



FEMA

R0629

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

By now you should have received an email notification from the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions Office. This notification indicates your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), National Fire Academy (NFA) “Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention” (YFPI) course.

Congratulations on your acceptance into the USFA’s/NFA’s YFPI course. The purpose of the course is to provide you with the knowledge and skills necessary to identify children and adolescents involved in firesetting and to establish programs to meet their needs. The course framework guides you through the process of developing a comprehensive strategy to combat the misuse of fire and incendiary devices by youths.

Enclosed is a pre-course assignment, which is a prerequisite for attending this course. You are to bring the completed assignment with you to class.

This is a six-day class that starts on Sunday at 8 a.m. Subsequent classes will meet daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with evening classes possible.

The course materials are now available in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) format that will function on any electronic device. If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) **before you travel to Emmitsburg** and bring the preloaded device with you. Please see the page following this letter for complete instructions on successfully downloading your course materials. Please note: If you plan to bring/use an iPad, you may experience issues saving/storing/printing course assignments because there is no USB/thumb drive capacity for these devices.

The NFA classroom environment is computer based. Increased numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers or other electronic devices to campus; you are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The NFA cannot provide computer software, hardware (which includes disks, printers, scanners, monitors, etc.), or technical support for your device. For your convenience, we do provide surge protector power strips at each classroom table.

If you need additional information related to your course’s content or requirements, please contact Mr. Michael Weller, Fire Prevention Management Curriculum training specialist, at 301-447-1476, or by email at [michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:michael.weller@fema.dhs.gov). Good luck, and I hope to see you on campus.

Sincerely,

Eriks J. Gabliks, Superintendent  
National Fire Academy  
U.S. Fire Administration

Enclosures

April 2025

## **National Fire Academy Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Course Materials/Download Instructions**

If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) before you travel to class and bring the preloaded device with you.

The **first step** is to download Adobe Acrobat Reader to your device. This will enable you to read and manipulate the course materials. Adobe Acrobat Reader can be used to comment and highlight text in PDF documents. It is an excellent tool for note-taking purposes.

### **For laptops and computers**

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded from [www.adobe.com/downloads/](http://www.adobe.com/downloads/). It is a free download. Please note that depending on your settings, you may have to temporarily disable your antivirus software.

### **For tablets and other similar hand-held devices**

Adobe Acrobat Reader can be downloaded onto devices such as iPads, Android tablets and other hand-held devices. The application can be found in the device's application store using the search function and typing in "Adobe Acrobat Reader." Follow the instructions given. **It is a free application.**

After you have successfully downloaded the Adobe Acrobat Reader, please use the following web link to download your SM. You may copy/paste this link into your web browser.

[https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm\\_0629.pdf](https://apps.usfa.fema.gov/ax/sm/sm_0629.pdf)

Note: In order to have the editing capabilities/toolbar, the SM needs to be opened with Adobe Acrobat Reader. There should be a function on your device to do this.

If you need assistance, please contact [nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov).

## PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENT

The pre-course assignment for the six-day “Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention” (YFPI) (R/N0629) course is a multistep process worth a portion of your grade.

You should begin the pre-course assignment immediately upon acceptance into the YFPI course.

In addition, please bring a laptop computer to class as there are multiple written, graded assignments.

### Step 1:

Complete two National Fire Academy (NFA) online self-study courses on community risk reduction. These courses are asynchronous (go at your own pace) and take about four hours each to complete. The courses provide foundational information you will need during the youth firesetting course and should be taken in this order:

- NFA Q0841 “Introduction to Strategic Community Risk Reduction” (ISCRR): [Introduction to Strategic Community Risk Reduction \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov/course/introduction-strategic-community-risk-reduction).
- NFA Q0843 “Introduction to Community Risk Assessment” (ICRA): [Introduction to Community Risk Assessment \(fema.gov\)](https://www.fema.gov/course/introduction-community-risk-assessment).

Please print your completion certificates and add them to your pre-course portfolio as proof of completion. Your portfolio should be a three-ring notebook or other type of folder. Instructors will be reviewing your portfolio on the first day of class.

### Step 2:

Take the International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) self-student e-learning course “Introduction to Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention” (IYFPI).

This course should only take about an hour to complete and provides excellent foundational subject matter that you will utilize during your NFA course. Please print your completion certificate and add to your portfolio.

### How to Enroll

1. [Navigate to the IFSTA Account Log-In: https://moodle.ifsta.org/course/view.php?id=8414](https://moodle.ifsta.org/course/view.php?id=8414)
2. To enroll, you will be directed to create an account with username and password. You can use “EASY” and “FREE,” or use your current IFSTA username and password.

3. When you log in, go to the ResourceOne tab, and click on it. Upon doing so you will see IFSTA Free Courses for Individuals on the upper right portion of your screen. Clicking there will take you to the home screen for the Vision 20/20 Essentials of Community Risk Reduction series of e-learning courses. Select the “Introduction to Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention” course.

**Note:** When a learner completes and exits the course, they return to the main page where the quiz is now available. They can review their responses and take the test again if necessary. When you score 80% or better on the quiz, print your score.

Firefox, Chrome and Safari are the browsers that work best with the courseware. Contact the Help Desk for issues with function of the course: [support@osufpp.org](mailto:support@osufpp.org).

### **Step 3:**

Download and read three National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reports summarizing America’s youth firesetting problem occurring in structures and non-structures.

“[Playing with Fire: Non-Structure Fires](#)” and “[Playing with Fire: Structure Fires](#)” reports

Download and read the NFPA report “[Structure Fires in Schools](#).”

Obtain free access to and peruse sections of NFPA 1030: *Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Prevention Program Positions*, pertinent to a youth firesetting intervention specialist and program manager (<https://www.nfpa.org/codes-and-standards/nfpa-1030-standard-development/1030>).

### **Step 4:**

Read the youth firesetting example case file summarizing the firesetting history and interventions related to Jacob Gantz and his family.

Read “A Brief History of Research on Youth Firesetting.”

### **Step 5:**

Please respond to these directives in a written format and add to your pre-course portfolio.

While there is no minimum or maximum required response, please be thorough as it is for your organization’s benefit.

### Your community

Provide a brief description of your community's demographics (i.e., urban, suburban, rural or a combination).

### Your youth firesetting problem

Explore the extent of your local youth firesetting problem and what your organization has done, or plans to do, about it. This exploration is essential regardless of whether your community has a youth firesetting prevention and intervention program or not.

**Note:** It is not acceptable to state, "We do not have a youth firesetting problem." If you don't or can't find statistics to prove you have an issue, provide an explanation as to why you are taking the YFPI course. Remember that while statistical evidence is important, anecdotal evidence such as your experience (or others within your organization) with youth firesetting incidents is important to note as well.

- On average, how many youth firesetting incidents does your organization handle per year?
- What types of youth firesetting incidents do you handle most frequently (e.g., curiosity motivated, crisis, thrill-seeking/risk taking, delinquent/criminal, etc.)?
- Are there areas of your community where incidents of youth firesetting occur more frequently?
  - If so, where and why?
- Are there particular age groups that represent a greater problem than others?
  - If so, please identify them.
- In the types of firesetting incidents in your community, are there identifiable trends?
  - If so, please describe them.
- What is the minimum age at which your jurisdiction can file criminal charges against a youth for fire-related incidents?
- If charges can be filed, what is the average number of youths who are charged per year?
- On average, how many injuries caused by youth firesetting does your community experience per year? How many deaths?
- On average, how much property loss is associated with youth firesetting per year?

### Preventing or reducing the youth firesetting problem

- What educational programs are offered by your organization that feature content aimed at preventing/reducing the occurrence of youth firesetting (e.g., schools and community-based programs)?
  - Describe the level of resources invested into these programs.

### Your existing youth firesetting prevention and intervention program (if applicable)

Outline your responses to this series of questions as it will help you to build a foundation for a graded assignment to construct a plan to create, enhance or even rebuild a youth firesetting prevention and intervention program in your community.

- If your organization currently has a youth firesetting prevention and intervention program, please include in your portfolio copies of the primary components, such as:
  - Youth firesetting prevention and intervention program mission statement.
  - Mechanisms for identifying firesetting youth.
  - Intake forms.
  - Interview/screening forms.
  - Lesson plans for youth firesetting educational interventions.
  - Follow-up protocols.
  - Overall program evaluation processes.

If you don't quite yet have a full program, but have some of the components listed above, please include them in your portfolio.

- If your organization currently has a youth firesetting prevention and intervention program, please include in your portfolio copies of the administrative tools that support your effort, such as:
  - Staffing plan to deliver program services.
  - Training protocols for fire department and partner agencies.
  - Program budget and ancillary resources to support the program.
  - Data management protocols.

- Program marketing plan.
- Standard operating procedures and guidelines.
- Memoranda of understanding (MOUs).
- Youth firesetting prevention and intervention handbook.

If you don't quite yet have a full program but have some of the administrative tools listed above, please include them in your portfolio.

- If your organization currently has a youth firesetting prevention and intervention program, what agencies are you working with to collaborate on the disposition of youth firesetting cases? Please list.
- In your opinion, how effective is your current program? Please justify your response.
- If improvements are needed, what are those improvements?
- Who are the people from your organization who are, or should be, involved with the components of the youth firesetting prevention and intervention program, such as:
  - Identification of youth in need of services.
  - Intake of youth/families.
  - Screening/interview process.
  - Educational interventions.
  - Follow-up to program services.
  - Program evaluation.
- If your organization does not have a program, please list the local agencies and their specific representatives with whom you should collaborate.

**Again, begin the pre-course assignment immediately upon acceptance into this course.**

**CASE FILE JACOB GANTZ, INCIDENT DATE:  
MAY 8**

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**FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT FROM  
MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE  
SERVICES FIRE MARSHAL**

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MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES OFFICE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION

On May 8<sup>th</sup> 20\_\_, at 05:06 hours I was summoned at request of Battalion Chief Three to investigate a house fire at 812 Oak Road in Maryville, Michigan. I arrived on scene at 05:38, observing the fire to be primarily extinguished with overhaul operations conducted by firefighters.

The residence presented as a two-story wooden frame home with a detached garage to the rear of the structure. I photographed all sides of the structure and documented fire operations prior to conferring with the incident commander.

Upon contacting the incident commander, they advised that on fire department arrival, flames were visible on the C Charlie (rear) side of the structure and two teenage occupants where in need of rescue from a second-floor window on the A Alpha (front) side of the house. Firefighters utilized a ground ladder to rescue the two teenagers and fire attack crews suppressed most flames within five minutes.

Prior to entering the structure, I interviewed the four firefighters who initially entered the structure to suppress the fire. They advised the front door to the home was open as they approached the building, and an adult female was outside by the door screaming about two teenagers being trapped on the second floor. They assured the woman other firefighters were rescuing the teenagers and asked the woman where the fire was in the house. She stated, "All the way back on the first floor in the recreation area." The firefighter told me that while crawling to that area, they encountered thick smoke and significant heat from the fire. Once locating the room that was significantly involved in fire, they commenced extinguishment efforts. When asked where they saw the most fire, the lead firefighter said, "The back of the room in the left corner and above us across the ceiling."

Upon receiving clearance to enter the building, and wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, I examined the interior of the home, working in sequential order from the areas of least damage to the room which displayed the greatest fire damage. That room was, in fact, the room described by the firefighters as the one to be on fire. Photographic documentation was taken of all areas.

Upon entering the apparent room of the fire's origin, I discovered clear lines of smoke and flame demarcation indicating the greatest amount of direct flame damage supported the firefighter's statement of fire in the back-left corner of the room. Discovered by firefighters, and in the place where they located it, was the remains of a two-pound propane torch. Also in the remains was a portion of wood paneling with what appeared to be some sort of flame generated etching of a name. These items were photographed, secured for future processing, and locked in the evidence carrier located in my response vehicle.

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MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES OFFICE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION

As part of performing a thorough examination of the apparent area of origin, I estimated the point of fire origin to be approximately two feet off the floor in the southwest corner of the room. There were no portable heating sources found in the room. There was a television located in the front right side of the room with some types of electronic gaming devices extending to a small table located in the center of the room. The television was not connected to an electrical outlet. The only light sources to the room appeared to be ceiling lights.

