



CITY OF
FORT LAUDERDALE
POLICE DEPARTMENT
PRESS RELEASE

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**FIRE STARTED
BY
7 YEAR-OLD**

On June 11, 2008 at approximately 10:15am, Fort Lauderdale Fire-Rescue responded to 711 E. Melrose Circle regarding a house fire. Upon arrival they observed a fire to one of the rear bedrooms. The fire fighters learned that they fire had been set by a 7 year-old child who was at home with a 16 year-old family member.

Fort Lauderdale Arson detectives responded to the residence and began an investigation. The investigation led to a 7-year-old child who had been playing with matches. The child and his mother met with detectives and stated the following information:

The child and his teen family member were home alone and in separate rooms of the house. At some point, the child took some matches from a matchbook and began playing with them. He advised detectives that he wanted to see what would happen if he lit his Easter basket grass on fire, which was located in a bedroom. He lit the "grass" which immediately caught on fire and quickly spread to a mattress and other items within the room.

No injuries were reported. While there is extensive damage to the bedroom, the residence is habitable.

According to detectives, based on their interview, criminal charges will not be filed on this case. The child will be referred to the Juvenile Fire Setters Program as required.

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