1984

Juvenile Arson and Firesetting: A Growing Problem?

Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/caldocs_joint_committees

Part of the Criminal Law Commons, Juvenile Law Commons, and the Legislation Commons

Recommended Citation
http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/caldocs_joint_committees/35

This Committee Report is brought to you for free and open access by the California Documents at GGU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in California Joint Committees by an authorized administrator of GGU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jfischer@ggu.edu.
JUVENILE ARSON AND FIRESETTING: A GROWING PROBLEM?

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FIRE, POLICE, EMERGENCY AND DISASTER SERVICES
SENATOR WILLIAM CAMPBELL, CHAIRMAN
Juvenile Arson and FireSETTING:

A GROWING PROBLEM?

Joint Committee on
Fire, Police, Emergency and
Disaster Services
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

SENNATOR WILLIAM CAMPBELL, CHAIRMAN

ASSEMBLYMAN MIKE ROOS, VICE CHAIRMAN

SENATOR ALFRED ALQUIST

SPEAKER WILLIE L. BROWN, JR.

SENATOR WILLIAM A. CRAVEN

SENATOR ED DAVIS

ASSEMBLYMAN PATRICK NOLAN

ASSEMBLYMAN LOUIS PAPAN

SENATOR ROBERT PRESLEY

SENATOR DAVID ROBERTI

ASSEMBLYMAN LARRY STIRLING

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SALLY TANNER

COMMITTEE STAFF

JERRY M. HALEVA, CHIEF-OF-STAFF

R. BLAIR SPRINGER, PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT

ROBERT B. GERBER III, ASSOCIATE CONSULTANT

SUE MAKIMOTO, COMMITTEE SECRETARY
In the Fall of 1983 the National Firehawk Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to working with children who have a history of firesetting behavior, requested the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services to conduct a public hearing on the topic of juvenile arson. In order to understand the extent and motivations of juvenile firesetters, the Joint Committee invited experts from throughout the nation to comment on their experiences, views and recommendations relative to this topic.

The following report is a synopsis of the major issues presented during the hearing conducted on November 15, 1983. The focus of the testimony was on: 1) the classification of arsonists; 2) the lack of adequate data on juvenile arson; and 3) the available treatment and education programs for juvenile firesetters and children. Clearly, the main concern of those participating at this public hearing was the need for a greater commitment by all levels of government and local communities in addressing juvenile arson.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification of &quot;Juvenile&quot; Firesetters</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arson Data</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curbing Juvenile Arson and Firesetting</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Firehawk Foundation</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcript of Hearing on Juvenile Firesetters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

According to recent arrest statistics, juvenile firesetters are responsible for a significant number of the intentionally set fires in this nation. Although statistical data on arson is limited, available information does indicate that approximately half of all individuals arrested for that crime are juveniles. Therefore, one could assume that juveniles may be a major contributing factor to the nation's alarming arson problem.

Unfortunately, because of the lack of comprehensive statistical data and the limited availability of first hand experience in dealing with juvenile firesetting, it is difficult to accurately define the extent or impact of juvenile arson. However, based on available information, it has been hypothesized that there is a high incidence of juvenile firesetting involving both intentionally set and unintentionally set fires. In order to determine the validity of that hypothesis, it is important that a concerted effort be made to determine the extent and impact of juvenile arson and firesetting. Furthermore, if it is a problem, appropriate treatment programs should be developed to reduce the incidence of juvenile firesetting.

The following chapters will offer the reader a brief review of various elements relating to juvenile
firesetting: 1) the classification of firesetters; 2) the available statistical data on juvenile arsonists; and 3) the treatment of juveniles engaged in firesetting behavior.
CLASSIFICATION OF "JUVENILE" FIRESETTERS

"According to recent statistics reported by the FBI, juveniles between the ages of 13 and 19 years of age account for 43 percent of all individuals arrested for arson offenses. Alarming as this percentage is, it excludes those juveniles who actually set fires but were arrested for non-arson offenses (such as vandalism or malicious mischief)."

Juvenile firesetters are commonly placed in three general age categories: 1) under 8 years old; 2) 9 to 12 years old; and 3) 13 to 17 years old. These youths may be furthered classified for placement into one of two categories: "...(1) those who are unaware of the consequences of their actions; and (2) those who fully understand the consequences of their acts and set fires because they want damage, injury, or death to result." By classifying youths who commit incendiary acts, professionals are better able to identify the appropriate type of assistance or remedial treatment for a particular type of firesetter.

For example, the primary motive behind many intentionally set fires is simple curiosity. In response to that motive, fire prevention programs have been designed to educate juveniles on the dangers of fire and to exhaust their curiosity about fire. Such programs have been effective in substantially reducing firesetting behavior in this group.
Firesetters who are emotionally disturbed or who are distressed present a greater challenge. Among this group of firesetters, prolonged exposure to stressful events may be the key factor in their firesetting behavior. Many of these juvenile firesetters are simply reacting to extremely stressful situations in their lives by setting fires. Unfortunately, if the seriously disturbed juvenile firesetters are not given proper help, they could become a dangerous threat to not only themselves, but to their families and the communities in which they live. Therefore, it is important to society that juvenile firesetters have the benefit of appropriate help and treatment. This help may be in the form of public education or individual attention and counseling.

A difficulty in determining the type of help to provide a juvenile firesetter is that the individual's behavior could be the product of any number of different motives. Therefore, in order to develop and provide the appropriate prevention or treatment programs, it becomes extremely important to be able to properly identify and understand the motives behind juvenile firesetting.

There are a number of identified motives for committing arson. The most common motives for juveniles are:

1) Vandalism - there are no accurate statistics on the incident of this firesetting act, but authorities
believe it is high, involving primarily schools and vacant buildings;

2) Revenge, spite, jealousy - this firesetting behavior is exhibited by juveniles who have experienced some form of rejection or failure in a close personal setting and do not react constructively to the severe stress of that rejection or failure;

3) Crime concealment - this motive is an attempt to conceal or eliminate visible clues of other crimes that have been committed; and

4) Arson-for-profit and intimidation - some youths are motivated to hire out as "torches" or use arson to extort money or goods.  

Dr. Linda E. Weinberger of the University of Southern California's Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Science, has developed a simplified categorization of juvenile firesetting motives. Dr. Weinberger has indicated that within the broad category of youngsters who intentionally set fires, there are two subcategories of firesetters, "...those who set fires for pathological reasons and those who set fires for nonpathological reasons."  

Juvenile firesetters seldom fall into the category of nonpathological motives, e.g. to destroy evidence, or arson-for-profit.  

As noted earlier, a classification system is used in order that the treatment of an individual can be tailored to the motivation. This is important since some juvenile
firesetters will be more responsive to treatment by personal counseling than others. Motives such as curiosity, fascination, or the excitement of seeing fire engines has been effectively curbed through appropriate counseling.

However, available statistics seem to indicate that while approximately 60% of the children involved in known firesetting incidents are simply "curiosity" firesetters, the other 40% appear to be engaged in more than just casual fireplay. Dr. Jessica Gaynor, President of the National Firehawk Foundation and a noted psychologist, believes that for those children who are more than "curiosity" firesetters

"...fireplay is not an isolated problem, but rather a part of a series of behavior and situational problems. These children are involved in recurrent firesetting as an expression of underlying needs or problems in their lives."

Dr. Gaynor also believes that it is essential to understand the psychology of a juvenile firesetter in order to properly help and treat the individual. Dr. Gaynor favors a system of classifying juvenile firesetting behavior that was developed by Captain Joe Day of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. This system classifies child firesetting behavior into three major categories: 1) little risk, which accounts for 60% of child firesetters; 2) definite risk, which accounts
for only 37% of child firesetters; and 3) extreme risk, 3% of child firesetters.\textsuperscript{12}

Recurrent firesetters are those classified as definite or extreme risk, and are distinguished from the little risk group based on specific behavior factors (i.e. energy level, intellect, personality) and situational factors (i.e. family, school).\textsuperscript{13}

Children classified as a definite risk are

"...mostly young boys between the ages of 5 to 13. They have been described as more mischievous, energetic, adventurous and aggressive than the average child. They tend to have a very high energy level which is often characterized by excessive restlessness and inattentiveness. They often exhibit irresponsible and impulsive behavior with a low level for frustration. They are easily prone to thrill-seeking activities which offer them immediate pleasure and gratification. They typically are of average and high intelligence, however, they also are easily distracted and sometimes have short attention spans. These children are socially aggressive with their peers and often need to feel as if they have control and mastery of their environment.

Many of these youngsters come from homes where the father is absent and where they have little opportunity to experience positive and meaningful relationships with adult males. When these children do not have relationships with their fathers, or other adult males, or when they do, the parent figure is often hostile and rejecting and has difficulty in setting limits on behavior."\textsuperscript{14}
Children classified as an extreme risk are

"For the most part they are young boys between the ages of 13 to 16. These youngsters are often ruled by their impulses and actively seek stimulation and excitement. They have a long history of delinquent or antisocial acts such as stealing, truancy, and fighting with peers. They are typically defiant and resentful, and are openly hostile to authority. Many are incapable of feeling or expressing any remorse or guilt.

They are generally of average intelligence, however they have little motivation to perform well. These boys have problems establishing and maintaining positive relationships with their friends, teachers, and parents.

These extreme risk youngsters usually set fires out of anger or revenge. They also can be motivated by peer pressure and antagonism for authority. They may be involved with school fires after school authorities have insisted on their suspension or expulsion.

The fires are usually set away from the home and with a group of friends. These children or teenagers will not notify anyone after the fire has started and they will not admit to being involved. Generally, they will be incapable of feeling or expressing any guilt over having started the fire."

Again, treatment varies for children who are classified as low, definite, or extreme risk. For example, children classified as low risk may benefit from brief educational programs, those classified as a definite risk may require a long-term counseling
intervention effort, and those of an extreme risk would
probably be referred for immediate professional
treatment.\textsuperscript{16}

Whatever the classification, it appears that
juvenile firesetters must first be identified, then
properly classified and, finally, given the appropriate
help. However, to achieve that goal requires the
widespread commitment of our communities, professional
disciplines, and public resources.

In essence, as Chief Ron Bogardus, P.E., California
State Fire Marshal noted

"The unique behavior problems
associated with young firesetters
cannot be solved by fire and law
enforcement officials alone.
Parents, teachers, coaches, youth
group leaders, neighbors, the
entire community must be sensitized
to the problem if positive changes
are to result."\textsuperscript{17}
ARSON DATA

"There are several shortcomings in the data that is currently available on arson. What there is is usually fragmented and incomplete. This is a major weakness, and it is recognized by virtually everyone involved in the arson field."^18

Professionals committed to addressing juvenile arson are concerned about the lack of adequate statistical data on the problem. One professional, Ms. Pamela McLaughlin, Founder of the National Firehawk Foundation, believes that the lack of accurate statistical data is a major barrier to our ability to properly address juvenile arson and firesetting. Statistical data is important in order to identify the extent of the juvenile firesetting problem and to be able to evaluate the success of various programs aimed at eliminating the problem.^19

There appears to be three primary reasons for the lack of adequate data: 1) juvenile firesetting has not received sufficient attention and, therefore, resources are not directed to keep proper data or statistics in this area; 2) a data program model has not been developed to record, in a meaningful manner, the few statistics that are accumulated; and 3) many incidents go unreported.

While arson data in general is limited and fragmented, it is especially inadequate in the area of juvenile arson. California's State Fire Marshal, Chief
Ronald W. Bogardus, P.E., stated that "In the case of juvenile firesetter's, this critically needed data is woefully lacking." Without comprehensive and accurate information, the nation and the state cannot be confident that if they are properly addressing the problem of juvenile firesetting. Furthermore, as stated earlier, it is virtually impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of those programs combatting juvenile arson if appropriate data is not collected and analyzed. Chief Bogardus claims

"Valid and reliable data is not only essential to such basic tasks as properly identifying the problem, but its equally important to measuring and evaluating the results, and attempted solutions."21

The lack of data is particularly frustrating when the tools for collecting the necessary information exist. For example, Chief Bogardus recognized that while California's Fire Incident Reporting System is one of the most comprehensive fire data systems in the United States, the only relevant information it includes on juvenile firesetters is whether or not a child was involved in an arson incident.22 No information is collected on the juvenile as to age, sex, education, personal background, prior incidents of firesetting, or whether alcohol or drugs were involved.

Furthermore, available national statistics on juvenile arson cannot accurately reflect the extent of
the juvenile firesetting problem. National statistics are only a compilation of statistics collected at state and local levels. National data is only as good as the data from which it was derived. Since state and local statistics are extremely limited and lack uniformity in content, the accuracy of the national statistics is questionable.

The lack of proper statistical data can only be corrected if a commitment is made to collect the necessary information. This will require the development of an uniform reporting system that requires the collection of data on juvenile arson. Furthermore, reporting personnel must be trained to properly maintain the records. It should be noted that training is important because the unreliable gathering of data and the erratic reporting of the information could be a result of untrained personnel performing the recording process.\textsuperscript{23}
CURBING JUVENILE ARSON AND FIRESETTING

Professionals who counsel juvenile firesetters are attempting to help the child understand his/her feelings and to prevent them from expressing those feelings through acts of arson. Counseling is especially applicable for those children engaged in curiosity or nonmalicious firesetting behavior. Public fire education has also been successfully employed to inform juveniles of the danger and destruction of fire, and to defuse their possible interest in playing with fire. Since prevention is considered the ideal deterrent, the use of public education to promote fire safety is often accomplished in the classroom or at home through the television medium.

One of the nations most successful public fire safety education programs is the "Sesame Street Fire Safety Project". Ms. Evelyn Davis of the Children's Television Workshop, noted that by taking advantage of the classroom and the television medium the Sesame Street Fire Safety Project has directly reached more than eight million preschoolers. The program provides the basis for fire safety education of juveniles up to 12 years old. Through the appeal of Sesame Street, there has been a serious effort to build a fire safety aware generation.

However, while public fire education is a major
factor in preventing curiosity and nonmalicious firesetting behavior, programs must also be available to diagnose and treat juvenile firesetters with more serious motives.

Professional diagnosis of the firesetter is important because

"Unless the diagnostic function is handled in a professional manner, the child may be placed in a treatment mode that is entirely unsuited to his or her underlying problem. This goes for youths who may be scheduled to receive too little help, as well as those at the other extreme who may be unnecessarily institutionalized. Because of inadequate diagnosis, the serious firesetting behavior may continue and even grow worse." 26

The diagnostic function may be performed by a professional mental health specialist, psychiatrist or psychologist. However, such services are frequently beyond the capability of a community to provide. Therefore, a number of local communities throughout the nation have developed programs utilizing trained fire service personnel to diagnose and counsel juvenile firesetters and, when necessary, to refer more difficult cases to available professional mental health experts. 27

Los Angeles County implemented a program that developed a prototype diagnostic and interview instrument for counselors to evaluate the extent of a juvenile's firesetting problem. 28 Other departments throughout the
state have also developed their own interview manuals and methods for helping juveniles to address the underlying problems that trigger their firesetting behavior.\textsuperscript{29}

In an effort to reduce the incidence of juvenile arson, several cities in California have implemented programs to educate youth in fire safety and to counsel juvenile firesetters. For example, Los Angeles County began a program in the late 70's in which fire department personnel were trained to identify and counsel youthful firesetters. Over 200 youngsters have been counseled since 1980, and less than three percent have been repeat firesetters.\textsuperscript{30}

The Los Angeles City Fire Department not only has its own program of counseling juvenile firesetters, but the Department also participates in the Los Angeles City Mayor's All Teen Arson Council. This project was designed to

\textit{"...bring an awareness to all students of the major financial impact, and the extreme life hazard to themselves and their loved ones that is created by the crime of arson and fire vandalism."}\textsuperscript{31}

In San Diego, the City Fire Department implemented a counseling program which utilized two trained fire prevention specialists. The success of their program is demonstrated by the fact that after counseling approximately 200 juvenile firesetters, there has been only two repeaters.\textsuperscript{32}
The San Francisco Fire Department implemented a Juvenile Firesetters Program that not only emphasizes a public fire education approach, but also included a diversion program. The diversion program is designed for firesetters under the age of 14. In this program a juvenile firesetter is matched with a firefighter counselor for weekly meetings and/or outings.

Whatever the specific approach taken by a fire department or local community, it appears that

"The juvenile firesetting programs endeavor to select a level of counseling involvement and length of interaction that are geared to the severity of each child's problem.... Significantly, all of the programs refer children with serious emotional problems to a mental health agency or professional.... In no program are the counselors encouraged to hold on to a firesetting youth whose behavior stems from a serious emotional disturbance."  

The success of these local programs indicate that the early detection of juvenile firesetters and the exposure of them to appropriate counseling is a successful approach to curbing juvenile arson in communities throughout the state and nation.

In recognition of the success of such methods, one non-profit foundation in California has developed a successful program that is available to communities throughout the country. This organization is known as the National Firehawk Foundation.
The San Francisco based National Firehawk Foundation, founded by Ms. Pamela McLaughlin, is one of the nation's most prominent non-profit organizations committed to helping juvenile firesetters and resolving the juvenile firesetting problem. As an outgrowth of volunteer work performed for the San Francisco Fire Department, Ms. McLaughlin recognized the value of pairing a firefighter with a juvenile firesetter in an environment of friendship, understanding and counseling to help the juvenile overcome his/her firesetting behavior.

Ms. McLaughlin was assisted by a research project conducted by Dr. Jessica Gaynor and funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Dr. Gaynor's research was instrumental in the development and testing of Ms. McLaughlin's Firehawk idea of utilizing trained firefighters to act as companions and counselors to juvenile firesetters. Ms. McLaughlin sought to pair juvenile firesetters with firefighters

"...who would act as long-term companions to the children, and also monitor any other kinds of health, mental health, family therapy help that they might also require, to make sure that the children got the help that mental health consultants recommended to them."35

Volunteer firefighters who become companions to
juvenile firesetters interact with the child to help raise his/her self-esteem, to teach the juvenile to be more constructive in venting his/her anger, and to educate the individual in fire safety and prevention. The program emphasizes the use of community resources and relies on a referral system to ensure that each juvenile firesetter receives all the assistance that is required.

Currently the National Firehawk Foundation is providing information to local jurisdictions interested in addressing juvenile arson in their own communities. Local areas can establish themselves as Firehawk affiliates and utilize the materials and methods developed by the Foundation. As a non-profit organization, the Foundation attempts to

"1. Provide a total package that can give the right help to any child interested in fire.

2. Make the most of the abilities and the experience of community and firefighter volunteers.

3. Provide complete training to help volunteers be effective with children.

4. Build another way that fire departments make their communities safe and secure."

The National Firehawk Foundation has a Board of Directors and an Advisory Council of nationally-recognized leaders from the fire service, mental health, civic, corporate, and political communities. A primary
goal of the Foundation is to reduce the incidence of juvenile fires through research, educational and intervention programs.

As a complement to that goal, there is a need to develop a model juvenile arson probation law. Such a law would take into consideration the conditions for placing a convicted juvenile arsonist on probation. The criminal justice system would be required to have juvenile arsonists properly evaluated in order to determine the appropriate conditions for the youth's probation. Probation would involve a variety of treatment programs designed to help the individual deal with his/her motivation for setting fires.

However, non-profit, community-based programs such as the National Firehawk Foundation cannot address the issue of a model probation law or the problem of juvenile arson alone. As noted earlier, to solve the behavior problems of young firesetters requires the involvement and cooperation of not only our fire and law enforcement officials, but parents, teachers, community leaders, the criminal justice system, psychologists, public agencies, and elected officials as well. Representatives of these groups must be brought together to address the problem of arson. By establishing a cooperative effort committed to solving the juvenile arson problem, the work begun by the National Firehawk Foundation and other programs can be further enhanced and the successful curtailment of juvenile firesetting can be achieved.
CONCLUSION

Some juveniles set fires intentionally. The motivations behind their firesetting acts can range from simple nonmalicious curiosity to complex emotional or psychological problems. Unfortunately, data on the extent, impact, and cause of juvenile arson is severely limited. It has only been recently through the research efforts of such people as Dr. Jessica Gaynor and the experiences of such community-based programs as the National Firehawk Foundation that more attention is being given to the problem of juvenile arson. It is evident that a greater commitment of public and private resources is needed in order to identify and understand juvenile arson, as well as to develop and implement effective programs to address the problem.

From the testimony presented before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, it is apparent that an initial step in addressing this problem would be the collection of better statistical data. The data should be uniformly collected and analyzed in order to develop the proper solutions for combatting juvenile arson and firesetting. Furthermore, such data is necessary in order to evaluate the success of any prevention or treatment program implemented to address the problem.

