

Fire Safety



This book is part of the Inuutsiarniq Reading Series, developed by the Department of Health in Nunavut. The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series is a unique, Nunavut-developed literacy initiative that infuses Northern values of healthy living and self-care into a culturally appropriate reading program.

The Inuutsiarniq Reading Series was developed to support the reading level guidelines outlined in the Department of Education's Inuktitut reading program, Uqalimaariuqsaniq. Uqalimaariuqsaniq is a sequential and progressive Inuktitut reading program that supports students in their development as readers.

Healthy students are better learners and become healthy adults. For more information, visit www.gov.nu.ca/health and your local health centre.

Book details

Level: 14

Text type: Non-fiction, informational book

Subjects/themes: Fire hazards and fire safety practices at home and on the land; emergency services and firefighters; first-degree burn first aid; what to do in an emergency

Key features: 32 pages, headings, supportive illustrations, diagrams, lists, final review list

Fire Safety



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Hi! My name is Bernice and I am a volunteer firefighter.

I meet regularly with the other volunteer firefighters to do training and practice drills. If there is ever a real fire, the volunteer firefighters in the community are called. We quickly meet at the fire hall and then drive to the fire in our fire truck.

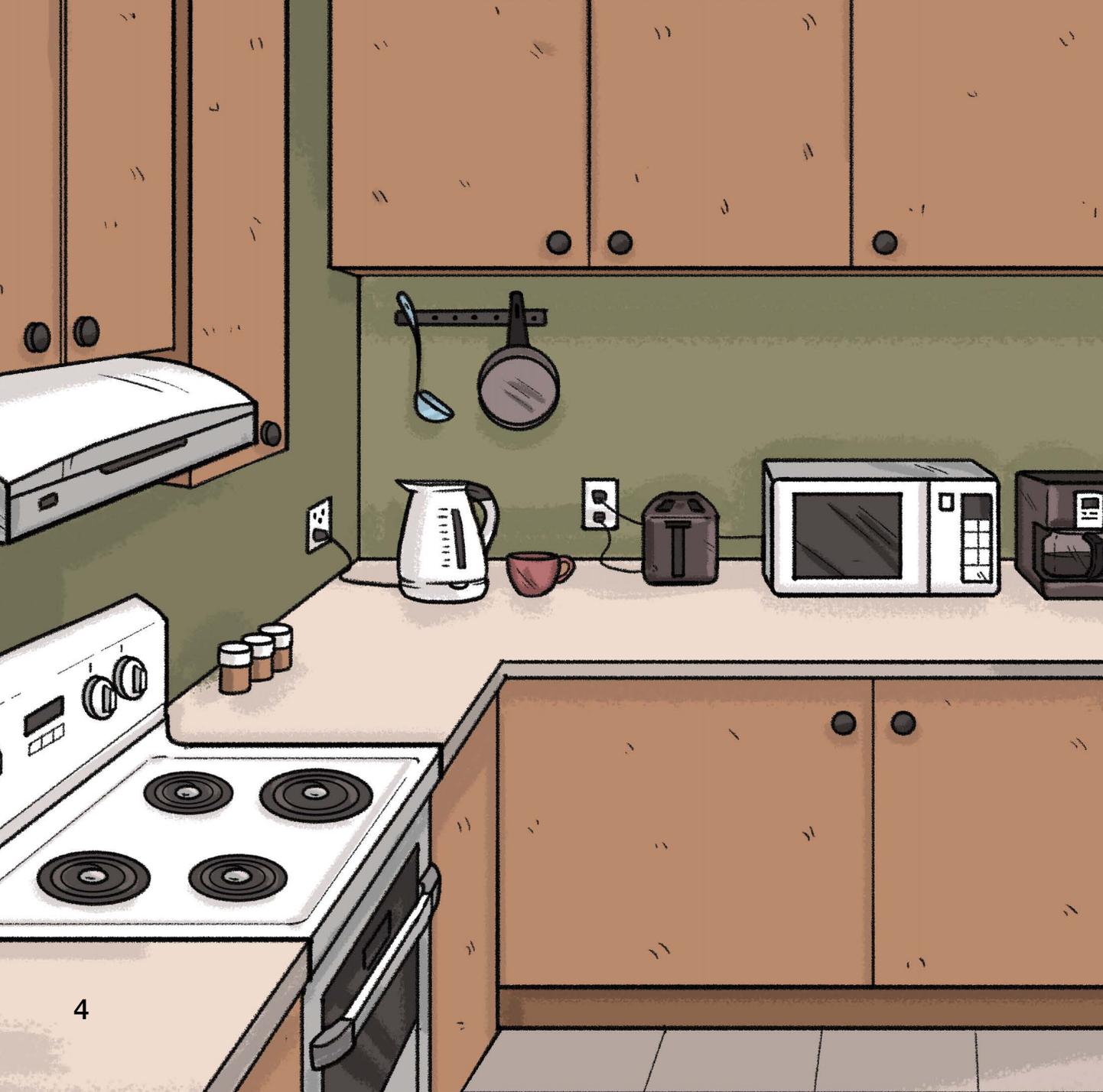
This is my nephew, Manasie. Together, we are going to teach you about fire safety.

