

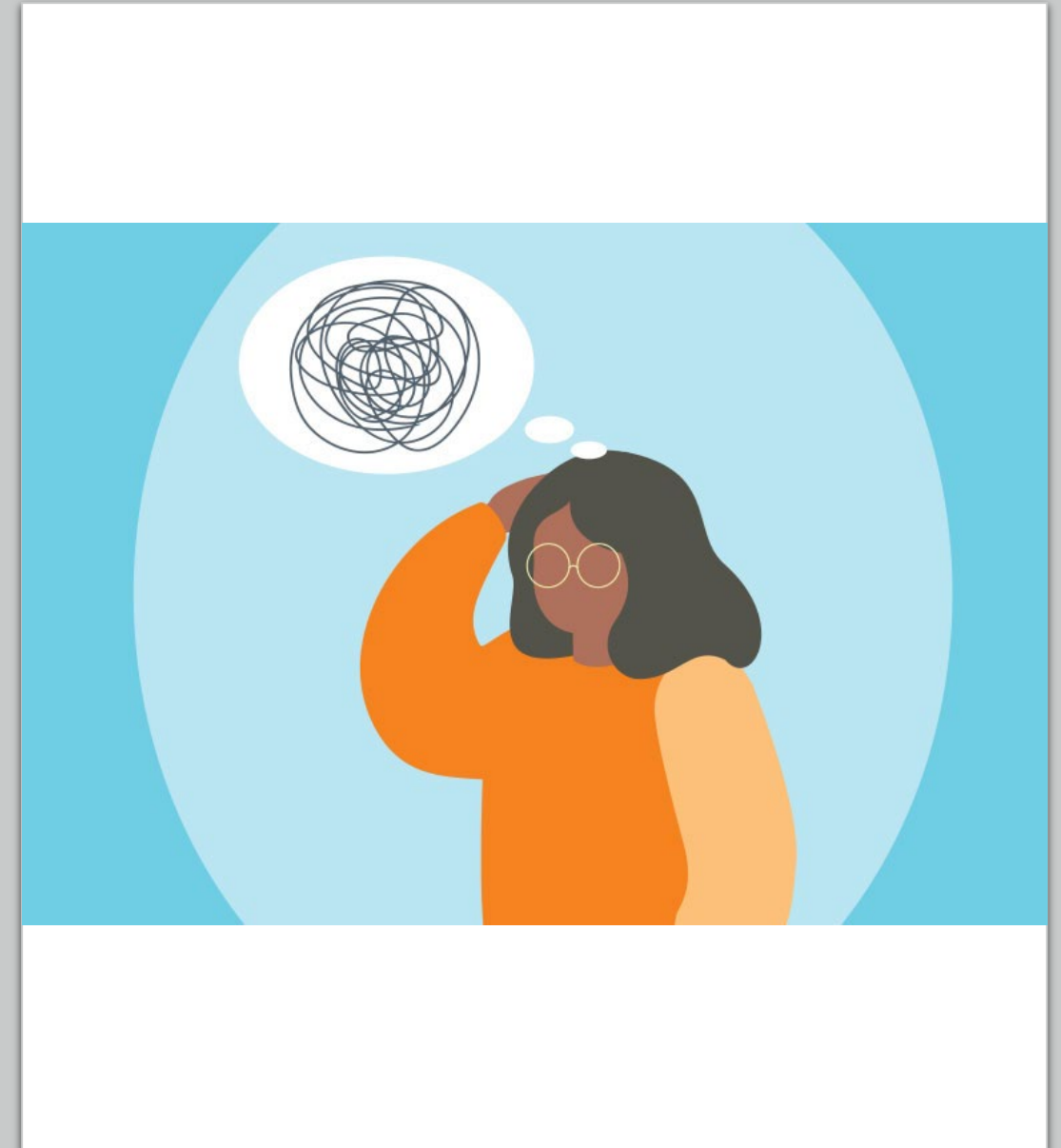
# Fire Safety Education, Psychosocial Interventions and 'What Works' in Addressing Child-Set Fires

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## Two weeks ago...