Given currently available data and the first hand experience of those working with juvenile firesetters, it
appears that certain methods of prevention and treatment of juvenile arson may be successful. Public education and counseling appears to be effective for curiosity firesetters, while personal, one-on-one counseling and attention is more appropriate for other types of juvenile firesetters.

Community programs, such as the National Firehawk Foundation, have demonstrated an effectiveness in the treatment and counseling of juvenile firesetters. Public education in the classroom and at home is helpful in preventing juveniles from expressing their frustrations through firesetting. However, to properly combat the juvenile firesetting problem, there must be a commitment of federal, state, and local public entities; law enforcement and fire service agencies; and the general public. This is essential to not only demonstrate an interest, but to support those programs and efforts dedicated to addressing juvenile arson and firesetting.

Juvenile arson and firesetting is a problem that should not be overlooked or dismissed as insignificant. There is reason to believe that this problem, if left unaddressed, could be responsible for a growing and significant loss of life and property to fire. Therefore, a serious effort must be made to: 1) determine the extent of the problem; 2) develop and implement appropriate programs for the evaluation and treatment of juvenile firesetters; 3) develop a model probation law
that allows the judicial system to effectively address
the problem of juvenile arson and to best treat juvenile
firesetters; and 4) support effective community-based
programs addressing the problem of juvenile firesetting.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The California State Legislature should memorialize the Federal Government to direct resources into the collection and analysis of data on the problem of juvenile arson and firesetting; and

2. A uniform reporting system should be developed and adopted by all levels of government and all reporting agencies for the collection and compilation of data on juvenile arson and firesetting; and

3. The California State Fire Marshal's Office should be requested to produce a report on the extent of juvenile arson and firesetting in this State. Furthermore, the Office should be requested to recommend how State resources could best be utilized to combat juvenile arson and firesetting; and

4. The California State Legislature should establish a Task Force on Juvenile Arson to develop a model probation law, including conditions of probation,
for juvenile firesetters. The goal of the model law would be to ensure that juvenile firesetters are properly identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate treatment programs.
REFERENCES

1. Karchmer, Clifford L., Juvenile Firesetter, Battelle Memorial Institute, Law and Justice Study Center, Aetna Arson Prevention Series, Washington, D.C., AA-4121, page 2

2. Karchmer, Clifford L., Juvenile Firesetter, op. cit., page 3


4. Karchmer, Clifford L., Juvenile Firesetter, op. cit., page 3

5. Ibid, page 5

6. Ibid, page 5

7. Ibid, page 6 - 7

8. Weinberger, Dr. Linda E., Ph.D., University of Southern California, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 47

9. Ibid, page 47

10. Gaynor, Dr. Jessica, Ph.D., Psychologist/President, National Firehawk Foundation, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 56

11. Ibid, pages 56 - 57

12. Karchmer, Clifford L., Juvenile Firesetter, op. cit., page 7

13. Gaynor, Dr. Jessica, Ph.D., op. cit., page 58


15. Ibid, pages 62 - 63

16. Ibid, pages 65 - 66

17. Bogardus, Chief Ronald W., P.E., California State Fire Marshal, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 36
18. Campbell, Senator William, Arson: The Neglected Epidemic, Senate Select Committee on Fire Services, California State Legislature, Sacramento, California, June 1977, page 18

19. McLaughlin, Pamela, Founder/Chair, National Firehawk Foundation, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 9

20. Bogardus, Chief Ronald W., P.E., California State Fire Marshal, written testimony submitted to the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, Appendix A, page 1

21. Bogardus, Chief Ronald W., P.E., California State Fire Marshal, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, op. cit., transcript page 34

22. Bogardus, Chief Ronald W., P.E., written testimony, op. cit., page 2


24. Davis, Evelyn, Children's Television Workshop, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript pages 85 - 88

25. Ibid, page 88


27. Ibid, page 8

28. Ibid, page 8

29. Ibid, page 9

30. Bragdon, Chief Clyde, Los Angeles County Fire Department, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 28

31. Pressman, Jerrold S., Chair, All Teen Arson Council, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire,
32. Raines, Captain Jim, San Diego City Fire Department, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 77

33. Crispin, Captain Richard, San Francisco Fire Department, testimony before the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services, November 15, 1983, Commerce, California, transcript page 95

34. Karchmer, Clifford L., Juvenile Firesetter, op. cit., page 10

35. McLaughlin, Pamela, Founder/Chair, op. cit., transcript page 6

36. ------- The Firehawk Children's Program, National Firehawk Foundation, brochure, 1984

37. Ibid

38. Ibid
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FIRE, POLICE, EMERGENCY AND DISASTER SERVICES

--00--

HEARING ON:

ARSON AND JUVENILE FIRESETTING

--00--

Tuesday, November 15, 1983
9:40 O'Clock A.M.

--00--

City of Commerce Council Chambers
5655 Jillson Street
Commerce, California

--00--

Senator William Campbell, Chairman
Assemblyman Mike Roos, Vice Chairman
Senator Alfred Alquist
Speaker Willie L. Brown, Jr.
Senator William A. Craven
Senator Ed Davis
Assemblyman Patrick Nolan
Assemblyman Louis J. Papan
Senator Robert Presley
Senator David Roberti
Assemblyman Larry Stirling
Assemblywoman Sally Tanner
Jerry M. Haleva, Chief-of-Staff
R. Blair Springer, Principal Consultant
Robert B. Gerber, III, Associate Consultant
Sue Makimoto, Committee Secretary
# INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairman William Campbell</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela McLaughlin, Founder/Chair, National Firehawk Foundation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Villella, Associate Director, Training Center, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rod Bennett, Fire Inspector, San Francisco Fire Dept., International Association of Black Firefighters and National Firehawk Foundation</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Clyde Bragdon, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Hacienda Heights Fire Department</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Ron Bogardus, P.E., State Fire Marshal</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Donald O. Manning, Los Angeles City Fire Department</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jerrold S. Pressman, Chairman, All Teen Arson Council</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Linda E. Weinberger, Ph.D., University of Southern California, Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Science</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Jessica Gaynor, Ph.D., Psychologist/President, National Firehawk Foundation</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gregory T. Winterbottom, Administrative Assistant, Senator Paul B. Carpenter's Office</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battalion Chief W. J. Tomes, San Diego City Fire Department</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Jim Raines, San Diego City Fire Department</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Davis, Children's Television Workshop</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine Pitts, Firehawk Affiliate, Turlock Volunteer</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain Richard Crispin, San Francisco Fire Department</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry D. Sibley, Jr., Arson Investigator, Los Angeles Unified School District</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William J. Patterson, Regional Fire Representative, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Region IX</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Richard Bosted, Riverside Fire Department, California Fire Chiefs Association, WeTIP</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayne Tyson, Arson Specialist, Aetna Casualty Company</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chuck Edwards, California Conference of Arson Investigators</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Good morning ladies and gentlemen. Today the Joint Committee on Fire, Police, Emergency and Disaster Services will be conducting a hearing on the topic of arson and juvenile firesetting. I'm Senator William Campbell, Chairman of this Joint Committee.

I have requested your presence today to discuss the inference that juvenile firesetters may account for an alarming proportion of our arson fires. It was brought to the attention of this Committee that during the past decade over 50 percent of those arrested for the crime of arson were under the age of 18. Even more disturbing was the fact that approximately 11 percent of those arrested were under the age of 10.

Arson is a serious crime, and each year it claims the lives of hundreds of victims, and injures thousands more, and is responsible for approximately $4 billion in property loss. In fact, it is estimated that arson costs the American public close to $15 billion annually in direct and related costs.

If we believe that the statistics showing a majority of arrested arsonists are juveniles, then it would seem logical to direct resources towards the juvenile firesetting problem. We could possibly reduce the loss of life and property to arson if we were able to control the incidence of juvenile firesetting. However, we are still not sure of the extent of the juvenile arson problem. Therefore, we must attempt to gain a better
understanding of this issue. The fact that there may be some
disagreement as to whether or not juvenile arson is a major
problem underscores the need to hold this hearing.

Today we have experts from throughout the state and
the nation who will be commenting on arson and juvenile fire-
setting. We will explore such areas as: the extent of the
problem, the need to collect better statistical data on arson,
the motivations behind juvenile firesetting, and what the public
could do to reduce the incidence of juvenile arson. Hopefully,
we will gain a better understanding of this subject area and,
therefore, be in a better position to identify the appropriate
steps and programs to curb juvenile arson and firesetting.

I'd like to introduce at this time Senator Ed Davis,
a member of the Committee who has just joined us, and we'll
begin this morning with our first witness who will be Pamela
McLaughlin, the founder and Chair of the National Firehawk
Foundation. Pamela?

MS. McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Senator Campbell, and
before I begin my testimony, I would like to convey the
greetings of Chief William Powell of Sacramento, and Chief
Theodore Coleman of Washington, D.C., two of my advisory
board members who cannot be here today.

I am the founder of the National Firehawk Foundation,
a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping child firesetters.
While my following remarks are based on my own personal
experience, I address you today not as an individual, but as
a representative of the hundreds of fire service men and women
who have joined our foundation -- arson investigators, fire
chiefs, fire marshals and public education officers from across
the country who have not been able to sleep at night because
of children seen in their everyday work that they could not
help.

    Children like David, an eight year old abused child
in Wyoming who is responsible for five mobile home fires; or
Georgie, a three year old boy in Wisconsin who burned his
entire house down when his father left home; or Charlie, a
San Francisco seven year old who had been sexually molested
the first time he was left out of his house by himself, and
who crept into a closet and burned all the sleeves off of his
shirts.

    After seeing children like these, fire service
officials and representatives who already work long and hard
hours on their jobs, call our Foundation with a request that
I know many in this room today will find hard to believe --
they wish to spend their own personal time in order to make
sure child firesetters in their community have the attention
and guidance needed to stop firesetting and grow up properly.

    As word of the Firehawk Children's Program has
become known in the fire service, my associate, Dr. Jessica
Gaynor and myself have found ourselves running an organization
that now has approximately 96 affiliates in 22 states with
approximately 60 requests for our program coming in each week.

    I'd like to add that we're both working about 60
hours a week as volunteers to keep up with the requests that
are pouring in for information about child firesetters. What
we're seeing is that all of our affiliates, and the people that
call and write to us are voicing similar concerns, which have
prompted our testifying at this hearing, and which direct
future actions of our Foundation.

These concerns are centered in two areas: Number
one is the need for more accurate statistics on child
fi setters and the extent and nature of the child arson
problem. Number two, the development of more humane practices
of handling these children, which can also better protect
communities.

In order to highlight the need for improvement in
these two areas, I would like to briefly recount my own
experience with child firesetters, and what has led me and
many fire service officials to become concerned and involved
in helping these children.

I think the work that was done in Los Angeles
County, which I'm also going to discuss for one moment, has
done more to help the child firesetters, and firefighters who
are trying to help child firesetters than anything in the
whole world, and I think that we -- the Firehawk Foundation
owes a tremendous debt to Chief Bragdon and Captain Joe Day.

In 1979, the U.S. Fire Administration, a part of the
Federal Emergency Management Agency, acting upon new statistics
that showed approximately half of the arson problem was caused
by juveniles, turned to Chief Clyde Bragdon of the Los Angeles
County Fire Department to develop a categorization and
screening program for child firesetters, which could be used
by fire service personnel. The program was to be based on work
done by Captain Joe Day of this department in conjunction with
psychologist Kenneth Fineman.

Some of the preliminary results from their work indicated that child firesetters could be divided into three categories: low concern, or curiosity firesetters; medium concern firesetters who are children who repeatedly lit fires; and very high concern children. One of their other findings was that approximately 85 percent of the children that were medium concern firesetters were fatherless boys.

At that time, I was working as a special projects volunteer in the San Francisco Fire Department, and I had noticed that there were quite a few fatherless boys coming into our department for recurrent firesetting. Many of these children that I started interviewing and working with also had histories of child abuse and negligence, or learning disabilities. What happened to these kids greatly disturbed me and I wished that there was something that I could do as a mother of two boys to help these children.

What in particular bothered me, and I guess started the Firehawk Foundation was that many of the children that we saw for firesetting were being punished for their home environment, or for being an abused child, that they were put perfunctorily into a juvenile court system where the people there would have liked to help them more than they could.

I'm not criticizing the social welfare system, or mental health psychologists, but they didn't have the resources, or they could not spend the time to help some of these kids. So what would happen to the typical kid that we would turn up who might be seven or eight years old, would be
a child that the fire service reprimanded strongly. If that
didn't work, there were repeated episodes. Fire department
personnel, to get the children the help they needed, if there
was perhaps suspected abuse, would have to turn them over to
the juvenile authorities.

When the kid got to the juvenile authorities,
usually there wasn't much that they would do with the children,
and they would sort of check the child out and release them,
and the child would go back to firesetting. These patterns
would continue for quite a few years, and nothing was done,
the fires would get bigger, finally the child would be sent
off to something like the California Youth Authority.

I just didn't think that that was right, and
fortunately, many people in the City of San Francisco, and
the Federal Government agreed with me. Chief Andy Casper, at
the time, was the Chief of the San Francisco Fire Department,
and since Joe Day down in Los Angeles had developed a very
good screening and categorization system to get to recurrent
firesetters, he suggested to the U.S. Fire Administration
that a pilot test be done on an idea that I had had while I
was a volunteer, and that is, since most of the child fire-
ssetters that we were seeing in San Francisco were fatherless
boys, why not pair them with firefighters who would act as
long-term companions to the children, and also monitor any
other kinds of health, mental health, family therapy help
that they might also require, to make sure that the children
got the help that mental health consultants recommended to them.

The U.S. Fire Administration thought that this was a
good idea, and we received a two year pilot grant which ran
from 1980 to 1982. Our program was 100 percent successful.
We used approximately 25 to 30 firefighter volunteers who were
paired up with recurrent child firesetters.

Now, you might wonder what our definition of
recurrent child firesetters are. I'm talking about pretty
heavy duty kids. No kid was too tough for us, and we had
many instances where the types of fires that were set could
have killed the inhabitants of the house.

For example, one child that successfully went
through our program had lit a series of fires through a
neighborhood, including setting a porch on fire where an
older woman lived. He was brought into our program, and
paired up with a firefighter, received other forms of
treatment and tutoring, and he's fine.

We also found out from being with him, and evaluating
him that he was a gifted child that no one had bothered to
give an intelligence test to.

Another child that we did take into the program, and
that we paired with a firefighter who said that he wanted the
toughest kid that we could find, and I actually waited until
we found the toughest kid for this toughest firefighter, was
a child that was approximately 10 years of age, was living
with his stepfather and mother in the house with new twin
babies.

The boy felt that he had never gotten any attention
or love, and one night, after a history of firesetting, when
his parents had just chastised him for not doing his homework,
he took some plastic bags down into the basement of his home while his parents were cooking dinner and lit a significant fire in the basement, closed the door, and left the house.

Fortunately for the family, they weren't asleep, and the fire was caught and put out. Now, we felt that that child could be salvaged, and I think that is sort of the type of child that we're trying to reach out to, a child that without some understanding from professionals, without some love and understanding from some concerned individuals, might skip over onto the other side and become a fairly dangerous individual, and at least a juvenile delinquent.

As we began our program in San Francisco, we started to receive requests from around the country about our program, and also, there were some concerns voiced. Weren't we actually going to be increasing fires by perhaps having all the kids want to spend time around the fire department, and be with firefighters?

Weren't we actually probably going to be exciting these kids more, something like putting an alcoholic in a brewery? Where would you get volunteers for a program like this, were some of the questions that were asked. So we waited two years until the pilot test was done, and there were no further incidences of child firesetting among these kids, until we could be perfectly sure that there was volunteer participation, that a community would get behind this program, and that the work that we said we were doing to reduce child firesetters could be scientifically proven to be successful.

Approximately last year, our pilot test from the
Federal Government was successfully concluded, and a manual which is about 300 pages long has become available to fire departments around the country through a foundation called the National Firehawk Foundation. The Foundation has an advisory board of 53 fire service leaders from around the country who are involved with child firesetting issues, and who run some of the biggest and smallest departments in the country.

They stand behind the program, I believe, because in each community, no matter where they are, they all have a problem of child firesetters. The problems that they see are not statistical problems, they are with actual individual children, some as young as three or four that they can't help, that in increasing numbers, in part because of the cutbacks in social services are actually just sort of washing up at the doors of fire departments.

In order to enable the Firehawk Foundation to successfully increase the work we're doing, and to spread, I would like to ask this Committee for one thing, and that is that there is a lack of accurate statistics within the fire service, to either use as a baseline for judging the success of any kind of efforts to eliminate child firesetting. Also, to know the true extent of the problem.

If someone came to me and said, child firesetting is a lot less than you think it is, that would make me actually very happy. But right now, the only statistic that we have that's easily available to the fire service is the FBI Uniform Crime Report. The last one that was issued, in September of
1983 said that approximately 8,000 youths from around the
country were arrested for arson.

Now, as many of my arson investigators who are
Firehawk coordinators tell me, this is not a really good,
accurate picture, for they say that only dumb arsonists get
captured, and in this case, dumb can be a little kid.

They would like to see a much more sophisticated
statistical system set up so that we know the ages of the
children involved, primarily, but also we know about kids who
are not arrested, but kids that are using it as a cry for
help, child abuse, things like that.

One of the problems that we're having, at least in
California, is while we keep beautiful, wonderful statistics,
and a lot of them are in child firesetters, and while we're
one of the most advanced states in the country in this regard,
some of the information that gets filtered in because of lack
of information on the part of the fire service, doesn't get
put in any meaningful way into our statistical recordkeeping
systems.

For example, if there is a room and contents fire
started by a child, many times the parents will plead with the
firefighter to have that put down as an accidental fire. There
might be a case of abuse going on. The firefighters are
unskilled, or not trained to know if there is or not. So
statistics like that are not included in our -- meaningfully
in our SPIKS system right now.

We also have some other problems with our statistical
recordkeeping processes, and that is that we need in California
to have in our annual report that is wonderful, some meaningful
way that the child firesetting statistics can be presented to
the average person. I'm hoping that one result of this hearing
will be that California, which has been the leader in child
firesetter programs, can put together a meaningful statistical
model that can be used and implemented in other states with the
goal being to present a few different kinds of beautiful
statistical models that can be incorporated into the national
fire incident reporting system so that we have a clearer
understanding of the nature of the child firesetting problems,
other than of the little unlucky children -- or lucky, perhaps,
because they get help, that end up in the FBI Uniform Crime
Reports.

For your information, one of the other areas that
our Foundation will be focusing on in the coming years, besides
trying to keep up with the demand for our program, will be in
ty trying to work out some models for the humane treatment of
children -- child firesetters in the juvenile justice system
that also will better protect our community.

As a volunteer, one of the things that I noticed was
these kids might have some problems, and they would be put in
jail for maybe three weeks, and then released. Surely there
is a better way to protect our community and help the children
than that system.

We intend, in California first of all, to sit down
with the District Attorneys' Association, judges, the police,
arson investigators, and work out a fair treatment program so
that these kids just aren't turned back into society again to
go light more fires.

I think that approximately a year or two from now
the results from this hearing are going to be felt all over
the country, because I know that the next speaker, Mr. Fred
Villella is a representative of the Federal Government, has
taken a lot of interest in what is happening in California,
and I think right now it would be his time to talk about the
federal involvement with this hearing, and with child fire-
setting. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you. Senator Davis, any
questions?

SENATOR DAVIS: Perhaps one of Ms. McLaughlin. I
don't quite understand how you expect us to do something to get
better data about what actually happened because -- okay, only
the fireman there who takes a report has any possibility of
making out a report, out of which you might make some surmises.

So it seems that -- I'm trying to figure out the role
of the State Legislature. We don't make laws on how to take --
how the police take crime reports.

MS. McLAUGHLIN: One part of that would be that we
need better education, better public education, and today
there will be some speakers who will address that, and yes,
you're right, your Committee, in a sense, cannot help with
the education of on-line firefighters.

But what you can help us with is that in California,
you have collected a lot of meaningful data on child firesetters
that has not been assembled in any meaningful way that I can
even tell you off the top of my head from your annual report of
the SPIRS system what kind of child firesetting incidences we have in California.

Because you are so far advanced, compared to let's say New Jersey, it would take a lot less -- you have more expertise, and it would take less effort for you to put your statistics around and compile them in a more meaningful fashion. I believe that Chief Bogardus is here today to explore the costs of doing something like that.

SENATOR DAVIS: Has that been discussed with the State Fire Marshal?

MS. MC LAUGHLIN: I've mentioned and suggested it to him.

SENATOR DAVIS: Okay, thank you.