I returned to the outside of the structure to locate adult members of the household. In the kitchen of a neighbor's home, I was introduced to Ms. Donna Gantz. Ms. Gantz advised she and her husband William Gantz own the home and it was occupied by them and their five children. She noted the family was blended from two previous marriages and includes a two-year-old male, seven-year-old male, twelve-year-old male, and two thirteen-year-old girls. When asked who was at home when the fire was discovered, Ms. Gantz said, "Everyone but my husband who works two jobs and one's night shift." When asked who discovered the fire, she said "My twelve-year-old son Jacob." When asked if she had any idea how the fire might have started, she said "I think Jacob did it."

Upon stating she believed Jacob was involved with the fire's origin, Ms. Gantz became emotional and started sobbing. She advised that Jacob is an exceptionally smart child but he "has issues." When asked what she meant, Ms. Gantz said Jacob has a mild form of Asperger's Syndrome and tends to get to the point of near obsession with things. Lately it has been electricity and fire. She said he also exhibits mood swings which include bursts of anger. He has a sleep disorder and routinely "gets up and tinkers around the house at all hours of the night." She also said, "He despises his two step-sisters and he and his step-father fight a lot."

When I asked if Jacob receives treatment for his condition(s), she indicated it was sporadic and that she and her husband routinely argue about whether Jacob should be on medicines prescribed by their primary care physician. She also said that Mr. Gantz's two teenage daughters from a previous marriage hate Jacob and wish he would "go away." When I asked if her husband has engaged in physical altercations with Jacob, she put her head down and nodded to indicate "yes."

I asked Ms. Gantz if she and I could speak with Jacob together about what happened, and she agreed. I accompanied Ms. Gantz to the neighbor's living room where the five children were located. Of interest, four of the children were in their bed clothing and Jacob was fully dressed in daytime wear.

Ms. Gantz, Jacob, and I returned to the kitchen area where I observed him to be of normal physical development for his age. After I explained who I was and why I was there, Jacob immediately became fidgety in the chair where he was seated.

When I asked Jacob to explain what he was doing when the fire started, he said he was awake and on the first floor of the home. When I asked what he was doing on the first floor of the

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MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES OFFICE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION

house in the early morning hours, he answered, "just messing around like I do when I can't sleep." When I asked him to explain in greater detail what "just messing around" meant, he became agitated and said, "just making the house mine."

I continued the interview with Jacob and asked him to explain how he became aware that a fire was happening in the home. He said he heard a popping sounding coming from the recreation room and went there from the kitchen to investigate. He said when he got to the door of the recreation room, he saw a fire burning in the corner of the room. When asked to explain what part of the room he saw on fire, he described the back left corner. When asked what he did when he saw the fire, he said "I went and woke up Mom."

After a pause, I asked Jacob to explain what he thought may have started the fire. He said that the fire was likely caused by the gaming equipment the family had in the room. When I reminded Jacob that he saw the fire in the left corner of the room and the gaming equipment was on the opposite side of the room, he immediately broke eye contact with me and started fidgeting in the chair. He also added that he didn't want to talk any more about the fire.

During the conversation with Jacob I noticed he not only smelled strongly of smoke, but his short sleeve shirt was discolored from what appeared to be smoke. The hair around his forehead appeared singed. Of particular concern were the presence of multiple small bruises on his upper arms and on the left side of his face. Also evident were multiple straight-line cut marks on his left forearm and wrist. There also appeared to be a small burn on his right hand.

When asked about these observations, and if he had hurt himself lately, Jacob focused his stare toward the floor, assumed a tense demeanor and remained silent. I noticed a slight twitching motion on his lips as well.

At this point I asked Jacob and Ms. Gantz if they would mind if I went outside to get something. Both indicated they did not mind and would wait for me to return. I went to my response vehicle and retrieved the piece of wooden paneling that had been placed in an evidence bag and secured. I took the clear sealed bag with the wood into the kitchen and sat back down at the kitchen table. I told Jacob that I had found this piece of wood in the area where I thought the fire started and asked if he could explain what it might be and how I could have found it near where the fire might have started.

Upon looking at the piece of wood paneling in the bag, Jacob became angry and stated, "Yes, I did it! Are you happy now?" When I asked, "Did what?", he said "I started the fire." When I asked him what he had been doing that started the fire, he said, "I made a stencil with my name on it and was burning my name into the wood wall." When asked why he did it, he said "I want my named burned into this house, so everyone knows I'm part of this family."

After pausing for a few moments, I asked Jacob if he was trying to burn down the house. He said, "Of course not. I was making a statement." When asked if he realized that both he and his

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MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES OFFICE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION

family could have been hurt badly or killed because of his actions, he said "I guess so." When asked a second time if he tried to put out the fire before going to get his mother, he said "Yes." I thanked Jacob for his honesty. His mother and I accompanied him back to the living room.

Ms. Gantz and I returned to the kitchen where she asked me "What do we do now?" I asked her if she believed Jacob clearly knew the difference between right and wrong behavior. She answered with an emphatic "Yes, he is a very smart kid."

I told her there are several things that must occur:

1. The fire was serious, lives were endangered, and Jacob had an "intent" to make a "statement." That alone demands the attention of Michigan youth justice officials. I told Ms. Gantz that I would be in contact with the agency to initiate referral of the case for investigation and potential legal actions.
2. In addition to the fire, and because I observed obvious cuts, bruises, and a burn on Jacob, I must report the findings to the Michigan Department of Social Service Child Welfare and Protection Unit. I explain this action was not only part of the youth firesetting prevention and intervention protocol, it was the law. I added that this action must occur immediately, and I would be doing so upon clearing the incident scene.
3. Since Jacob has a prior diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome, coupled with a sleep disorder and anger issues, it is prudent the family contacts their primary care physician to seek advice.
4. Finally, because the community has an outstanding youth firesetting prevention and intervention taskforce, I would be submitting a referral to one of my partners, who serves as the chairperson of the group. A representative of the taskforce would contact Ms. Gantz within 24 hours. I told Ms. Gantz that all the allied agencies work closely together on youth firesetting cases with very successful outcomes.

I assured Ms. Gantz that these combined actions were part of the fire department's standard response to a situation like this fire incident. Ms. Gantz thanked me for my concern about her son and began sobbing again, saying "My husband will fight any mental health involvement because he does not believe in counseling or medications." "He is old school and believes strict rules backed up by corporal punishment is what will fix Jacob."

I told Ms. Gantz that an immediate combined approach to the situation would be helpful, and she readily agreed. I added that due to the urgency of the situation members of the YFS taskforce would be reaching out to her today. I then introduced Ms. Gantz to two representatives from the American Red Cross who had arrived at the scene.

I departed the incident scene at 07:51.

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MASSEY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES OFFICE OF FIRE INVESTIGATION

/s/ Sara Smith

Fire Investigator, Massey County Fire and Rescue Services

Office of Fire Investigation

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**DOCUMENTATION FROM MASSEY  
COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES  
INTERVENTION SPECIALIST**

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## **FIRE DEPARTMENT INTERVENTION SPECIALIST-SCREENING NARRATIVE**

(Screening assessment documents to accompany this narrative)

Date/Time: May 11, 20xx 0930. Conducted in the Fire Department Headquarters Prevention Conference Room  
Family participants: Biological Mother Donna Gantz with 12yr old son Jacob A. Gantz  
Massey County Fire Intervention Specialist Carrie Barton conducted the screening assisted by Lt. Gabe Huron

**INCIDENT OVERVIEW:** Early morning (approx. 5am) of May 8<sup>th</sup> 20xx the Massey County Fire Dept responded to a significant structure fire at a single-family residence (detached garage) address: 812 Oak Road. Two teen occupants of the residence were rescued (ladder rescue) from 2<sup>nd</sup> floor by fire department. Initial investigation shows fire origin in family recreation room on 1<sup>st</sup> floor. There are seven family members of a blended family living in the home: two married adults and five children ranging from two-yrs. to 13-yrs old. No injuries but home appears to be a substantial loss (damage estimate not currently available). Investigator did find a propane torch and wood paneling burned by said torch which was later noted to be used in starting the fire. *(See Investigator comprehensive fire report for further details).*

### **PARENT DISCUSSION:**

Bio mother Donna Gantz had noted to Massey County Fire Investigator at fire scene the morning of May 8<sup>th</sup> that she thought her 12-yr old son Jacob had started the fire. Jacob is the biological son of Donna Gantz and was adopted by William Gantz when he and Donna married 7 years ago. During the parent interview section of the risk screening, Ms. Gantz was forthright and her narrative of the fire incident was consistent with what she relayed on scene. She and her husband William have suspected intense fire interest and possible prior fire misuse (smell of smoke) from Jacob but no definitive evidence and when asked Jacob would deny having any part of prior smoke/fire incidents. When asked in further detail about these incidents Ms. Gantz noted that Jacob "is a handful" and both she and her husband just "let it drop" rather than press for details as they are both so busy. Mr. Gantz works two jobs and is rarely home. She also noted that her husband often exhibits "rage" towards Jacob and was extremely angry about the fire. Ms. Gantz was open in sharing that Jacob has been formally diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, obsessive-compulsive disorder, sleep apnea, is bi-polar, and exhibits intermittent explosive disorder. Ms. Gantz also stated that while Jacob has been prescribed medications for these issues, he currently is not taking any of the prescribed medications. Jacob also is no longer receiving any mental/behavioral treatment as he has received in the past; when questioned why she noted that her husband William "does not believe in therapy" and he does not think medications are appropriate for Jacob. The only outside assistance Jacob does see is the family primary care physician. In-school counseling is available through the school Jacob attends. However, Jacob does well academically so she has not sought counseling through school nor elsewhere. When asked about family dynamics, Ms. Gantz noted that Jacob does not get along well with any of his siblings (bio or otherwise) but in particular "hates" his sisters (twins). Ms. Gantz used the term "shun" to describe how Jacob's sisters treated him. The parental section of the interview concluded with Ms. Gantz expressing how "overwhelmed" she felt with the family stresses and Jacobs increasingly difficult behavior. When asked about the fire service sending a referral for both Jacob and the family in its entirety to a mental/behavioral health agency, Ms. Gantz was quite open to the idea but expressed concern that her husband might show resistance as he has shown in the past. Referral paperwork was provided at this time and completed by Donna Gantz.

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## **FIRE DEPARTMENT INTERVENTION SPECIALIST-SCREENING NARRATIVE**

(Screening assessment documents to accompany this narrative)

### **YOUTH DISCUSSION:**

Jacob was forthright and quite open to answering questions during the screening. He is surprisingly well-spoken for a 12-yr. old. He did not deny involvement in the fire but seemed to “check out” when discussing what consequences could have happened from this fire incident. When asked about how he feels about school Jacob responded with “Meh.” He likes science, but all his classmates are “idiots.” When asked about friends, in school or outside, Jacob mentioned that he has one friend, Tyler, whom he met earlier in the week. Tyler is his only friend. Jacob completely shut down when asked about his relationships with his siblings. Jacob noted that the family most often “hangs out” in the recreation room, but that he hates that room as he is “invisible” in there. Jacob was open about his prior fire misuse. When asked how many times he has misused fire prior to this incident he stated, “lots of times- too many to count.” When asked specially about this fire, Jacob admitted that he hid a blowtorch that his dad kept in the garage in his bedroom for about two weeks prior to “practice” lighting it. Jacob woke up early the morning of May 8<sup>th</sup> (he was the only one awake in the house), he got dressed, ate some cereal, and it was then he decided to etch his name on a wall to “prove” he really was a member of this family. Jacob repeated several times that he did not want to hurt anyone nor burn the house down. He wanted to “be noticed.” However, when pressed about his understanding of what could have happened that morning Jacob refused to discuss. When asked (several times) if Jacob would do something different the morning of May 8<sup>th</sup>, he did not answer.

### **INTERVENTION PROCESS:**

The May 11<sup>th</sup> screening with both Jacob and his biological mother Donna Gantz was uneventful. However, from the screening interview there appears to be significant issues which need to be addressed which most likely contributed to the fire incident on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

- \* Immediate referral to partnering mental/behavioral health treatment agency is needed.
- \* If compliance to receive treatment is resisted, intervention from Dept of Human Services will be needed. There appears to be, at best, a lack of home supervision-boarding on negligence, from the parents.
- \* Fire safety education is needed for the entire family.
- \* An *In Lieu of Citation* would be appropriate to ensure compliance with the above recommendations.

