

Memorandum



DATE: February 6, 2015

TO: Honorable Members of the Public Safety Committee:
Sheffie Kadane (Chair), Adam Medrano (Vice Chair), Dwaine Caraway, Jennifer S. Gates,
Sandy Greyson, Scott Griggs

SUBJECT: **Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program J.F.I.P.**

On Monday, February 9, 2015, you will be briefed on the Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program J.F.I.P. The briefing materials are attached for your review.



Eric D. Campbell
Assistant City Manager

Attachment

c: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
A.C. Gonzalez, City Manager
Warren M.S. Ernst, City Attorney
Craig D. Kinton, City Auditor
Rosa A. Rios, City Secretary
Daniel F. Solis, Administrative Judge
Ryan S. Evans, First Assistant City Manager

Jill A. Jordan, P.E., Assistant City Manager
Mark McDaniel, Assistant City Manager
Joey Zapata, Assistant City Manager
Jeanne Chipperfield, Chief Financial Officer
Sana Syed, Public Information Officer
Elsa Cantu, Assistant to the City Manager – Mayor & Council

Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Program J.F.I.P.



Public Safety Committee
February 9, 2015



WHAT IS J.F.I.P.?

- J.F.I.P. is an intervention program targeting children who:
 - Have committed the crime of intentionally setting fires
 - Children who have demonstrated firesetting behavior



OUR GOAL

To address and deter firesetting behavior through:

Assessment – child and family risk surveys

Treatment – referral to professional counseling services
(if needed)

Education – help children understand the consequences
and risks associated with firesetting
– conduct a home fire safety check with parents

WHO ARE THE J.F.I.S.?

- Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialists are DFR personnel who received training to administer the National Fire Academy Program.
- Consists of four Specialists



TRAINING

J.F.I.S. personnel receive training from:

- National Fire Academy
- State of Texas Fire Marshal's Office
- Mental Health America, and the Home Safety Council



IS JUVENILE FIRESETTING A PROBLEM?

Nationally:

- 28% of arson offenses cleared in the U.S. involved children under 18
- Two out of five of the individuals arrested were under the age of 18

Locally:

- Last year 13% of our Arson clearance rate was linked to incendiary fires involving persons under the age of 18
- 30% of the children referred to our program are between the ages of 13-16

TYPES OF FIRESETTERS

Curiosity / Experimental

- Ages 2 to 10

Troubled / Crisis

- Typically boys of all ages
- Most likely will continue to set fires until needs are met or identified
- Also known as “Cry for Help” firesetters

TYPES OF FIRESETTERS (cont.)

Delinquent / Criminal

- Teens with a firesetting history
- Targets are typically schools, open fields, dumpsters, or abandoned buildings

UNDERSTANDING YOUTH FIRESETTER BEHAVIOR

- Firesetting behavior is often a symptom of underlying problems



REASONS BEHIND FIRESETTER BEHAVIOR

- Unsupervised
- Experimentation
- Vandalism
- Malicious acts
- Express emotions
- Gang initiations
- Thrill seekers and Dares



CURIOSITY FIRESETTING

- We have taught children for years; don't play with matches or lighters.
- What happens when a lighter looks like a toy?
- Make no mistake. We all know nothing is child proof. How about child resistant?



WHAT IS A NOVELTY LIGHTER?

- A novelty lighter is defined as any lighter that has entertaining features or resembles an item commonly used by or found appealing by children 5 years of age or younger.
- Lighters are inherently dangerous in the first place.
- Children cannot differentiate a toy from a fire tool that looks like a toy.



CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?