MS. MC LAUGHLIN: Um-hmm.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Pamela. Our next witness this morning will be the Director of the Training Center for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Fred Villella. Fred?

MR. VILLELLA: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Senator Davis. I'm the Associate Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, appointed by the President of the United States, and confirmed by the Senate, responsible for fire training programs, and the United States Fire Administration which represents the federal focus on the nation's fire problem.

It's my privilege to appear before the Joint Committee this morning. The President of the United States and the nation's fire service appreciate your efforts, in courage and leadership in this critical area -- children in
need of attention.

I commend to you the growing efforts as well, not only the leadership of your fire departments throughout this great state, but also the firefighters who are in growing numbers contributing their time and efforts to assist these children in need of attention.

Now, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, by Executive Order of the President and Act of Congress, is the federal agency responsible for the coordination of other federal agencies in times of emergencies. FEMA is also responsible for supporting state and local governments in a wide range of disaster planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts. This Agency serves, as well, as the federal focus on the national fire problem through its United States Fire Administration and National Fire Academy.

America is still burning. Although there has been an improvement in a number of communities throughout the nation in reducing the nature and impact from fire, there continues to be unacceptable losses of life and property. A single loss of life from fire, the tragedy of a destroyed home, crippling burns and injuries, or increased economic losses cannot be ignored.

FEMA, through the United States Fire Administration, is concentrating on the prevention of fire, as well as the detection and control in the early phases of fire development. I believe the widespread application of automatic sprinkler systems, coupled with approved detection systems would be a giant step forward in eliminating, or at least significantly...
reducing the toxic fire gas problem.

The primary focus of the United States Fire Administration in this fiscal and in the forthcoming fiscal year will be in the area of a truly national fire prevention program of which children in need of attention, and child firesetters will be a very critical part. It is the ultimate goal of the administration to provide the means of making available to every American a fire safe home.

We propose to accomplish this goal through a unified program that would involve not only the nation's resources, community volunteers, fire service and private sector. This program will be focused through the Governor's offices of each state, and will reach the local community in a very clear and focused manner.

I have submitted to you, Mr. Chairman, my statement for the record. I would like to briefly summarize the salient points of that statement.

The juvenile fire problem continues to be of major concern to local law enforcement and fire departments nationwide and justifiably so. The 1982 FBI Uniform Crime Report indicates that 37 percent of those arrested for arson alone were under 18 years of age. Although it is slightly lower than 1981, it is still nearly 10 percent higher than the base year that we have chosen to compare against of 1978.

These nationwide statistics show that the juvenile firesetter problem is a continuing significant portion of the overall national fire problem. Many local experiences reflect even more frightening statistics. Some local communities have
reported that nearly 50 percent of their fires, reported fires were caused by juveniles. Although these statistics are valid for arson fires, they fall short of providing the appropriate needed information.

The National Fire Incident and Reporting System currently cannot capture the necessary information. Many fire departments realize the urgency of the juvenile firesetter problem. Some began to develop programs with the help of psychologists, mental health care specialists, educators, and other professionals.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency became involved with this program in 1979 when the problem was originally brought to the attention of the United States Fire Administration by Captain Joseph Day of the Los Angeles County Fire Department who joined with Dr. Kenneth Fineman of Huntington Beach and embarked upon a study supported by the Federal Government, to look at the problem and develop some suggested intervention strategies to deal with the issue of young firesetters.

As a result of that effort, the juvenile firesetter counseling manual and videotapes were produced. The manual, "Interviewing and Counseling Juvenile Fire Setters" has been issued to hundreds of departments throughout the nation. The State of California has been a leader in the Juvenile Firesetter Program since its very inception.

The recently created National Firehawk Foundation grew from a FEMA sponsored program, designed to determine the feasibility of involving firefighter volunteers as counselors
to children firesetters in a one-on-one setting. This is one example of a federally supported private program in support of state and local efforts that is being continued with all private sector resources and support. It is being expanded into other parts of the nation as well.

There are now Firehawk affiliates formed in over 100 communities in 22 states. These communities range from metropolitan cities and counties such as Washington, D.C., Prince Georges County, Maryland, to small towns such as Freeport, Texas.

FEMA has enhanced efforts in the Juvenile Firesetter Program through joint United States Fire Administration and National Fire Academy efforts in cooperation with the Burn Concerns of Chicago. These include the continued delivery of juvenile firesetter counseling workshops.

In the recent past, the workshops have been targeted to the development of counseling programs for firesetters seven years of age and under. For firesetters seven years of age and under. The program is now scheduling workshops that will be designed to establish counseling programs targeted for the child 7 to 13 years of age.

Since 1980, approximately 194 workshops in 41 states have been conducted for 13,000 fire service, law enforcement, social service, and judicial agency personnel. Other current efforts include a national conference to bring together representatives of existing juvenile firesetter programs to exchange information and ideas, identify needs, and develop future direction for the program.
We plan to continue at the federal level the dissemination of the juvenile firesetters counseling program through a wide range of approaches, including workshops, seminars, and satellite teleconferences. As more local firesetter counseling programs are established, it is expected that a resource network will also be established, linking many of these programs together to allow the sharing of information and ideas.

We hope in that same process to deal with law enforcement and the other community-based organizations who must be a part of sharing that information for the benefit of the child in need of attention.

In addition to assisting local communities in developing fire safety programs to address the juvenile firesetter problem, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has also spearheaded efforts to develop fire prevention approaches aimed at the problem of fire safety and very young children. It is estimated that 17 percent of fire deaths in the United States are children under five years of age.

I would digress for a moment, and tell you Mr. Chairman, that arson is a very sexy subject throughout the United States, but it cannot nearly be as sexy as that statistic which I just reported -- 17 percent of the fire deaths are children under five years of age.

In cooperation with the Children's Television Network Workshop, the Sesame Street Fire Safety Program was created to reach these young children, and it is estimated to have reached 8 million preschoolers to date. The Sesame Street program
continues to be one of the most far-reaching fire safety programs, reaching parents, children, young children, and older children as well. Its popularity continues to grow, and its results will be detailed by Evelyn Davis of the Children’s Television Workshop, scheduled to testify later.

We propose to launch before the end of this fiscal year a program that encompasses community-based participation at the state and local level under the umbrella of the National Fire Prevention Program through community volunteers of which the Firehawk Program, and the Juvenile Firesetter Program will be a very critical component.

The goal is to work on a national strategy basis to stop America from burning using local volunteer resources, public and private sector, and encouraging states to assist and institutionalize the process of fire prevention at the local level through community volunteers.

A national review panel is about to be formed. The President of the United States has indicated his support, and will participate in this process, and the panel will be made up of nationally and locally prominent members from the public and private sectors and shared by a governor and a national fire service leader.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency, through the United States Fire Administration, and the National Fire Academy has been committed to addressing the fire problem as it impacts children. Through the development of successful fire prevention, fire protection, and fire safety programs, such as the Juvenile Firesetter Counseling Program, and the
Sesame Street Fire Safety Program, coupled with the emerging initiative to bring together those community-based organizations, major reductions in the children and fire problem can be achieved, and will be continued in our efforts to deal with this national problem.

In partnership with state and local government agencies such as this body, private sector groups, we are confident that this trend will continue.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank you for inviting us to participate and testify before this Committee. It is hoped that more hearings in more states will be held on this very serious problem. It is not unexpected that California would take the leadership in the nation to perform this valuable service.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency recognizes the need for a concerted effort on the part of local, state and national organizations, both private and public to reduce the national fire problem, and in particular, the problem associated with children in need of attention. California flourishes with outstanding leadership at the state and community level. We urge your continued efforts to focus this leadership to help our children.

That is the summary of my statement, Mr. Chairman. I'd be delighted to take on any questions, and I expect that the nation's fire service will look to me to provide some leadership in order to improve the reporting system which we acknowledge. It is sparse in this very critical area.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Mr. Villella, thank you very
kindly. We appreciate your coming here today, and we
appreciate the work that you have done in this area, and you'll
be hearing from us again.

MR. VILLELLA: Thank you very much, Senator.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you.

The next witness will be Rod Bennett, Fire Inspector
with the San Francisco Fire Department. Mr. Bennett.

MR. BENNETT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senators.

I'm here today representing the San Francisco Fire Department,
the International Association of Black Firefighters, and the
National Firehawk Association.

I am currently working on assignment as an arson
inspector in the Bureau of Fire Prevention in San Francisco.
I've been there for the last two years. It's in this
capacity that I first had a chance to meet Ms. McLaughlin and
learned of her Firehawk Program.

First of all, I'm not going to talk about a lot of
the statistics, because as she said, statistics can be very
deceiving, and when it comes to arson, very difficult to
categorize a fire, especially if there's no one around when
you come to put it out.

Instead, I'd like to comment on some of the human
aspects of the Firehawk Program. It's been said a couple of
times here today that almost half of the arson fires in this
country have been set by children. You can imagine the impact
of that statement when it comes in terms of property damage
and/or lives.

But in the past, the treatment for a child firesetter
has been a punitive one. It's always been, throw the kid in the juvenile hall, a log cabin, or a CYO camp, or something of this nature. But has this been an effective treatment? I would say no. We're dealing with a kid here, not a criminal. There might be underlying motives for the kid's behavior.

Through hours of agonizing and analyzing case histories of child firesetters, Ms. McLaughlin, and Dr. Jessica Gaynor, over here, came up with a profile of a typical child firesetter that goes like this:

One, his age is 5 to 13 years old.

Two, he usually comes from a single parent home, usually where the father is absent, and

Three, some change has usually occurred in the family, either they've moved, or switched schools, or the parent has lost his job, something traumatic of that nature.

It's interesting to note here that in this profile, there's no mention at all of race, or economic background, that is to say whether a child is Black, White, rich or poor does not come into effect.

Most of these kids are striving for an attention of some sort when they set these fires, and naturally if you set the house on fire, you're going to get some attention, whether it's negative or whatever, the kid's just looking for attention, he'll take any, as it comes.

Now, secondly, I'd like to say that our type of approach is similar to the Big Brother. We're all firemen, we all pick up a kid, we take him to the fire house and slide down the poles, put little hats on them, we take them to all
the ball games, and soccer, things of this nature around --
maybe once a month we go to some sort of an event, and what
it does is, it picks up the kid's estee.

My kid last year was seven years old, he came from
an interracial family, just a wife, and the father was gone,
and he was living with his grandmother, and the mother had
moved to Modesto, or in the valley, so he was just there by
himself with the grandmother. He set the fires, I guess because
he felt that he was neglected, or left by himself.

Now, from my point of view, the firemen that I know,
our reward is to look in the kid's eyes, we take these kids
and all of a sudden they've found someone that takes an
interest in them for their sick, and this is a reward for me,
as well as it is for the kids, because to me, it's very
fulfilling to have accomplished something like this in the
life of a kid, lead him on the right path, or something, and
for some strange reason, they seem to look upon firemen as
really the good guys in life.

Anyway, in closing, I'd like to say that everyone,
whether you're young, old, Black, White, whatever, needs to
be -- feel that you're needed or wanted, and this is what
these kids are doing. The only really important statistic
that I'd like to bring to mind is the success rate of the
kids that enter our program, it's 99.9 percent.

In other words, 99.9 percent of the kids that came
into our program did not restart fires again, and that record
speaks for itself. One kid out of 160 started another fire.
Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Bennett, we appreciate you coming down, we appreciate your testimony today.

MR. BENNETT: Thank you. At this time, I'd like to introduce Dr. Jessica Gaynor, she'd like to show a short video of the program as seen on "Hour Magazine".

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: I have Jessica scheduled for about three witnesses from now.

MR. BENNETT: Okay.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Do you have a time problem? Do you have a plane to catch or something?

DR. GAYNOR: No, it's actually part of his testimony.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: It's part of his testimony?

Come on up, then.

(Video Presentation.)

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much. Our next witness will be Chief Clyde Bragdon of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

CHIEF BRAGDON: And I might add, Hacienda Heights.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Yes, Chief of the Hacienda Heights Fire Department.

CHIEF BRAGDON: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. It is appropriate, I think, my placement on the agenda, having the opportunity to follow what has given significant efforts and direction towards a universal problem in this country.

The Firehawks program represents certainly private sector involvement, is a splendid example of volunteers and the public sector working together towards a common goal. FEMA and the U.S. Fire Administration has served as a catalyst, a
clearinghouse, and federal focus. They do not interview one juvenile firesetter. However, through their efforts, we have maximized on a national basis attention to this problem, and to Inspector Bennett, certainly a practitioner who literally is working the streets and addressing this problem.

Perhaps too much emphasis will be given to statistics, and statistics only serve to identify the problem, to give measurement standards, to attain funding, and may reinforce what we're after. Our real emphasis should be addressing the problem itself, and that's the problem of dealing with juveniles in our society.

We will hear testimony today from a number of persons relative to this problem, for fires attributable to juveniles. We've already heard some of the data which arranges, and if you pick up every document, ranging as high as 50 percent to maybe a low of 25 percent. That should not really be our emphasis.

In our community, like most others in this nation, arson has been on the increase. We've also added an increase in the fires started by juveniles, for whatever the reasons. Statistics are extremely important, as I've previously emphasized, but they should not be our total direction.

Juveniles start fires for a variety of reasons: revenge, intimidation, jealousy, mental retardation, vandalism, crime concealment, profit, certainly emotional problems caused in the home.

I have two case studies here which I will submit with the documentation, but I will not repeat today, but they
are typical of what our investigators and interviews run into. Both of these cases had different resolutions, however. One is a consequence of getting involved in the interview process and having an appropriate referral to psychologists, and people that can deal with those problems, because the parents decided to get involved.

The other case, it did not, we have not solved that problem. It will serve further to aggravate that young child's situation and his place in life.

For years the fire community has been concerned about the child firesetter. Some departments made an attempt at solutions. Parents would bring their youngsters into the fire station, most typically, and firefighters thought they had the ability to cope with the problem. They would show photos of burned people, and homes, and talk very firmly to them. In other words, try to frighten the child into the consequence of his actions, maybe even intimidate him with threats of punishment, jail, and spanking from parents.

Then if he promised not to set any more fires, they let him sit on the shiny red fire truck, and maybe blow the siren for him. Some firefighters believed that the curious firesetters could be turned around by letting him set fires until he became just plain bored. In other words, send him home, give him a box of good old cowboy, or kitchen matches, and let him light them one-by-one and extinguish them slowly, and maybe it would teach him never to play with fire again.

As effective as these measures may seemingly have been, obviously, they were not. The problem was increasing,
and nobody was specifically addressing it.

In 1975, Captain Joe Day, head of our department's education unit, served on a panel with other fire officials and two psychologists at the California State Psychologist Association in Anaheim. As an outgrowth of that conference, an Arson Prevention Committee was formed.

The committee identified with the fire service as doing interviews with juvenile firesetters, but there was little, if any training available through the fire community on how to conduct a meaningful interview, and identify those needed more in-depth professional counseling.

In 1977, our department received a grant from the Fire Administration to develop a training manual to aid fire department personnel in identifying and counseling youthful firesetters. This initial manual, as mentioned before, was targeted at the group of age seven and below.

We also held workshops to include both fire service personnel and psychologists who are interested in working with juvenile firesetters. This first workshop was held in 1978. A subsequent grant developed video training programs on the same subject.

In 1980, and this is where the work began to spread on a national basis, on a cooperative agreement with the Fire Administration, and the Psychologist Association, workshops, 75 in number, were conducted in 28 states, and Captain Joe Day was a project coordinator of that project.

Many departments showed great interest. Our department included juvenile counseling as part of the in-service
training, and all personnel received instruction in counseling

   techniques. We had to recognize and realize that firefighters

   are not psychologists. What we want the firefighter to do is

   to recognize the problem, and be able to make the appropriate

   referral.

   Since 1980, our fire department has counseled more

   than 200 youngsters that have been identified with these

   problems. They've been referred to us by schools, by fire

   station personnel, and by -- who felt that our staff of

   educators in our fire education unit were more suited to

   handling this particular problem.

   Despite the fact that little publicity has been given

   to the availability of this program, we do find parents who

   seek our help. Follow-up is difficult. If the youngster is

   referred to a professional counseling, we lose contact as the

   patient/psychologist relationship begins, but we are satisfied

   and convinced that goals that we can follow, there have been

   less than 3 percent repeat fire problems. Our program is

   therefore effective, as we now see it.

   I would like to, however, add a different perspective

   to the overall problem, one that is -- I feel is certainly more

   proactive, and that is the prevention of this problem to

   begin with. That is in public education.

   Starting in 1960, our department created and

   identified a public education unit to work with schools. It

   focused on the fifth grade in approximately 300 elementary

   schools. In 1972, we modified the program to encompass the

   second, third, and fourth grades. We were convinced with
discussions with professional educators that second graders were indeed capable of learning that fires can be dangerous, and they were excellent carriers of that information back into their own homes and families.

A study by graduate school researchers revealed that in the five years, after changing our emphasis from the single fifth grade approach to encompassing all the grades previously mentioned, that fire starts by children had dropped by approximately 80 percent.

We conclude that the exposure of these children to the fire problems serves as a deterrent to starting fires, and I might give emphasis to what that program means in our jurisdiction. In the calendar year of 1982, working in 401 schools, we conducted 1,333 programs with an attendance of approximately 156,000 students.

SENATOR DAVIS: You do the whole -- excuse me, do you do the whole school at one time? When you go into an elementary school, do you take grades one through three, and then four through six, or how do you do it?

CHIEF BRAGDON: No, sir, they're done in their normal classroom setting.

SENATOR DAVIS: Individual classrooms?

CHIEF BRAGDON: Yes.

If I had to make a recommendation to the fire community, of those who are not currently involved in such a public education program, it would be involvement. That is your commitment and investment in the future, those young people, and I think I could expand upon that comment considerably.
It does not represent much of a financial investment; it is your investment in the future. Our budget, approximately two-tenths of one percent are dedicated to that effort, and yet we are able to reach the numbers of people that I indicated earlier.

I'm appalled at times, when I find that during recent years when there have been financing difficulties to some extent in local government, that people would not still maintain their public education and commitment as the highest priority, and somehow those programs have been dropped.

To conclude, I can state that firefighters properly trained can provide a resource for counseling juvenile fire-setters. Most psychologists do not understand the juvenile firesetter and the problem. Proper training in their role in helping to work with these youngsters and their families is also vitally needed.

There are insufficient resources within the public sector to provide professional mental health counseling with the juvenile firesetter and family. In Los Angeles County we have the resources of one mental health professional, and she divides her time between firesetters and other patients.

Social workers must also have knowledge of the firesetter problem, and be equipped with information as to where help can be obtained. Many of the youngsters that we see are already receiving some form of counseling from the public sector for other social and family problems.

Additional fire safety education programs must be developed and delivered to the preschooler. An early
appreciation of fire in our lifestyle does not deter youngsters from playing with fire. Priority must be given to funding educational programs for teachers and preschool leaders to permit them to identify a problem youngster.

Of the millions of dollars expended annually by the federal, state, county, city governments to meet the challenge of mental health problems, none currently is earmarked for continued development of professional programs to tackle the problem of the juvenile firesetter.

Without that help, without a concerted effort, we will continue to have fires which destroy our homes, damage property, and burn, maim, and kill. With youngsters, it is often the firesetter himself who becomes the victim. I might add to that, as I mentioned before, we need a stronger interface in our other public sectors, community law enforcement and so forth to identify and work with this problem.

If I can leave one recommendation for this Committee, it would be to expand beyond just the fire problem, but into those that exist in all of our communities. We have forgotten in our educational system some of the civic responsibilities that should be firmly ingrained at the most impressionable age -- I'm talking about obedience to law, preparation for emergency and disaster services, as well as the fire problem we just addressed.

That is something I think that this Committee could address through the educational mandates in this state. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you. Senator Davis, any
questions?

SENATOR DAVIS: Chief Bragdon, I apologize for having had to go out and return some calls to the press, but you understand that very well, I'm sure. But -- so I missed whether or not your department actively has adopted the Firehawk Program.

CHIEF BRAGDON: Yes, we are an affiliate, or I am a member of the Firehawk Board, and so forth, but we've been involved in the Juvenile Firesetter Program since its inception.

SENATOR DAVIS: Now, when you talked about having your -- I presume, arson investigators, or maybe firemen go to schools, the second grade, or whatever it is, did you indicate that was cutoff as a result of probably Prop. 13, or are you still doing that?

CHIEF BRAGDON: No, sir. What I did indicate, even with the funding difficulties, that I am appalled that any responsible fire official would not still establish that as his top priority, public education, particularly in our school system at that impressionable age, grades two through five, and that should always be his top priority, that's his investment in the future.

SENATOR DAVIS: But you are -- you have been able to continue to do that?