The Risk Assessment concluded at 11:05am. From the Risk Assessment, Jacob is a DEFINITE (boarding on EXTREME) fire risk and above recommended follow-up should be immediate.

Carrie Barton  
Massey County Fire Intervention Specialist

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**Youth Fire Intervention (Form #1)**  
**INTAKE INFORMATION**

**Youth Information:**

Date: MAY 9, 20xx

Name - First: JACOB Middle: A Last: GANTZ

Gender: MALE DOB: SEPT. 11, 20xx Age at time of incident: 12

Address: 812 OAK ROAD

City: MASSEY GROVE State: OK Zip: 73101 Phone: 405-378-3778

Is the youth a smoker? Yes ☐ No ☒

What is the youth's primary language? ENGLISH

Race: WHITE Ethnicity: NON HISPANIC

School attending: FRANKLIN MS Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

What types of social media does the youth use? SNAPCHAT, TIKTOK, INSTAGRAM

Referred by: (Fire Investigator - Massey County) Address: (2324 WELLER DRIVE)

**Youth Medical History:**

Does the child have any medical or mental health conditions? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, what? ASPERGERS, OCD, SLEEP APNEA, Bi-POLAR, EXPLOSIVE DISORDER

Is the youth receiving treatment for those conditions? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, what? (INTERMITTANT - IN PAST; HAS BEEN FORMALLY DIAGNOSED BUT NO FOLLOW-UP TREATMENT)

Is the child on medication? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, what? NOTE: PRESCRIBED, BUT NO COMPLIANCE TREATMENT

Other agencies working with the family? FAMILY PCP, NO SPECIFIC MENTAL / BEHAVIORAL TREATMENT

Has there been a stressful event in the youth's life over the last six months? \_\_\_\_\_

BLENDED FAMILY w/ ONGOING STRESSFUL FAMILY DYNAMICS



**Caregiver Information:**

Family type (Birth parents, single parent, divorced, adopted, etc.): BIRTH Mom & ADOPTIVE Dad

Responsible Adult #1: Lives with child? ☒ Yes ☐ No Relationship: Bio Mom

Name: DONNA GANTZ

Address: 812 OAK ROAD

City: MASSEY GROVE State: OK Zip: 73101 Phone: 405-378-3778

Email: dgantz@gmail.com Highest level of education: HIGH SCHOOL GED

Responsible Adult #2: Lives with child? ☒ Yes ☐ No Relationship: DAD (ADOPTED BY)

Name: WILLIAM GANTZ

Address: 812 OAK ROAD

City: MASSEY GROVE State: OK Zip: 73101 Phone: 405-378-8773

Email: billygant2@gmail.com Highest level of education: ASSOCIATED DEGREE

**Youth / Family Residence Information:**

Number of children in primary residence: 7 ~~8~~ includes 5 children + 2 parents

Name of sibling: ANASTASIA Gender: Female Age: 13 (step) <sup>William</sup>

Name of sibling: IZZY Gender: Female Age: 13 (step) <sup>William</sup>

Name of sibling: JACOB Gender: Male Age: 12 (Danna-8.0)

Name of sibling: GABE Gender: Male Age: 7 <sup>William</sup>

Name: WILLIAM II Gender: Male Age: 2 <sup>Danna</sup>

Does youth participate in free lunch program? Yes ☐ No ☒

Smokers in the household? Yes ☐ No ☒

Type of residence (Single family home, apartment, etc.): SINGLE FAMILY  
(detached garage)

**Fire Scene Information:**

Date of Fire: May 8, 2014 Time: 0500 Run Number: 71758

Did the child or anyone else sustain any injuries? Yes ☒ (No) (minor singed hair)

If yes, what type? \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Fire: FIRST FLOOR, RECREATION ROOM OF FAMILY HOME -  
(SOUTHWEST CORNER)

If location was a structure, was it occupied? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Type of Fire: STRUCTURE (RESIDENCE)

Ignition Device: PROPANE TORCH Novelty lighter? Yes ☒ No

Dollar Loss: Undetermined @ this time Flammable Liquids? Yes ☒ No

Other Details:

*Residence is not inhabitable - significant smoke damage throughout*

**Accomplice(s):**

*None known @ this time*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Information:**





# Youth Fire Intervention (After assessment is complete) INTERVIEWERS OBSERVATIONS

Does parent appear indifferent or unconcerned about the firesetting? ☐ Yes\* ☒ No  
Does child appear neglected or abused? ☒ Yes\* ☐ No  
Is residence sloppy? ☐ Yes\* ☒ No

Youth behavior and mannerisms: ☒ nervous ☐ stubborn ☒ good eye contact ☐ shy  
☒ open ☒ polite

Youth mood: ☒ angry ☒ sad ☐ happy ☒ calm ☐ depressed ☐ excited

Youth way of thinking: ☐ rational ☐ appropriate ☒ scattered ☐ logical ☒ illogical

Parent(s) behavior and mannerisms: ☐ fidgety ☐ nervous ☒ stubborn  
☒ good eye contact ☐ shy ☐ open ☒ polite

Parent(s) mood: ☒ angry ☒ sad ☐ happy ☐ calm ☒ depressed ☐ excited ☒ defensive

Parent(s) way of thinking: ☐ rational ☐ appropriate ☐ scattered ☐ logical ☒ illogical

Characteristics: ☐ Low risk ☐ Moderate risk ☐ High risk  
Age appropriate Assertive, low self-esteem Defiant, fights, unfeeling

Family environment: ☐ Low risk ☒ Moderate risk ☒ High risk  
Two parents, concerned Inattentive parents / Single parent, inattentive

School experiences: ☒ Low risk ☐ Moderate risk ☐ High risk  
No problems Learning problems Problems, suspended

Circumstances of fire: ☐ Low risk ☐ Moderate risk ☒ High risk  
At home, matches/lighter Outside, for attention Malicious, flammables

Motivation for firesetting: ☐ Low risk ☐ Moderate risk ☒ High risk  
Accidental Peer pressure Anger, peer pressure

Age: ☐ Low risk ☒ Moderate risk ☐ High risk  
3 to 10 years 5 to 13 years 10 to 17 years

Overall rating: ☐ Some risk ☐ Moderate risk ☒ High risk



## Youth Fire Intervention Class Agreement (Learning level / age 10+)

I, JACOB GANTZ agree to the following:  
(print youth's name)

1. I agree to be completely honest about my fire setting offense and accept full responsibility for my actions.
2. I will actively participate in group and individual sessions to the satisfaction of staff and other group members.
3. I will not talk about any information regarding another class member outside of this program.
4. I will show respect to instructors and other class members and follow the rules of the program.
5. I understand that if I break this agreement I can be sent home and all costs of the class will be forfeited.

May 11-2008  
Date

Jacob Gantz  
Youth

May 11, 2008  
Date

Dana Gantz  
Parent or Guardian



# PARENT CHECKLIST

Youth Name JACOB GARTZ Date of birth: 9/11/01 xy

Your name Donna GARTZ Relationship to youth Bio mom

My child takes medication for a behavioral problem. Y N

Are there smokers in the home? Y N

Please check if any of the following statements are true for your child.

- | Yes                                 | No                                  | Sometimes                |  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child has set fire or played with fire tools more than once. <i>Suspected</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child has set fires outside of the home before.                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other people in the home have set fires.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child is fascinated by fire (for example, often stares at flames).            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child has altered or misused fireworks.                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child has easy access to lighters and/or matches.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There is a wood stove, fireplace, candles or incense frequently in use at home.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child fights with brothers and sisters.                                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child argues with <sup>Dr</sup> parents/caregivers.                           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child has witnessed parents arguing.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child spends as much time as desired with father/male caregiver.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My child spends as much time as desired with mother/female caregiver.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There has been a traumatic event in my child's life or family in the last year.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There has been physical or sexual abuse in the family.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family moves frequently.  |



- ☒ — ☒ — My child has been suspended from school.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child has few friends.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child is often picked on or bullies by others.
- ☐ ☒ — ☐ — My child has friends who are a bad influence. *No friends*
- ☒ — ☐ — My child has a history of lying.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child has stolen or shoplifted.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child destroys their own possessions.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child has special needs.
- ☒ — ☐ — My child has been in counseling. *in past*
- ☒ — ☐ — My child is physically aggressive or hurts others. *Siblings*
- ☐ ☒ — ☐ — My child has intentionally harmed or injured an animal.
- ☒ — ☐ — I feel like I have no control over my child.

Comments:

## PARENT INTERVIEW

Youth Name JACOB GANTZ Date May 11, 20<sup>xv</sup>

Interviewer Name CARRIE BARTON Score 22

**Instructions:** Place a check mark next to the scoring level that best describes the situation for this youth. Expand the questions as you feel necessary to complete the interview with confidence. Use the comment line for anything that seems out of the ordinary or supports your impressions.

A. What was the parents' or caregivers' response to the fire?

Suggested Questions:

**Mom, Dad, what was your reaction to the fire?**

Scoring

1 The reaction of the parents to the fire was immediate and appropriate response, with concern for any victims.

☒ 2 The reaction of the parents to the fire was one that appears too lax or too punitive.

3 The reaction of the parents to the fire was either nonexistent or was an immediate and overly punitive response (such as burning the youth's hands).

Comments: Dad- William- extremely angry about incident; rage towards Jacob

B. Is there a family history with fire?

Suggested questions:

**Did anybody else in the family ever play with fire or get burned from a fire that got out of control?**

**Have you ever had a house fire?**

Scoring:

1 There is no traceable history of fire in the family.

☒ 2 There is some history in the family that the youth has or may have heard about.

There is a fire history about which the youth has direct knowledge.

Comments:

William & Donna suspected possible fire misuse (would smell smoke) but no definitive evidence



C. Does the youth have a history of fire play or firesetting?

Suggested questions:

**How many other times has your child lit matches, played with a lighter or burned things of little or no value?**

**Do you know if he has ever threatened anybody with fire or if he/she has been hurt by fire himself/herself?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 This is the first known incidence of unauthorized use of fire for the youth.
- ☒ 2 The youth has a sporadic history of unauthorized use of fire. There was little or no damage from previous.
- ☐ 3 Family members have used fire inappropriately. The youth's home is not fire safe.

Comments:

*Again just suspected misuse of fire*

D. What kind of modeling is going on in the home? How did the parents/caregivers teach their youth about fire? What kinds of fire safety practices occur in the home? Are there any cultural or traditional ways the family uses fire?

Suggested questions:

**How did you teach your child about fire?**

**Do you have a working smoke detector?**

**Do you have candles or a woodstove? How do you store matches and lighters?**

**How does your family use fire?**

**Are there smokers in the home?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 Appropriate fire safety is observed in the home. Smoke detectors work, woodstoves are safely installed. Parents, siblings or other family members avoid modeling fire play.
- ☒ 2 There is modeling of using fire for fun at home and fire safety is only moderately observed by parents and siblings.
- ☐ 3 Family members have used fire inappropriately. The youth's home is not fire safe.

Comments:

*No direct family fire misuse; but clearly lack of time/attention to teach w/ fire (or anything else)*

E. How is the youth supervised?

Suggested questions:

**When you are not at home, who takes care of the child?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 The youth has good, continual parental and/or caregiver supervision.
- ☐ 2 The youth has some supervision, but the supervision is often sporadic.
- ☒ 3 The youth has minimal supervision.

Comments:

*Appears to be bordering on neglect - Unsupervised much of time*

F. Does the youth have any problems in school?

Suggested questions:

**Is the youth having any problems in school?**

**Does your child have any learning problems?**

**Is your child in any special classrooms or programs?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 The youth has minimal problems in school.
- ☒ 2 The youth gets some school referrals.
- ☐ 2 The youth receives special education services.
- ☐ 3 The youth has been suspended or expelled from school.

Comments:

William (Dad) has not approved any in-school counseling, especially since Jacob does well academically

G. Has the youth ever been in counseling?

Suggested questions:

**Has your child ever seen the school counselor or other mental health provider for problems?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 The youth has never been in counseling.
- ☒ 2 The youth has been in counseling in the past.
- ☐ 3 The youth is currently in counseling or has been referred for counseling.