- Why language matters
- Characteristics of children who set fires
- Three broad domains in risk factors for firesetting behaviour by children
- Firesetting as a spectrum and the hierarchy of interventions
- Current UK landscape including absence of assessments and national guidelines



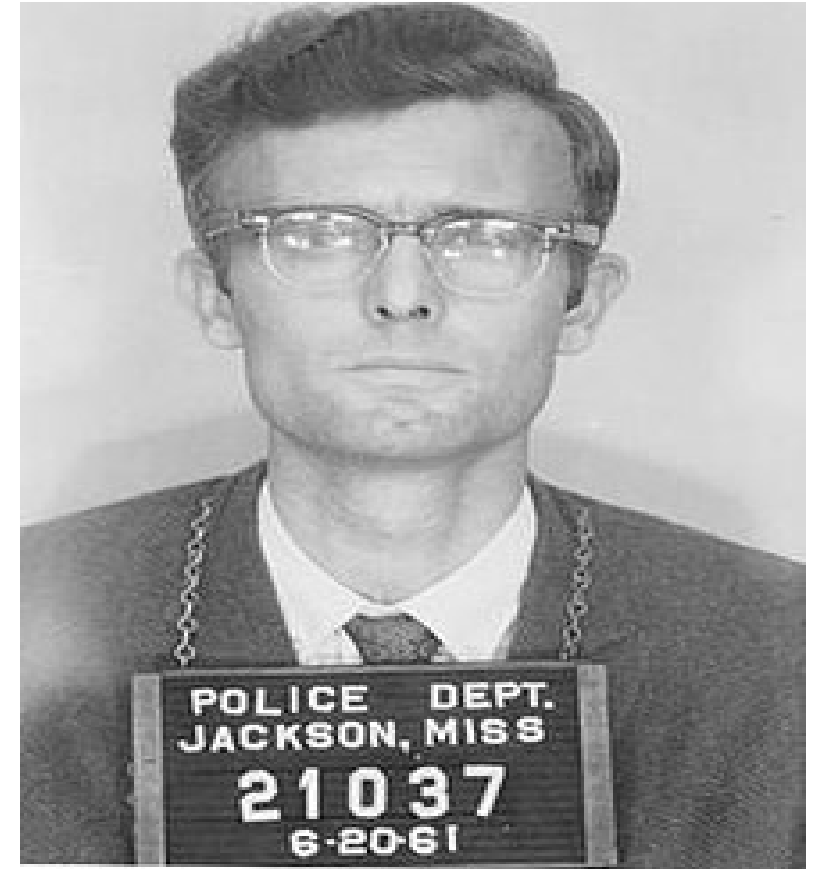
# Q&A Reflections

1. Illinois fatal fire
2. Popular media representations and cross-cultural patterns
3. FASD
4. Resources



**‘What Works’**

“Nothing works”