We need fire for a lot of different things, like cooking and staying warm. But fire can also be dangerous if we do not use it safely and responsibly.

If you know about fire safety, you can keep yourself and others safe.

Manasie is here to show us some examples of how to be “fire safe” at home and on the land!





How to Prevent Fires at Home

Let's start by talking about fire prevention. This means being responsible and making sure that a fire doesn't start in the first place.

Fire needs three things to start: heat, fuel, and oxygen. Anything that can start a fire easily is a fire hazard.

Many things in our homes can be fire hazards. There are many sources of heat and fuel in homes, For example, hot surfaces, open flames, electronics and light bulbs can be fire hazards if they are not used properly.

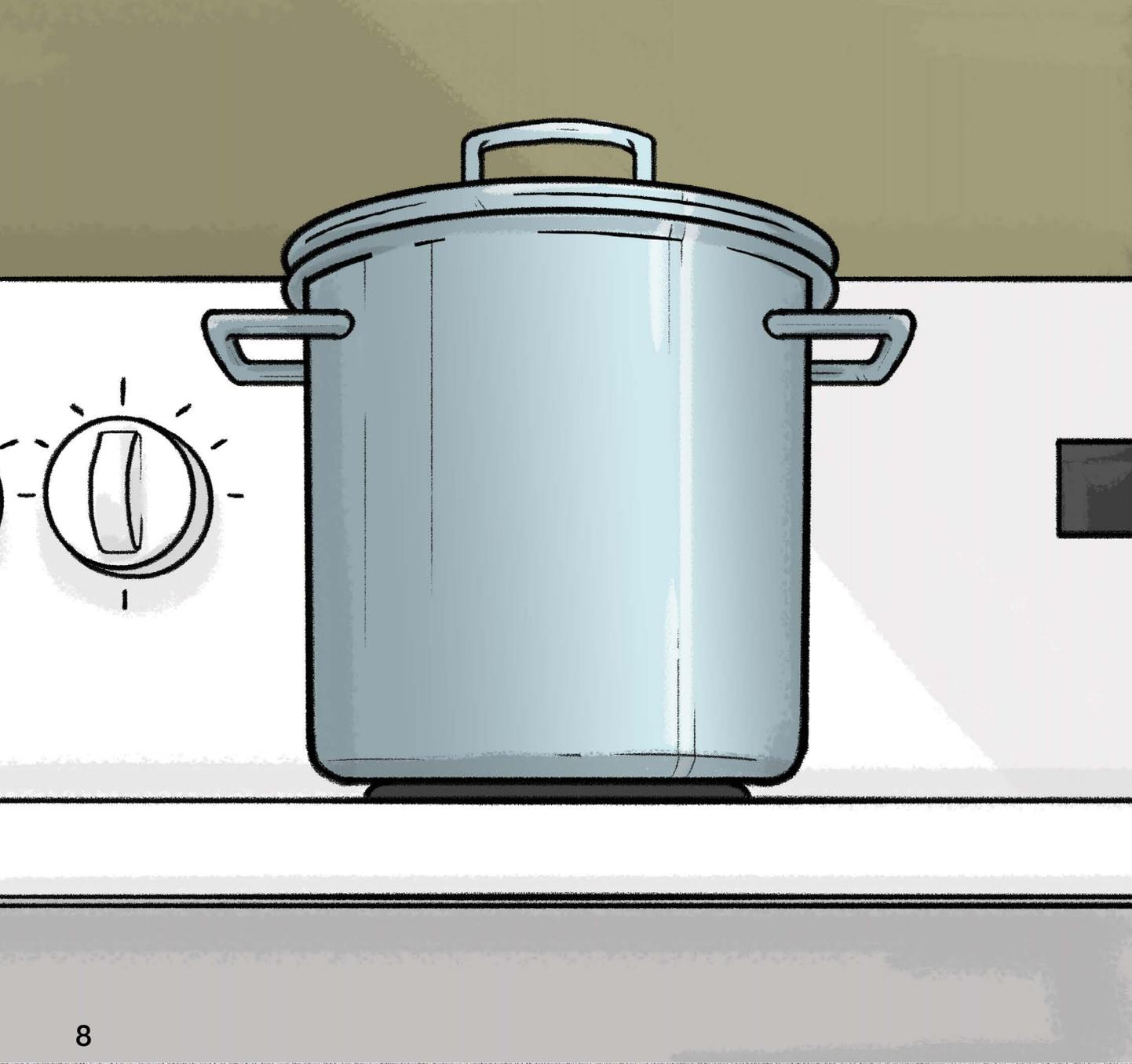
More than half of all house fires start in the kitchen. There are many fire hazards in a kitchen, including the oven and stovetop, the microwave, the toaster, and other appliances that you plug into the wall.