Comments:

Formal diagnosis were made by mental professionals but not followed up on.

H. How would you describe your youth's friends?

Suggested questions:

**Do you like your kid's friends?**

**Are they a positive influence on your child?**

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 The youth has a healthy, supportive peer group.
- ☐ 2 The youth has some peer support, but his/her behavior is influenced by peers (bad friends).
- ☒ 3 The youth has little or no peer support, is shunned by peers and is isolated and withdrawn.

Comments:

Even family appears to "shun" Jacob -  
certainly siblings do



I. Has any kind of crisis or traumatic event happened within your family? Please describe.

Scoring:

- ☒ 1 There has not been a traumatic family experience in the past year. — > 1 yr - but not resolved  
☐ 2 There has been a major traumatic family experience in the past year.  
☐ 3 There has been a major traumatic family event in the past that may be influencing the youth's behavior.

Comments:

"Trauma" a strong term - but lots of stressful family dynamics w/ this lg blended family

J. Would you be willing to seek additional help for your child such as taking him/her to counseling?

Scoring:

- ☐ 1 The youth's family acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting and seeks help appropriately.  
☐ 2 The family protects the child, seeks to blame others and denies their own and the child's responsibility for the fire.  
☒ 3 The family doesn't seem to take the behavior seriously and simply wants the fire department to "fix" the youth and/or doesn't see the need for other services.

Comments:

Dad - William does not believe counseling/therapy is effective, especially since Jacob is academically gifted. Also will not comply w/ Rx prescribed.

## SCORING AND REFERRAL PROCEDURE

**Add the face value of the checked responses for both the youth and the parent interview. Enter the total on the lines provided below:**

Total Score: (Youth Interview) \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent Interview) 22

**If youth questions D, J and / or L were scored with a 3 response, consider referring this youth for a crisis evaluation.**

**If the total number for the youth interview is from 14-19 then:** The fire behavior appears to be basically experimental in nature. This youth does not have a history of fire behavior. The intervention for this category is fire education for the youth and the family. There are numerous fire education intervention curricula available to use with this child. The family should set clear rules about fire use in the home and practice home fire safety. YFPI Specialists should emphasize the importance of working smoke alarms and home escape planning for these families. Younger firesetters do not understand the consequences of their actions so it is important that parents/caregivers increase their knowledge of fire safe practices.

**If the total number for the youth interview is 20-42 then:** The youth has a sporadic history of firesetting and needs to be referred to other community agencies that serve children and their families. Many of these youths will require a more comprehensive mental health evaluation to determine the motives for his/her behavior. Youth who score in this range are setting fires as a cry for attention, as a response to a crisis event, to express anger or to defy authority. Many youth use fire because they are seeking power and control. The firesetting in this case is often a symptom of other family, school or peer group problems.

In addition to referring the family for further evaluation, YFPI Specialists need to provide fire science education. Families often do not understand the power of fire and need to increase their knowledge of home fire safety practices. Again, emphasizing the importance of working smoke alarms and practicing home escape planning. Helping educate the youth about how their firesetting behavior affected the community and the risk involved is another way YFPI Specialists can provide a service to the youth and their family and hold youth accountable for their behavior. Curricula for educating adolescent are available.

**If the total number for the parent interview is from 10-15 provide fire safety education to the youth and family.**





## Youth Fire Intervention (Form #2)

### PARTICIPATION RELEASE AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

The Minnesota Youth Fire Intervention Team (YFIT) uses the youth firesetting assessment tool that was developed by the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office. This tool evaluates a child's involvement in fire activity.

The assessment evaluates the firesetting behavior by reviewing six types of individual characteristics: demographic, physical, cognitive, emotional, motivation and psychiatric.

Based on the results of the evaluation, your child's tendencies will place him/her in one of the following areas of concern:

**Some concern** Needs educational intervention.

**Moderate concern** Needs referral for evaluation by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist and educational intervention.

**High concern** Needs immediate referral for evaluation by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist and educational intervention counseling.

If educational intervention is indicated, the YFIT will offer further educational activity for your child. Participation in the program is not a guarantee that firesetting behavior will stop.

Depending on the individual case, the school your child attends, local law enforcement, social services, mental health or other agencies may become involved.

Upon request, the questions asked in this evaluation may be viewed prior to signing this release.

I, Donna Garte, have read the previous statement and do hereby grant permission for my child, Jacob Garte, to participate in the Minnesota Youth Fire Intervention program. Although I understand that YFIT does everything in its power to protect juvenile information, I authorize release of information regarding my child to such other governmental entities and agencies as may be deemed appropriate by the intervention specialist.

Donna Garte  
Parent / Guardian signature

Jacob Garte  
Youth signature

May 11 2020  
Date / Time

[Signature]  
Witness signature



**Youth Fire Intervention (Form #3)**  
**RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Youth's name: JACOB GANTZ Case #: 71758

***Authorization for Release and Receipt of Confidential Information***

By signing below, I agree to the terms of the release form.

I understand that the Minnesota Youth Fire Intervention Team (YFIT) includes representatives of fire and police departments, the juvenile justice and probation systems, public and private mental health facilities and their associates, public and private children-and-youth social services, the state mental health care consultant and the local school system.

I hereby authorize YFIT, including all of the agencies listed above, to receive any and all information deemed necessary from the sources listed below:

- |                                   |                            |                        |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| *Referral/admission information   | *Psychiatric assessment    | *Psychological testing |
| *Education reports                | *Progress notes            | *Social history        |
| *Comprehensive evaluation reports | *Individual education plan | *Discharge summary     |
| *Fire/police/probation reports    | *Assessment interview      |                        |

For the purposes of:

- |                        |                              |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| *Planning intervention | *Reporting problems/concerns | *Coordinating services |
|------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|

I hereby authorize YFIT to provide the following types of information to agencies deemed appropriate:

- \*Referral information    \*Intervention plan assessment    \*Progress notes    \*Case reports

Furthermore, I hereby release YFIT and its authorized agents from any and all legal responsibility or liability stemming from the release of information indicated and authorized herein.

Information released with this authorization will not be given, sold, transferred, or in any way be relayed to any other person or agency not specified above, without written consent.

I understand that I may revoke this consent at any time by submitting a written request to the ~~Minnesota~~ Youth Firesetting Prevention and Intervention Program.

Counseling provider name: \_\_\_\_\_

Therapist name: SUNNY HILLARD

Address: 2550 Happy Trails Loop Phone: 405-963-8780

Ronna Gantz May 11, 20xx  
 Parent / Guardian Date / Time





**Youth Fire Intervention** (After assessment is complete)  
**YOUTH FIRE ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

Youth Name: JACOB GANTZ Interviewer: CARRIE BARTON

Date: May 11, 20<sup>xx</sup> Start Time: 1300 End Time: 1430

Location of assessment: MASSEY FIRE HEADQUARTERS

People present: Big Mom (Diana), YOUTH JACOB GANTZ

Classification: Curiosity Delinquent Thrill Seeking Crisis Special Problem

Pre-test Score:      Family Risk Score 22 Child Risk Score 32 *Cry for aid*

Action Plan:

- ☐ No need for further action
- ☒ Fire Education Class
- ☐ Community Impact Report
- ☒ Education one on one
- ☒ Follow up (to be completed 3 months after initial interview)
- ☒ Homework assignment
- ☒ Refer to other agency (see below)
- ☐ Sent to Police for charging
- ☐ Business card given
- ☐ Other:

Referred to: HAPPY TRAILS THERAPY  
 Agency

SUNNY HILLARD 405-963-8780  
 Contact name Telephone number

Will file be transferred to referred agency? ☒ Yes ☐ No

**If yes, release of confidential information form must be completed!**

Summary of assessment- start with summary of parent information, then juvenile information, finish with overall summary and recommendation. (use additional pages)

*(attached)*

# YOUTH INTERVIEW

Youth Name JACOB GANTZ Date May 11, 20<sup>xx</sup>

Interviewer Name CARRIE BARTON Score 32

**Instructions:** Place a check mark next to the scoring level that best describes the situation for this youth. Expand the questions as you feel necessary to complete the interview with confidence. Use the comment line for anything that seems out of the ordinary or supports your impressions.

## A. Is the youth experiencing any school problems?

Suggested questions:

How's school? Meh

What do you like about school? Science

What don't you like? Do you get in trouble at school? Not turning in homework

Do you have lots of friends at school? Ø

Who is your best friend? - Tyler - met him this week

### Scoring:

- 1 The youth likes school and has minimal problems.
- ☒ 2 The youth has some trouble in school either socially or academically.
- 3 The youth has frequently been in trouble at school, hates the teachers, doesn't like the classes, has been expelled or suspended, etc.

### Comments:

Academically does well. Little/no social interacting @ school

## B. How does the youth get along with the others in the neighborhood?

Suggested questions:

Do you have any friends in the neighborhood that you hang out with?

Do you like them?

Do they like you?

Do you ever get picked on by the kids in the neighborhood?

### Scoring:

- 1 The youth has friends in the neighborhood.
- ☒ 2 The youth gets into fights frequently or has few friends. The youth may get bullied.
- 3 The youth is involved in a gang or hanging out with others involved in delinquent or criminal behavior.

### Comments:

Neighborhood kids "bryno". Classmates are "idiots"



C. What was set on fire? Was there anything significant about the object?

Suggested questions:

*Tell me about what was burned? - wall (wood paneling)*

*Tell me about the fire.*

*I wonder why you wanted to burn?*

*Have you ever burned this before? NO*

*What other types of things have you burned? - Lots of items "too many to count"*

*Whose stuff did you burn?*

Scoring:

☐ 1 The object that was burned had little emotional significance for the youth. (i.e. toilet paper, leaves or trash).

☐ 2 The object that was burned had some emotional significance for the youth (i.e. plastic army figures, other person's possessions).

☒ 3 The object that was burned had emotional significance for the youth or someone else (i.e. sibling's crib or favorite toy, a parent's or caregiver's possession).

Comments:

*Jacob readily admitted to "etching" his name on wall to "prove" he's a part of this family*

D. Where was the fire set? Was there significance to that location?

Suggested questions:

*Where did the fire start? Recreation room*

*If at home: What room were you in or were you outside? Inside*

*If not at home: Do you go to this place often? Do you like it there?*

Scoring:

☐ 1 The fire was started in a place where the youth plays such as his/her bedroom, a closet, a fort, a hiding place.

☒ 2 The fire was started in a place with community significance i.e. church, a school, a park, in the forest.

☐ 3 The fire was set in a building occupied with people with the intent to place people at-risk.

Comments:

*The recreation room is where the family "hangs out" - Jacob hates that room as he stated "I am invisible in there"*

**E. How much planning was done prior to the fire?**

Suggested questions:

- Tell me what you were you doing right before the fire?**
- Did you think about how you were going to start the fire?**
- Where did you get the things that were burned?**
- What was used to light the fire? Where did it come from?**

**Scoring:**

- ☐ 1 The fire was started using available materials; the act of firesetting was spontaneous and done without planning. Matches and lighters were readily available.
- ☐ 2 There was some pre-planning for the fire and some gathering of materials; however, the fire was not especially thought out.
- ☒ 3 There was definite planning for the fire, materials were sought out, and matches and lighters were stashed and/or hidden at the site beforehand. Accelerants may have been used.

Comments: *Jacob hid the blow torch in his room for about 2 weeks prior to used- "produced" lightning & putting out*

**F. Who was with the youth at the time of fire?**

Suggested questions:

- Was anyone with you when the fire started?**
- If yes, who?**
- What did they say about the fire?**
- Did the person with you do anything as the fire started burning?**

**Scoring:**

- ☐ 1 The youth was with many peers/siblings when the fire was set.
- ☐ 2 The youth was with other peers/siblings and this youth might have instigated the fire.
- ☒ 3 The youth was alone when the fire was set.