# What the Literature Tells Us

## Two distinct types of intervention

- Fire safety education (FSE)
- Psychosocial interventions

FSE can be delivered in conjunction with psychosocial interventions

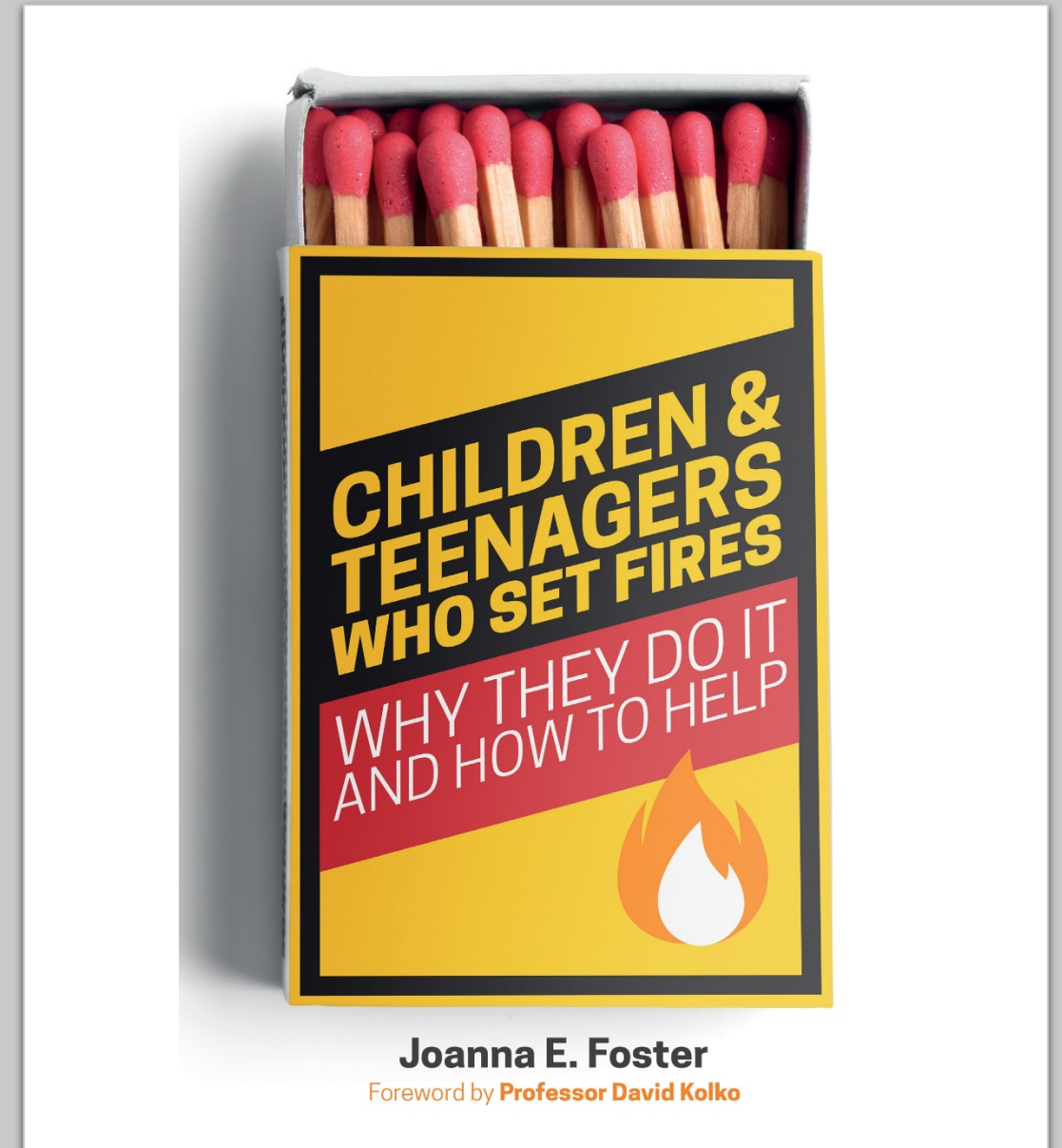


# Fire Safety Education (FSE)

FSE aims to target a child's curiosity in, exposure to and experience with fire

Requires the expert instruction of fire safety skills and practices that raise awareness of the dangers of fire

(Kolko et al. 2008; Mackay et al. 2012; Pinsonneault et al. in Kolko 2002; Palmer et al. 2005; Foster 2020)



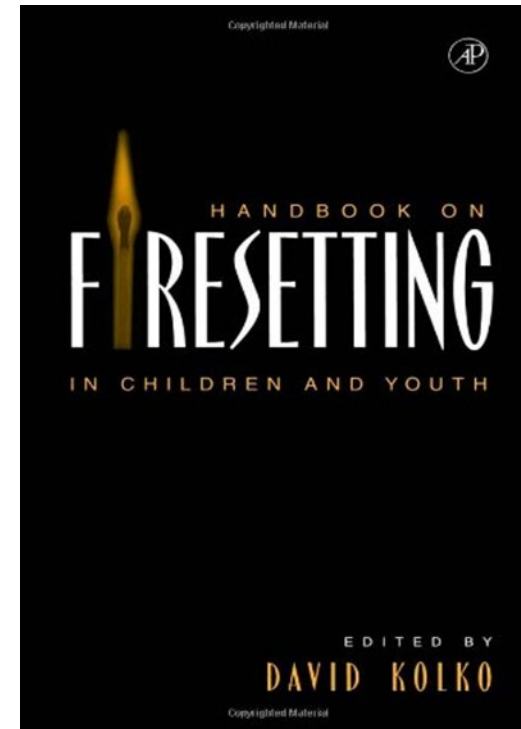
# Psychosocial Interventions

Seek to modify parenting practices, children's cognitive and behavioural responses, and family functions that influence a child's firesetting behaviour

