



MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN TOUR ABINGTON TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT'S SAFETY HOUSE TO LEARN VALUABLE FIRE PREVENTION LESSONS

ABINGTON – Abington Township Fire Department firefighters visited third-graders at McKinley Elementary School to pass along valuable fire safety tips and show students the apparatus and gear that firefighters use to keep the community safe.

Using the ATFD's Fire Safety House, a trailer that is outfitted with a kitchen, living room and bedroom, ATFD firefighters taught students to avoid the many hazards that can cause fires in the home. Students learned that simple acts like making sure flammable materials are kept away from stove burners and fireplaces and turning pot handles so they cannot be bumped by someone passing the stove can help keep a family safe. In addition to these lessons, students in the Fire Safety House practiced staying low in a smoke-filled room, exiting from a window using a ladder and dialing 9-1-1 for help.

"The ATFD Fire Safety House is a hands-on way to teach our youngsters the importance of fire prevention – it allows them to be involved in the lesson and learn by doing," said Dave Schramm, ATFD Fire Services Administrator. "These types of demonstrations are effective at helping young people to prevent and respond appropriately to emergencies."

McKinley Elementary School Principal Charles Lentz said the Fire Safety House has been making stops at McKinley for several years now, and offers the perfect opportunity for children to practice what they are learning in school about fire safety.

"We focus a lot on safety in the building and do fire drills, so this brings it all to life for them and ties into what we are already doing," said Mr. Lentz.

The third-graders who toured the Safety House were attentive listeners who were able to recite the many different fire prevention tips they had learned.

Student Emily Friel said she was surprised to learn that if someone is trapped inside a room due to a fire, it is smart to throw a stuffed animal or blanket out the window so that firefighters know where to go first when they arrive. Learning these tips will help her be more prepared if there is an emergency.

“I think it’s important because if you have a fire at your house, you know what to do and you can get out,” she said.

Classmate Natalie Faye agreed.

“You never know when you might have a fire. You have to be prepared at any time,” she said.

In addition to teaching children fire safety rules, McKinley Fire Company Chief Chris Bors showed students the gear that firefighters put on before heading out to an emergency, and taught them about the many features of one of the company’s fire engines. Students were surprised to see how heavy the air tanks are, and asked questions about the “accountability tags” that firefighters wear to aid in their own protection at emergency scenes.

The ATFD is committed to fire safety education and makes many visits throughout the school year to public, private and parochial schools in Abington Township to teach children how to prevent or escape from fires.

The ATFD headquarters is located at 1176 Old York Road in Abington. For more information, call (267) 536-1055 or visit AbingtonFD.org.