Manasie knows that it is very important to pay attention, follow instructions, and be safe when he is cooking.

Manasie likes to cook with his mom. Manasie especially likes making caribou stew. His mom makes caribou stew in a very big pot. It can take a long time to cook, so Manasie checks on the stew every few minutes to make sure it does not burn.

Manasie and his mom always make sure the stove and oven are off when they leave the house.





If Manasie spills anything near the stove while he is cooking, he cleans it up right away. Spills, especially oil or grease from cooking meat, can cause fires. That is because certain substances, like grease, are flammable. This means they catch fire very easily and can be difficult to put out.

When Manasie and his mom are done cooking, Manasie's mom checks that all the burners on the stove have been turned off.

Here are some other things to remember about fire prevention at home:

- Never play with matches or lighters, inside or outside. The air in Nunavut is very dry, so fires can start suddenly and spread very quickly. Even a tiny match can start a large and dangerous fire. If you find lighters or matches, give them to an adult.
- Be careful with candles. If the power goes out in your home and you need to light a candle, ask an adult to light it. Blow the candle out when everyone leaves the room. Never leave a candle burning when there is nobody around.
- If someone you live with smokes, that person should smoke outside and always make sure that he or she puts the cigarette out completely.





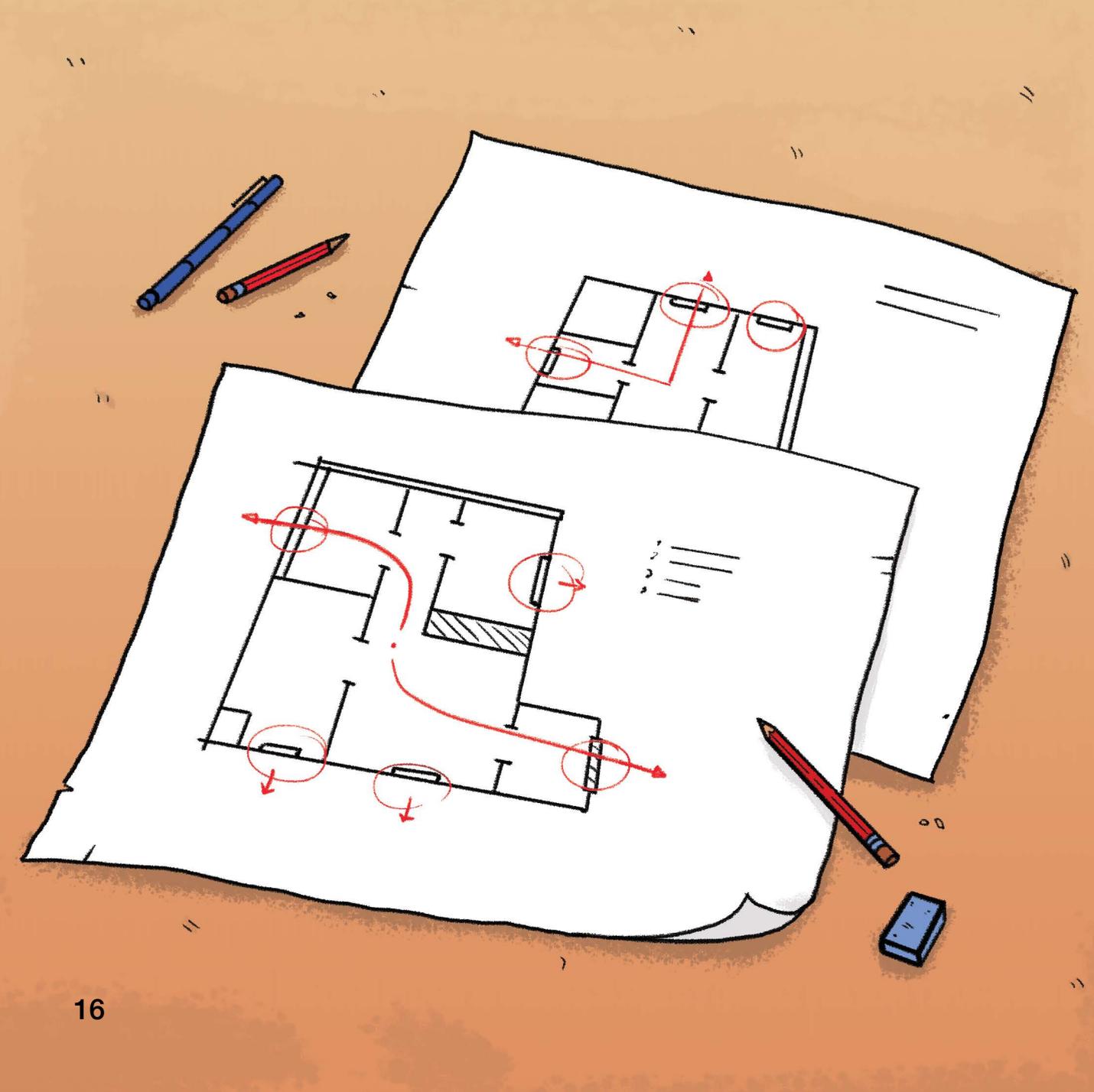
What You Need in Your Home to Be Fire Safe

Being fire safe at home also means keeping these fire safety items on hand. Check with your parents or guardians to make sure you have the following in your home:

- **Smoke detectors.** A smoke detector will beep loudly if it senses smoke. You should have at least two smoke detectors: one in your kitchen, and one near sleeping areas. You should be able to hear the warning beep of a smoke alarm from every part of your home. Ask your parents or guardians to show you how to test that your smoke detectors are working properly. Test your smoke detectors every few months, and change the batteries at least twice a year.

- **A fire extinguisher.** If a small fire starts, an adult may be able to use a fire extinguisher to put the fire out. But it's important to call the fire emergency phone number right away if you are alone or if an adult cannot put the fire out with a fire extinguisher.
- **The fire emergency phone number for your community.** Make sure you have this phone number written down and displayed somewhere in your home, such as on your fridge, on your stove, or next to your home phone, and saved in every cellphone.