Frequently incorporate cognitive behavioural treatments including:

- Graphing
- Pro-social skills and anger control
- Problem-solving skills
- Individual and family psychotherapy

(Bumpass et al. 1983; Bumpass et al. 1985; Kolko and Ammerman 1988; McGrath et al. 1979, DeSalvatore and Hornstein 1991)

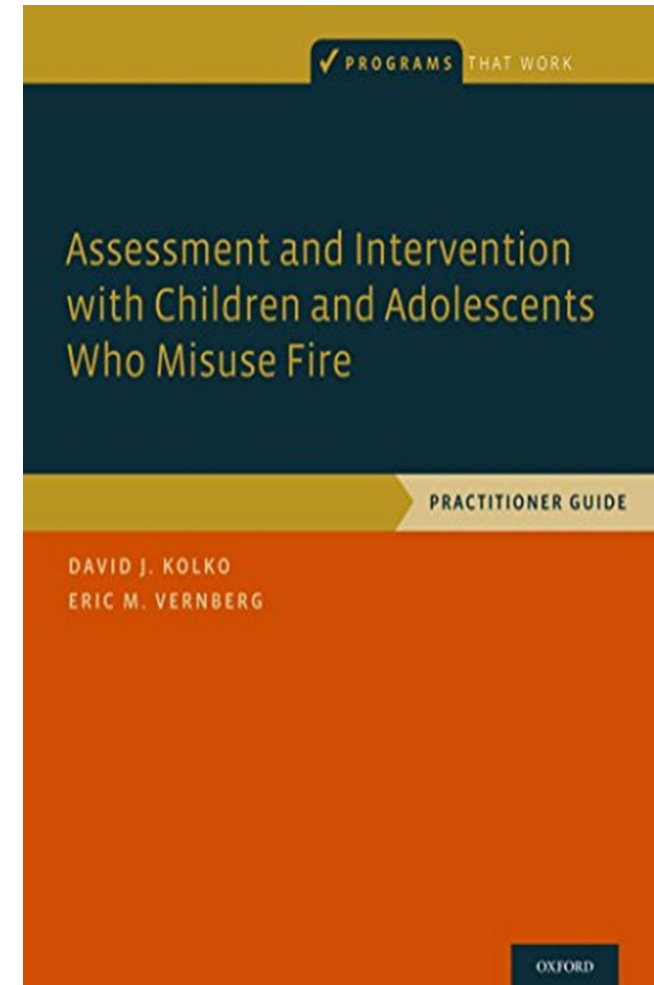


# FSE and CBT

Modular approach includes sections on:

- FSE
- Affect regulation and cognitive control
- Effective problem-solving
- Being assertive
- Building positive parent-child relationships

(Kolko and Vernberg 2017)





# Efficacy of FSE

- Ten-year follow-up of 182 children that had completed the New Zealand Fire Service 'Fire Awareness and Intervention Programme' (FAIP)
- Only 2% were known for further arson offences
- Overall rate of general offending was 59%

(Lambie et al. 2013)



# HVF, FSE and CBT

- Home Visit from a Firefighter
- Fire safety education
- Cognitive Behavioural Treatment

All showed post-treatment improvements in fire involvement, interest and risk

FSE and CBT more efficacious in firesetting frequency, severity and other fire-related behaviours

(Kolko 2001)