Comments: *Jacob was the only family member awake @ time of fire.*

**G. What was the youth's response to the fire?**

Suggested questions:

- What was the first thing you did when the fire started to burn?**
- What was the next thing?**
- Did you tell someone (an adult) about the fire?**
- If so, who was it: When was it?**

**Scoring:**

- ☐ 1 The youth tried to extinguish the fire and called for help.
- ☐ 1 The youth engaged in match or lighter play.
- ☒ 2 The youth may have made some attempts to extinguish the fire, but called for help only after others discovered the fire.
- ☐ 3 The youth ignored the fire, did not call for help, stayed to watch, or left the fire scene.

Comments: *Jacob stated he didn't want anyone hurt- just wanted to be "noticed"*



**H. How did the youth feel after the fire?**

Suggested questions:

**What did your caregiver say about the fire?**

**Was anyone angry with you about the fire?**

**Do you care what others think of you after starting the fire?**

**Do you feel like you did something bad or did the fire scare you?**

**Did you think you would get into trouble?**

**Scoring**

☐ 1 The youth shows remorse for the fire.

☐ 2 The youth showed interest in how others reacted.

☒ 3 The youth is unconcerned about others' reactions or is pleased with the fire.

Comments:

Why asked if Jacob understood the consequence of what might have happened. Jacob seemed to "check out"

**I. Was the youth supervised when the fire occurred?**

Suggested questions:

**When you were playing around with the matches and lighters, where was mom or dad?**

**Was anybody at home at the time? Who was taking care of you?**

**Scoring:**

☐ 1 Parents or caregivers were home at the time or youth was under appropriate supervision.

☒ 2 Parents or caregivers were home but unavailable or not directly supervised.

☐ 3 The youth was left alone or with younger children.

Comments:

Early morning hours- everyone but Jacob was sleeping

**J. How knowledgeable is the youth about fire? How much does the youth understand about the dangers of fire? Does the youth use fire for power or control?**

Suggested questions:

**Did you think that the fire could get out of control and get really big?**

**Do you feel you can control a fire that you start?**

**Can you determine how big the fire will get? How?**

**What did you want to have happen when you started the fire?**

**Scoring:**

☐ 1 The youth is knowledgeable about some aspects of fire survival but is unaware of the destructiveness or speed of fire.

☐ 2 The youth may indicate some concern about the dangers and risk of firesetting but thinks they can control it

☒ 3 The youth does have an understanding of fire and uses it to defy authority, gain attention or express anger

Comments:

Clearly fire set in a attempt to be noticed in a house with complicated dynamics

**K. Has the family experienced any kind of crisis in the past six months?**

Suggested questions:

Tell me about home

Do you like being at home? *No!*

Is there anything about home that you don't like? *My sisters are "evil"*

Has anything happened at home in the last six months that upset you?

Is there anything different about home lately?

**Scoring:**

☐ 1 There has been no major crisis in the family in the last six months.

☒ 2 There have been some changes in the family structure in the last six months, ie: divorce, death, moving, etc.

☐ 3 The family is in a state of crisis or chaos.

Comments:

*Family not in crisis, but Jacob is crisis*

**L. Does the youth have a fire history?**

Suggested questions:

Tell me the other times you have burned things?

What was the smallest fire? What was the largest fire?

Have you ever used an accelerant like gasoline or lighter fluid?

How about fireworks? Have you ever altered fireworks?

*needs attention & family support*

**Scoring:**

☐ 1 This is the first known incidence of firesetting.

☐ 2 The youth admitted to setting from 2—5 fires.

☒ 3 The youth has started more than 5 unsupervised fires.

Comments:

*As noted above, Jacob has set "too many" to*

**M. Has the youth ever been burned?**

Suggested questions.

Have you ever been hurt by fire?

Tell me what happened?

Where did it happen? Who was involved?

*count" - prior fires*

**Scoring:**

☒ The youth has never been burned.

☐ The youth has been burned unintentionally.

☐ The youth has been burned by another person and may have scars from this burn.

Comments:

*Remarkably, Jacob has sustained 0 injuries despite multiple & fire misused*



N. How concerned was the youth for accepting responsibility for the fire?

Suggested questions:

*Now the fire is out and you have had a chance to think about what has happened, would you do it again? - No response*

*Tell me your reasons or why this fire occurred?*

Scoring:

\_1 The youth acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting and accepts help appropriately.

☒ The youth acknowledges the seriousness of the firesetting but seeks to blame others and denies his/her own responsibility.

\_3 The youth denies the seriousness of the firesetting and his/her own responsibility for it or takes full responsibility for it because he/she intended to cause destruction or injury.

Comments:

*Deep-set anger towards family (namely step-sister)*

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES CENTRALIZED INTAKE;  
REPORT OF ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED  
CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

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YOUTH FIRESETTING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

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USED FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY

XXXXXXXXXX  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF XXXXXXXX  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
CENTRALIZED INTAKE

XXXXXXXXXX  
DIRECTOR

06/14/202X

Fire Inspector Sara Smith  
Massey County Fire & Rescue  
12345 Main Street  
Maryville, MI 12345

Intake ID: ABCDE123  
Complaint Date: 05/08/202X  
Date of Disposition: 05/08/202X

Thank you for the report you made to the Centralized Intake unit of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). The Children's Protective Services Centralized Intake unit has carefully reviewed the complaint you made to MDHHS. This is to notify you that a Children's Protective Services investigation is not required, based on one or more of the following factors:

- The complaint did not meet one of the legal and policy criteria for investigation.
- The family is already working with Children's Protective Services and the information you reported was provided to the assigned worker.
- Information you reported should be investigated by an agency or department other than Children's Protective Services and your report was transferred accordingly.

MDHHS is unable to provide any further details because the information is confidential in accordance with Section 722.627, Sec.7 of the Child Protection Law.

If you have concerns or questions about the action taken in response to your complaint of suspected child abuse or neglect, please contact the Mandated Reporter Hotline at 1-877-xxx-xxxx or you may e-mail [xxxxxxxx@state.gov](mailto:xxxxxxxx@state.gov). Please refer to the Intake ID listed above on this letter.

We appreciate your efforts to report child abuse or neglect. If you obtain additional information and believe another report should be made, please call 855-444-3911.

Thank you.

# YOUTH FIRESETTING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

## REPORT OF ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

Was Complaint Phoned to MDHHS?					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		If yes, Intake ID # <u>ABCDE123</u>		If no, contact Centralized Intake (855-444-3911) immediately	
<b>INSTRUCTIONS: REPORTING PERSON:</b> Complete items 1-19 (20-28 should be completed by medical personnel, if applicable). Send to Centralized Intake at the address listed on page 2.					1. Date <b>05/08/202X</b>
2. List of Child(ren) Suspected of Being Abused or Neglected. <span style="color: green;">To insert additional rows, tab at the end of last row to create a new row.</span>					
NAME	BIRTH DATE	SOCIAL SECURITY #	SEX	RACE	
Jacob A. Gantz	01/14/200X		Male	White and Black or African American	
3. Mother's Name Donna Gantz					
06/02/198X				Female	White
4. Father's Name Biological father George Williams is deceased					
Unknown				Male	Black
5. Child(ren)'s Address (No. & Street) 812 Oak Road (where fire occurred)		6. City Maryville	7. County Massey	8. Phone No. 313-000-0001	
9. Name of Alleged Perpetrator of Abuse or Neglect William Gantz		10. Relationship to Child(ren) Step-father and adoptive father			
11. Person(s) The Child(ren) Living With When Abuse/Neglect Occurred Donna & William Gantz & 4 siblings/step-sibs		12. Address, City & Zip Code Where Abuse/Neglect Occurred 812 Oak Road, Maryville, 12345			
13. Describe Injury or Conditions and Reason for Suspicion of Abuse or Neglect Observed multiple dark purplish contusions on Jacob's right upper inner arm and on the left side of his face; also noted multiple lacerations on his left forearm and wrist that were approximately 1-2 inches in length and in varying stages of healing (some were open with oozing blood and others with a crust/scab present) and an approximately 0.5 inch circular burn mark on his right hand. Mother stated "he [Jacob] despises his two step-sisters and he and his step-father fight a lot." When Mother was directly asked if William Gantz has had physical altercations with Jacob, she nodded her head yes. Jacob involved in starting a fire in their home because "I want my named burned into this house, so everyone knows I'm part of this family...I was making a statement." Previous firesetting incidents suspected to be started by Jacob have occurred, indicating ongoing unsafe home environment and inadequate supervision. Mother reports that Step-Father refuses medical treatment for Jacob for known diagnosed mental health conditions.					
14. Source of Complaint (Add reporter code below)					
01 Private Physician/Physician's Assistant		11 School Nurse		42 MDHHS Facility Social Worker	
02 Hosp/Clinic Physician/Physician's Assistant		12 Teacher		43 DMH Facility Social Worker	
03 Coroner/Medical Examiner		13 School Administrator		44 Other Public Social Worker	
04 Dentist/Registered Dental Hygienist		14 School Counselor		45 Private Agency Social Worker	
05 Audiologist		21 Law Enforcement		46 Court Social Worker	
06 Nurse (Not School)		22 Domestic Violence Providers		47 Other Social Worker	
07 Paramedic/EMT		23 Friend of the Court		48 FIS/ES Worker/Supervisor	
08 Psychologist		25 Clergy		49 Social Services Specialist/Manager (CPS, FC, etc.)	
09 Marriage/Family Therapist		31 Child Care Provider		56 Court Personnel	
10 Licensed Counselor		41 Hospital/Clinic Social Worker			
15. Reporting Person's Name Fire Investigator Sara Smith		Report Code (see above) 07		15a. Name of Reporting Organization (school, hospital, etc.) Massey County Fire & Rescue	
15b. Address (No. & Street) 12345 Main Street		15c. City Maryville	15d. State MI	15e. Zip Code 12345	15f. Phone Number 313-000-1234
16. Reporting Person's Name		Report Code (see above)		16a. Name of Reporting Organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
16b. Address (No. & Street)		16c. City	16d. State	16e. Zip Code	16f. Phone Number
17. Reporting Person's Name		Report Code (see above)		17a. Name of Reporting Organization (school, hospital, etc.)	
17b. Address (No. & Street)		17c. City	17d. State	17e. Zip Code	17f. Phone Number

# **YOUTH FIRESETTING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

18. Reporting Person's Name		Report Code (see above)		18a. Name of Reporting Organization (school, hospital, etc.)		
18b. Address (No. & Street)		18c. City		18d. State	18e. Zip Code	18f. Phone Number
19. Reporting Person's Name		Report Code (see above)		19a. Name of Reporting Organization (school, hospital, etc.)		
19b. Address (No. & Street)		19c. City		19d. State	19e. Zip Code	19f. Phone Number
<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY MEDICAL PERSONNEL WHEN PHYSICAL EXAMINATION HAS BEEN DONE</b>						
20. Summary Report and Conclusions of Physical Examination (Attach Medical Documentation)						
21. Laboratory Report				22. X-Ray		
23. Other (specify)				24. History or Physical Signs of Previous Abuse/Neglect <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
25. Prior Hospitalization or Medical Examination for This Child						
<b>DATES</b>				<b>PLACES</b>		
26. Physician's Signature				27. Date	28. Hospital (if applicable)	
The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) does not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs or disability.				AUTHORITY: P.A. 238 of 1975. COMPLETION: Mandatory. PENALTY: None.		

## **INSTRUCTIONS**



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## YOUTH FIRESETTING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

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### GENERAL INFORMATION:

This form is to be completed as the written follow-up to the oral report (as required in Sec. 3 (1) of 1975 PA 238, as amended) and mailed to Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect. Indicate if this report was phoned into MDHHS as a report of suspected CA/N. If so, indicate the Log # (if known). The reporting person is to fill out as completely as possible items 1-19. Only medical personnel should complete items 20-28.