Toy



Lighter

J.F.I.P. IN ACTION

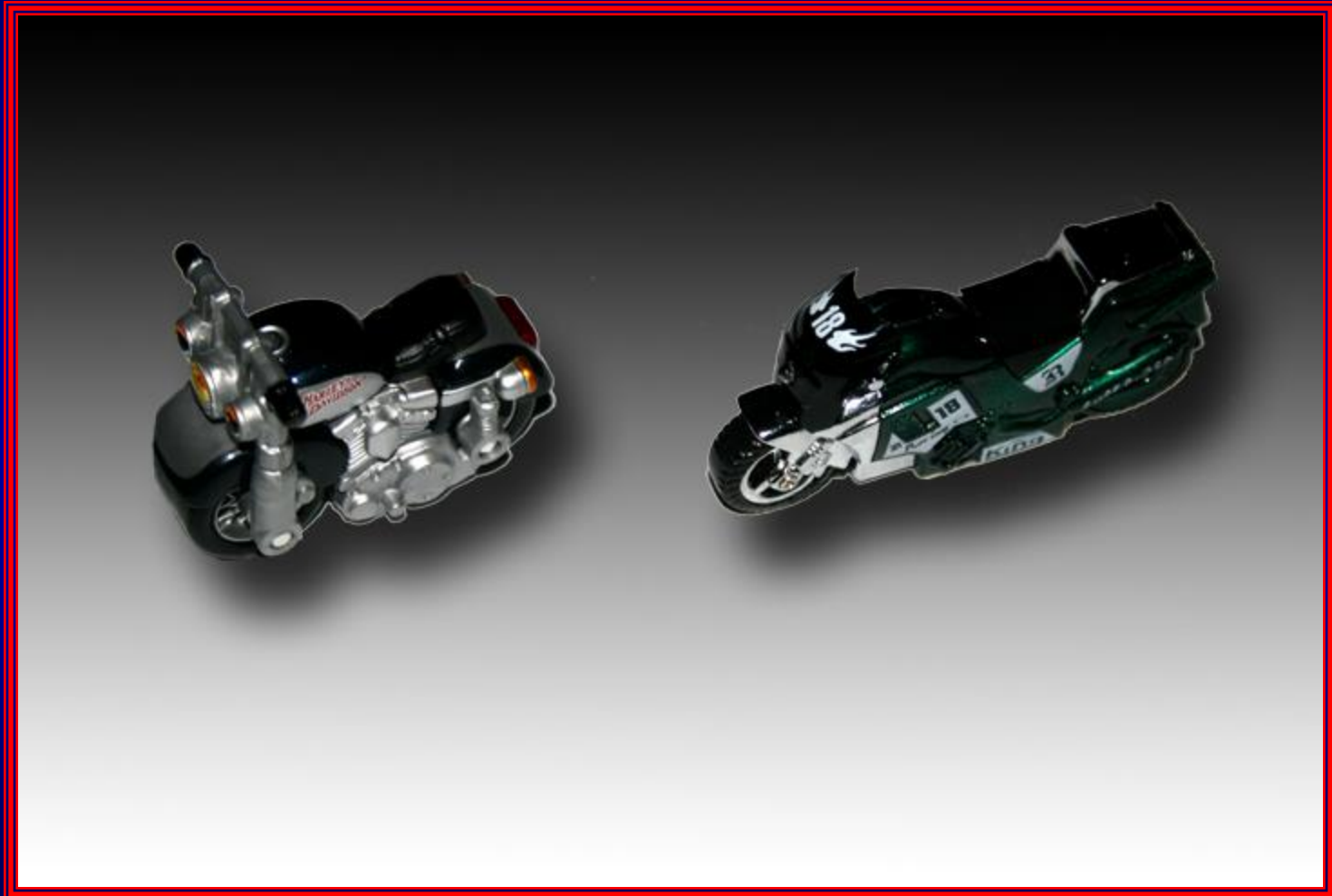
- Individual intervention sessions for juvenile fire-setters and their families
- Access to additional resources
- Offers group education and intervention



NUMBER OF JUVENILES COUNSELED PER FISCAL YEAR

| Fiscal Year | 2011-12 | 2012-13 | 2013-14 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Number Counseled | 58 | 42 | 82 |

CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?



