

## News from Charlie's House - the home safety site

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- [Charlie's Checklist](#)
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## Keeping Your Home Safe From Fires

The most effective tool in protecting your home against fires is a working smoke detector - a lifesaving sound that will wake the family up and allow them to escape the risk of a burning house! **Two-thirds of home fires that kill children occur in homes without a working smoke alarm.**

Do you have a working smoke detector outside sleeping areas, or if the bedroom doors are closed, is there a working smoke detector inside the bedrooms?

You will never know if the smoke alarm will work when you most need it unless you test it. Do you routinely check the batteries of your smoke alarm - at least once a month? Remember than batteries don't last forever - they need to be replaced every year (FEMA, 2013; KCMO FD, 2013).

**To test your smoke detector battery:** push the test button and listen for the audible sound - if you can't reach the smoke alarm - use a broom handle to push the test button. Batteries that are losing power will "chirp" - alerting you that the power is low. Replace batteries immediately. Make sure that no one removes the batteries to use them for toys or other battery powered products.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA, 2013) reported that matches, lighters and other heat sources (i. e. space heaters) are the most common sources of fire-related deaths of children under 5 years of age. Here are some things you can do to reduce the risk of children playing with fire:

Charlie's House provides safety information, materials, and furniture straps free of charge as a way of helping keep children in our community safe. If you would like to help us achieve our mission of preventing injuries to children in and around the house, please consider a financial donation to Charlie's House.



**Charlie's House** was named in honor of Charlie Horn, a 2 year old boy, who was killed in 2007 when a small dresser in his bedroom fell on him.

The mission of **Charlie's House** is to prevent injuries to children in and around the home.

## SAVE THE DATE

Charlie's House 5K  
Fall 2013

Check our website in March for more information!

- Explain that matches and lighters are adult tools and children should tell an adult if they find them.
- **Up and away** is the best policy for storing matches and lighters - preferably out of sight of children and, when possible, locked away from curious children.
- Use only child-resistant lighters - none are child-proof!
- In the kitchen or patio, teach your children to respect fire - keep a 3 foot safety zone from the stove or fire pit.
- Avoid overloading outlets. Never route electrical cords under rugs, mattresses or leave them exposed for curious children.
- Smoke outdoors and dispose of tobacco products in sand or water.

To prevent fires in the home related to cooking and heating, remember the following:

- Grease fires result when your stove, oven or broiler is not kept clean and free of grease.
- Space heaters should be placed out of the traffic path and on a level surface.
- Space heaters should never be left on when an adult is not in the room.
- Oil and gas heaters use oxygen - keep a window slightly opened in the room with a running heater.
- Heaters should never be near curtains, furniture, bedding or any other combustible material.
- Check gas connections to ensure the seal with the heater is in tact to prevent leakage of fuel.
- Never use flammable liquids to start a fire in the stove, fireplace or furnace.

The Kansas City Missouri Fire Department reminds you that when you have a babysitter or family member caring for your children, be sure that they know how to lead the children to safety. Remember - the best choice is to get out, and then call 911.

Sources:

Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2008). "Prepare. Practice. Prevent the Unthinkable."

Retrieved from [http://www.usfa.fema.gov/campaigns/usfaparents/downloads/fa\\_251a.pdf](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/campaigns/usfaparents/downloads/fa_251a.pdf)

Kansas City Missouri Fire Department. (2013). Home Safety Checklist. Retrieved from <http://www.kcmo.org/>

# Dancing With The Stars

Charlie's House is honored to be participating in the

**Brian Anselmo**

**Memorial Foundation**

**Dancing with the Stars.**

Fani Schifman will be dancing and raising money on behalf of Charlie's House at the event scheduled for June 8, 2013 at the Overland Park Marriott. Join us by voting for Fani or purchasing a table at this event at [bmafoundation.org](http://bmafoundation.org).

You will not want to miss this exciting night so reserve your seats now!

 [Join Our Mailing List](#)

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Charlie's House  
6324 N. Chatham Ave, #223  
Kansas City, MO 64151  
[info@charlieshouse.org](mailto:info@charlieshouse.org)

[CKCMO/Depts/Fire/Homesafetychecklist/index.htm](http://CKCMO/Depts/Fire/Homesafetychecklist/index.htm)

United States Fire Administration. (2013). "Winter Fire Safety." Retrieved from [http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/home\\_fire\\_prev/holiday-seasonal/winter.shtm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/citizens/home_fire_prev/holiday-seasonal/winter.shtm)

## Gun Safety in the Home

Charlie's House is concerned about gun violence and the effects it has on children in their homes and schools. Earlier this month, a young boy here in Kansas City injured himself with an unattended firearm (see article [here](#)). With these simple reminders for gun safety in the home, hopefully these accidents will cease to happen!