Make an Exit Plan

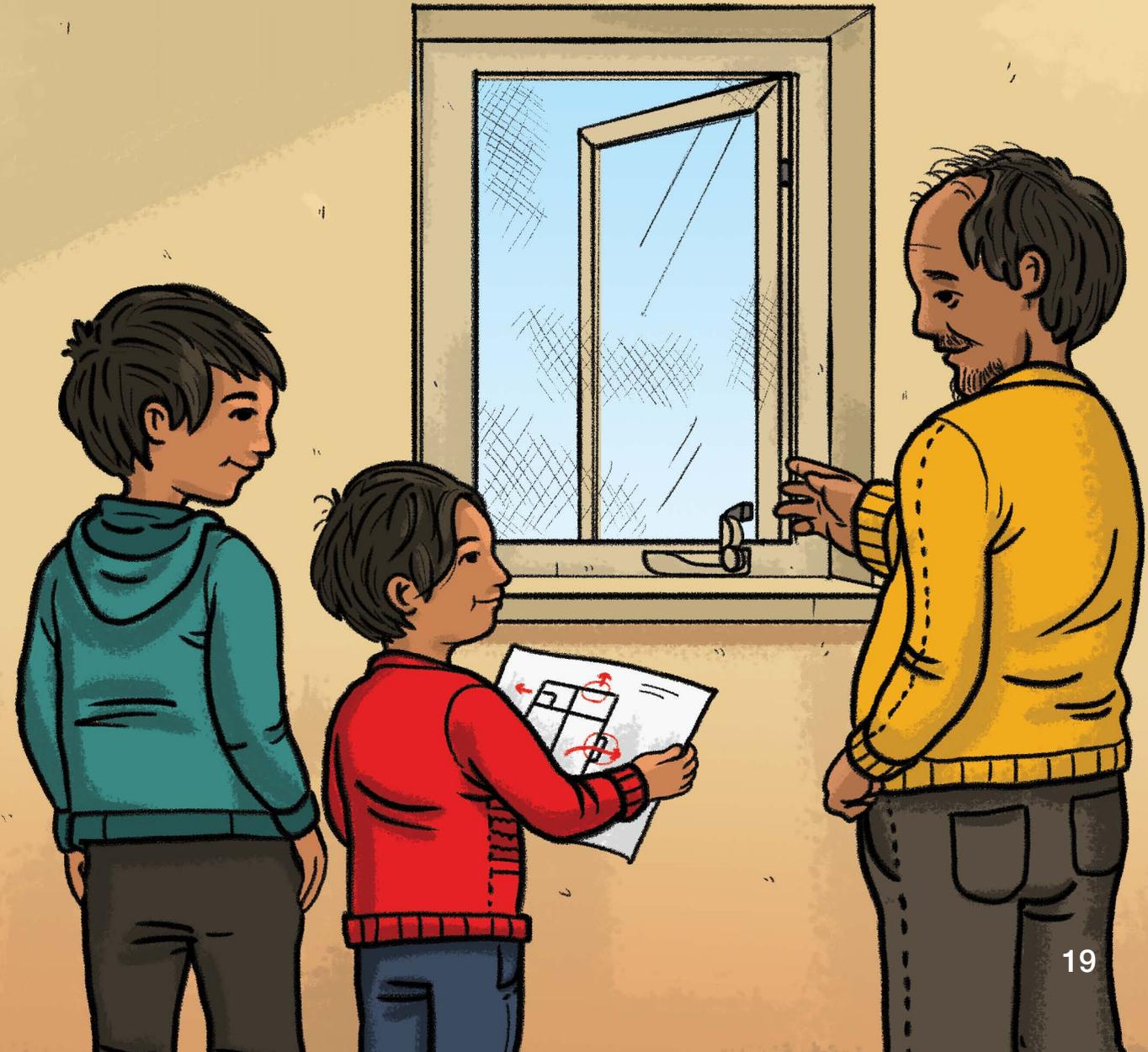
If you have to get out of your home during a fire, you should choose the exit that gets you outside the fastest. But what if that exit is blocked by fire or smoke? That is why you need to have an exit plan. Everyone in your house should know all the possible exits in your house.