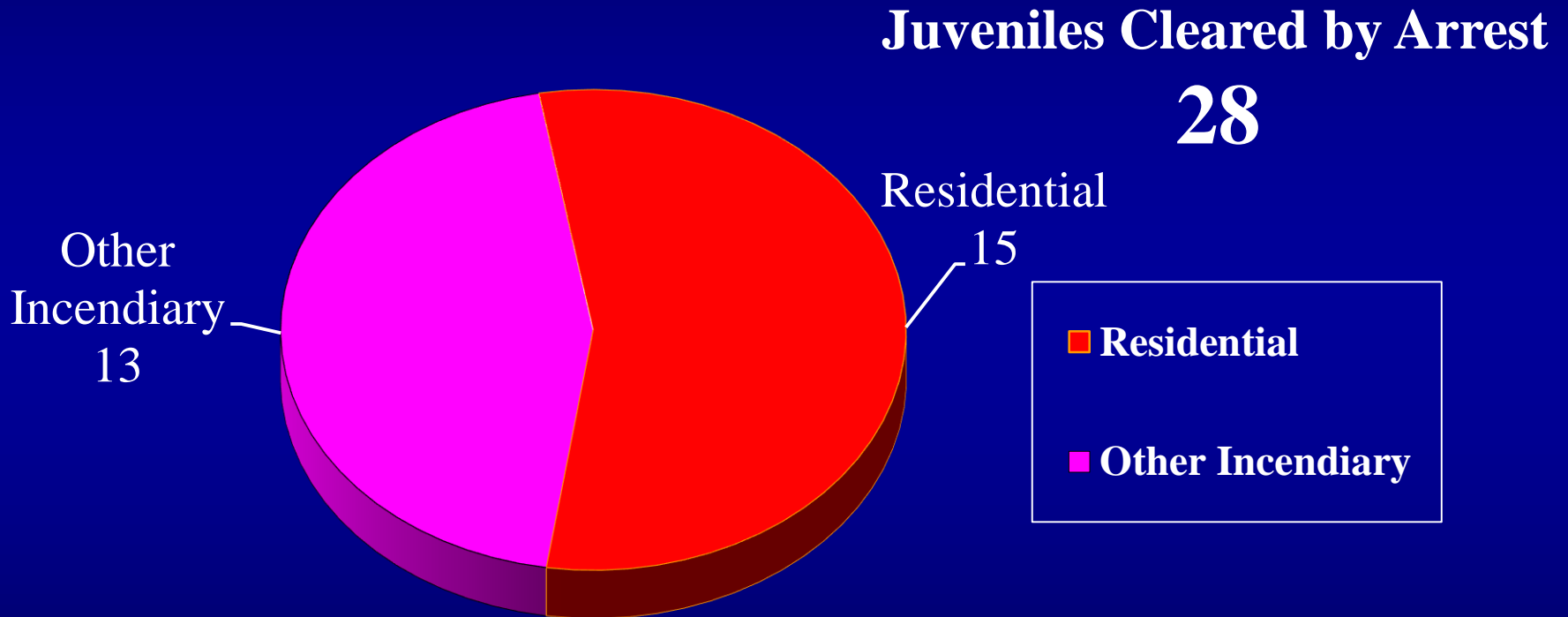


Toy



Lighter

JUVENILES CLEARED BY ARREST FY 2013-2014



NETWORK AND RESOURCES

- ADAPT Services
- Big Brothers & Big Sisters
- Child & Family Guidance Centers
- City of Dallas – Recreation Centers & Libraries
- CONTACT Crisis Line
- Dallas County Juvenile Probation
- DISD
- Girls Inc.
- Juvenile Firesetter Intervention Specialists Assoc.
- Metro Care Services
- DFRfiresetterprogram@dallascityhall.com
- <http://dallasfirerescue.com>

CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?





Toy



Lighter



QUESTIONS?