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Fire safety/prevention skills training to reduce involvement with fire in young psychiatric inpatients: Preliminary findings *

David J. Kolko ... June Faust

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This study evaluated the effects of a brief cognitive-behavioral skills training curriculum designed to reduce firesetting among young, psychiatrically hospitalized children. Children were randomly assigned to a group Fire Safety/Prevention Skills Training group (FSST; $n=12$) or an individual Fire Assessment/Awareness (FAA; $n=12$) condition. FSST emphasized instruction and practice in fire safety concepts and preventive activities using didactic presentation, modeling, role-playing, self-instructions, and reinforcement, whereas FAA children met individually with a staff nurse to assess/discuss firesetting behavior. Based on multivariate and univariate analyses, FSST was associated at posttraining with a significant reduction in contact with fire-related toys and matches in an analogue task and an increase in fire safety knowledge. Parent-reports at 6-month follow-up indicated less overall involvement with fire for FSST than FAA children. Contact with matches in an analogue task and low fire safety knowledge at posttraining were associated with follow-up matches. Implications for assessment of and intervention

associated with follow-up matchplay. Implications for assessment of and intervention with young firesetters are discussed.



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* Portions of these data were presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Psychological Association, New Orleans, LA. Susan Watson is currently with the Highland School, Pittsburgh, PA.

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