- The safest home for children is a gun-free home.
- If you decide to keep a firearm in the house, lock up guns, unloaded with ammunition separately and have the key unavailable to children.
- If you have a family member with mental health or behavioral problems, store guns away from the home.
- Treat all firearms as if they are loaded.
- Point muzzles in a safe direction.
- Never leave a gun unattended when handling or cleaning it.

For more information on gun safety, please visit this web site: <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/105/4/888.full>

## Be the Difference for Charlie's House

By now you probably know that the mission of Charlie's House is to prevent injuries to children in and around the home. You likely also know that Charlie's House hopes to achieve this goal by building a safety demonstration home in Kansas City where parents and caregivers can learn how to make their homes safer in a hands-on environment. What you may not realize is that Charlie's House relies solely on the charitable contributions of others to make this mission a reality.

Perhaps you are a parent yourself. Or maybe you have grandkids who steal your heart every day. For whatever reason, we know that you are one of the many who want to help - but you just can't make a million dollar gift. At least not right now anyway! No matter what financial position you are in there are ways you can help Charlie's House achieve its mission. Gifts of any size make a real difference. This list shows five ways you can help:

**1. Spread the Word.** Now it's the time to spread the word to your friends and family. Visit our website ([www.charlieshouse.org](http://www.charlieshouse.org)), "like" us on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/charlieshouse>), and follow us on Twitter (@CharliesHouseKC). Give the gift of safety to new parents or grandparents. Let them know about Charlie's House, encourage them to visit our website and learn more about home safety.

**2. Become a Charlie's Angel.** Charlie's Angels is the unique group of donors who have committed to supporting Charlie's House on an annual basis with a gift of \$100 or more. Benefits are given to Charlie's Angels based on the level of their contribution. For more information or to make a donation visit [www.charlieshouse.org/how-to-help/charlies-angels](http://www.charlieshouse.org/how-to-help/charlies-angels).

**3. Let Us Come to You.** Are you a member of a civic, social or church group who is looking for a speaker? A member of our Board of Directors or a Charlie's House volunteer is happy to come to your meeting to talk about Charlie's House. One of the most important things we can do is let people know about the resources available through Charlie's House. Help us spread the word. Please contact Maggie Collins at [mcollins@charlieshouse.org](mailto:mcollins@charlieshouse.org) to make arrangements for a speaker at your next meeting.

**4. Start at Home.** Make your own home an example of safety by using the tools available at [www.charlieshouse.org](http://www.charlieshouse.org). You can download Charlie's Checklist as well as tour the Virtual House and get tips on how to make each room in your home safer. If you need help getting the right materials to safety-proof your house, please contact us at [info@charlieshouse.org](mailto:info@charlieshouse.org). We can help and often times supply the tools needed to make your home safer.

**5. Get Creative.** It seems there is always something to celebrate - birthdays, new babies, weddings - you name it. Charlie's House is here to help you get creative with your gift giving. Honorarium gifts are always welcome. Instead of another receiving blanket, donate the cost in

honor of the newborn. And at the next birthday party you can feel good knowing you've given a gift to Charlie's House in the birthday boy or girl's name. And no need to look any further for that perfect gift for the newlyweds - make a donation to Charlie's House on their behalf. All donations can be made online at [www.charlieshouse.org](http://www.charlieshouse.org) or by mailing a check made payable to Charlie's House to 6324 N. Chatham Ave, #223, Kansas City, MO 64151.

## Letter from our New Executive Director



It is an exciting time to be involved in Charlie's House, and I am happy to spend my time with such a meaningful initiative. My name is John McCarthy and I am proud to tell you that I am the new Executive Director of Charlie's House. I've had a lot of nice titles over the course of my career, but I am a husband and I am a father, and those titles are a priority for me. When I first heard Charlie's story, learned of the mission and watched the video, I knew I wanted to be involved.

Most of you that are reading this know about Charlie's story. It's emotional. It's heartbreaking. It's so real. As a Dad, I imagine that I have the thought that most Dads and Moms would think: "What if that was my child?" Our hope, our mission, through Charlie's House, is to help keep this story from repeating itself. Brett and Jenny Horn, and the extended family, have gone through the unthinkable pain with the loss of their son, and we're focused on keeping preventable injuries - and death - from happening to other children in and around the home.

Think about the power of our mission. You, me and our many supporters can actually make a true difference in the lives of children and families. I ask you, "What if it was your child?" Can we make a difference for your "Charlie"? I believe that we can.

Please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or comments, or just to introduce yourself. I can be reached at [john@charlieshouse.org](mailto:john@charlieshouse.org) or at Charlie's House at [913-375-7123](tel:913-375-7123). Again, thank you for your support of Charlie's House. I look forward to a successful 2013!

Sincerely,

John McCarthy  
Executive Director  
Charlie's House