# Fire Safety Messages Linked to Stages of Cognitive Development

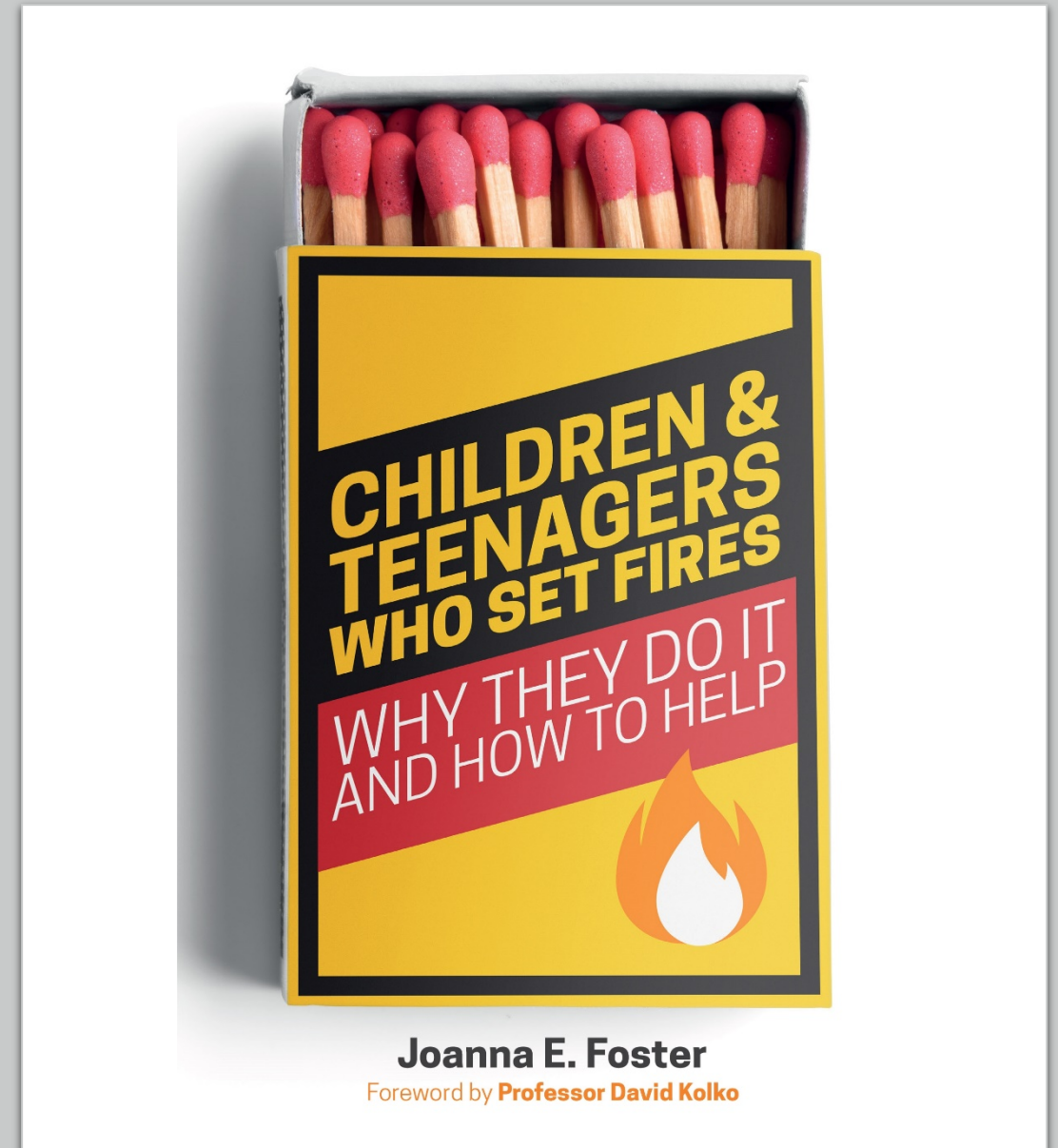
**0 – 7yrs**                      **Stay away from fire**  
*Reflecting children’s very literal thinking*

**8 – 11yrs**                    **Good versus bad fires**  
*Reflecting children’s more logical thinking*

**12+yrs**                      **Fire science and the ability  
to consider “what if”  
scenarios**

*Reflecting teenagers’ ability to think hypothetically  
and understand more abstract ideas*