CHIEF BRAGDON: Yes, we have continued that, yes.

SENATOR DAVIS: But you feel some frustration that not every chief sees the efficacy of it, and I just want to tell you, I share that. I invented Neighborhood Watch, and it was highly effective in reducing crime. It was very difficult
to get policemen, particularly -- even my own department, I
was able to command that, you know, and tuned it up once a
week myself, but to propagate it around the nation, it's still
being tried here and there, and hither and yon, but without
really putting into it all the things that really make it work.

So, I have shared the frustration you feel about not
everyone universally doing this job with children in the school.
I agree with you 100 percent.

CHIEF BRAGDON: Your comments are, in fact, analogous,
and I would hope that through organizations such as these
professional organizations, the federal focus that's been
presented, and this growing emphasis in addressing the problem
by the U.S. Fire Administration that we will, in fact,
accomplish those things that you also realize some frustration.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Chief.
Our next witness will be the State Fire Marshal, Chief Ron
Bogardus. Chief Bogardus?

CHIEF BOGARDUS: Senator Davis, Senator Campbell,
as you're aware, I'm very intense about the subject of arson,
and I commend your initiative in addressing what I believe is
the most promising long-term solution to reducing the arson
problem in California, and that is dealing effectively with
the juvenile firesetter.

For the sake of emphasis, I will confine my comments
to the principal subject areas of: the need for statistical
data, and the need for increased public education to reduce
the incidents of juvenile firesetting.

We all recognize how important accurate, and complete
information is to the problem solving process. Valid and
reliable data is not only essential to such basic tasks as
properly identifying the problem, but it's equally important
to measuring and evaluating the results, and attempt solutions.
In the case of juvenile firesetters, this critically needed
data is lacking in California.

The California Fire Incident Reporting System,
administered by the office of the State Fire Marshal, is one
of the most comprehensive fire data systems in the country
today; yet, the only information we gather relative to this
issue is whether a juvenile was or was not involved in an
arson incident. To my knowledge, we are the only state that
collects even that basic information.

Although detail -- although sufficient detail in the
CFIRS system data base does give some measure of scope to the
problem; for instance, during the past five years, through
December 1982, juveniles were identified in 48,500 arson fires,
which resulted in $131 million in damaged and destroyed
property. That represents 38 percent of all arson fires, and
29 percent of the total dollar loss attributed to arson in
California during that period.

When we consider just structure fires, and those are
the ones that people are most likely at risk, we find that
36 percent of the arson fires, and 30 percent of the dollar
loss are juvenile related. Furthermore, if we were to add
those incidents reported as suspicious, the total arson
activity involving juveniles would leap to 101,000 fires, and
$204 million in loss -- a staggering loss, certainly
 unacceptable to our business community and the economy of our state.

For the record, I have included annual summaries of this data as my attachment to my testimony. I will also gladly provide any further analysis of the data that the Committee would find helpful.

This basic information certainly helps to quantify the general scope of the problem, but unfortunately, it stops there. In order to properly address the problem, we must have more information about the individuals involved -- who they are, how old are they, what's their background, where they live, their education, their family situation, are they involved in problems other than firesetting.

In other words, we must have a clear understanding of what factors contribute to firesetting behavior so that intervention efforts can be focused accordingly. The obvious question is, how do we obtain this essential information?

Although I do not have a definitive proposal to present at this time, I do offer the services of the office of the State Fire Marshal to develop an extension of the reporting system that will capture those elements of data needed to identify the firesetting problem, and make them available through the California Fire Incident Reporting System.

I'm confident that a practical and effective process can be put in place for a relatively small cost. I will be happy to work with your staff, and other interested parties to develop the detailed plan for your consideration.

One of the most significant benefits to be derived
from this data will be its use to raise awareness of the problem and increase the efforts towards public education.

The unique behavior problems associated with young firesetters cannot be solved by fire and law enforcement officials alone. Parents, teachers, coaches, youth group leaders, neighbors, the entire community must be sensitized to the problem if positive changes are to result.

People must understand that when a child deliberately sets a fire, it's most likely a manifestation of a deep emotional problem. Public education is needed to dispell the long-held misconception that we are protecting a child by ignoring or hiding the fact that he or she exhibits fire-setting behavior, and nothing more could be further from the truth.

These young people need help, and the sooner they receive it in their lives, the better. That help is now available in the form of a professionally directed counseling program such as the outstandingly successful Firehawk Program founded in San Francisco by Pam McLaughlin. I'd also like to mention the All Teen Arson Council founded in Los Angeles by Chief Manning and Mr. Pressman that are present here this morning.

People need to understand the importance of recognizing the underlying factors evidenced in firesetting behavior, and the critical necessity for obtaining professionally guided help to modify that behavior.

A specifically focused data collection process, and an intense community oriented public education effort are
essential to bring that about.

I'd like to thank you, both Senators, for listening to the California Fire Service, for being interested in this process, and I'd certainly be glad to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Ed?

SENATOR DAVIS: Well, again, back to Ms. McLaughlin's original testimony, she regretted that there wasn't a more comprehensive massaging of whatever data could be gathered so that it would help in terms of prevention, and I have to agree with her, and I reflect back on -- and I did when I was in the business, on police reports. They're designed to get the data in case this fellow does it again, that you'll know who he was, and in the process of trying to convict, that you have the data necessary to do that.

In terms of all the other kinds of data that would be useful to people working in the field of prevention, the kind of information that -- the Glicks who did the massive, ponderous opuses on -- research on delinquency, and they were very useful to all of us, that -- you know, you have a single parent family, and you have a certain economic level, and you have certain other conditions, none of that is reflected in police arrest reports, and I doubt very much that the fire service, in terms of their arrests, handled by their arson people, have gathered that.

In the case of the police, when I brought that up, because of the vast volume of arrests that are made, people say, well, we couldn't get to that. But I -- the fire service has a -- miniscule in numbers, numbers of arrests to process,
and particularly with juveniles.

   It might well be that some of you in your profession could think about asking yourself if Elmer and Sheldon Glick were trying to help on this problem. You know what kinds of other data would they try to find out about a youth who had been identified as being a perpetrator in arson.

   There's a possibility that you could pioneer, and go ahead with the police field, and come up with some useful things that would help them in working against delinquency.

   CHIEF BOGARDUS: Senator, it's our feeling that with minor modification to the form that's filled out on all fires in the State of California and reported to the State Fire Marshal's Office, that a minor modification could be made for a test period to run one year or more, which would develop the data, and with the strong support of the -- of my colleagues here in the room, we could see that the data a year from now was much more comprehensive than it is today, and put some limits on this problem so we can address it in real terms.

   CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: What is required, Chief, to change your reporting system?

   CHIEF BOGARDUS: It's our feeling today, Senator, that --

   CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Is that an internal document that you have?

   CHIEF BOGARDUS: Well, it's an internal process that emanates from the State Fire Marshal's Office, but it includes every fire in the state, and each individual fire has its own
individual report that's made out at the local level. That form is provided by the state. We feel that we can modify that form, basically, that's a contract with Teale Data Center where that's all entered, coming out monthly to our office, published annually.

That process is not inexpensive, but it's not prohibitive either.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Chief. I appreciate your being here today.

CHIEF BOGARDUS: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Our next witness will be Chief Donald Manning from the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

Chief Manning?

CHIEF MANNING: Senator Campbell, Senator Davis, ladies and gentlemen, I really thank you for the opportunity to be here.

During the past three years, there were 81,640 fire incidents in the City of Los Angeles. Twelve and a half percent, or 10,249 of those fires were directly related to juveniles. Of these juvenile related fires, 6.4 percent, or 5,256 of these fires were caused by juveniles playing with matches.

The cause for the remaining 6.1 percent, or 4,993 fires was listed as juvenile incendiary or juvenile suspicious fires.

In listing a fire as being juvenile incendiary or suspicious, we are referring to the juvenile whose motive is spite, vandalism, malicious mischief, crime cover, or who is
a pyromaniac or psychotic.

In listing a fire as being juvenile with matches, we are referring to the child who is playing with, or experimenting with matches and unintentionally starts a fire.

During the same three year period, the associated direct fire loss for total fires was $267.2 million. 4.3 percent of this total loss, or $11.6 million was attributed to juvenile caused fires. Half of this juvenile caused loss, or $5.8 million was attributed to juveniles playing with matches, and the other $5.8 million was attributed to juvenile incendiary or suspicious fires.

Additionally, these juvenile related fires have caused a conservatively estimated indirect fire loss of $46.4 million, or an average loss of $42,375 per day. Indirect loss refers to the loss of jobs, medical care cost, increased insurance premiums, increased welfare or financial burdens placed on the community and its citizens as a result of the fire. That's $42,375 a day.

Further, these juvenile related fires have caused an incalculable amount of suffering and personal trauma. During the past three years, there has been 254 fire fatalities in the City of Los Angeles. Of these 3.1 percent, or eight of the fatalities occurred from juvenile caused fires. All eight fatalities were listed as caused by juveniles playing with matches.

In reviewing our data base and comparing fiscal year statistics for the last three years, it has been noted that there has been a decrease in the number of juvenile
incendiary and suspicious fires, while there has been an increase in juvenile playing with matches fires.

Statistics such as those stated above enable an agency such as ours to: (1) Identify a developing trend, or the extent of the problem over a period of time, and (2) to determine where resources, often rather limited, should be deployed.

To this end, the Los Angeles Fire Department has been committed for some time to thoroughly identifying its arson problem by the accurate reporting of fires and careful cause determination.

In dealing with the juvenile fire problem, the Department has been active in several areas. It has an ongoing program of teaching fire prevention to fifth graders, school visitation and demonstrations, distribution of anti-fireworks literature to the schools and the community prior to the 4th of July, and conducting fire prevention sweeps in the immediate neighborhood where a fire has occurred.

The Department has also been very active in the Mayor's Arson Task Force where a unique juvenile program called ATAC, All Teen Arson Council, was developed to prevent arson in the schools and the community.

I would like at this time to introduce Mr. Jerrold Pressman, Chairman of the All Teen Arson Council. Mr. Pressman, a member of the Mayor's Arson Task Force is the President of Master Fire Protection Enterprises, one of the largest fire protection companies in the United States. He has been very active in the field of fire prevention education, and is a
member of several committees at Cal State University, Los Angeles, and is on the Board of Visitor's of the United States Fire Academy, Emmitsburg, Maryland.

I'd like to make Mr. Pressman to make a presentation to the board as part of mine.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Certainly, Mr. Pressman?

MR. PRESSMAN: Thank you. It's indeed a pleasure to be here today. In 1979, the City of Los Angeles addressed itself to several factors, one of which was statistical, two and three-quarter billion dollars worth of losses -- well, I don't even want to get into statistics. Let me get more down to brass tacks.

The uniqueness that we face, the real crime of arson is a crime that is borne by our society for not having a cogent plan to deliver to our children. We haven't done a good job, and the ATAC Program was designed to pick up that load by transferring the burden to the children. Since we haven't been able to teach them, we thought perhaps the kids could teach us something, and that's exactly what the program did.

We got around the red tape by going to the private sector and having them totally fund the program. The scope of the project was to bring an awareness to all students of the major financial impact, and the extreme life hazard to themselves and their loved ones that is created by the crime of arson and fire vandalism.

The concept involved working with the schools, the parents, the youth of our community in different ways than have been tried before. It was designed to be acceptable by the
business community who was going to be asked to fund the program. I'd like to read to you some of the goals on our original outline of the program.

It was to incorporate a fire prevention and fire awareness into the daily habits of our youth. Again, something that very few places in the country have addressed themselves to.

To present a standard for fire safe living to our youth in the formative years. We're so busy giving them the statistics, we're so busy covering the major issues that we haven't addressed ourselves to the simple problem of getting down and teaching our youth from the youngest age what fire safety is all about.

To impart fire prevention techniques and skills that will be applicable over the life of the student.

To create peer awareness, thereby eliminating any peer rewards that firesetting may have generated in the past.

To place the feeling of responsibility for fire vandalism at the most effective level, and that's with the kids that are doing it.

To provide all Los Angeles youth with a personal link to law enforcement for the specific purpose of identifying those observed, or known to be participating in firesetting or fire vandalism.

To include the use of a hot line which would provide our youth direct access to reporting individuals or suspicious circumstances to the proper authorities anonymously, and to act as an ongoing deterrent.
Again, most important, to use the youth of our city
to fill that educational void that our society has failed to
provide in the areas of arson awareness, and carrying the
message to their homes.

Now, we did this by creating a competitive environ-
ment in the schools, by having them demonstrate fire
extinguishing skills, to teach the kids to do the fire
inspections in the schools, and to make the teachers aware
that the extinguishers were gone, that the alarm was turned off,
that the doors were locked.

The interesting part of the program is that we have
week tip posters placed up. We supplied thousands of
additional posters to be replaced, expecting them to be torn
down on a weekly basis. To this date, we have not replaced
one poster in one school.

The Burbank Junior High School, where the program
began initially had one fire a day, attributed to somebody
throwing a match somewhere. Since this program was incepted,
we have not had one fire a day.

Now, all of the assignments, which are part of my
presentation, are available for your use. I would encourage
you to read them. What they really do is have the children
go into the schools, go down to the grade school level, go
into their community, to the YMCA, and tell the story from a
child's point of view, and to give us the things that we've
been missing.

I've toured the United States and the world, and have
talked to fire educators throughout our great nation, and
unfortunately, that's what it comes down to, talk, nothing but rhetoric, nothing but inaction, so I certainly welcome the efforts made by this Committee, and I hope we can get beyond that talking stage.

Let me just tell you the way we end our year. Most of the children are taken to a burn ward. Now, the purpose is not to expose these kids to terribly disfigured burn victims, but it's to let them see what the impact of that match can perform. All the statistics in the world could not be worth the looks on their faces when they see other children that have been burned, and to get that message back to that family.

How many kids are burned blowing out their birthday candles? How many kids are burned through hot water? How many kids are burned through stupidity, stupidity of adults? I think we have a viable program, and I think the City of Los Angeles is performing a very vital function.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Mr. Pressman. Chief?

CHIEF MANNING: Yes, sir. The Department has also been active in counseling the juvenile firesetter who has maliciously set a fire. The juvenile may be counseled at a fire station, or arrested and sited back to the Los Angeles City Fire Department Arson Unit, or a police station near his home to appear with his parents, or may be referred to Dr. Linda E. Weinberger, a consultant to the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

I would like at this time to introduce Dr. Weinberger, who is the chief psychologist at the USC Institute of Psychiatry, Law and Behavioral Sciences. Dr. Weinberger has taught at the
University of Houston, and USC, and has conducted research on
the psychological dimensions of juvenile firesetters.
Dr. Weinberger holds a B.A., an M.A. in Psychology, and a
Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology. Dr. Weinberger.

DR. WEINBERGER: Good morning Honorable Chairman,
Senator Davis, ladies and gentlemen.

In an attempt to understand the numerous psychological
dimensions related to firesetting behavior among juveniles, a
review of the literature was conducted at the USC Institute
of Psychiatry, Law and Behavior Science by the late Seymour
Pollack and his associates, myself included.

It was found that this broad category of youth who
engaged in firesetting conducted could be subdivided into two
sections: those youngsters who intentionally set fires, and
those youngsters who do so nonintentionally. In exploring the
latter, children who play with matches as a result of
curiosity, experimentation, or fascination seldom intend to
set fire to anything or anyone.

Similarly, any other type of behavior where a
youngster's curiosity or negligence leads to a dangerous fire
situation may be classified as nonintentional firesetting.

Mental health professionals have worked with youth
who display such interest or negligence primarily via
instructional or educational means. That is, these young
people may be given pamphlets to read, or movies to see about
the hazards of fire; or they may be asked to make posters or
complete homework assignments related to fire safety; or they
may visit fire stations and be exposed to the workings of
The nonintentional firesetter is certainly a concern to us all. The fire that results from his or her behavior may be just as damaging as a fire set intentionally. However, we believe that it is the juvenile who sets fires intentionally who represents a more potential harm and appears more alarming to the community.

In describing individuals who set fires intentionally, we may further subdivide this category of people into two sections: those who set fires for pathological reasons and those who set fires for nonpathological reasons. To illustrate people who set fire as a result of a nonpathological motive, we may consider the person who sets a fire in order to destroy or conceal evidence from another crime, or we may consider the torch, a person who sets fires for financial profit.

Generally, juvenile firesetters seldom fall into this category, particularly children. However, I have evaluated a teenager who intentionally set a fire in order to destroy evidence and divert attention from his burgling activities.

As I mentioned earlier, we as a community, and more specifically, those in the mental health professions, are most concerned about the juvenile who intentionally sets a fire because of a pathological reason. We fear that if such an individual is not treated, his or her psychopathology will remain in tact and active as well as serve as a predisposing factor for additional acting out behavior.

Among youngsters, it is imperative that we consider what is viewed as age-appropriate conduct in order to
distinguish pathological behavior from nonpathological behavior. In addition, a consideration of the youngster's emotions and his or her motives for setting the fire must be made so that an accurate distinction can be rendered.

For example, among young children who set fires, let's say between the ages of two and seven, as discussed earlier, curiosity and fascination with fire as well as excitement and enjoyment derived from fire engines and fire extinguishing, does not in and of itself point to psychopathology. Such emotions and motives are normal.

In addition, such children are highly responsive to curtailing such behavior after they've been warned or reprimanded about the dangerous elements inherent with fire. Similarly, as children grow older, one of the most common features present and causally related to their firesetting behavior is conflicts between them and their parents.

Aggressiveness, jealousy, talking back, moodiness, temper tantrums, and withdrawal are some traits and features frequently found among prepubescent juveniles. They too are generally amenable to simple counseling efforts.

The child, however, who continues to set fires after experiencing parental authority, or counseling intervention, most frequently is one who is doing so because of pathological reasons.

Among children between the ages of let's say, seven and twelve, who are not mentally retarded, or suffering from significant psychopathology, such as mental retardation, psychosis, autism, the most common causal feature related to
their firesetting behavior is that of seriously disturbed child/parent relationships. The youngster's firesetting behavior is a manifestation of his emotional experience in such a relationship.

What the children experience in almost all of these seriously disturbed relationships is a feeling of rejection, abandonment, or deprivation of love and security over a long period of time. The child may have suffered abuse, be it verbal or physical, neglect, inconsistency in discipline and setting of limits, or parental separation, such as that from divorce, death, remarriage, birth of a sibling.

The child's firesetting behavior may be viewed as an aggressive act where he can indirectly express his hostile impulses about having been rejected or abandoned. It can also be hypothesized that the firesetting behavior is a means by which he can attract attention to himself and not feel rejected or overlooked.

Attention, irrespective of whether it is dispensed in a positive or negative manner, nevertheless, represents to the child notice, and thus, supersedes his rejection, at least for that moment in time. His firesetting behavior, thus, is in essence, a cry for help.

Youngsters who feel significantly inferior or inadequate, and have low self-esteem may attempt to compensate for such feelings by engaging in a behavior that would make them appear as a hero. That is, they may intentionally set fires and then attract attention to themselves by allegedly finding and reporting the fire.
Consequently, they may feel powerful and prestigious. Most of these youngsters tend to be preadolescents with low intelligence and/or suffering from learning disabilities. Among youngsters who are in direct conflict with an authority figure, firesetting behavior can serve as a means by which the juvenile can show himself superior and powerful to his adult oppressor.

We have found that juveniles who set fires alone are more likely to be psychologically disturbed than those who engaged in this conduct with others. Peer pressure, the thrill of the moment, or initiation activity may serve as nonpathological motivating factors. Fires set as a part of group conduct occur more frequently among teenagers between the ages of 12 and 16.

This type of behavior may be reflective of a general pattern of developing delinquency. Often, this set of juveniles start fires as a result of strong feelings of revenge and the desire for retaliation against an authority figure. School fires are a good example.

We do not believe that their conduct is a manifestation of severe psychopathology, or deep seated emotional problems; rather, it appears to be a reflection of antisocial attitudes and values. Such juveniles are often psychiatrically diagnosed as having a conduct disorder.

The juvenile with a conduct disorder is one who demonstrates a repetitive and persistent pattern of antisocial behavior whereby the rights of others are violated.

Children and adolescents who have a conduct disorder
and demonstrate it aggressively, such as by setting fires, may be classified as being undersocialized or socialized -- the difference being that the undersocialized juvenile has not established adequate social bonds, while the socialized juvenile has done so.

It has been found that the undersocialized firesetter is frequently more emotionally disturbed than the socialized one. The undersocialized firesetter tends to be a loner and acts out as an expression of anger, hostility, jealousy, defiance, or revenge against others.