Manasie and his brother created an exit plan for their family. Together, they drew a map of both floors of their house. They included all of the windows and doors on the map. Their exit plan has more than one possible exit.

Windows can be safe exits if they are big enough to fit through and if they are not too high off the ground. Manasie asked his parents about which windows in their home would be safe to use as exits. They checked that these windows open easily. Some windows can freeze shut or become blocked by snow in the winter.

Manasie's exit plan includes a meeting place at a location away from the house.

At the meeting place, Manasie's family can make sure that everyone in the family has left the house safely. Because it can be very cold outside, you should make your meeting place somewhere warm, like a neighbour's house across the street or another warm building nearby that is open at night.





If your house is filled with smoke, you should get down low on the ground and crawl on your hands and knees to the exit. Smoke rises, so it can be very hard to see and breathe if you are standing up.

If there is a fire in your home, you should always touch the doorknob with the back of your hand before you open the door. If the doorknob is hot, do not open the door, because there may be a fire in that room.

Manasie and his family practise their exit plan together twice a year so that everyone remembers exactly what to do if there is a fire in the house.

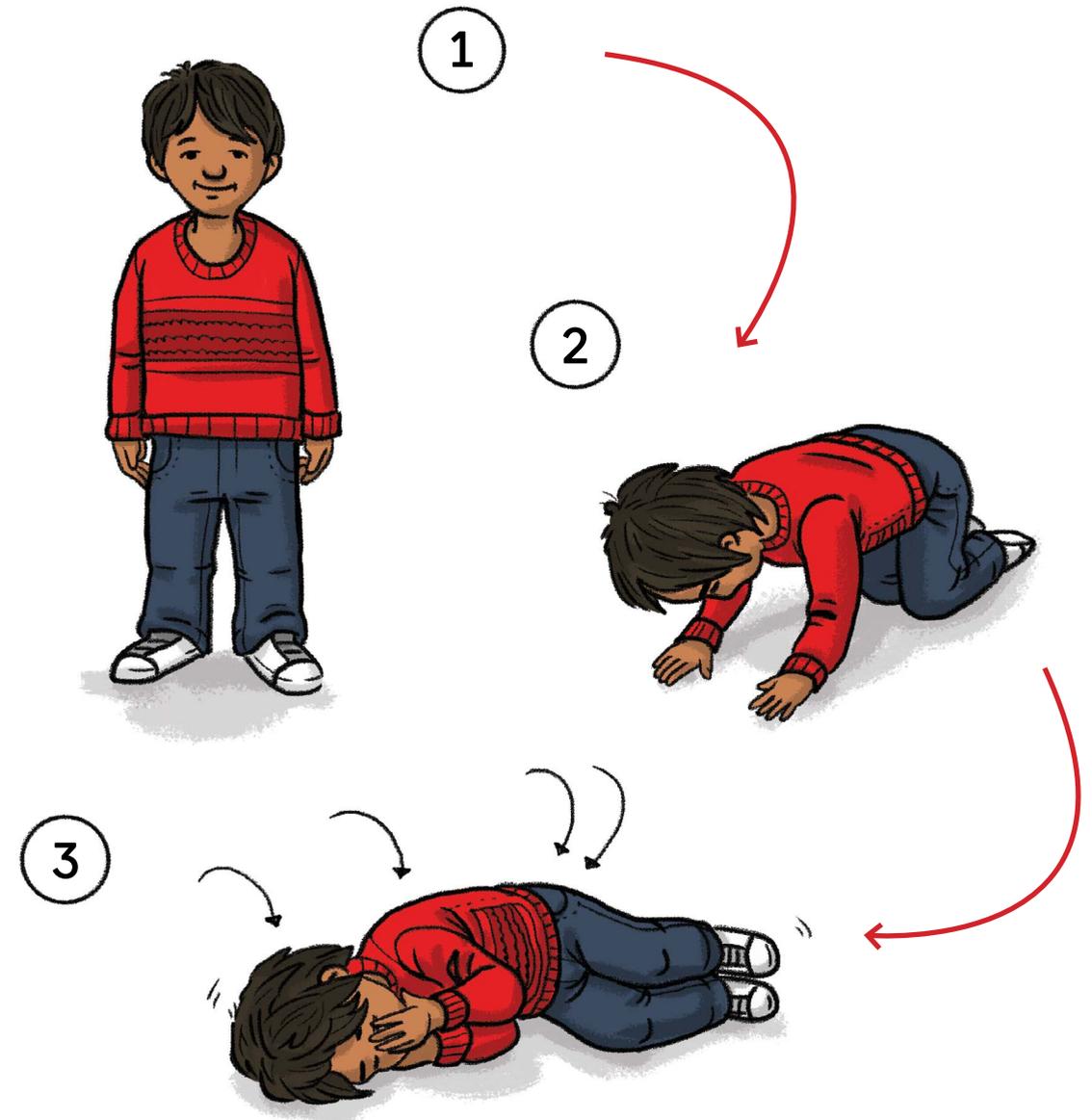
What to Do if Your Clothing Catches Fire