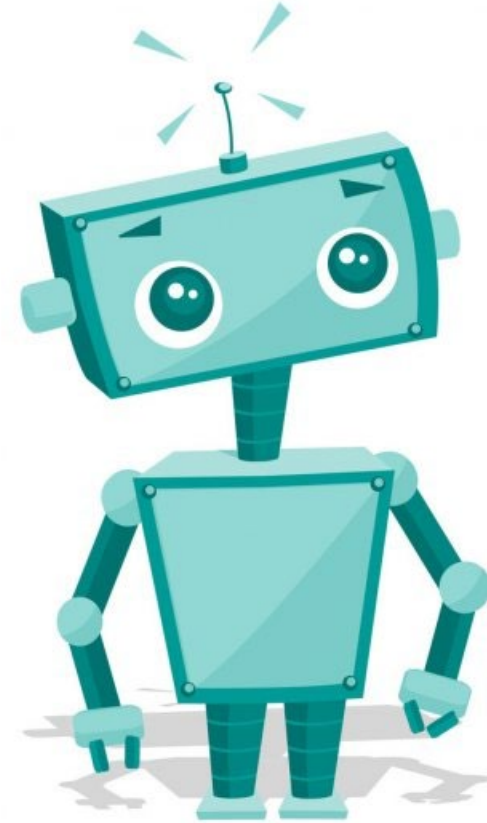
(Foster 2020)





0 – 7yrs

Stay Away From Fire





0 – 7yrs

YES! I can play!

NO! STAY AWAY!