The socialized firesetter, on the other hand, has social attachments and usually engages in firesetting behavior with others. This type of youth acts out because of disregard or callousness toward others for whom they feel no attachment. Such an individual is usually a few years older, pubertal or immediately post-pubertal, than the undersocialized firesetter who tends to fall into the pre-pubertal stage.

The older delinquent teenager who sets fires is usually doing so because of more clearly defined and entrenched antisocial values. They're commonly involved in gang activities, or the fire is used to cover up other illegal behavior. The reaction to their consequences of conduct is similar to that of individuals with an antisocial personality disorder, in that they appear remorseless and free of guilt.

There is also a group of juveniles who set fires because of disorders of impulse control, namely, the pyromaniac. True pyromania manifests itself during childhood. Psychiatric diagnostic criteria for this disorder consists of the following:
a recurrent failure to resist impulses to set fires; an increasing sense of tension before setting the fire; an experience of either intense pleasure, gratification, or release at the time of committing the act; and a lack of motivation for setting the fire, such as monetary gain, or sociopolitical ideology.

Some people who suffer from pyromania have reported experiencing sexual arousal from fire. Those individuals who engage in the greatest percentage of repeated firesetting tend to be male adolescents between 16 and 18 years of age. They're often psychosocially and psychosexually immature. They are usually introverted, loners, noncompetitive, and ineffective.

In addition, they have had few or no heterosexual experiences and avoid such relationships. Most of them have mildly defective intelligence, but are not as retarded in their ability to function day-to-day in society. It appears that emotional or social rejection is the causal factor for their firesetting behavior.

In most of my presentation, I used the male pronoun when describing juvenile firesetters, this was intentional.

Research findings indicate --

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Not chauvinistic, just intentional.

DR. WEINBERGER: Research findings indicate that firesetting differs from other types of delinquent behavior in that it appears to be a predominantly male activity. We're unsure as to the reasons why males as opposed to females are more prone to engage in this type of conduct for expressing
hostile impulses.

In conclusion, it is important to keep in mind that juveniles who suffer from psychopathology or significant psychological problems do not only manifest their difficulties by setting fires. Juveniles who set fires generally do not know, or are unable to explain the reasons for their behavior. In addition, their parents tend to express similar confusion and often minimize the significance of their child's conduct.

As a result, it is incumbent upon firefighters as well as mental health professionals to develop and perfect our diagnostic skills so that we may be able to recognize and distinguish among the different subtypes of juvenile firesetters and thereby administer appropriate intervention.

In attempting to understand the dynamics and features which lead juveniles to engage in firesetting behavior, one day soon, hopefully, we will be able to move away from a remedial model of intervention to a preventive model.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Doctor. I appreciate your testimony. Chief?

CHIEF MANNING: Senator Campbell, in closing I again would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to appear before you and to bring the two people with me. We really appreciate this opportunity. If there are any questions I may --

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: We appreciate your testimony here today, Chief. Thank you very kindly.

Our next witness will be Dr. Jessica Gaynor who
obviously doesn't have an audio/visual certificate, but is a licensed psychologist in the State of California.

DR. GAYNOR: I'm going to use another audio/visual piece of equipment, which I hope works better this time.

I'd like to start by thanking the Committee for giving me the opportunity to address the issue of child firesetting. I think it's very important that many different professionals can work together to describe the problem of child firesetting and offer a diversity of solutions.

Today I'd like to focus on who these child firesetters are, and why they need our help, and what is available to help them.

Curiosity about fire is a naturally occurring phenomenon. We all can claim, at least an interest in fire. Like most natural occurrences, however, fire has both its positive and negative features. The question we must ask ourselves today is why is it that during an early phase of our development where our interest in fire can be extended into a destructive and potentially deadly act? Why do children become involved in firesetting? Who are they and how can we help them? Why do children become involved?

Fire interest is universal. There is virtually no culture where fire has not played a major role. Interest in fire reportedly begins as early as the age of three. Even at this early age, fire interest often turns into fireplay. Fireplay in children usually begins when they light matches with or without parental permission or supervision.

Data estimates that up to 50 percent, or half of all
children actually participate in fireplay. If half of all our
youngsters actually strike a match or engage in some sort of
minor fireplay, either in a supervised or unsupervised setting,
then it's not hard to imagine the great potential for fires to
occur simply as a result of innocent fireplay.

Data estimate that in most cases where children have
been involved in one instance of fireplay, 33 percent of those
fireplay instances resulted in a fire. In addition, for those
children who have been involved in more than one fireplay
incident, 80 percent of the time their fireplay resulted in
actual fires.

Where the majority of these fires are small and
easily extinguished, their severity in part depends on such
chance conditions as the place where the fire was started, the
type of material used, the weather, et cetera. Remember, these
statistics only reflect the incidence of fires set amongst
those youngsters who are involved in casual fireplay. And,
these statistics reflect those fires which were actually
brought to someone's attention.

If the incidence of fireplay in children remains high,
then the probability of fireplay resulting in actual fires,
some of which may be costly and damaging, also remains high.

Up to this point, I have described a universal
interest in fire which, at a very early age for many children,
translates into fireplay. We are talking about "normal"
children. Their fireplay behavior was a result of a naturally
occurring interest in fire. They wanted to know how fire feels
and looks, how hot it is, how it burns, and what it does.
So, part of the answer to why children become involved in firesetting is that their involvement arises out of a naturally occurring curiosity about fire. In fact, statistics show that about 60 percent of children involved in known firesetting incidents can be classified as "curiosity" firesetters.

But what about the other 40 percent? This group of children is not involved in casual fireplay. Their casual fireplay turns into repeated firesetting incidents. Who are these children, and why has their casual fireplay resulted in more serious firesetting behavior?

Who are the child firesetters? We know that 60 percent of the children involved in firesetting can be described as curious and as wanting to explore or experiment with their environment through fire. Often the fires started by these children are accidental. We classify these children as at little risk for future involvement in firesetting.

Once these children have started a fire, they usually seek help from an adult to extinguish it. They often admit their involvement and feel guilt and remorse concerning their behavior. You will often hear them say that they don't want to play with matches any more, that they have learned their lesson, and they didn't realize that playing with matches could start fires.

These children have normal physical abilities, normal intelligence, personality and social behaviors. They come from relatively stable families and have little or no difficulty in school. However, for other children, fireplay is not an isolated problem, but rather a part of a series of behavior and
situational problems. These children are involved in recurrent firesetting as an expression of underlying needs or problems in their lives.

Before I describe the psychology of the recurrent firesetter, it might be useful to present the widely used framework for classifying child firesetters. This was developed by Captain Joe Day, who is present here today, of the Los Angeles Fire Department and Dr. Kenneth Fineman, under the direction of the United States Fire Administration.

It classifies child firesetting behavior along a continuum of severity, specifying three major categories of risk. A risk level describes how likely it is that a child will become involved in future firesetting, given his psychological and firesetting history.

(Slide presentation.)

You can see the continuum at the top of this first slide. Children can be at little, definite or extreme risk, depending on their past behavior. Below this continuum of child firesetting behavior, I've shown the distribution of children estimated to fall into each category.

Approximately 60 percent of the children are classified as little risk, 37 percent as definite risk and 3 percent as extreme risk. Utilizing this risk framework, I have extended this conceptualization in Table 2.

Table 2 outlines the behavior and situation factors that contribute to child firesetting behavior. The specific behavior factors are physical or energy level, thinking or intellectual capacity, personality characteristics and
motivational factors. The specific situational factors include family and school settings. Both behavior and situational factors distinguish recurrent firesetters from those children who are classified as little risk.

Who are the recurrent firesetters? Those children classified as definite risk are mostly young boys between the ages of five to thirteen. They have been described as more mischievous, energetic, adventurous and aggressive than the average child. They tend to have a very high energy level which is often characterized by excessive restlessness and inattentiveness.

They often exhibit irresponsible and impulsive behavior with a low level for frustration. They are easily prone to thrill-seeking activities which offer them immediate pleasure and gratification. They typically are of average and even high intelligence, however, they also are easily distracted and sometimes have short attention spans. These children are socially aggressive with their peers and often need to feel as if they have control and mastery of their environment.

Many of these youngsters come from homes where the father is absent and where they have little opportunity to experience positive and meaningful relationships with adult males. When these children do not have relationships with their fathers, or other adult males, or when they do, the parent figure is often hostile and rejecting and has difficulty in setting limits on behavior.

Typically, these fathers will use overly harsh and punitive methods of discipline. Many of these children look to
their mothers for warmth, acceptance, and affection, but many
times they find that their mothers are preoccupied, especially
if they are solely responsible for the financial support of
the family. As a result of these less than adequate relation-
ships with parental figures, these children often feel
neglected and unwanted. Many of these children have feelings
of low self-worth.

Although it has been mentioned that these children
generally have average and sometimes high intelligence, they
also have problems in constructively channeling their
capabilities in school. They have short attention spans and
lack the ability to concentrate.

Frequently, their academic performance is poor, and
they develop an attitude of their not being able to succeed.
Because they are easily distracted, they often find themselves
in trouble with the school authorities, and are the subject of
many poor conduct evaluations.

The mischievous, adventurous, impulsive nature of
these children lead them into situations where they are at
risk for deviant and unconventional activities. Fireplay and
firesetting is one way in which these children express their
aggressive behaviors. Often these children set fires to
diffuse their excessively high energy level, or to express
their feelings of anger and frustration over their family or
school situations.

They may be involved in setting one or more small
fires near their home alone, or with one or two other friends.
Sometimes they will let someone know about the fire so that
it can be extinguished, but they may be embarrassed and may not want to openly admit their involvement. After a fire, they are often confused and scared. I would like to describe a case example of a child who is at definite risk.

Johnny is a seven year old child who lives with his mother. Mother and father have not lived with one another since Johnny was two, and Johnny and his father do not see one another. For the last two years, mother has been living with a man, and she reports that he and Johnny have an average relationship.

He likes to spend time with Johnny, but at times he can be extremely rigid and overly punitive when Johnny does something he doesn't like. Just recently, mother has separated from her current companion because he physically abused her. Johnny has been witness to this physical abuse several times.

Just after the separation, Johnny's behavior problems began to appear. Mother noticed in Johnny a shortness of temper, a lack of concentration, and a tendency to express his anger by physically destroying his toys. Mother reported that Johnny had been curious about fire since the age of three or four when she found him playing with matches.

At that time, she had taught him how to strike a match correctly. He would practice by striking the match, blowing it out and throwing it in the fireplace. He also was told never to play with matches, and that if he wanted to strike a match, he would have to ask permission.

However, mother reported that during the past few
months she had found him twisting up lengths of paper, striking a match to ignite the paper, and then throwing the paper in the fireplace. She asked him to stop doing this and described how dangerous it was, and the potential consequence of setting the house and themselves on fire. Johnny's most recent episode had been to twist up a paper, ignite it by lighting it on the gas stove and trying to run from the kitchen to the fireplace in time to discard the burning paper.

Unfortunately, he was unsuccessful in getting from the kitchen to the fireplace in time, and the burning paper fell on the carpet and started a fire. Johnny became scared and confused and ran to his mother for help. Luckily she was in another part of the house and could arrive in time to extinguish the fire herself. However, it was this incident that led Johnny's mother to call the fire department for help.

In this case, there are definite signs of behavior problems and family discord. Although for Johnny there is an obvious connection between the separation taking place in his family, and his problems controlling his anger, not all cases are this clear cut. It is always important to try to determine the linkages between the child's behavior and what is currently happening at home and in school.

Johnny's fireplay has gone well beyond the curiosity phase. He had exhibited repeated fire starting behaviors, in spite of his mother's attempts to educate him in a constructive but firm manner. Johnny was more than just interested in fire, he was actively involved in testing the limits of his mother's authority. His repeated attempts at lighting the papers and
throwing them into the fireplace may represent a way for him to express his own internal turmoil and confusion about his current family situation.

These definite risk children have special personal characteristics and social behaviors which increase the likelihood that they will be involved in firesetting. There is also a small percentage of youngsters who are at extreme risk. For the most part they are young boys between the ages of 13 to 16.

These youngsters are often ruled by their impulses and actively seek stimulation and excitement. They have a long history of delinquent or antisocial acts such as stealing, truancy, and fighting with peers. They are typically defiant and resentful, and are openly hostile to authority. Many are incapable of feeling or expressing any remorse or guilt.

They are generally of average intelligence, however they have little motivation to perform well. These boys have problems establishing and maintaining positive relationships with their friends, teachers, and parents.

These extreme risk youngsters usually set fires out of anger or revenge. They also can be motivated by peer pressure and antagonism for authority. They may be involved with school fires after school authorities have insisted on their suspension or expulsion.

The fires are usually set away from the home and with a group of friends. These children or teenagers will not notify anyone after the fire has started and they will not admit to being involved. Generally, they will be incapable of
feeling or expressing any guilt over having started the fire. Watching the fire burn is often pleasurable for them. They appear to be attracted to the flames and the magic and power of the fire.

In fact, the fire is so fascinating to them that they sometimes will be found very near the fire they have set watching it burn. I would like to briefly describe a case example of a youngster who is at extreme risk for firesetting.

Michael is a 14 year old who lives with his father and a younger brother. His mother and father divorced when Michael was 10, and his mother has recently remarried. Michael's father is employed as a truck driver and leaves for work early in the morning and arrives home late in the evening.

When his father has had to take long overnight trips, Michael and his brother spend time with their mother. Michael's father describes his son as a good kid, but he wishes he were more obedient. His mother says she has a very difficult time talking to him, and she feels that he never really listens to her or takes her seriously.

Michael is a very bright young boy, but he has been expelled from several public schools because he has been involved in repeated fights with his peers. He tends to take on the role of class bully, and seems to enjoy antagonizing others into fighting. Michael is currently attending a private school where his grades have been marginal and his conduct average.

As a young child, Michael liked to play with matches and start small trash can fires. Both of his parents
thought he was going through one of those stages, and after a few months, these behaviors would stop. Last week while Michael and his brother were staying with their mother, they both fell into serious trouble. Michael, his brother, and some other teenagers were playing in a nearby schoolyard on a Saturday.

Someone noticed that a door leading into the school was open, and the group entered. Apparently the teenagers proceeded to vandalize school property by breaking windows, overturning furniture and writing obscenities on the walls. Once they finished, all the boys left for home. Michael and his brother, however, returned to the school and set two or three small fires. Then they left the school and returned home to their mother.

When they were eating dinner together that evening, their mother became aware of the fire set in a nearby school, because it was an item on the television's 6:00 p.m. news. It was reported that there had been over $300,000 in property damage. Their mother knew they had been playing in the schoolyard and immediately became suspicious. After much questioning and pressure, Michael admitted that he had started the fire.

Michael had a history of being involved in various antisocial behaviors. He apparently has difficulty adjusting to school environments and almost seizes the opportunity to get himself into trouble and expelled. The lack of attention and supervision in the home may be a critical problem, leading Michael to pursue recognition in socially undesirable ways.

Michael apparently felt no guilt over having set the
school fire, and he made no attempt at trying to extinguish it or calling for help. At the very least, Michael needs an intensive psychological evaluation to determine the motivations behind his fire starting and other delinquent behaviors. More than likely, the psychological assessment will reveal a very disturbed and upset teenager, and long-term professional counseling might be recommended both for Michael and one or more members of his family.

How can we help these children? How can we help these youngsters? The information we have to date suggests that if we do not offer to help them, they will either continue their firesetting behavior, or graduate to more serious anti-social activities. Here is what I propose as one way to tackle the problem of juvenile firesetting.

Table 3 outlines a strategy for helping firesetters. Because we can determine the risk level of those children who become involved in fireplay and firesetting, and because we are beginning to understand their psychology, we can now offer certain kinds of intervention programs.

For children classified as little risk, our experience has shown that brief educational programs are extremely effective. For children classified as definite risk, our experience shows that educational programs are important, but because of the particular psychology of these children, a more long-term intervention is most beneficial.

One approach to helping these definite risk children is the Firehawk Companion Program, which pairs these young fatherless boys with firefighter volunteers who act as a long-
term friend and role model. Given the apparent success rate
of this type of intervention, it seems like the Firehawk
method of helping should be recognized as effective.

For the small percentage of children classified as
definite risk, their recurrent firesetting behavior is only a
small part of a much larger problem they have, adjusting and
coping with the realities of their world. Their behavior
demands long-term, intensive professional help. While these
extreme risk children are identified, they should be referred
immediately for professional treatment.

The state of the art of how to help child firesetters
has advanced considerably in the last 10 years thanks to the
many dedicated individuals working in the fire service. We
can now identify and classify child firesetters, and we are
beginning to develop methods of helping them overcome their
problems.

However, I believe we are also at a new beginning in
the field. We must now take the knowledge we have accumulated
about child firesetting and bring it to fire departments and
communities across the country so that they can take advantage
of the tools available to prevent child firesetters from
burning America. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Dr. Gaynor, thank you very much.
We appreciate the time and effort you've put into this. We
appreciate your testimony here today. Senator Davis, any
questions?

SENATOR DAVIS: Only to commend the lady for the
very fine presentation. It is -- I couldn't help think that
that child could either have become a firesetter, or a
burglar, or a rapist, or any number of other things. It just
happens that a smaller percentage do firesetting, thank
goodness.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Jessica. Our
next witness is Jerry Partain from the Department of Forestry
who is not here. It will be Greg Winterbottom from Senator
Paul Carpenter's Office. The witness after Greg will be
Battalion Chief Tomes of the San Diego City Fire Department.
He has to get back to San Diego, so we'll try to take him on
before lunch.

Greg, good morning.

MR. WINTERBOTTOM: Good morning, Mr. Chairman,
Senator Davis. I'm here on behalf of Senator Carpenter today,
and he would like to acquaint the Committee with the merits of
the National Firehawk Foundation. It's a nonprofit, tax
exempt organization, formed for the purpose of supporting
fire safety and prevention programs.

I'm sure you've heard some of the other statistics
today, but in 1970's, 54.6 percent of all arrested arsonists
in the United States were under the age of 18, including 11
percent of those age 10 or under. It is only since '79 that
the problem of child firesetting has received national attention
and has been met with successful programs.

In 1979, the United States Fire Administration, an
office within the Federal Emergency Management Agency, announced
that it would begin research and development for programs to
categorize and treat child firesetters. Also in 1979, an
independently conceived plan for counseling child firesetters was developed in San Francisco. This effort was granted financial support by the United States Fire Administration. The result was the successful Firehawk Child Firesetting Counseling Program, now the model for a national program to be developed and directed by the National Firehawk Foundation.

The short-range objective of the Foundation is to plan, develop and distribute to fire departments and communities across the nation the Firehawk Program. This program is designed to reduce the incidence of fires, particularly those where children are either the victims or are the setters. The program provides a comprehensive fire safety and prevention training, and pairs fatherless children who have been identified as firesetters with firefighter volunteers.

The long-term objective of the Foundation is to support research, educational and intervention programs aimed at fire safety and prevention. The Foundation's board of directors and its advisory council are comprised of nationally recognized experts from all quarters of the national fire service, as well as mental health experts and civic, corporate and political leaders. The Foundation is a nonprofit, nonmembership organization.

Damage caused by fires has increased ten times during the past decade. Direct damage in 1979 was estimated at $1.3 billion. Indirect damage, which is defined as losses in tax revenues, wages, unemployment insurance payments, and relocation costs, was estimated at over $15 billion.

In 1980, statistics showed almost 3 million fires
cost 6,600 deaths, with 53 percent of the multiple fire victims under the age of 13. The increases in the incidence of fire and the resulting loss of life and property is a major national problem.

While the rate of all fires increased tenfold over the past decade, during that same period, arson increased 325 percent. The United States has the world's highest rate of arson, with one out of every four fires intentionally set. Statistics reveal that the population of known firesetters is dominated by youngsters. Arson has reached epidemic proportions and we must handle it soon.

Until recently, child firesetting was not recognized as a significant cause of fires. Three major problems contribute to this oversight. First, there are some poorly kept statistics. Secondly, parents were hesitant to seek help for their children; and thirdly, there has been a lack of scientific knowledge about the cause and the solutions of firesetting behaviors in children.

These three factors, the lack of accurate statistics, the hesitancy of parents to seek help for their children, and the absence of scientific knowledge about the causes and solutions to child firesetting have contributed to the significant cause of fires in our nation.

The time has come to develop positive programs that can guide our nation's youngsters away from the devastation and tragedy of the firesetting behavior.

With grant support from the United States Fire Administration, the Los Angeles County Fire Department, in
association with psychologist Dr. Ken Fineman, developed and
categorized a screening system for children firesetters. The
system published in manual form in 1980 is designed to be
used by fire departments and children -- to provide children
services.