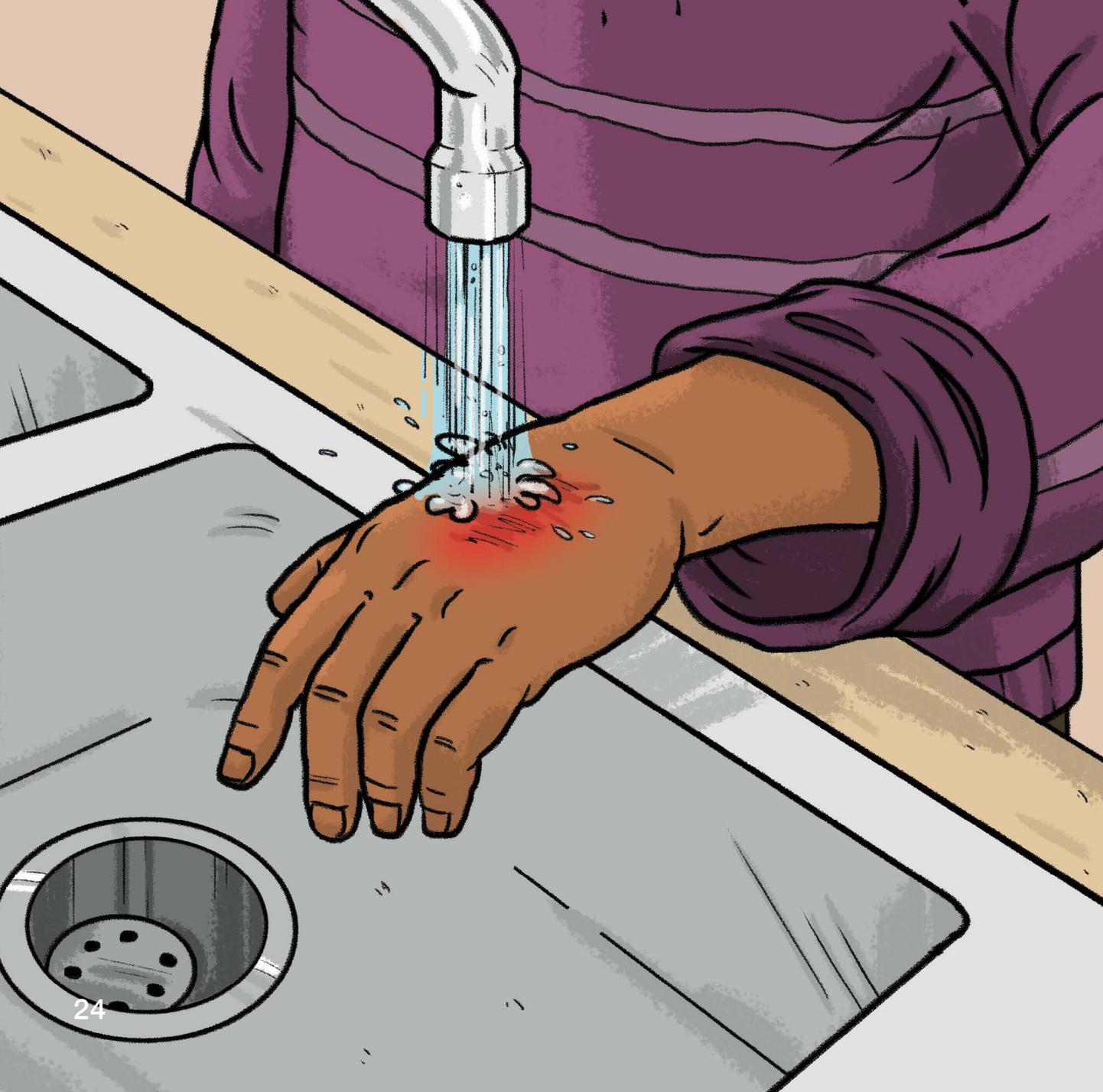
Always remember to stay away from open flames. Clothing and hair can catch fire very quickly, and that can cause serious burns.