8 - 11yrs

Good versus Bad Fires



8 – 11yrs

Jez's Lucky Day





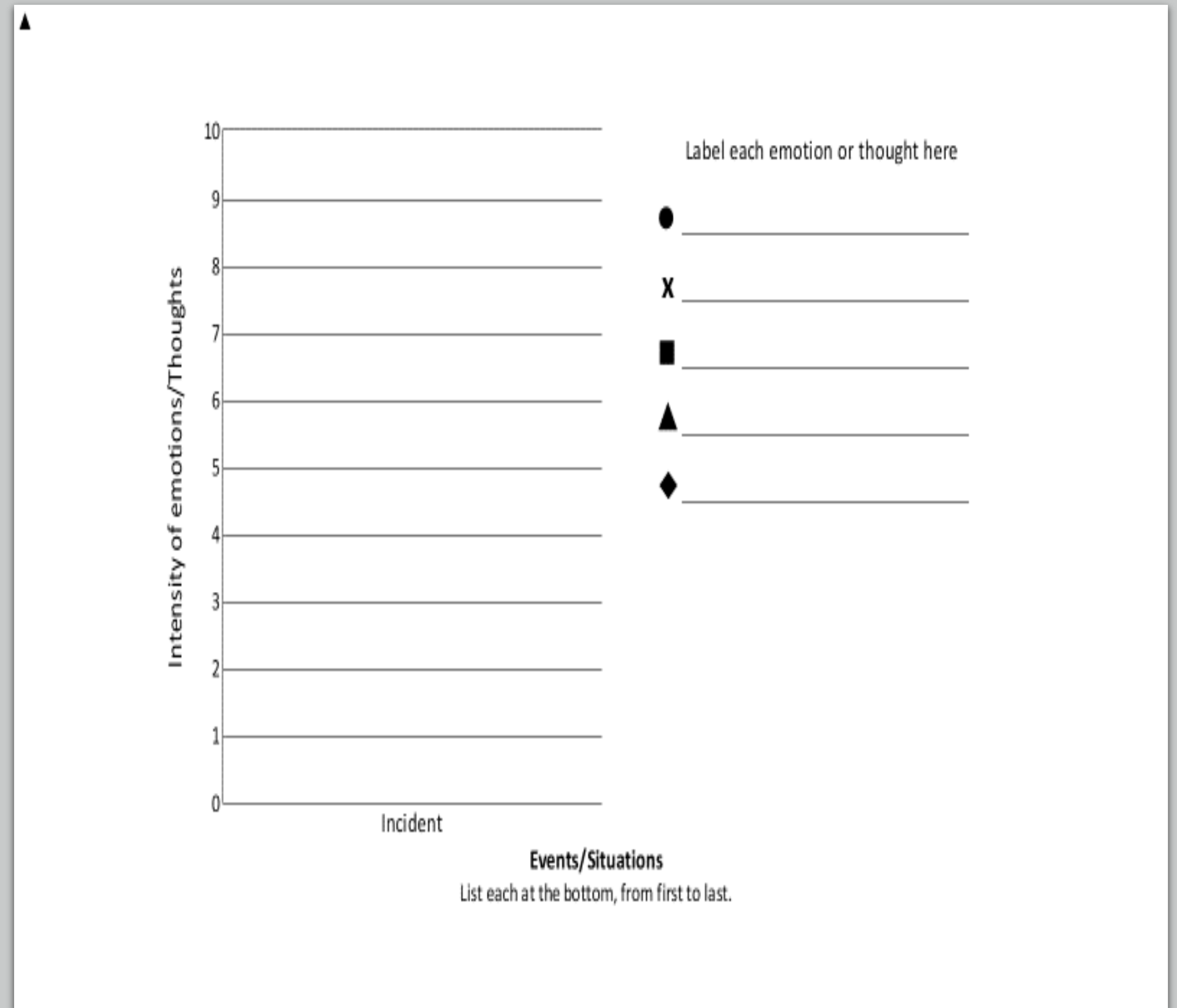
12+yrs

Fire science and what if...