Mail this form to:

Centralized Intake for Abuse & Neglect  
5321 28<sup>th</sup> Street Court, SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

OR

Fax this form to 616-977-8900 or 616-977-8050 or 616-977-1158 or 616-977-1154

OR

email this form to MDHHS-CPS-CIGroup@michigan.gov

1. Date – Enter the date the form is being completed.
2. List child(ren) suspected of being abused or neglected – Enter available information for the child(ren) believed to be abused or neglected. Indicate if child has a disability that may need accommodation.
3. Mother's name – Enter mother's name (or mother substitute) and other available information. Indicate if mother has a disability that may need accommodation.
4. Father's name – Enter father's name (or father substitute) and other available information. Indicate if father has a disability that may need accommodation.
- 5.-7. Child(ren)'s address – Enter the address of the child(ren).
8. Phone Number – Enter phone number of the household where child(ren) resides.
9. Name of alleged perpetrator of abuse or neglect – Indicate person(s) suspected or presumed to be responsible for the alleged abuse or neglect.
10. Relationship to child(ren) – Indicate the relationship to the child(ren) of the alleged perpetrator of neglect or abuse, e.g., parent, grandparent, babysitter.
11. Person(s) child(ren) living with when abuse/neglect occurred – Enter name(s). Indicate if individuals have a disability that may need accommodation.
12. Address where abuse / neglect occurred.
13. Describe injury or conditions and reason of suspicion of abuse or neglect – Indicate the basis for making a report and the information available about the abuse or neglect.
14. Source of complaint – Check appropriate box noting professional group or appropriate category.

**Note:** If abuse or neglect is suspected in a hospital, also check hospital.

15.-19 - Reporting person's name - Enter the name and address of person(s) reporting this matter.

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**DOCUMENTATION FROM MASSEY  
COUNTY OFFICE OF HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION OF  
JUVENILE JUSTICE  
JUVENILE JUSTICE PROBATION  
OFFICE**

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Massey County Office of Health and Human Services  
Division of Juvenile Justice  
Juvenile Justice Probation Office

I received the file of Jacob Gantz (12 y.o.), 812 Oak Road, Maryville, MI, from the Office of the Fire Marshal, Massey County Fire and Rescue, on May 13, 20xx. The file detailed an investigation of a residential house fire at the aforementioned address in which Jacob readily confessed to igniting the fire by utilizing a propane torch to etch his name into the wood paneling on the wall. He stated that he was not intending to burn the house down, but rather he was attempting to make a statement that he was part of the family as there is extreme discord within the home.

Jacob's mother shared that he was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome (no longer isolated in the DSM, but part of the Autism spectrum diagnosis) and is exceptionally intelligent but becomes "obsessed" with things. Recently he has become obsessed with fire and electricity, and upon knowledge of the fire, she immediately thought he was culpable and responsible. It is unclear if he has set previous fires.

Mrs. Gantz emphatically stated that her husband is opposed to mental health involvement and does not believe in medications or counseling of any kind. She stated that her son suffers from a sleep disorder and experiences mood swings, often including bursts of anger. She said that Jacob absolutely understands right versus wrong.

In reviewing the intake documentation in the file, the following information, obtained from interviews with the parents, Jacob, and the fire marshal is critical to understanding him, interrupting his firesetting behaviors, and the likelihood of recidivism:

- Mrs. Gantz immediately believed that Jacob had set the fire, stating that he had recently been obsessed with fire and electricity.
  - Jacob has known mental health challenges such as a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome (Autism), mood swings accompanied by bursts of anger, and suffers from insomnia.
  - Jacob's treatment for his challenges has been sporadic at best, and Mrs. Gantz and her husband cannot agree on whether he should take his prescribed medications from his primary care physicians.
  - At the time of the fire incident, at 0538 in the morning, while all the occupants in the home were still in pajamas, Jacob was fully clothed.
  - There is significant dysfunction in the home with children from multiple marriages and extreme strife between siblings.
-



- After lying multiple times about his knowledge and presence at the fire, Jacob confessed to the fire investigator that he set the fire and admitted that he was aware that his family members could have been injured or killed.
- Discussions with the fire marshal did not reveal any prior firesetting, however, as reported by the U.S. Fire Administration, as few as 10% of fires set by those under the age of 18 are ever reported (U.S. Fire Administration, 2014).
- There have been no prior criminal charges brought against Jacob Gantz.
- Law enforcement and Juvenile Justice were notified by the Office of the Fire Marshal regarding this incident.
- Jacob does not currently have legal representation.
- There is an allegation of child abuse against Jacob perpetrated by Mr. Gantz and acknowledged by Mrs. Gantz.
- A previous psychological evaluation was conducted.

As with all jurisdictions across the country, arson in Massey County is a felony. However, to prove that the crime of arson took place, one must be able to prove unequivocally that the action took place willfully and maliciously. During his interview with the fire investigator, Jacob stated that he was not trying to burn his house down, was only trying to make a statement, and attempted to put out the fire before notifying his mother. This information will assist in looking at Jacob's motivations and intent as required by the juvenile justice system. While Jacob claims that he was not endeavoring to burn down the house or harm anyone, he was also non-committal when asked if he was aware of the danger of his actions and answered, "I guess." This creates a conundrum for our juvenile justice group as youths who set fires are often excused as children playing with matches and are unaware of the dangers associated with their actions. Jacob is an adolescent and self-professes to an awareness for his actions, going so far as to initially deny setting the fire. Though the evidence gathered at the scene clearly showed that the fire was incendiary in nature, based upon the information from the fire marshal, the willful and malicious elements necessary for the charge of arson are lacking in this situation.

After a thorough review of the case, Jacob's age, and mental state, it is the decision of Juvenile Justice Probation to charge Jacob Gantz with juvenile delinquency and reckless endangerment. Juvenile delinquency specifically refers to the antisocial or criminal activity of the child (below 16 years of age for boys and 18 years for girls) which violates the law. Thus, that same activity would have been a crime if it were committed by an adult. Reckless endangerment is a crime consisting of acts that create a substantial risk of serious physical injury to another person, and while Jacob did not necessarily intend the resulting or potential harm, he acted in a way that showed a blatant disregard for the foreseeable consequences of his actions.

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It is the recommendation of this office that the predisposition report be the result of a multi-disciplinary assessment of the youth's prioritized needs, an individualized plan for treatment of said needs, utilize the balanced restorative justice model for rehabilitation to include but not be limited to, behavioral and mental health services and fire safety education, and a recommendation of the most appropriate placement to meet the youth's and that of his family's needs in a setting that provides a level of security sufficient to ensure public safety.

J. Smith, Probation Officer  
Juvenile Justice, MCOHH



# **DOCUMENTATION FROM PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION**

PSYCHIATRIC OUTPATIENT CLINIC

123 Main Street  
Maryville, MI, 48040

Complete Evaluation: Psychiatrist

Date of Exam: 5/30/\_\_\_

Time of Exam: 5:22:37 PM

Patient Name: Gantz, Jacob

Patient Number: 100001043248

History: Mr. Jacob Gantz is a 12-year-old boy who lives in a blended family. His 2- and 7-year-old brothers and their two 13-year-old stepsisters live with them.

The following information was provided by:

Mr. Jacob Gantz

Mr. Gantz has previously been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (formerly called Asperger's syndrome) and has anger issues. Mr. Gantz describes symptoms of a depressive disorder. He reports that there is a precipitant for his depression. Mr. Gantz's current depressive symptoms are attributed to living with two 13-year-old girls who bully him.

"I tell people and they don't believe me. Mom says to man-up and her husband says that his daughters can do nothing wrong."

Current Symptoms: He reports that his appetite is decreased. Some weight loss has occurred. He reports a weight loss of more than five pounds. He reports that he gets so angry about being picked on that sometimes he cannot breathe. He reports strong interest about fire and electricity, and difficulty sleeping. Insomnia is reported.

Suicidality: He denies suicidal ideas or intentions. Denial is convincing.

Prior Depressive /Manic Episodes: He reports that there have been no prior depressive episodes. Mr. Gantz does not have a history of manic or hypomanic episodes.

Severity/ Complexity: Based on the risk of morbidity without treatment and his description of interference with functioning, classification of disorder is estimated to be severe.

Mr. Gantz has symptoms of anxiety. Anxiety symptoms have been present for months. Anxiety symptoms are occurring daily. He reports occurrences of difficulty concentrating. Feelings of restlessness are described. Difficulty sleeping is occurring. There is difficulty falling asleep. He produces an exaggerated startle response. He routinely wakes in the middle of the night, fully dresses, and "tinkers" with fire and electrical experiments.

Problem Pertinent Review of Symptoms/Associated Signs and Symptoms: Obsessive, intrusive, and persistent thoughts or compulsive, ritualistic acts are reported around his fascination with electricity and fire. No hallucinations, delusions, or other symptoms of psychotic process were reported by him.

Past Psychiatric History:

Previous diagnosis of Autism Spectrum disorder.

**Withdrawal History:**

There is no history of Mr. Gantz ever having experienced withdrawal from any substance.

**Psychiatric Hospitalization:**

Mr. Gantz has never been psychiatrically hospitalized.

**Outpatient Treatment:**

Mr. Gantz received outpatient mental health treatment for autism spectrum disorder and trouble controlling his anger approximately two years ago. Stepfather is unsupportive of ongoing outpatient treatment, including therapeutic medication.

**Addiction/Use History:**

Mr. Gantz denies any history of substance abuse. Mother and stepfather also deny history of substance abuse.

**Psychotropic Medication History:**

Psychotropic medications have been subscribed for Mr. Gantz. His stepfather will not allow him to take his medications.

Past psychiatric history is sporadic.

**Social/Developmental History:**

Mr. Gantz is a 12-year-old boy in middle school. He has few friends and seems to prefer to be by himself.

**Barriers to Treatment:**

Mr. Gantz's stepfather is opposed to treatment. Given the firesetting incident, mental health treatment and fire intervention services are recommended.

**Emotional:**

Emotional or psychological problems are a barrier to treatment success: Emotional problems will be addressed via the treatment plan. (Profound depression, obsession with fire and electricity.)

**Client's Goals:**

"I just want to feel better."

**Family History:**

Biological father, recently deceased, known to have anxiety.

Biological brother thought to have bipolar disorder.

Family psychiatric history is otherwise negative. There is no other history of psychiatric disorders, psychiatric treatment or hospitalization, suicidal behaviors, or substance abuse in closely related family members.

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**Medical History:**

Adverse Drug Reactions: List of Adverse Drug Reactions:

(1) Added ADR to Penicillin, Reaction(s) = Respiratory Distress, Status = Active

**Allergies:**

There are no known allergies.

**Compliance:**

Mr. Gantz reports good compliance with medical instructions including medication orders.

**Exam:**

Mr. Gantz presents as inattentive, disheveled, with facial muscles tensed and a scowling expression. He exhibits speech that is normal in rate, volume, and articulation is coherent and spontaneous. Language skills are intact. There are signs of severe depression. He appears downcast. Body posture and attitude convey an underlying depressive mood. Facial expression and general demeanor reveal depressed mood. Noted multiple straight-line cut marks on left forearm and wrist. Physical abuse or self-harm denied. Suicidal ideation is denied. Homicidal ideation is denied. His affect is congruent with mood. Associations are intact and logical. There are no apparent signs of hallucinations, delusions, bizarre behaviors, or other indicators of psychotic process. Associations are intact, thinking is logical, and thought content appears appropriate. Cognitive functioning is intact and age appropriate, within the normal range. Short- and long-term memory are intact. This patient is fully oriented.

Insight into problems appears fair. Judgment appears fair. There are signs of anxiety.

\*Irritability

\*Fidgety

**Diagnoses:**

Adjustment disorder with depressed mood, DSM-5 (Active)

Autism Spectrum disorder, DSM-5 (Active – pre-existing)

Borderline personality disorder, DMS-5 (Active)

**Instructions / Recommendations / Plan:**

A clinic or outpatient treatment setting is recommended because patient is impaired to the degree that there is severe interference with interpersonal functioning. Sessions with the entire blended family will be required.

Psychopharmacology

Supportive Therapy

Start Celexa 20 mg PO QAM x30days # 30 (thirty) None refills (Depression)

Start Klonopin 0.25 mg PO TID x30days # 90 (ninety) None refills (Anxiety)

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Start Ambien CR 6.25 mg PO QHS PRN x30days # 30 (thirty) None refills (Insomnia)

**Notes & Risk Factors:**

Acute Grief: Death of biological father 2/2/\_\_\_

99203PI (Office / Outpt, New)

Joyce Coleman, MD

Electronically Signed

By: Joyce Coleman, MD

On: 6/8/5:23:38 P

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# **A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON YOUTH FIRESETTING**

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## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON YOUTH FIRESETTING**

### **Youth Firesetting Origins: Initial Terminology was “Juvenile Firesetting”**

Four theoretical frameworks are evident when reviewing literature specific to juvenile firesetting: (a) Psychoanalytic Theory, (b) Social Learning Theory, (c) Dynamic-Behavioral Theory, and (d) Cycles of Firesetting Oregon Model. Each theory outlines the etiology for juvenile firesetting behavior based on the theoretical perspective of the researchers and three of the four are informed by a mental health perspective and have provided the foundation for the explanations of the motivations of youth who set fires to date.