It divides children into three levels of risk for
involvement in firesetting -- little, definite and extreme.
This new system enables fire service personnel, without
extensive training, to identify children who are, or could
become firesetters.

Statistics compiled by Los Angeles in developing
its system revealed that 80 percent of the children categorized
as definite risk for firesetting can be described as young
boys, ages five to thirteen, and coming from homes where there
is inattentive or absent fathers, and experiencing a recent
family or school-related change.

I'm sure you heard some of the prior testimony to
that fact.

As the Los Angeles categorization and screening
system was being readied, with new information available on
the nature of child firesetters, the United States Fire Adminis-
tration turned to psychologist, Dr. Jessica Gaynor, for the
research and development of a treatment program for child
firesetters.

The plan was to develop and test a concept
organized by Pamela McLaughlin, fire safety volunteer.
Observing her own boys interacting with firefighters, she
hypothesized that a child's firesetting behavior could be
eliminated if the child was provided with a firefighter who could be a positive role model.

The firefighter, besides providing the male attention the child lacked, would have specific goals in working with the child firesetter. These goals include: raising the child's feeling of self-worth; teaching the child to express his emotions; exploring with the child the recreational resources available to them; teaching the child some basic concepts of fire safety and prevention.

Several firefighters immediately expressed interest in the program and offered to volunteer their time. A psychological screening and training program was developed for the firefighter volunteers by Dr. Christopher Hatcher.

A research program was designed to assess the effectiveness of matching definite risk children with firefighter volunteers, to evaluate the specific impact of providing companionship for these children.

The 30 children in the research program were chosen for having the firesetter profile characteristics. In addition, the children entering the program were found to have moderate difficulty controlling their impulses and to have problems expressing their emotions. The 30 paired children and their parents gave informed consent to undergo complete psychological assessments before beginning the program and the one year participation.

Six months after beginning the program, there were no known incidents of firesetting by any of the 30 children. While a one-year psychological follow-up is not yet complete.
for all the children and their families, the 100 percent no-rekindle rate is still intact.

Throughout the two year research and development phase, the Firehawk Children's Program expanded. The program grew into a comprehensive package of five major components, all aimed at teaching children fire safety and prevention.

The Firehawk Children's Program is a volunteer program. Establishing it in fire departments requires minimal resources, and it costs little to maintain because the majority of the staff time is donated through volunteers. Private donations underwrite the few expenses of the program, and the Firehawk Children's Program provides a way of involving youngsters in fire department activities that will help them to grow and mature into responsible community citizens.

In closing, Senator Carpenter hopes to see the Committee address the issue of child firesetting as a disease with positive solutions, rather than a crime that requires incarceration or institutionalization.

As you know, both Dr. Jessica Gaynor and Pam McLaughlin are here, and I'm sure they would appreciate answering any questions. Thank you.

SENATOR DAVIS: Thank you very much for your testimony and this further tribute to the Firehawk Foundation, and all of the other people that are working towards the same direction. So thank Senator Carpenter for us.

MR. WINTERBOTTOM: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR DAVIS: Now, we're going to take Battalion Chief W. J. Tomes from the San Diego City Fire Department so
BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: Senator Davis, other members of the Committee, I'd like to just take a few minutes, and discuss a little bit of what's happened to us in San Diego. Also, I'd like to have Captain Raines come up and deal with some specifics on juvenile firesetters.

I've learned a lot today. I really appreciate the opportunity you've provided by having this Committee. I'm sure that we're going to take a lot of these ideas back to San Diego. We feel that juvenile firesetters is a problem. We've been dealing with it in a certain fashion, and we feel that you need to keep on top of these things if you're going to have good, successful programs, and continue to change them.

Our story in San Diego has, as I've said, been very successful. One of the reasons for that success, by the way is Assemblyman Larry Stirling, which I'm sorry he couldn't be here, is certainly a member of this Committee, was a councilman in San Diego at the time we set up our arson program, and was extremely supportive in getting us funds, and so forth, and getting us started.

We initiated this program in 19 -- June of 1980, and we called it the Metro Arson Strike Team, which we use the acronym of MAST to represent that. We hype this thing very much in our city, and I think the point here, I'm going to try and make, is the use of data, and how important it is to use data accurately if you're going to be successful in dealing with juveniles, or the arson problem in general.

We started the typical arson team, we had eight
fire types, and six police types, we put them together under one roof and developed a team from those 14 people. We feel that is extremely important also in any dealings with arson, that the police and fire have a meeting of the minds, and that they work together as a unit.

Since the inauguration of this unit, we've reduced arson. San Diego was burning like the rest of the nation in 1980. We had a $13 million fire loss due to arson that year. After the first year of operation of the MAST team, it was reduced to $8 million; in 1983 it was reduced to $5 million; and this year we're reaching our four year goal, we're running right up -- projecting out, right about $4 million, which is what we projected when we started the program.

It has been one of our most successful programs that we have ever started in our fire department. It's one of those things where you make a long four year commitment, you stick to it, and you see success.

One of the things that we wanted to do to try and measure success was as I said before, to develop accurate data so that we could look at it, and say, okay, we're doing the right things, we're not doing the right things. One of those, of course, was the arson loss, and the other was our arrest rate and cancellation rate.

We continued to monitor those arrest rates and cancellation rates, I know everybody does this a little bit differently, but we measured our ability based on the -- all the cases that we investigate, which is all the significant arson cases in the city, that's any arson in a structure or a
vehicle, and any major brush or grass fires, and we've
developed how much -- how many cases we cancelled, how many
arrests that we made.

This past year we had an arrest rate of around 55
percent, and we cancelled 40 percent of all the cases that
we investigated. Unfortunately, many of the cases that we
did cancel were involved with juveniles. We feel that the
real key, though, here, to the success of this program is
based on taking this data, and getting it to the community.

We have used MAST, as I say, it's an acronym. In
San Diego MAST is synonymous with arson now. Most of the
people in our jurisdiction know when you say MAST you're
dealing with the Arson Strike Team, and by using the media,
we've -- and this being television, radio, the newspapers,
we've had a chance to really put a seed in the peoples mind
that this is a very effective unit, it's a very good unit.

I think what we've done is probably, you know, made
the unit better in the public mind than it actually is, and
I guess that's the key to the thing here, is if you can get
this across, that hey, this unit is capable of solving any
arson case that happens in this city, it seems to send a
message to the community.

I think that's again been our real key in reducing
the losses, and getting arson under control. When we look
around the country, at other cities like ours, we're the
seventh largest city in the country right now, we find that
we're kind of alone in this thing, and we feel, again, that
that's because -- I think the people in our jurisdiction
recognize if they're going to set a fire in our camp, there's a very strong chance they're going to get caught, and we do advertise our arrest rates. We do make arrests, we make sure they're on television, and we get outstanding support from our media.

In fact, this past year, we track our arson for profit fires, and we have only been identified six or seven -- possibly seven arson for profit fires out of our 18,000 fires that we've had this year. So we feel that's an outstanding record, and we hope to continue that.

I think the thing with success, a lot of times with success comes complacency, and that's one thing we don't want to be is complacent. We have a juvenile counseling program, and as I said, we're looking to improve that. I'd like to have Captain Jim Raines come up and just briefly describe, you know, what we are doing with juveniles, and what we hope to learn, and benefit from this program.

Thank you.

CAPTAIN RAINES: Thank you Senator Campbell, Senator Davis, other members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to speak here.

In trying to direct -- directly to the question, I would say that yes, there is a problem with juvenile fires, and that approximately 50 percent of all fires we have in San Diego are juvenile related. I would think that our juvenile counseling program has been successful in San Diego for a couple of reasons.

One, we've taken two juvenile -- or two fire
prevention specialists and had them trained by local psychologists and experts in the field, and it is their job, in addition to other duties, to counsel juveniles, and their success rate has been very good. After 200 and some counselings, we've only had two repeaters.

I think anything the state can do is to provide professional training, or information for training, for not only counselors, but investigators will be of a great help. I think one of the points that's missed is that you cannot counsel a juvenile unless you find out who he is. In the past, funds for fire service training has fell far behind other law enforcement.

I think police officers can go through POST certified training and be — and their local authorities can be reimbursed for their training, whereas a fire investigator cannot. Although we've made great strides in the recent past, again, any kind of support that the fire investigators themselves can get as far as funding goes will help the apprehension of juveniles, and thereby allow us to counsel juvenile firesetters.

I think the formation of the Metro Arson Strike Team itself has been one of the reasons for our success, and we don't consider ourselves completely successful until we catch all of the juvenile firesetters, and all of the firesetters period. But the fact that we've doubled our fire investigation team in 1980, and more than halved our fire loss, and our firesetters problem, I think speaks for itself.

It's simply an investment in time and money is made,
then I think some admirable products will come as a result of that. Thank you.

SENATOR DAVIS: Thank you. A couple of questions of either you or Chief Tomes, did I pronounce -- is Chief Tomes still here? Yes. Have you used the technique of Firehawk where you use a fire service officer to act as a sort of a big brother, counselor, role model, and so forth? Has that been part of your program?

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: We have had a big brother program, but it wasn't combined with our arson juvenile program. We've read some good things about it, though, and we're definitely interested in it. In fact, we want to have the folks from Firehawk down to discuss that specific program with us.

SENATOR DAVIS: It sounds like you have a highly successful program based on your reduction in arson losses, and an excellent detection program, which is absolutely paramount, and -- but it might be well to think very seriously about a type of program such as Firehawk.

Another question, is there any -- has there been zero POST money spent for fire investigators, or is there some help from POST?

CAPTAIN RAINES: As far as I know, Senator Davis, there is no money for fire department employees. Fire department investigators. I think that POST strictly reimburses training to police agencies, and I'm sure as you're aware, in some cities it varies. In our city, the basic responsibility for fire investigation falls under the
direction of the fire chief, and thereby, the fire investigation unit falls under that direction. Any police officer that's in that unit can get reimbursed through POST, but no fire department employee, as far as I know, can get any kind of reimbursement through POST.

SENATOR DAVIS: A third question, then, is there any -- are there any California departments where arson is investigated by the police service?

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: Yes, there's a number of those that are -- seen to be done both ways. Well, there's three ways it seems to be being done throughout this state, and actually, throughout the country. You have an all police type fire investigative unit, and you have an all fire department fire investigator unit, or you have a mix.

We went around the country and around the state, what we could see was -- it seemed very obvious to us, looking at everybody else's programs was that the ideal set up was when you get the police and fire to join forces, take the discipline of the fire service investigator, and the discipline of a good police detective, put them together under one roof, and use those two disciplines to work together under one management team, and that's basically what we've been able to do.

Both the fire department and the police department have laid down the old traditional walls, and the six police types work in our office, we liaison real closely with police management and fire management, and we look at them all as just being part of that team. Whether they're police or fire doesn't make any difference to us.
SENATOR DAVIS: All right. Then the fourth question is, have any POST funds been set aside for training police arson investigators?

CAPTAIN RAINES: We've had some of our police types --

SENATOR DAVIS: You know, as arson investigators.

CAPTAIN RAINES: As far as I know, Senator, the only criteria for reimbursement on POST funds is that they are -- is that the employee be a direct employee of a police department. So if it's a POST certified class, and they are an employee of the police department, they can be reimbursed.

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: Some of our police detectives have had POST training, and received some of -- you know, some training, but our fire types weren't able to get that. What we were able to do, also, was use the National Fire Academy for police and fire, that's been a nice thing about the federal academy that Mr. Villella represents is that they've been able to train both police and fire, which has worked out very well.

SENATOR DAVIS: Just a comment, now, that your -- one of your eventual deputy chiefs, I think it was Gene Muleheisen and I put in the original thinking and the -- and I was a lobbyist in Sacramento that created POST in 1959, and it was for police and sheriff's officers, for general education of law enforcement.

Since that time, as Senator Campbell will testify, almost everyone and his brother has come in under POST. I mean, I think correctional officers are now there, and other state-type investigators, some special districts, and it's
been expanded greatly. I have resisted much of that because it's gotten away from the original concept of training the beat policeman in being a better policeman, and beat deputy sheriff in doing the same thing.

I would ask my colleague, Senator Campbell, to think about the possibility of -- I hate to have this come from me, of maybe having a legislative amendment that would allow POST funds to be used for arson investigator training, including the liaisons with service agencies in the community, and the use of programs such as Firehawk, on the theory that arson investigation essentially is a police function that administratively within various jurisdictions either falls in fire, or police, or in a combination of both of them.

So I see nothing that would do violence to the original objectives of POST to train that small fraction of the fire service who are fire investigators, fire -- people who are peace officers under state law for the specific purpose of arson investigation. Isn't that correct, they are peace officers for that purpose?

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: That would be extremely helpful, it really would, I know the fire service would --

SENATOR DAVIS: But it would be better if rather than -- Senator Campbell or I on our own to initiate such legislation, for you to take it back to the fire organizations, the California State Firemen's Association, and there's undoubtedly a Fire Chief's -- California State Fire Chief's Association --

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: Yes.
SENATOR DAVIS: And you don't have to go to the intermountain, or any of the rest of them, you just take care of the ones within the state, and if they came to us and said, we want a bill that would provide a portion of POST funds for the specific purpose of training fire department personnel, who are peace officers assigned to arson investigation, I think Senator Campbell and I would jointly put in such a bill. You might ask Senator Campbell.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: No problem at all, that's a great idea, Senator. Good idea.

SENATOR DAVIS: Okay. Back to the -- I now relinquish the gavel, which I never had, back to the Chairman.

BATTALION CHIEF TOMES: Just one other little detail on our juvenile program, just to throw out a statistic, and I've heard several today, we have a -- since we started doing our counseling program, we have counseled 226 juveniles. We've had two repeaters. I've noticed -- it was interesting, we thought we were doing good, then I noticed the Firehawk Program hasn't had any, so I guess that's even a better statistic, and yeah, we -- I think that's a -- it seems like a great idea, and certainly good use of the firemen.

Senator Campbell, I'd just like to say on behalf of the fire prevention officers of California, and I speak on their behalf, personally thank you for your involvement in fire prevention activities in the State of California, we really do appreciate it.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much.

CAPTAIN RAINES: Thank you.
CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: The Committee will now recess until the hour of 1:30.

(Thereupon the hearing was adjourned at 12:10 for luncheon recess.)
AFTERNOON SESSION

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. We would like to reconvene again, and our first witness this afternoon will be Evelyn Davis from the Children's Television Workshop. Is she here now or -- yes, here she is.

(Preparing videotape presentation.)

MS. DAVIS: Sorry for the delay.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: That's quite all right.

MS. DAVIS: Mr. Chairman, Senator Davis, members of the Committee, I'm very pleased to be here today to testify before the Committee, and to describe a public education and mass media program for young children.

The Children's Television Workshop, or CTW, is the first broadcast organization to develop programs that combine measurable educational impact with mass entertainment appeal. Now in its fifteenth year, the workshop has helped provide information and education programming of social value through its productions of Sesame Street, The Electric Company and 3-2-1 Contact.

Since 1969, Sesame Street has consistently drawn an audience of 12 million preschoolers daily, plus 4 million adults who watch without children. Seen in 74 countries, Sesame Street is a symbol of educational television excellence.

Fred Villella has already mentioned that prior statistics indicate that preschool children who make up seven percent of our total population as a group suffer 17 percent of the fire deaths and injuries. Because of this alarming
information, the Federal Emergency Management Agency asked the Children's Television Workshop to consider the inclusion of fire safety information on Sesame Street.

There is much evidence that a multi-faceted approach to learning is the most effective method for children. Using television as the impetus, teachers and parents can accomplish more ambitious objectives than television alone can try for. On the other hand, home and school learning can be bolstered by the television medium. The Sesame Street Fire Safety Project takes advantage of both strengths.

Over the last three years CTW, fire departments, community organizations, public and private institutions have joined forces in a nationwide effort to introduce fire safety education to preschool children through their adult caregivers.

This program is based upon research that was conducted by the Children's Television Workshop Research Department and we have a summary of that research in this brochure.

The project to date has involved more than 1,000 areas of the country, and directly reached 8 million preschoolers.

A few highlights of the project are:

National television coverage through a seven minute segment on Good Morning America, which resulted in requests for more than 30,000 copies of the Sesame Street Fire Safety package. That package is this resource book and record with fire safety information that parents and others can use in English and in Spanish.

Mass media coverage provided 77 and a half hours on
television, 9 and a half hours on radio, and 317 documented newspaper and magazine articles. The appeal of the project is so strong that in the first nine months of this third year, there has been 22 hours and 20 minutes of television coverage, and 2 hours and 28 minutes of radio interviews.

Fire safety information has been interwoven into the Sesame Street curriculum. Stories and articles on fire safety have appeared in our Sesame Street Parent Newsletter, that's this publication. It's also appeared in our 3-2-1 Contact Magazine which is designed for 3 to 12 year old children, and in our 3-2-1 Contact Teachers Guide for use in the classroom.

In one month off the press, a book entitled "A Visit to the Sesame Street Firehouse", which this is, soared near the top of the juvenile best seller list. This is a book that's very inexpensively priced at a $1.50 so it's available for all. A collaboration with Statitrol produced a Sesame Street Fire Safety Kit which was included with their top of the line smoke detector.

I'd like to show you one short sample of how we have included fire safety information in the basic Sesame Street curriculum. Are we ready?

(Video presentation.)

MS. DAVIS: That's a brief sample of how fire safety has been included in various segments of the show. CTW staff have blanketed the country with major presentations at conferences for groups as varied as the Association for the Education of Young Children, Regional...
Migrant Councils, Head Start Programs, day care centers, fire inspectors, chiefs, educators groups and the U.S. Air Force.

Sesame Street Muppets and live cast members have participated in a variety of events throughout the country as part of the ongoing effort to heighten public awareness of the need for fire safety education.

Public television stations have joined CTW staff in mobilizing local community group involvement in fire safety projects.

Assisted by the National Association of Local Cable Programmers, special interactive cable broadcasts on fire safety were produced in 240 locations in Alaska, the cities of Columbus, Ohio; Atlanta, Georgia; Austin, Texas and New York, New York. We know that the Austin show, for example, was directly responsible for saving the lives of two young boys. All of the cable shows have had a high repeat factor, 23 times to date.

A pilot project integrating the Sesame Street Fire Safety Project into the United States Air Force's safety programs has been completed. The project is now expanding into other branches of the armed services around the country and overseas.

Hundreds of Sesame Street Fire Safety festivals have been held throughout the country. In Illinois, for example, Lonnie Jackson spearheaded a week long festival that utilized 936 firefighter manhours to reach 7,450 people directly; 877,450 people through the media, and countless others through a downstream effect. Over 3,300 preschool
children were brought in by bus from schools within a ten mile
radius to participate in the festival.

To give you a little sense of what these fire
safety festivals have been like, we have a short tape of one
that was held in the South Bronx in New York City.

(Video Presentation.)

MS. DAVIS: A couple of other items that I didn't
show you that go with our projects. This is a refrigerator
sticker that's designed to help children remind their parents
to practice fire drills in the home; and this is a puzzle,
firefighters are our friends, that's available for children.

This brief overview describes how Sesame Street has
contributed to public education and therefore is: Using the
appeal of Sesame Street to focus national and local media
attention on fire safety issues; building and teaching life
saving habits to young children to help develop a fire safety
aware generation.

Stimulating combined community action through task
forces organized to deal with a community problem; involving
people in serious efforts that can change and better their
lives; helping teenagers achieve an awareness of fire safety
as an important parenting skill; providing an outlet for the
exercise of personal social responsibility; and demonstrating
the potential for effective use of cable as an interactive
community resource.

It is important that a sense of urgency concerning
the fire safety information and practices be encouraged and
sustained in every community in the country. Given the
mobility of the American population, fire safety awareness is appropriate for urban, suburban and rural communities. However, special attention should be paid to high risk areas.

I recommend the following as high priority program areas: continuation of intensive efforts to develop fire safety awareness and practices among the preschool population; encouragement of the development of year-round media safety campaigns; development of high visibility education programs to ensure the use of early warning devices in the home and enforcement of legislation requiring the installation of smoke detectors in homes and public facilities.

The encouragement of all youth serving organizations and agencies to include fire safety training in their programs; encouragement of the development of neighborhood-based youth tutoring youth projects designed to develop fire safety awareness and participation in arson watch efforts.

The utilization of appropriate state agencies to provide fire safety training for day care providers (an example, through day care licensing agencies). Television and radio stations should be urged to carry fire safety public service announcements during prime time. The establishment of state sponsored interagency task forces to be encouraged to develop and carry out fire safety programs.

Public education can help develop an informed population utilizing positive safety habits. I'm very pleased that I've been invited here, one as a member of the advisory board of the National Firehawks Foundation, and to have had this opportunity to share some of our views and programs with
you. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Ms. Davis, thank you very much. Yours is an excellent program that you've got ongoing, and I've asked Blair if he can get copies of the material that you have there for the members of the Committee.