Manasie is going to demonstrate what to do if your clothing catches fire.

1. **Stop!** Don't move or wave your arms. This can make the fire spread to different parts of your clothing or body.
2. **Drop!** Fall to the ground immediately. Cover your eyes and mouth with your hands.
3. **Roll!** Roll on the ground to put out the fire.

When the fire is out, find an adult who can take you to a health centre.





How to Treat Burns and Other Injuries from Fires

Fires can cause serious burns. There are three types of burns: first-degree, second-degree, and third-degree. You can get a first-degree burn from an open flame, or from touching a hot surface like a stove burner. A first-degree burn will cause skin redness and pain.

You may be able to treat a first-degree burn at home. First, run the burn under cool water for 10 to 15 minutes. Or, place a clean, damp towel on the burn. You can use creams like aloe vera to help the burn heal faster.

If you touch a hot surface or open flame and your skin blisters or looks red and swollen, you may have a second-degree burn or third-degree burn. These kinds of burns are very serious because they can cause permanent damage to your skin, muscles, nerves, and even your bones. You should go to the health centre immediately. Never treat a second-degree burn or third-degree burn yourself.

Fires can also cause serious injuries from smoke. Smoke can cause burns to your throat, lungs, or eyes. It can also cause poisoning from inhaling dangerous chemicals in the smoke.





Fire Safety on the Land

In the summer, Manasie likes to go camping with his family. He is going to show us how to be fire safe on the land.

When you are camping, you might start a bonfire or use a camp stove to cook food and stay warm. If you don't use your stove or campfire properly, you could cause a fire that is not safe.

Before they go out on the land, Manasie's mom tests to make sure that the camp stove is working properly.

Manasie's mom finds a flat surface to set up the camp stove so it will not tip over. Then she lights it. While the stove is lit, Manasie watches it. Manasie does not sit too close, and he does not touch the stove with his bare hands. Camp stoves are very hot and will burn your skin if you touch them.

It is important to always be careful when you are using a camp stove or qulliq and to make sure you never leave the camp stove or qulliq lit when no one is around.

Always make sure that there is nothing close to the camp stove that could catch fire, like blankets, clothing, or cardboard.

Some people like to have campfires on the land. It is important to keep a close watch on your campfire and to check that it is fully extinguished before you leave your campsite.



Manasie and I have talked a lot about fire safety today!
Let's review what you have learned!

- Turn off the oven or stove when you are done cooking.
- Never leave candles unattended in the house.
- Never play with matches or lighters.
- Make sure your home has smoke detectors, a fire extinguisher, and the fire emergency phone number for your community.
- Create an exit plan for your home that has at least two safe exits.
- If your home is filling up with smoke from a fire, get down on your hands and knees and crawl to the closest exit.
- If your clothing catches fire, stop, drop, and roll.
- If you suffer a first-degree burn, run it under cool water for 10 minutes. If it is a more serious burn, go to the health centre immediately.
- Smoke from a fire can also cause serious injuries.
- Be fire safe on the land. Always watch a camp stove, qulliq, or campfire when it is lit.



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