

TODAY / HEALTHLIFE

Safe Kids coalition offers tips for preventing children's burn injuries

Gazette Staff Reports

KALAMAZOO — For National Burn Awareness Week (Feb. 1 to 7), Safe Kids Kalamazoo County is calling attention to the fact that children are burned by more than fire.

Also dangerous are hot foods and beverages, heating appliances, hot pots and pans, electrical currents and chemicals.

Young children do not recognize heat-related hazards quickly enough to react appropriately, says the Safe Kids coalition, led by the Children's Hospital at Bronson.

Safe Kids offers these suggestions for preventing injuries:

- ❖ Reduce the temperature of tap water by setting your water heater to 120 degrees Fahrenheit. Also, consider putting anti-scalding devices on each faucet and water head.

- ❖ Prevent spills by cooking with pots and pans on back

BURN FACTS

- ❖ Among accidental injuries, fires and burns are the No. 5 cause of death for children ages 14 and younger.
- ❖ About 113,600 children ages 14 and younger are treated for fire/burn injuries each year, and more than 500 die because of unintentional fire- and burn-related injuries.

burners and turning handles away from the front of the stove. Also, avoid wearing long sleeves or baggy clothes in the kitchen.

- ❖ Establish a kid-free zone around the stove — 3 feet away is a good distance — marking it on the floor with bright tape. Never leave your child alone in the kitchen, and don't hold children while cooking or carrying hot foods and beverages.

- ❖ Test the temperature of

cooked food and hot drinks to make sure they're not too hot for children. Never microwave a baby's bottle.

- ❖ Keep electrical cords out of reach of children, especially extension cords and cords connected to appliances such as coffee pots and deep fryers.

- ❖ Childproof your home by covering open electrical outlets so children can't insert metal objects into outlets and by locking matches, lighters and flammable materials out of children's reach. Keep children away from candles and other open flames.

- ❖ Actively supervise your child. Simply being in a room with a child is not necessarily supervising.

- ❖ Do not let children play with or ignite fireworks.

For more information about burn prevention, call 341-8830 or visit www.usa.safekids.org.