids such as tea and coffee? Can they explain exactly how it happened? How did it feel? What was done about it at the time? Was it a permanent injury or has it healed? Can students suggest actions that could have been taken that would have prevented this particular burn injury from happening?
- Tell students that a slogan is a simple and catchy short phrase to help people remember important messages. Have they ever heard the slogan ‘hot water burns like fire’? Discuss the use of such a powerful slogan. Why is it so effective at getting the message out, **eg**
 - we know that fire burns and is dangerous
 - we now know that water burns and is just as dangerous.
- Divide students into discussion groups and have them brainstorm a list of possible situations where a hot water burn injury could occur at home – especially to very young children. As each situation is identified, can they think of any actions or ways that these hot water burn injuries could be prevented. Present these ideas to the class.
- Challenge students to turn the prevention ideas into easy-to-remember slogans. Display slogans on a bulletin board.

www.safekids.org.nz

TUNING IN TO CAUSES

- Did the students know that hot drinks are the number one cause of burn injuries needing hospitalization for children under 5 years of age in New Zealand?
- Are the students surprised about this fact? Speculate on why this is so and the possible causes.



BURN INJURY SCENARIO ENACTMENT

Have a group of students prepare and act out the following burn injury scenario. Present it to the class and school.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- Baby doll dressed in a white stretch and grow
- Mug of strongly coloured juice or liquid i.e. blackcurrant
- Bouncy cradle baby seat or baby car seat
- Plastic sheeting to put under the doll.

ACTING IT OUT

- Place the doll in its cradle or car seat on the floor.
- A group member carries the mug of liquid in their hand while talking to the others about the dangers of carrying hot liquids while small children are around.
- The group member then pretends to trip or is accidentally bumped by another person while standing over the doll. Make sure that the full contents of the mug are completely spilt over the doll.
- Take the doll out of the cradle and hold it up to the class to demonstrate how the liquid has spread all over the doll – both back and front.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

- What was the strong safety message that this enactment gave the class, **eg**
 - never hold a cup of hot liquid when holding or when close to a baby
- Have students identify other situations where this could happen, both in and outside the home, **eg**
 - at a cafe, marae or meeting
 - at a parent toddler group
 - visiting a friends house...
- Find out what the students presently know about treating a burn injury by asking them to state what immediate action/s they would take.



Image courtesy of Burn Support Group Charitable Trust Inc.

THIS BURN INJURY IS PREVENTABLE

RESEARCHING CAUSES AND TREATMENT

- Visit: www.safekids.org.nz > select **Safety Topics** > select **Burn Injury** > Download the **'Fancy a Cuppa? Burns Prevention and First Aid Flyer'**. Print out for group research or data project for a class shared reading exercise. Have students research and discuss the following:
 - the seriousness of spilling a hot drink over a baby
 - the time it takes for hot drink to cool to a safer temperature and why this is different from adults
 - identify and list the many situations where hot drink burns can happen
 - the consequences for severely burned children and the effects on their lives
 - identify the simple safety measures that should be taken to prevent burn injuries
 - the dramatic effect that giving immediate first aid can have on the burn injury
 - identify and understand the first aid steps that should be immediately taken.



Image courtesy of Burn Support Group Charitable Trust Inc.

Run water from the cold tap gently over the burn for **AT LEAST 20 MINUTES**, or until the ambulance arrives.

- Introduce the idea that while burns from hot drinks can happen if we do not take strict safety measures, can the students think of any other situations at home where young children could suffer a burn injury from hot water? Did they think of:
 - pulling a boiling or hot jug off a bench
 - turning on the hot tap at the sink or in the bath
 - pulling a hot drink off a bench or a table
 - pulling a saucepan of hot liquid off a stove
 - opening a microwave containing hot liquid.
- Have students suggest simple measures that should be taken to prevent these situations from happening.
- Do they have any rules at home that help to prevent burn injuries from hot drinks and liquids? Share these with the class.
- Tell students that another important message is to supervise young children at all times.

GETTING THESE MESSAGES OUT

- Set the students, both as individuals and in groups, the task of getting the important burn prevention messages out to junior classes in their school and to all the members of their families. In what ways will they do this? Brainstorm ideas. Did their ideas include:

- having a discussion with family members to find out what rules they have at present about being around hot water and how these rules could be improved
- identifying hazards on a room-by-room basis, eg keeping jugs and cords out of reach, turning pot handles inward
- designing a fridge reminder checklist for the family
- preparing oral reports to give at assembly to keep the messages always fresh in other students' minds
- designing and creating posters with key messages and display in every room of the school
- preparing and act out safety dramas for junior school classes
- shooting scenario videos for the school website or You Tube
- running a 'safe around hot water' slogan competition.

ACTIVITIES FOR YEARS 1-3

- Discuss 'all the good things' about warm water ... baths, showers, warm drinks in winter.
- Do the students know that hot water can also be dangerous? Can they think of when this could be?
- Do they remember any rules that they have at home about being careful with hot water? Why do they think that they have these rules?
- For homework, have students ask their parents about rules that they have at home about being safe around hot water. Share these with the class.
- Why do the students think it is never safe to be close to someone carrying a hot drink? Introduce the idea that if they have a hot drink, they should always sit down to drink it.
- Can they think of any dangers in their kitchen when they could be at risk of getting a painful burn from hot water? What can be done to stop this happening?
- Do they have any young children at home? Explain why it is so very important to always keep the under 5s away from hot water.
- Have all students contribute self portraits of themselves being safe around hot water. Add stories and/or captions and display as a wall chart.
- Invite a health professional to talk to the class about the dangers of burns and keeping ourselves safe. Find out what they should immediately do if they ever suffer from a burn injury.

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