## **YOUTH FIRESETTING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

### **Psychoanalytic Theory**

Psychoanalytic Theory is a theory of human development that interprets human development in terms of motives and drives. Those who ascribe to Psychoanalytic Theory believe that human development is “primarily unconscious and heavily colored by emotion. Behavior is merely a surface characteristic, and it is important to analyze the symbolic meanings of behavior, and that early experiences are important to human development” (Berger, 2005, p. 35). Psychoanalytic Theory prescribes that firesetting is a child’s desire to have power over something that they can extinguish themselves.

### **Social Learning Theory**

Bandura and Walters (1963) first introduced the Social Learning Theory as an extension of Miller and Dollard’s (1941) research on the behavioral interpretation of modeling. Bandura’s (1977) Social Learning Theory looked at the importance of learning through observation and modeling of behaviors, reactions, and attitudes of others. Bandura (1977) stated, “Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action” (p. 22).

Bandura (1973) believed that anger and aggression, just like other types of behaviors, were learned through observational learning. An individual’s observational learning comes from his or her family, cultural background, peer group, community, and mass media. According to Gaynor and Hatcher (1987), aggressive children come from families where one or more members also demonstrate aggressive behaviors. Through modeling, children learn to exhibit aggressive behaviors. As a result, poor social skills begin to develop within the family and continue to occur outside the family, for example, with peers and in school. Hence the family as well as the young person’s other primary environments reinforces the development of the socially deviant behavior of firesetting (pp. 46-47). The link between Social Learning Theory and juvenile firesetting would come from a child seeing a family member or peer set a fire out of anger or aggression.

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Firesetting researchers Kolko and Kazdin (1986), drew on Social Learning Theory to develop a risk-factor model for youth who set fires. This model includes three domains: (a) learning experiences and cues, (b) personal repertoire, and (c) parent and family influences and stressors. Learning experiences and cues would include the child's early modeling and vicarious experiences, early interest and direct experiences, and the availability of adult models and incendiary materials. The personal repertoire would include cognitive components such as limited fire and fire safety awareness, behavioral components such as interpersonal ineffectiveness/skill deficits and antisocial behavior excesses, and motivational components. The parent and family influences and stressors would include limited supervision and monitoring, parental distance and lack of involvement, parental pathology and limitations, and stressful external events.

### **Dynamic-Behavioral Theory**

Dr. Ken Fineman (1980) introduced the Dynamic-Behavioral Theory of firesetting in 1980, to show that certain factors predispose a child to firesetting behaviors. These factors include (a) personality characteristics, (b) family and social situations, and (c) environmental conditions (see Table 1 for a description of these factors).

Fineman (1995) introduced his Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Survey to determine the future risk of firesetting for a child already determined to exhibit firesetting behaviors.

### **Cycles of Firesetting**

Based upon years of experience working with juvenile firesetters, the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office and the Oregon Treatment Strategies Task Force partnered to develop the Cycles Model of Firesetting. According to Stadolnik (2000), "The Cycles Model is visually represented by four concentric circles that represent the four dimensions of a juvenile's internal and external world that are considered to be related to their likelihood of firesetting" (p. 19). The cycle includes four circles: (a) the emotional/cognitive cycle, (b) the behavior cycle, (c) the family/household cycle, and (d) the community/social cycle. The four circles are described in Table 2.

## **YOUTH FIRESETTING RESEARCH TIMELINE**

The above theoretical frameworks of youth firesetting were established upon multiple empirical studies. The following section discusses this research timeline, beginning with the research of Dr. Helen Yarnell in the 1930s, through the current firesetter research of today. The chronology illustrates a move from studying institutionalized youth who set fires to the development of a series of typologies for non- institutionalized youth who set fires.

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## 1930–1960

During 1937 and 1938, Dr. Helen Yarnell, working in the Psychiatric Division of Bellevue Hospital, undertook one of the very first studies on juvenile firesetting. The reason for the study stemmed from her discovery that children who were referred to the Psychiatric Division of Bellevue Hospital for observation and firesetting tendencies showed a variation in their clinical history. Yarnell's study team observed 60 children between the ages of 6 and 15. Sixty percent were between the ages of 6 and 8 and 35% were between the ages of 11 and 15. Only two were girls, ages 6 and 7. The research team reviewed the children's clinical history and completed interviews with each child. According to Yarnell (1940), the adolescent group's findings were much different than that of the younger group; however, Yarnell's study with the adolescent group was incomplete at the time of the printing of her monograph.

In the first column of Table 3 is a list of the findings on the children ages 6 through 8, except for five children who were deemed to have cognitive limitations severe enough to preclude them from the study. In the second column of Table 3 is a list of the findings on the adolescents, ages 11 through 15. Yarnell found that children aged 6-8, started fires because of a deprivation of love and security at home, whereas older children viewed fire as exciting and entertaining.

In a second study initiated shortly after Yarnell's study of 1937-1938, Drs. Nolan Lewis and Helen Yarnell (1951) looked at a group of 238 children who set fires between the ages of 5 and 15. In this study the case records were obtained from fire reports, insurance investigators, juvenile research centers, and juvenile courts. The 1951 study included the 30 cases from Yarnell's previous 1937-1938 research study. In this study Lewis and Yarnell reported a wide range of motivations for firesetting.

The motivations included:

1. Low average to superior intelligence of the children, except for children who set fires against the school.
2. Guilt over some type of sexual preoccupation.
3. Symbolic fires directed specifically toward one member of the family.
4. Fire and excitement, which accounted for 32% the youth-set fires.
5. Revenge against a parent or foster home, which accounted for 22% of the youth-set fires.
6. Enjoyment out of seeing the fire engines, which accounted for 17% of the youth-set fires.
7. Revenge against their employer, which accounted for 15% of the youth-set fires.
8. Desire to be a hero, which accounted for 8% of the youth-set fires.
9. Concealment of theft, which accounted for 6% of the youth-set fires.

Both the Yarnell (1940) and the Lewis and Yarnell (1951) studies were the first studies that looked specifically at the child and adolescent firesetter. These studies were the groundwork for future research on child and adolescent firesetting. Unfortunately, it was not until the 1970s when research on juvenile firesetting resumed when fire departments and mental health professionals noticed the increasing numbers of child and adolescent firesetting incidents.

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## 1960–1980

There was little research, aside from that of Lewis and Yarnell, throughout the 1940s and 1950s. It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that the fire service and mental health took notice of the large number of reported youth who were setting fires, that were appearing in the fire service statistics of that time.

Macht and Mack (1968) began the resurgence in firesetting research in 1968. They studied four adolescents with firesetting behavior, ages 16 to 18. In this study they found that all four boys came from stressful home situations. The boys only set fires when they were away from their fathers, and each one of the boy's fathers had some type of significant job involvement with fire. Macht and Mack concluded from their study that fire had come to have a special and pleasurable meaning in the lives of these patients. In an important sense, the firesetting behavior represents a call from the overburdened adolescent to the absent father to bring him to the rescue. The activity in connection with fire served to reestablish a lost relationship with the father (p. 286).

Folkman and Siegelman (1971) undertook a pilot study to explore the firesetting behavior in 47 randomly selected children ages 6 and 7. In this study, Folkman and Siegelman found that only two boys had come to the attention of the fire service for setting fires. However, 60% of the boys and 33% of the girls were found to have an interest in fire, which was exhibited by either a self-report of previous firesetting or reporting they had asked to light matches. During this time, the focus expanded to identifying treatment options for youths who set fires. During a California State Psychological Association conference in 1975, a group of fire service personnel and psychologists met to discuss the issue of juvenile firesetting. The reason for this discussion was the fact that both fire service and mental health had been receiving referrals for youth who set fires and neither group knew how to help these children. Out of this meeting the Fire Service and Arson Prevention Committee was formed to design methods to work with the children who set fires. According to Gaynor and Hatcher (1987), this committee received a grant from the United States Fire Administration to begin work on designing and developing a method to classify juvenile firesetting behavior and to determine the risk of future firesetting in children who have been identified as exhibiting firesetting behaviors. This committee's work provided the basis for the evaluation and classification system used today with youth who set fires.

Bernard Levin (1976) wrote about the psychological characteristics of people who set fires. The focus of this article was on the adult who sets fires; however, he did discuss children and fire by stating, "Most people are fascinated by fire. This fascination starts at an early age and manifests itself in young children playing with matches. While people may not outgrow their basic fascination with fire, normal children learn that playing with matches is not acceptable behavior and discontinue it by the age of five or six. A few children continue to play with matches or deliberately set destructive fires, and their chronic firesetting is an observable symptom of a psychological disturbance" (p. 38).

He went on to discuss two types of treatments used when working with chronic juvenile firesetting behavior. The first treatment discussed by Welsh (1971) was stimulus satiation. This technique requires a firesetter to strike matches for an hour a day until the firesetter grows bored of lighting the matches and stops match lighting and/or firesetting. The second treatment is through positive

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reinforcement that is accompanied with the threat of punishment by loss (Holland, 1969). This technique requires a child to bring any found match packages to their father, who would then give them a reward for their positive behavior. This treatment would cause the child to develop positive non-firesetting behaviors based on the positive reward.

The literature on juvenile firesetting from the 1940s through the 1970s focused either on diagnosis or treatment. During this time, Heath, Gayton, and Hardesty (1976) reviewed the literature on juvenile firesetting and found only six journal articles that exclusively discussed juvenile firesetting and 17 articles on issues related to juvenile firesetting. Unfortunately, they were unable to get their literature review article published in the United States, so they relied upon the Canadian Psychiatric Association to publish the literature review in their journal. However, from the 1980s through today, the literature has proven to be rife with research on juvenile firesetting, just not specific to the motivations of youths who set fires in schools or the phenomenon of school fires.

## **1980–Today**

From the 1980s through today, there have been many different foci of youth firesetting research, including: a) the impact of the environment on the behavior of the youth who sets fires (Fineman, 1980; Gaynor & Hatcher, 1987; Vreeland & Waller, 1979; Perks et al, 2019; Lambie et al, 2013;); b) mental health and substance use conditions contributing to firesetting (Fineman, 1980; Freud, 1932; Heath et al., 1976; Kolko & Kazdin, 1986; Kuhnley, Henderson, & Quinland, 1982; Lewis & Yarnell, 1951; Williams, 2005; Wooden & Berkey, 1984; Yarnell, 1940; Vaughn et al, 2010; Perks et al 2019; Lambie et al, 2013; MacKay et al, 2009; Kolko, 2001; Kolko & Vernberg, 2017; Franklin et al, 2002); c) firesetting as a learned behavior (Gaynor & Hatcher, 1987; Kolko & Kazdin, 1986; Vreeland & Waller, 1979); d) assessment of youths who set fires and evaluation instruments (Fineman 1980, 1995; Gaynor & Hatcher, 1987; Sakheim & Osborn, 1994; Slavkin, 2000; Stadolnik, 2000; Foster, 2019; Kolko & Vernberg, 2017); e) mental health and educational interventions (Bumpass, Fagelman, & Brix, 1983; Fineman, 1980, 1995; Kolko & Kazdin, 1986, 1991; Sakheim & Osborn, 1994; Stadolnik, 2000; Wooden & Berkey, 1984; Foster, 2019; Kolko, 2001; Kolko et al, 2001; Kolko & Vernberg, 2017; Franklin et al, 2002); f) juvenile firesetting motives and typologies (Cotterall, 1999; Fineman, 1980; Gaynor & Hatcher, 1987; Hall, 2006; Kolko & Kazdin, 1991; Meade, 1998; Sakheim & Osborn, 1994; Swaffer & Hollin, 1995; Terjestam & Ryden, 1996); and g) link between abuse/maltreatment, trauma, and youth firesetting (Perks et al, 2019; Lambie et al, 2013; Peters & Freeman 2016; Root et al, 2008; Nishi-Strattner L, Kopet T, Erdberg P, 2001; Becker KD et al, 2004; Martin G et al. 2004; Cole et al, 1986, 1983; Puri BK et al, 1995; Foster, 2019.). In Unit #3, we will learn more about the typologies of youth firesetting, motivations, and other contributing factors. The existing research on typologies contain anywhere from three to nine categories of firesetting motives, ranging from the curious to the pathological youth who sets fires. It is important to note that current recommended approaches to interventions in firesetting youth are not exclusively based on the firesetting literature; they also draw from research on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma-informed care, shared risk and protective factors, behavioral health science, motivational interviewing, resiliency, and other topics related to working with youth. Hence, it is important to collaborate with other disciplines in your youth firesetting programs to ensure that best practice approaches are being utilized.