MS. DAVIS: I'd be happy to.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Senator Davis, any questions?
SENATOR DAVIS: Just to say thanks for not just your fire prevention work, but everything else you do for children, I think it's marvelous.

MS. DAVIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Ms. Davis. Our next witness will be Ms. Elaine Pitts from the Firehawk affiliate in the Turlock area.

MS. PITTS: Hi, members and Senators. Recently I moved and I found several of these volunteer pins like I have here. The one -- this one is from the Veterans Hospital in La Jolla.

One day in looking through Woman's Day Magazine, I saw a small article telling about the Firehawks' program. I immediately sent off for literature concerning this program.

I'd like to tell you a little bit of my background leading up to my speaking here today. I feel like I was born a volunteer. At 14 I became an assistant den mother to the cub scouts. Volunteering for young programs was a family affair. As my father was president of little league and pony league, plus a leader in Boy Scouts, I helped when I was needed.

One day in looking at my brother's Boy Scout magazine,
I found an article telling how one Cub Scout troop back east would serve coffee or cocoa to weary Christmas Eve travelers. I showed the article to my father, and he liked the idea. Consequently, this program became an annual event in our town.

Through my father's participation, I learned to take a chance and get involved in people's needs. He also taught me to give a kid a chance, and loving them enough to see that they are treated fairly.

In volunteering, I enjoyed serving people whether one to one or starting a program from scratch.

While I was on my way to get a B.A. in social science, I studied criminology. We went into Duel in Penryn. Now Penryn was a youth reformatory. In the boys ward sat a little boy on his bed. The guide told us the history of this boy. This was 20 years ago. His story haunted me. He was only 8 and had set many warehouse fires. He evidently had told everyone that he wanted to eventually go to San Quentin. As a last remark, the guide told us, his father sits on his can all day.

After I received the information on how to start a Firehawk affiliate in my community, I tried to encourage some members of the fire department to start this program in their vicinity. Unfortunately, some fire officials, although they seemed to like the program, they would not give me permission to proceed to implement this program.

I talked it over with Pamela, and she advised me to propose this program to my City of Turlock. I gave the literature to the Turlock Fire Marshal and the fire investigator.
After a few weeks they told me to proceed on the project.

When Pamela first started to promote her program, she met many obstacles. But she persevered. She believed in herself and her program. She knew if some firefighters would take her seriously that they would open-heartedly endorse her program. In her manual she states it's easy to get volunteers to help the youth among firefighters. She knew they were warm and caring people, especially with children.

Many new programs are hard to get started. Even Dr. Semmelweis realized doctors needed to wash their hands before going around and examining patients. Many of his OB patients were dying. As he searched for an answer he realized, he was spreading from the autopsy room, or contaminated instruments and hands from other patients. He had the doctors wash their hands in special solution. Death statistics went way down.

However, his supervisor would not follow this practice and discouraged other doctors from trying it. Eventually Dr. Semmelweis was discharged by his supervisor. Dr. Semmelweis was heart sick at the rapid return of death among OB patients. He was so conscientious that he even felt guilty over the number of women he might have infected before he realized that washing the hands was extremely important. Now all doctors wash their hand before examining or doing surgery on a patient.

We have all opened our lives and hearts to a commitment as volunteers of Firehawks. How many years have firefighters wanted a way to stop arson and help arsonists?
I have to tell you a fire story that I heard recently. Three children were playing in a playhouse. The boy decided to play indians. He tied his sisters with a rope to a post, then he disappeared. When he came back, he set the playhouse on fire. The girls' screams were heard, and they were rescued in time. Even a child's rich imagination can become a disaster. Children's lives have been damaged or destroyed by other unsafe methods than by fire.

I believe that children from two and a half to five years old and their parents should have a program of safety. Maybe films, or Smokey the bear-like comic books could help teach better safety steps. I personally have saved two children from suffocating in plastic bags over their heads. Both those children were out of sight of their parents. Do you know it's a bad idea for children to wear anything with their name on it? Especially young children, because some stranger could see their name and call them over by saying, "Hi, Kim," and Kim is more likely to respond to someone who calls their name on her with this response. It happened to me one day when I had my volunteer name tag on.

These are just two examples of the need to be better informed, not just in fire safety, but safety period.

The Firehawk's program not only will save buildings, but lives, and bring understanding and love to the type of child who sets fires. That child is less likely to become an adult arsonist, much harder to catch, or be put in jail to mature to other criminal thoughts.

We should applaud the Firehawk's program, Pamela,
and the many volunteers involved in this program. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony here today.

MS. PITTS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: We appreciate the effort that you're doing in Turlock too, thank you.

MS. PITTS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Our next witness will be Captain Richard Crispin from the San Francisco Fire Department. Captain Crispin.

CAPTAIN CRISPIN: Thank you. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, good afternoon Senator Davis, and other members of the Committee. Chief Condon from the San Francisco Fire Department has asked me to express his regrets for not being able to attend this meeting. He's busy with other items in San Francisco. However, he did want to express the -- his thanks for hearing this kind of a problem. We're certainly concerned with it in San Francisco, and we are actively pursuing juvenile firesetting programs in San Francisco. I'll attempt to describe a couple of them for you so that you can evaluate how we're approaching the juvenile firesetting problem.

The San Francisco Fire Department's Juvenile Firesetter Program relies upon public fire education, such as the Learn Not to Burn Program, to educate juvenile firesetters who may be motivated by curiosity and nonmalicious mischief. Presently in its third year, the Learn Not to Burn curriculum taught in the public schools has made a tremendous impact on the fire prevention awareness of the youths of this city.
During the first year of the program, over 300 teachers attended the Learn Not to Burn workshops. Approximately 15,000 students of the 2nd, 5th, and 7th grade levels received materials and instructions from this privately funded program, which incidentally was set off by Pamela McLaughlin, the active person in the Firehawks Program.

The generation of school children now being exposed to the Learn Not to Burn curriculum will be the teachers of the future. An independent evaluation of the program has shown that there has been a positive impact not only upon the students, but on the teachers and parents as well.

The San Francisco Fire Department has also maintained an active juvenile firesetter diversion program, commonly known as Firehawks, for the past three and a half years. During this time, approximately 50 juveniles have been included in the program, and of this number, 22 remain in contact with firefighter counselors at the present time.

The Firehawk diversion program is designed to apply to juvenile firesetters under the age of 14 years. Prospective participants are referred into the program by schools, social services, the youth guidance centers, juvenile court, fire department personnel, parents, and other concerned citizens.

After screening by a family psychologist to determine if the child has a minor firesetting problem, or requires long-term counseling, those in the middle range of firesetting behavior are matched with firefighter counselors for weekly meetings and/or outings. This informal counseling program appears to be successful as known recidivism is negligible.
It is our opinion, based upon experience, that the juvenile firesetter program is best handled with effective public fire education programs. Juvenile firesetter diversion programs are necessary and beneficial, but the scope of this portion of the problem appears to be exaggerated, particularly in the area, as I see it, of the statistics that have been generated with regard to 11 percent of the arrests being amongst children 10 years of age and older -- younger, excuse me.

I surveyed the Uniform Crime Report, and I couldn't find this statistic anywhere in the report that was issued in September of 1983 which would pertain to problems during 1982. I was an investigator for approximately 13 years, and during that time, I had no occasion to arrest a child under the age of 10. I think there may have been a misinterpretation of a graph that was in the Uniform Crime Report which alludes to age specific groups in a population of 100,000 or more. There was a 10.97 incidence of individuals arrested under the age of 10 in populations of 100,000 or more, and I have some documentation that I will submit to the Committee for your review in order to analyze this problem.

We don't feel that this is a heavy problem in San Francisco, 10 years and under. We're primarily concerned with juveniles who are involved in firesetting activities between the age of 14 and 18 years.

Incidentally, in the Uniform Crime Report for 1982, which was released by the FBI, they indicate that the incidence of juvenile firesetters was 37 percent for those under the age of 18 years, and this again, as I said, we will provide you
in documentation. However, we don't find this to be extremely relevant, because it is a serious problem, it's one that we appreciate addressing with this Committee, and in other areas of the fire service.

Extensive statistical analysis of the juvenile firesetter problem in San Francisco indicates that it's virtually impossible to match our juvenile arson rate -- arrest arson rate, with those that have been quoted in various publications. A distinction must be made between the juvenile who may be driven by curiosity, such as children who are simply too young to appreciate the dangers in playing with matches, and youths who are motivated by the same factors as adult arsonists. This would be vandalism, malicious mischief, revenge, crime concealment, intimidation and profit.

Juvenile firesetters who are motivated by the same factors as adult arsonists, and are responsible for damage to the property of another, should, in most cases, be placed into the juvenile justice system for professional help, and possible diversion to a counseling program.

Juvenile firesetters driven by curiosity should be exposed to effective public education programs such as Learn Not to Burn. Any assistance which the members of this Committee -- this Joint Committee may be able to provide in this area would be appreciated. This is in the area of handout materials for the public schools, and things of this nature.

Incidentally, the woman that preceded me, I thought had excellent recommendations for the Committee with regard to some programs that could be established for public education
of children and juvenile firesetters.

Screening by professionals in order to distinguish between firesetters, in order to identify and develop treatment and other remedial options is critical. It is recommended that community health service professionals be made available to fire departments in order to assist in these evaluations.

It is our further recommendation that consideration be given to expanding the 1983 Fireworks Study being conducted by the State Fire Marshal's Office to include an analysis of the effect upon children who are allowed to use safe and sane fireworks. Our experience has shown that there is an alarming increase in the carrying and use of open flame devices by children before, during and after the holidays celebrated by the use of fireworks.

Enclosed for your perusal are articles pertaining to juvenile firesetters, and we also enclosed some intra-departmental memos pertaining to our analysis of the statistical problem. I'd be happy to answer any questions which you may have.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Senator Davis?

SENATOR DAVIS: In listening to the laundry list of reasons why fires are set, I didn't ever hear anyone talk about sexual motivation, and yet over the years, I can't tell you where, I've heard that many fire bugs got a sexual gratification out of fire. Is that a major percentage of firesetting?

CAPTAIN CRISPIN: It has not been identified as one in San Francisco. I think one of the earlier psychologists
alluded to pyromania and the sexual satisfaction that may be
derived from setting fires. We have had experiences whereby
we have had individuals who have set fires, and it appears
that this may have been a motivation, but it's not a serious
problem in San Francisco, or hasn't been identified as one, sir.

SENATOR DAVIS: In fire-lore, country-wide, is it a
microscopic percentage, or --

CAPTAIN CRISPIN: I would think so. According to
the information that I've received and read from uniform crime
reports in other areas, it is one that's not been identified
as a major problem. I think revenge is probably one of the
greater ones, and also arson for profit. Those are the two
that we concentrate mostly on, and those are the causes and
the motivation behind the majority of fires in San Francisco.

SENATOR DAVIS: Okay, thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Chief.
Appreciate it. Our next witness will be from the Los Angeles
Unified School District, Harry Sibley who is an arson
investigator for the District. Mr. Sibley?

MR. SIBLEY: Good afternoon Senator Campbell and
Senator Davis. My name is Harry Sibley, and I am a peace
officer for the Los Angeles Unified School District, assigned
to arson investigation. My primary responsibility is to
investigate school related fires.

I was a city policeman for five years, and have been
a school peace officer approximately 13 years. I've been
involved in arson investigation at the school district for
approximately the past two years.
I received my specialized arson training at the California Fire Academy at Asilomar and have been certified as a fire investigator by the California State Board of Fire Services.

The Los Angeles Unified School Districts maintains approximately 700 school sites and offices, enrolls approximately 664,000 students, and employs over 60,000 teachers and other staff personnel. The District covers approximately 710 square miles.

School fires are a very significant financial and morale problem within the District. During the past five and one-half years, the District has experienced over 700 reported incidents of arson to District property, amounting to nearly $7 million in property loss.

The majority of these incidents are small trash can, dumpster, locker or shrubbery-type fires, however, the structure fires are very costly financially and severely impact the educational process. Whereas we can estimate $7 million in property loss, there is no way to put a dollar loss on the impact to students, staff and the educational process.

For example, last week, Pacoima Junior High was the victim of two arson caused fires in one evening which completely destroyed one home economics and foods classroom, and a hospitality room. The adjoining home economics room received severe heat, smoke and water damage and will be lost for at least one semester. Across the campus, the second fire damaged a special education classroom.

The home economics, food and catering program,
affecting approximately 800 students, will be lost for one semester to one year. Those students have been relocated in the multipurpose room, displacing numerous physical education classes. The special education classes have been relocated into the library, resulting in an approximate 50 percent loss of regular use of the library.

Another example, in 1982, a major arson caused fire at Poly High School destroyed the attendance, counseling and nurse's offices. The remainder of the administration building was condemned causing the offices of the principal, assistant principal, dean, nurse, counselor, attendance, et cetera, to be relocated throughout the campus where space was available.

Again, the library was used for temporary offices, resulting in loss of that area's use as a library. The extreme inconvenience of the loss of the administrative center will affect over 2,000 students and staff for approximately one and one-half years during reconstruction.

Classroom fires frequently damage or destroy student work and projects and teacher's irreplaceable lifetime collections of photos, tapes, films and other educational aids.

If it were possible to apply a dollar factor to the educational disruption resulting from these incidents, that figure might exceed that of the property loss.

Approximately 99 percent of the Los Angeles Unified School District's school related fires are arson caused. Approximately 95 percent of these occur during off-hours or closed hours. Therefore, they are not usually detected until they are in advanced stages of destruction.
The great majority of our fires are started with combustables found at the location. Los Angeles Unified School District records indicate that nearly all of our arsons are committed by male juveniles living in the neighborhood who attend, or have previously attended the involved school.

Our records further indicate that most elementary school fires are usually set by attending elementary students, or those who have recently graduated to junior high. Junior high school fires are usually set by attending junior high students or those who have recently graduated to high school. High school fires are usually set by attending high school students.

Our rate of apprehension and detection for those responsible is much higher with the elementary age suspects. These suspects are more apt to tell their peers which aids in their detection. Usually the crime involves more than one or two participants, and the fire is usually subsequent to other vandalism in the area of the school, which also aids in the detection.

Younger suspects usually strike during earlier hours of the evening, or on weekends when there are more potential witnesses available. This age group is obviously easier to interview successfully.

Older suspects are increasingly more difficult to detect and prosecute because they're more sophisticated, street-wise, and the motives are frequently different. They may set a small fire to destroy certain records which continues to burn for several hours, escalating into a major structural
fire. On the morning after, when the severity of the act is apparent, these suspects realize the seriousness of the consequences and become far less communicative.

My experience indicates that the motives for juvenile firesetting in the schools are variable. Elementary school age firesetters tend to be motivated by thrill or as a part of vandalism which they commit in the school. They are usually opportunistic fires.

Junior high age suspects generally intend to disrupt the school, are spiteful, or are expressing malicious attitudes. They may also be opportunistic. High school age suspects usually intend to destroy documents or records, or angry at a teacher or the school, wish disruption, or are just malicious and enjoy destroying or burning.

Our data tends to indicate that school arson fires are not usually set to cover other crimes, or by adult suspects, or financial gain, or to my knowledge, ever for any sexual gratification.

Our statistics, as shown in the attachment, fail to indicate any apparent parallels of arson incidents to burglary and vandalism incidents. It's interesting to note that when arson incidents are up, vandalism incidents are down. During the highest year for burglary and arson -- or vandalism incidents, the arson dollar loss was at its lowest for those years reported.

Our records indicate that the district averages approximately 40 structure type arson incidents per year, and approximately 6,700 burglary and vandalism incidents per year.
Therefore, assuming that arson is a part of a 
burglary and the entry, only slightly over one-half of one 
percent of the burglar/vandals are firesetters. We're 
extremely fortunate that more suspects do not decide to drop 
a match in the wastebasket and put it under the teacher's 
desk while they're inside the school before they leave. 

Approximately two years ago, the Los Angeles 
Unified School District's Security Section established an 
anti-vandalism/crime prevention unit. The unit makes presenta-
tions to elementary age students. The presentations are 
designed to increase student awareness of the effects of school 
crime, vandalism and arson on their lives and school environ-
ment. The program utilizes school peace officers through the 
medium of a puppet show to reduce vandalism and school crime. 
The dangers and misfortunes of school arson are included in 
the presentation. 

Preliminary results of the program appears to 
indicate a vandalism and crime reduction in the areas where 
the program has been presented. 

On the accompanying attachment relating to the 
statistical information, I was noting that a lot of experts 
feel that the younger age firesetters are opportunistic, and 
it would seem that if that holds true in school arsons, that 
when the vandalism/burglary incidents, which they are in the 
school during closed hours, were up, that the elementary arson 
figures would also be up. 

However, according to the statistics we have 
available, as the incidents of burglary and vandalism declined,
or I should say, increased from '78 through '80, the incidence of elementary school fires declined during that period of time. It's my opinion that possibly school arsons are more -- are related more to the specific attitudes of the individual, rather than to community attitudes, the ethnicity of the area, the economic area, et cetera, and a lot of times it's said that when crime is up, arson is up, and other crimes follow suit.

However, according to these statistics, that does not appear to be true. An interesting note that the east side of Los Angeles, which is generally considered to be a low income area, has the lowest school arson rate during the last few years than any other part of the city.

The Los Angeles School District appreciates the opportunity to provide the information to the Committee. We trust that it will be beneficial in assisting in the reduction of juvenile firesetting.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Mr. Sibley, thank you very much. Thank you, we appreciate your testimony here today.

MR. SIBLEY: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Our next witness will be Andy Casper is not with us -- will be Chief Bill Patterson from FEMA, the Regional Field Representative. Bill? For Region IX.

MR. PATTERSON: Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Senator Davis. I'm William Patterson, the Regional Fire Representative for FEMA Region IX. The fire representative position and responsibilities are to provide the -- serve as a communicator and a coordinator for the Fire Administration
programs with state and local agencies.

The Region IX section includes the states of California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii and the Pacific Trust Territories. The United States Fire Administration is a major division of the FEMA, and has, since its inception in 1975, placed a high emphasis on the arson problem.

While no program is a panacea to this particular problem, I hope to share with you a number of successful programs the U.S. Fire Administration either has initiated, supported, and/or encouraged in this war against arson. My background includes some 35 years as an active fire service member, and as such, have seen a number of these problems from a various number of perspectives.

I am pleased the Committee has seen the necessity to address the problem of arson, and particular the problem of juvenile arson. As indicated in the correspondence relating to this hearing, arson continues to take an intolerable toll, both in human suffering and economic loss.

As additional data is collected, it becomes tragically apparent that juveniles are a disproportionate number of the participants. I'm confident today you will hear, and have heard, a variety of statistics relating to the problem, and I'm sure that many of these statistics will tend to contradict one another.

Essentially, that says that available statistics on arson in different and confusing -- point in different and confusing directions at once. Even with substantially improved reporting systems, reporting gaps still abound. Arsons are
misclassified, and widely divergent viewpoints on the meaning of all this data continue to haunt agencies that collect arson statistics.

For example, the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System, and the National Fire Protection Associations' Reporting System, arson rose roughly between six percent -- rose roughly six percent between 1980 and 1981. In contrast, the FBI notes that arson incidents during this same period to which Uniform Crime Reporting System by local agencies dropped slightly during this same period.

Insurance companies using their own collection system report arson as leveling off during this period, with losses due to arson increasing. It's interesting to note for the year 1981 and '82, most agencies indicate a modest decline in arson fires. Even with this modest decline, the FBI 1982 reports a higher degree of juvenile involvement in the crime of arson than any other index crime. It's obvious that arson continues to plague us as a major social problem.

Before we attempt to find solutions to the juvenile arson problem, let's essentially see what that problem is. What is arson? The legal definition of arson varies from state to state, but most states define the act of arson as the willful burning of a building, or the property of another, or the burning of one's own property for some improper purpose, such as to collect insurance.

The motives for arson are many, but we'll identify the five motives here, and put some percentages on those that might tend to provide some clarity to Senator Davis' question.
Number one is vandalism, and the motive is vandalism, and the estimate of arson by motive ends up anywhere from 30 to 40 percent. The second motive is revenge, anywhere from 18 to 30 percent. Arson for profit runs the gamut from 3 percent to 19 percent. And pyromania is a difficult one, as you can see here by the percentage, it says it runs anywhere from 6 to 25 percent. Crime concealment is 7 to 10 percent.