12+yrs

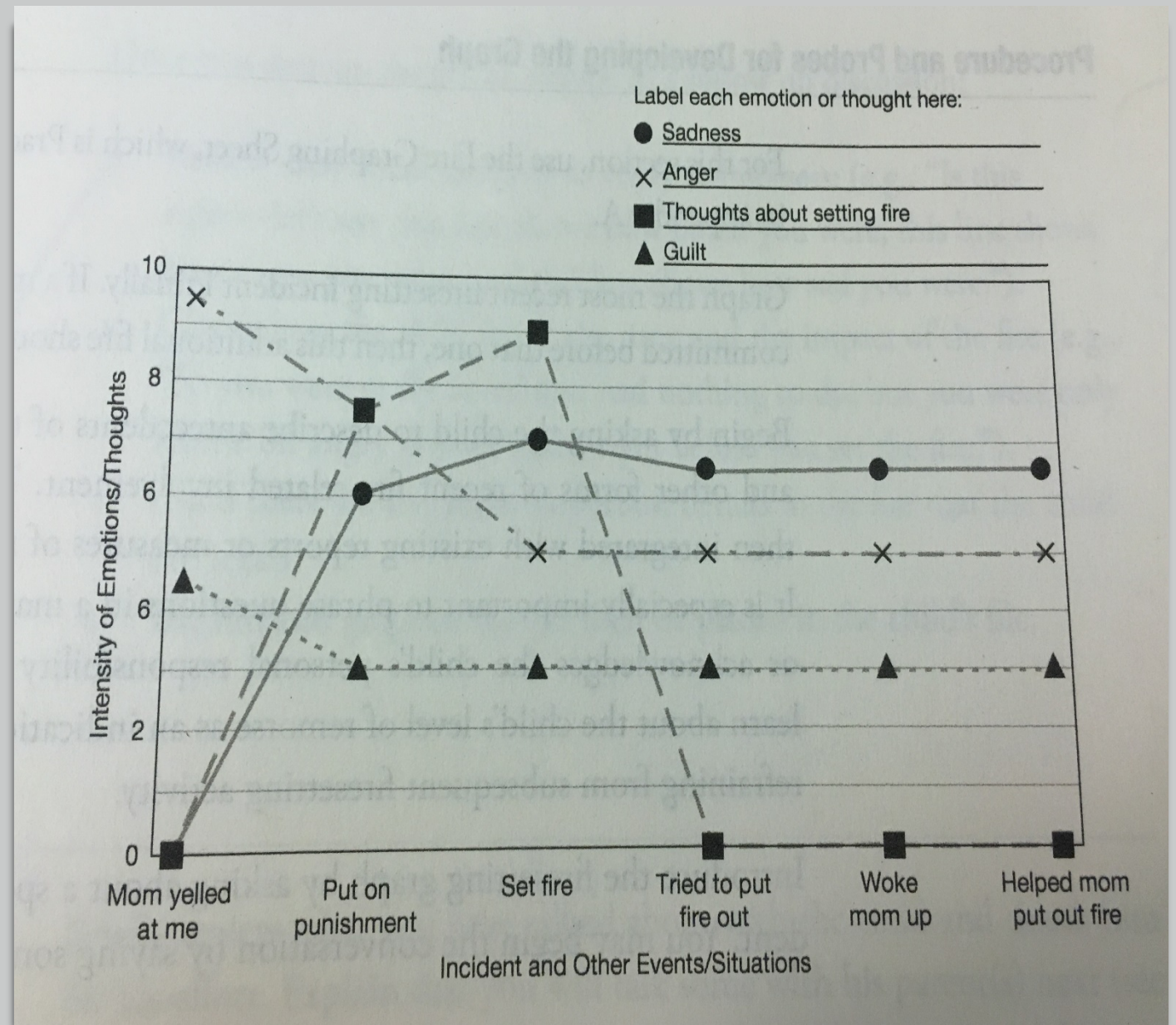
Graphing



12+yrs

Graphing

(Kolko and Vernberg 2017)



# To Conclude

Rites of passage

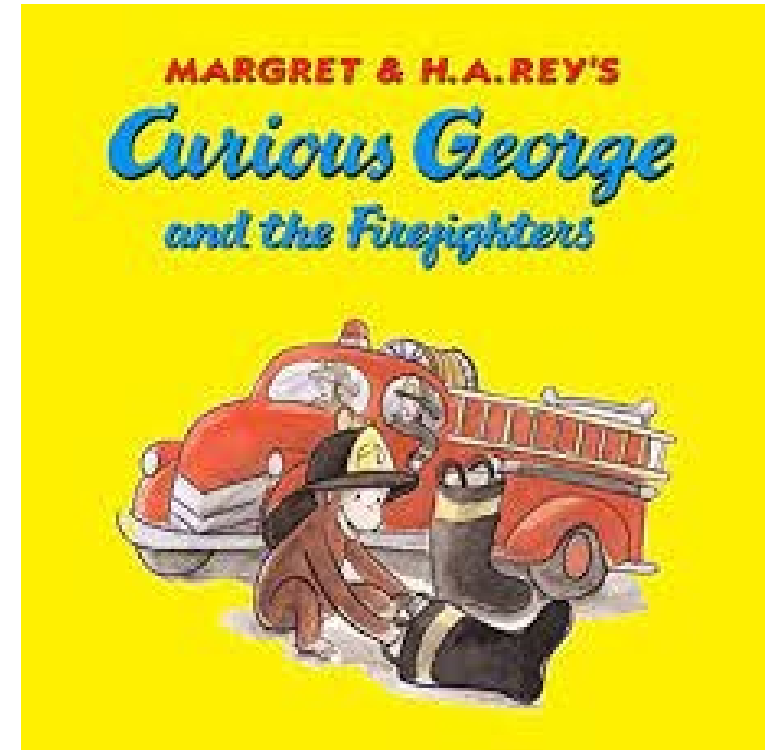


Benjamin Choe, 13, holds a certificate after receiving a dose of the Pfizer coronavirus vaccine on 13 May 2021 in Seattle.

(David Ryder/Getty Images)

Q&A

Be curious





# Thank You



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## **‘Talking About Firesetting’ group on LinkedIn**

This international group of practitioners represents the fields of criminology, psychology, child and adult safeguarding, mental health, education, youth justice, probation, restorative practice, youth work, and the emergency services.

It aims to provide a safe, open and nurturing space for the sharing of ideas and reflections on how best to support children, teenagers and families affected by firesetting behaviour.

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8937075/>

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