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Research on youth firesetting continues to evolve. At the time of publication of this course, there are several current national/international research projects underway. Utilize online journal and research database platforms (e.g., PubMed and MEDLINE, Science Direct, Cochrane Library Database of Systematic Reviews, ScienceOpen, Google Scholar, CINAHL, Ovid, etc.) to keep current on new findings and recommended interventions.

## **RELATED TOPICS IN YOUTH FIRESETTING RESEARCH**

### **Arson and Youth Firesetting: The Early Years of Arson Elements and Motives**

When a fire occurs, it is the responsibility of the fire investigator to determine the cause of the fire. The fire investigator looks for three elements to determine if the fire can be considered the crime of arson. DeHaan (2002) identified these elements as follows:

1. There has been a burning of property. This must be shown to the court to be actual destruction, at least in part, not just scorching or sooting (although some states include any physical or visible impairment of any surface).
2. The burning is incendiary in origin. Proof of the existence of an effective incendiary device, no matter how simple it may be, is adequate. Proof must be accomplished by showing specifically how all-possible natural or accidental causes have been considered and ruled out.
3. The burning is shown to be started with malice, that is with intent of destroying property (p. 508).

According to Wooden and Berkey (1984), “Arson itself is as old as civilization, but it was not until the nineteenth century that there appeared to be much concern about the motivations for it or about the psychological stability of arsonists” (p. 12). In the 1800s and early 1900s, considerable emphasis was placed on arsonists suffering from pyromania. It was not until the mid-1960s that research on the motives of arsonists moved away from theories of a certain type of deviance. In 1966, McKerraccher and Dacre studied 30 adult male arsonists in a forensic psychiatric setting. They found that when compared with 147 adult non-arson offenders, the motives for the arsons were related to feelings of aggression, rather than from a certain type of deviance. In support of McKerraccher and Dacre’s findings, Wolford (1972) reported that arsonists were unable to express their anger to others. Vreeland and Waller (1979) supported Wolford’s findings when their research found that arsonists could not confront the object(s) of their anger/aggression, and instead the arsonists displaced that anger/aggression against property by starting fires.

In addition to the literature that focuses on pyromania, more current discussions of arson revolve around criminality. The National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) has identified six major categories of arson motives:

1. Profit
  2. Vandalism
  3. Excitement
  4. Revenge
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5. Crime concealment
6. Extremism (DeHaan, 2002, p. 509)

According to DeHaan (2002), of these six categories, the vandalism category is most closely associated with juvenile and adolescent firesetting. The fires are “set when the opportunity arises, often after school or work or on weekends. Boredom and frustration among youths, sometimes lead to peer-group challenge to create some excitement” (p. 511).

O’Connor (1987) identified nine categories for the various motives for arson; (a) arson for profit, which would include insurance fraud and welfare fraud; (b) business-related fraud, which includes eliminating the competition and organized crime; (c) demolition and rehabilitation scams and building strippers; (d) revenge and prejudice fires; (e) vanity or hero fires; (f) crime concealment fires; (g) mass civil disturbances; (h) terrorism; and (i) juvenile firesetters and vandalism. Yet in focusing solely on juveniles, O’Connor stated that “a motive for juvenile firesetters is not always apparent” (p. 20), like it is with an adult. In support of O’Connor, Boudreau et al. (1977) stated, “Vandalism is a common cause ascribed to fires set by juveniles who seem to burn property merely to relieve boredom or as a general protest against authority. Many school fires as well as fires in abandoned autos, vacant buildings, and trash receptacles are believed to be caused by this type of arsonist” (p. 19).

In other words, according to Boudreau et al. (1977), O’Connor (1987), and DeHaan (2002), unlike arson in general, the motive is not always apparent as to juvenile firesetting and it could be just a symptom of boredom.

### **School Fires and Youth Firesetting**

According to historical information on school fires from the NFPA, there have been eight school fires in grades K-12 with 10 or more deaths between 1908 - 1958 in the history of the United States: <https://www.nfpa.org/News-and-Research/Data-research-and-tools/Building-and-Life-Safety/Structure-fires-in-schools/US-school-fires-with-ten-or-more-deaths> A synopsis of the three most deadliest these school fires follows. The first school fire occurred on March 4, 1908 at the Lakeview Elementary School in Collinwood, Ohio. The cause of the fire was said to be wood joists coming in contact with an overheated steam pipe that started the fire. This fire killed 175 students and teachers (Gottschalk, 2002). The second devastating school fire occurred on March 18, 1937, in New London, Texas. A disgruntled school employee who had been reprimanded for smoking and wanted to get back at the school administrators started the New London School fire. He tampered with the gas lines to run up the school gas bill. The ensuing explosion killed 294 students and staff (Gottschalk, 2002).

The third school fire occurred on December 1, 1958 in Chicago, Illinois at the Our Lady of the Angels School. A fifth-grade student lit a cardboard waste barrel in the school basement and started this school fire. The fire claimed the lives of 92 students and 3 nuns.

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All these fires caused community devastation, millions of dollars in property loss, and the most precious loss of all, the loss of life. However, only the fire at Our Lady of the Angles School was started by a school student.

Refer to Appendix H: Table 1: Database Summary Description: Potential Sources of Youth Firesetting Related Data for current data and reports on school fires.

In Lewis and Yarnell's (1951) study from 1937–1938 of 238 children who set fires in school, 61 had set fires in either churches or schools (no differentiation between church or school was given). The reasons they gave for setting their school fires were predominately based on hatred, revenge, and the desire to destroy the school building, hoping that they would no longer have to attend school. Some of their other reasons included the following comments:

1. "We didn't like the looks of the teacher."
2. "I got a bad report card and thought I'd make a fire and blow it up."
3. "I was mad, because I didn't pass."
4. "I was tired of going to school."
5. "The teacher picked on me." (p. 300)

Some of the secondary reasons these students gave for setting the school fires was to see the fire, see the fire engines, and be the hero that discovers the fire. The researchers went on to say that these children might also vandalize school property, steal from teachers and staff, leave obscene notes on the teacher's desk, and mutilate the teacher's clothing. Their classroom behavior and schoolwork were poor at best and they showed a "predominately dull or borderline intelligence with special learning disabilities, and all of them were unable to compete in the classroom" (p. 300). Lewis and Yarnell (1951) also stated that children under age 10 rarely set school fires and the most frequent age group of school children who set fires are between 12 and 14 years of age. In Wooden and Berkey's (1984) study, they found that the "greatest number of fires (37%) set by the delinquent firesetters" were school-related fires (p. 72). The motives for these school fires were found to be "revenge, spite, or disruption of classroom activities" (p. 77). The median age for the youth who set fires in school in Wooden and Berkey's (1984) study was 14 and the fires were most often set in the classroom, school closets, under the teacher's desk, or in the wastebasket. They also found that most of the youth who set fires in school were considered trouble-making students and the fires occurred after being punished by a teacher or school administrator. In the body of current literature, only two examples of differing motives appear.

In an article written by Jeff Meade (1998) titled *Fire Power*, while not a study about youth who set fires in school but rather a compilation of information about school fires written for *Education Week*, Meade discussed school firesetting with juvenile firesetter researcher Paul Schwartzman. Schwartzman suggested that there was no one main reason firesetting juveniles target schools; however, he did suggest the following possible motives behind school firesetting:

1. A prank
  2. To get out of final exams
  3. Peer pressure
  4. Seeking attention
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Other possible motives behind school firesetting discussed by Meade (1998) include revenge, school disruption, anger, or no explanation at all. Hall (2006) reported that “deliberate fires in schools are often a result of mucking about which gets out of hand” (p. 2). However, according to Hall’s report, Dr. Jack Kennedy, a clinical forensic psychologist, reverted to a pathological explanation, asserting that there was a deeper reason for school fires. Kennedy stated, “For children, school is normally a focal point for their social world. So that’s where they’re going to be exposed to frustrations, to issues of tolerance, and anger. And because they place social controls on children, schools—unfortunately—often annoy them, cause them to be disgruntled, or to feel harm done by them. The results can be starting a fire to vent anger, or exact revenge against the school, or against the teacher. It is rare that there is not some sort of trail or story behind a fire at school. Fires may be like a friend to some of these children, the one thing they feel gives them some power” (Hall, 2006, pp. 2-3). As has been evidenced by the scant research that focuses specifically on youth who set fires in school, little is known about the motivations behind school fires. In Lewis and Yarnell’s (1951) research, all the youth who set fires in school had “predominately dull or borderline intelligence with special learning disabilities and all of them were unable to compete in the classroom” (p. 300). In Wooden and Berkey’s study in 1984, all the youth who set fires in school were troubled students who set school fires after a teacher or school administrator had punished them. Meade and Hall speculated about the motives of those who set fires in school but undertook no actual research to support their hypotheses.

**Table 1 - Dynamic-Behavioral Theory of Firesetting (Fineman, 1980)**

Category	Description
Personality characteristics	Child’s exhibited behaviors, school adjustment, physical problems, and organic dysfunctions.
Family and social situations	Information about the family system, how the child gets along with family members, how discipline is meted out, and if there is an ongoing crisis within the family.
Environmental conditions	The child receives encouragement to play with fire, models firesetting behavior identified in others, and deals with emotional distress, peer pressure, and stress.

Fineman (1995) introduced his Juvenile Firesetter Child and Family Risk Survey as a way to determine the future risk of firesetting of a child already determined to be a firesetter.

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**Table 2 - Cycles Model of Firesetting (Stadolnik, 2000)**

Cycle	Description
Emotional/cognitive	Juvenile's thoughts and feelings after his or her firesetting event.
Behavior	Behaviors of the juvenile firesetter that coincide with his or her thoughts and feelings.
Family household	How the family responds to the firesetting event and the emotional environment of the juvenile's household.
Community/social	Responses by the community to the firesetting and what level of support or restriction the firesetter and family receive.

**Table 3 - Findings of Dr. Helen Yarnell's 1937-1938 Study**

Ages 6-8	Ages 11-15
All of the children are of average to dull normal intelligence, but many had some special educational disability such as reading or arithmetic. This made their school adjustment difficult.	This group showed little anxiety or regret for their firesetting.
In every case, the child had been deprived of love and security in his/her home life.	Anxiety dreams were infrequent.
They set fires only when under stress in their home situation.	The fires were planned, set away from home, and many caused losses involving thousands of dollars.
The children set fires, with associated fantasies to burn some member of the family who had either withheld love from the child or become too serious a rival for the love of a parent.	The adolescents waited to see the fires and enjoyed the noise and excitement from the fire engines.
The fires are set in and around the home, cause little damage, and are usually put out by the child himself; significance is chiefly symbolic.	The boys tended to go in pairs, with the exclusion of all other friends. The pairs included an aggressive and passive member, suggesting homosexual association; however, the researchers never proved this.
The children show other types of asocial behavior such as running away from home, truancy, stealing, and general hyper kinesis and aggression.	N/A
All children show acute anxiety and suffer from terrifying dreams and	N/A

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fantasies, including vivid attacks by the devil, ghosts, and skeletons.	
All children have some sexual conflicts and many tell of active masturbation, sodomy, or fellatio; type of activity does not seem significant.	N/A
Enuresis was noted in only nine of the cases and seemed a part of the general picture rather than specifically associated with the fire motif.	N/A
A special group of children were orphans who had been placed in boarding homes but failed to make emotional adjustments.	N/A

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