It's apparent that most of these major motives fit the juvenile firesetter. We question why this alarming increase in the crime of arson over earlier years and why now a leveling off or decline in this crime. I have my own opinion, based on many years of being deeply involved in fire safety, and essentially, they are these:

1. Over the past year, a greater emphasis and importance is being placed on arson today than ever before.

2. Firefighters and officers are better trained to identify arson fires and preserve evidence.

3. Fire incident reporting systems have established better data banks on which to draw conclusions.

So essentially what I'm saying is that we've had arson, arson has been a problem in this country for years, and only in the past several years have we really identified the arson problem that's really occurred and been there for some time. Now, we've made some efforts to improve or reduce that arson problem, and many of the anti-arson programs established are providing positive results, and we're seeing the conclusion of some of those results today.

It's interesting to note that in an early arson
reduction seminar held in 1976 by the then National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, now the U.S. Fire Administration, they identified nine areas requiring attention if we as a nation are going to control the arson problem, and I'd like to identify those and see how we've impacted on those.

1. Responsibilities. The intent was to define the responsibilities of the fire service, law enforcement, the legal system, the insurance companies, and other public and private bodies who should be concerned with the arson problem, essentially, what's their role, and what's their responsibility.

2. Reclassification. Reclassify arson in crime reporting systems to reflect its true status as a major offense. You can see that essentially some of that's happened through the inclusion of that in the FBI Crime Reporting System.

3. Training. There is a need to develop and apply training programs which are directly keyed to job-related needs of professional investigators and other categories of personnel such as firefighters, police officers, attorneys, prosecutors, judges, insurance adjusters, underwriters, and claims supervisors.

5. Reporting. There needs to develop a better reporting system, better data collection system, and data analysis procedures on a local, state, and national basis.

6. Laws and regulations. There is a need to promulgate and apply effective laws and regulations which are as uniform as possible among jurisdictions.

7. Funding. There is a need to identify and develop adequate sources of funding to combat arson.
8. Research and development. There is a need to conduct research and development to make better and more useful tools for arson investigation, and to provide a better understanding of social and behavioral phenomena associated with arson.

9. Uniform terminology. There is a need to develop a consistent, uniform terminology that can be applied to arson and incendiarism by all disciplines and in all sections of the United States.

Now, the fire community has responded to these needs, and although the continuing effort is needed, and always will be in many of these areas, let's identify some of the major successful programs that are addressed in the nine needs identified in the 1976 report.

1. Federal Arson Task Force. The Federal Arson Task Force tends to coordinate all the activities of the federal agencies in an arson investigation and arson activities. While in the past we have the coastal authorities, we had the FBI, a number of other federal agencies, the firearms, and some of the other agencies doing their own thing, by coordinating that into a Federal Task Force, we ended up being far more effective in addressing the arson problem from the federal level.

2. The development of arson task forces. Local, regional, and state task forces. Membership includes fire, law enforcement, and legal representation through whom a coordinated approach has been far more effective in addressing the arson problem. Through the encouragement of the Fire
Administration, a number of arson task forces were developed and put into place across the country. Their success, in turn, encouraged other agencies to develop such programs.

While I was Fire Chief in Santa Barbara County, I was fortunate to have the opportunity to implement such a program there. It's been an effective tool in addressing the arson problem in that county.

Obviously, by having the various disciplines working together, we're far more -- in a far better position to ensure conviction and so forth, than we have in the past.

3. Public education programs. The U.S. Fire Administration, local fire departments, and several major insurance companies have developed public information programs relating to the arson problem. You've heard about some of these here today, Learn Not to Burn, the Sesame Street programs, and some others.

4. Tipster and hotline programs. These programs have served to provide the citizens access to agencies investigating arson, and an opportunity to directly participate in specific arson investigations. The WeTIP program, which we'll hear more about later, is certainly one of the leaders in this particular area here in California, if not in the nation.

5. Juvenile counseling programs. Several successful programs that were developed in California with the support of the USFA, the San Francisco Fire Department, and the Los Angeles County Fire Department. They continue to use slightly differing but highly successful programs. I think you've heard
a good deal about those today, and hopefully this idea will continue to spread on a nationwide basis.

6. Early warning systems. Several successful programs such as AIMS, Arson Information Management System, have been developed and implemented which predict arson targets so that preventive activities may concentrate on the most likely targets. This program is being expanded. The software for that program is available to all fire agencies in the country.

7. Training programs. Many arson and fire scene investigator classes have been held, both at central sites and at many local training facilities. The coordination of the National Fire Academy, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, through the support of the now defunct LEAA program, carried training to many parts of our country and gave the initial training to a substantial number of fire/arson investigators.

As a point of interest, recently I was in the Republic of Palau, I had the -- I was met by an FBI agent from Honolulu who had been requested to assist them in an arson -- a very, very ticklish and sensitive arson fire that they'd had in that Republic. It was particularly interesting for me to note that he reported to me that he received his initial training in arson in one of the Fire Administration programs.

So we've seen this tend to expand even on a world-wide basis. The National Fire Academy continues to identify fire/arson investigation as a major program area, and offers a number of fire/arson related classes both at the National Fire Academy, and in the outreach program in the field.
8. Reporting. The CFIRS, California Fire Incident Reporting System, and the NFIRS, the National Fire Incident Reporting System have provided an improved means of collecting, storing and retrieving fire/arson statistics. While we've heard some criticism of those particular systems here today, I'd like to suggest that it -- while they certainly contend to be improved, and we will continue to work to improve them, I'd also suggest that I would doubt very much if we'd ever develop a system that provides all of the information, and all the data, and all the statistics that one particular discipline needs.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: I don't think there was any criticism of the system, Bill, I think there was just an item of what more information can we and should we be getting from the system.

MR. PATTERSON: I read it that way, too, Senator.

9. Sharing information. The U.S. Fire Administration operates the Arson Resource Center in which all arson related articles and data are retained and available for those seeking same. Also, arson resource directories have been published and are available for the use of the U.S. Fire Administration with information relating to successful programs and contact points for such programs.

The newest of such publications is the Public Technology's Incorporated Program, War on Arson and How to Win. It was developed, financed and published through the cooperative efforts of PTI, FEMA, and the Aetna Insurance Corporation. Some of the other information sharing has come about through
legislation, which provided greater access between the public sector, and the insurance sector relating to arson fires and information and data that's collected by the individual agencies.

Recent changes in law provide for this sharing of information between public and private agencies that had been earlier restricted.

10. Funding. Funds for the continuation of the War on Arson have been limited and restricted, or eliminated at the federal, state and local levels. While hope exists for passage of the Justice Assistance Act which provides substantial federal support for arson related programs, each state and local agency can profit by utilizing existing appropriate programs.

I'd like to comment personally on the impact of Prop. 13. What you gentlemen have heard here today are some of the leading fire officials in the State of California, and I'd like you to be well aware that the impact, the fiscal impact on communities, on fire departments in this state, and across the nation has tended to impact some of these programs in a very negative manner.

You've heard today from some of the departments that place high priority on the arson program, and the investigation and public information and education, that isn't the case in many parts of this state, and many parts of this nation.

These programs have provided a positive impact on our nation's arson problem. I think we're seeing the results of that impact. Although only some are directed specifically towards the juvenile firesetter, all have application.
One area commonly overlooked on addressing the arson problem is the capability of quickly controlling and extinguishing such fires so that they fail to achieve their purpose. Such technology is available to us through smoke detectors and quick response sprinkler systems for structural property.

Essentially, the information is contained in this particular document, and I'd like to make this document part of the testimony here, if I may, and I have two documents here for the two Senators.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you.

MR. PATTERSON: I will close with a statement made in 1979 from Mr. Gordon Vickery, the Administrator of the U.S. Fire Administration. I think that it emphasizes the importance of implementing the programs that have proved as successful, and I think what he says is still appropriate today.

"Arson has been studied to death. Our responsibility now is to act -- coordinated actions which will reduce arson's devastation to our cities, and to our people...Let's get on with it."

I'd be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Chief, thank you very much. I appreciate your testimony here today, and I appreciate your joining with us. Our next witness will be --

SENATOR DAVIS: Could I ask a question?

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Oh, I'm sorry. Senator Davis.

SENATOR DAVIS: What's pyromania?

MR. PATTERSON: Pyromania is the sexual gratification, or gratification for setting a fire one way or another, whether
it be sexual or otherwise. That falls into that area you're
talking about.

SENATOR DAVIS: That's 6 to 9 percent?

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: We'll let Dr. Gaynor maybe
respond to that. Dr. Gaynor, do you want to respond to that,
is that correct?

DR. GAYNOR: Yes, that's correct.

SENATOR DAVIS: One other question. What do you
think of the Firehawk program?

MR. PATTERTON: I think the Firehawk program is an
excellent vehicle for one part of the program. I hope what
I've tried to emphasize in my comments here today is that it's
a multifaceted problem, and it's a variety of kinds of
activities and efforts that all of us have to engage in if
we're going to manage that problem. The Firehawk program is
one section of that, and it most certainly is an effective one.

SENATOR DAVIS: Okay. Does your agency attempt to
propagate the Firehawk program?

MR. PATTERTON: Our agency initially put the dollars
up for the initiation of the Firehawk program, to pilot test
the Firehawk program, and what it was, essentially was, is
seed money, which we've done with many of these programs to
initiate them, to see if, in fact, they were effective, to
take a package that -- of those effective programs and
distribute them.

Essentially, the Firehawk program has moved on even
more quickly than we'd hoped for in that it's got additional
funding and support from the private sector, which tends to
move it on on a nationwide basis. The program that was done
in Los Angeles County, we developed a number of informational
brochures and booklets that related to that program, they
were distributed and shared with people across the country,
and many places across the country picked that up, used that
program if they felt it was appropriate for their area.

SENATOR DAVIS: I guess the reason I'm asking these
questions is that I always thought as a policeman that if you
could work in the area of prevention, that the payoff is
always larger than working at arrests and prosecutions when
people get older. It would seem like the Firehawk program
would be a crime prevention thing against arson, that would
deserve some proselyting on the part of your agency.

In other words, even though it's growing rapidly,
it still covers only a small microcosm of American society.

MR. PATTERSON: I differ with you in that -- in
your evaluation --

SENATOR DAVIS: Does it cover a large -- what
percentage of the population is serviced by a Firehawk program?

MR. PATTERSON: Obviously, I'd have to let the
Firehawk program people share that with you, but there are
chapters that are being expanded all over the country, and
it's my understanding it's a nationwide program now for those
agencies, and those departments, those cities that want to
participate in it.

SENATOR DAVIS: I have 22 states, and more than
that individual departments, but if you looked at the whole
percentage, you know, what percentage that is of the population
of the country, it may be as little as five percent. I'm guessing now, I don't know.

MR. PATTERSON: Senator --

SENATOR DAVIS: I can ask --

DR. GAYNOR: I'm not quite sure what percent is covered right now by the Firehawk program. I know that certain statistics like the average size of an affiliate covers about 350,000 people, and that we're expanding so rapidly, it's a little hard to keep track of our records. But we could use all the support from the private and public sectors that --

SENATOR DAVIS: So it covers one and a half percent of the population, something like that?

DR. GAYNOR: Yeah. Hopefully someday we'll --

SENATOR DAVIS: Okay. All I'm doing is saying, you know, you can be a good propaganda agent for it to disseminate it further.

MR. PATTERSON: That's -- Senator, that's essentially what part of my job is, to take the programs that we've identified, that we've had participation in, that have been successful, sharing those with other people. I think I'd like to caution -- make a point of caution. One that the Firehawk program, although it's successful, and appears to be a good ongoing program, still ends up only being one very, very small sector of the problem.

The other, that the Firehawk program, is it right for every agency, and why I say that is that the agency has to have an enthusiasm, and an interest, and recognize their
problem before they'll participate in it. So just -- you have to have the right people and the right timing to initiate this program, just as we do with a variety of others.

SENATOR DAVIS: Well, that's why it needs more enthusiastic people pushing it.

MR. PATTERSON: I'm enthusiastic, and that's our plight. Thank you, Senator.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you, Bill. Our next witness is Chief Richard Basted from Riverside Fire Department. He's also representing the California Fire Chiefs Association, and WeTIP, and Chief, we're going to get you on the freeway before 3:00 o'clock. Heading east, you want to be on that freeway before 3:00 o'clock.

CHIEF BOSTED: You bet.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: So do I.

CHIEF BOSTED: Senator Campbell, Senator Davis, and ladies and gentlemen, my presentation is going to be short, and I want to preface my response to the four points that were indicated in your letter of invitation to speak by indicating that I believe that the State Legislature in recent years has responded to the requests of the fire service in a constructive way.

The increase in penalties for the crime of arson, as well as redefining the actual Penal Code sections dealing with the crime have been beneficial to our objectives. It's become easier for our investigators to file charges on perpetrators, and easier also to obtain the cooperation needed from the district attorneys in the State of California to help
in the prosecution phase of this crime.

Additionally, I believe that the increased penalties
for the crime of arson in many cases have served to deter
would be arsonists, and we're talking about those adults that
perpetrate those crimes in most cases. I believe that those
facts are partially, and I go back to what Bill just said, to
know that it's got to be a -- there has to be a multimedia
effort to control the crime of arson, and I believe we've
done some wonderful things in the just past couple of years.

I believe that these facts and the help from the
State Legislature is partially responsible for the overall
downturn of the incidence of arson crimes in the State of
California.

I've talked with the members of the Board of
Directors of the California Fire Chiefs as recently as a week
ago last Friday, and asked them, and they're 13 fire chiefs
from all over the State of California, what their impressions
are, and what this legislative committee could do to assist
us in controlling the crime of arson.

The interesting thing is that they're all experiencing
the same kind of a downturn. I'd like to think that in
Riverside, it's because of what we're doing locally. But I
think that we're experiencing this downturn all over the
state, and you're partially responsible for it as legislators
in redefining those Penal Code sections.

Now, in response to some of the specific points you
made in your letter of invitation, and although our juvenile
firesetters are still a problem in California, we've experienced
a reduced incident rate during the past year, as well as other arson fires generally. I think it's also due to the juvenile counseling programs that exist today, which are, by the way, I think woefully inadequate in terms of their availability, and I'll get to that in a minute.

To assist, I think, in continuing and accelerating this reduction in crime. I think now that we're on the offensive, I think now is the time to redouble our efforts, because the strides that we've made, and Chief Davis -- Senator Davis mentioned that prevention has got to be worth a pound of cure, and I believe that too. I think that the prevention doesn't show up in statistical evidence the way that we'd like it to so that we could redouble our efforts and pump out a certain number of dollars at the end of the trail.

Because what happens is, as you know, in municipal governments throughout the State of California, when the problem goes away, they stop spending money on it, and when that happens, why we're going to have a return to the old statistics again, unless we remain diligent.

So I think that in accelerating this reduction in crime, that if we had a central clearinghouse in California, or a computer, if you will, for the storing of arson information, that it would be an investigative asset. This type of a tool has been recommended for some years by the fire service, and I believe that the time has come for this technology to be utilized.

This clearinghouse, if you will, could be established
in the Office of the State Fire Marshal if funding were made available to do so. Again, I believe, as many of our previous speakers today have stated, that public education has the most promising prognosis for dealing directly with the crime of arson. WeTIP, you know, which is an acronym for We Turn In Pushers, began in 1972 as a drug abuse mitigation program in the West San Gabriel Valley that expanded in 1978 to accept anonymous information on all major crimes.

At that time, if I remember right, Senator Davis was at that press conference that day, and we asked the founder/director of WeTIP if he'd be willing to accept arson as a major crime, because you know, at that time, the FBI hadn't yet seen fit to do so, and Ed Davis and Bill Brownell both agreed that would be a good idea. That began our statewide war on arson through WeTIP.

If you've been paying attention to the latest television reports, you'll recognize that that's now a national program. In fact, Chicago, Illinois is doing their best to unseat KABC, WLS TV in Chicago is trying to unseat KABC in Los Angeles as the top rated news program in the nation, and KABC in Los Angeles admits readily that it was the WeTIP program that put them in that spot.

So I love to see that kind of competition, and they highlight various arson crimes on that program from time to time, and even though they don't all generate the kinds of tips that result in arrests and convictions, I believe that that kind of highlighting does create a deterrent.

Finally, in your fourth point, psychological
motivations that develop in juveniles from broken homes, or one parent homes implies that the parents must become part of the counseling program. Investigators generally do not have the necessary counseling skills and need someone to refer these firesetting juveniles to in addition to the judicial system.

So at any rate, that finishes my comments, and I would be happy to answer any questions if my voice will hold up.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: I have some cough drops here, Dick, if you need them. I'd be delighted to share.

Ed, any questions?

SENATOR DAVIS: No.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, and we will get you on the freeway before 3:00 o'clock.

CHIEF BOSSED: All right, pyromania, I have to respond to -- if I can hold up just a second more. Many psychologically maladjusted juveniles that start fires don't do so for sexual gratification, but receive sexual gratification subsequently. The fire is started for other motivation, such as vandalism, or revenge, or spite, and the sexual gratification comes as another part later. That's the results of the research that I did on it, because it's always bandied about, as you say, Senator, and I've heard it for many years too. Thank you.

SENATOR DAVIS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you. Wayne Tyson from the -- an arson specialist with Aetna Casualty Company. Mr. Tyson.

MR. TYSON: Thank you. I came with a list of
statistics and problems, and I've heard everybody
give all the information I was going to use today, so I'm
going to skip over that.

I've been listening to previous speakers, I've
heard their ideas on statistics, problems, the juvenile
problem, and so forth, and I understand, and I agree with them,
and as I mentioned, I'm not going to throw any more statistics
and so forth your direction, because I'm sure during the
previous day you've heard almost all of them.

The one thing that I would like to mention, and
speaking for an insurance company, and I'm the only one that's
been here today speaking for the insurance company and their
problem. One statistic you ought to remember, it's the
consumer, not big business, that is suffering as a result of
the arson fires.

Twenty percent of all insurance premiums are used
to offset the expense of arson as we know it now. I'm also
probably the only person in this room who has experience on
both sides of the field. I started with Prince Georges County,
Maryland as a firefighter, and then for eight years I was on --

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: I thought you were going to say
you started as an arsonist.

MR. TYSON: No I started -- I should. I was a
firefighter, and then I spent eight years on the arson bomb
squad in Prince Georges County, Maryland, and now I'm on the
other side of the fence in the insurance business. As a result,
I've seen both sides of the fence, the problems that the fire
departments are experiencing, and the problems that we are
experiencing as an insurance industry.

Aetna has been a forerunner of all the insurance companies in the fact that we recognize the arson problem, and it is a large major problem in the United States, and we are trying to do our part to put a stop to it, and to combat it. We're one of the first companies, as I said, that are aware of the arson problem, much less the juvenile arson problem. We are experiencing problems with that also.

As I said, we realize that the problem exists. We're trying to do our part to fight it, and so are a lot of other companies, and the only thing that I want to mention, being as everybody's covered all the ideas I wanted to have is that we have gone out and done materials that are available, such as what you saw today with Sesame Street, and so forth, that Aetna has produced, and printed, and has given out free of charge, hundreds of thousands of this booklet, which was written by our Director, Mr. John Barracotto, which I will leave with you.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you.

MR. TYSON: We have just come out with a printing on the Aetna arson prevention series, four various booklets, one is Detecting Arson; one is Preventing Arson Epidemics, The Role of Early Warning Strategies; and one is Organizing of Staffing, Administration of the Arson Investigation Unit; but the fourth one here is A Juvenile Firesetter and School Arson Prevention Programs. We do mention the Firehawks in this book.

But the fact that we have printed these, and we
I have recognized that it is a serious problem, it's one that we're going to have to face more and more everyday, and as a result, I just appreciate the few minutes that you've allowed me to speak here today, and to give you a chance, if there's anything we can do with you as an industry, feel free.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you.

MR. TYSON: Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Mr. Tyson, thank you very much, we appreciate your being here. Our final witness will be Chuck Edwards representing the Arson Investigators. Mr. Edwards.

MR. EDWARDS: Senator Campbell, Senator Davis, I'm with the California Conference of Arson Investigators. We're an organization that has fire, police, insurance, public utilities and private investigators. We're also concerned in the juvenile firesetters.

We agree with the previous speakers. The Firehawk is a very good program, and in leaving, I want to get out of here at 3:00 too -- and in leaving, with Senator Davis' comment about POST, you will be receiving a letter from us requesting some help with that. Thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: Thank you very much, Mr. Edwards. Is there anybody else who wishes to testify this afternoon, and take us beyond the 3:00 p.m. deadline that I've established?

(No audible response.)

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL: If not, I thank you all very much for your appearance, and for your testimony, and your help and assistance. We look for ward to seeing you again soon.

Thank you. This meeting stands adjourned.

(Whereupon the hearing was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.)