

Now, use what you've learned.

- **Set Up Your Plan**, including two ways out, and a meeting place.
- **Conduct a Practice Drill** to determine if anything has been overlooked.
- **Everyone** in the household **Needs to Participate** for it to be successful.
- It may **Save Your Life**.



The **Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services** intends this guide to help families develop and practice home exit drills.

For any further information needed in regard to **EDITH**, you can contact the:

Howard County Department of Fire and Rescue Services
Bureau of Life Safety
6751 Gateway Drive, 4th Floor
Columbia, MD 21046

Phone: 410.313.6040

Fax: 410.313.6066



James N. Robey, County Executive
Joseph A. Herr, Fire Chief

EDITH.

Exit Drills In The Home

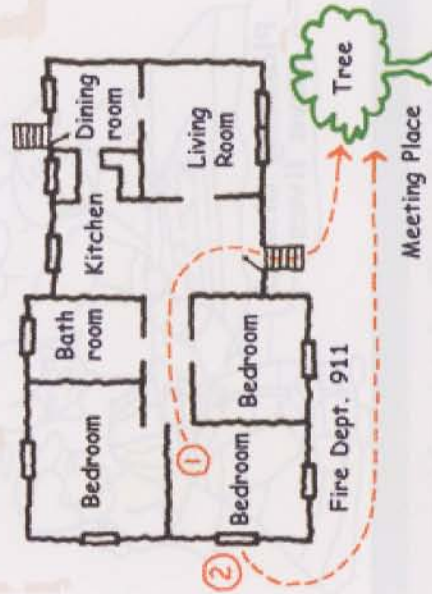


A Guide to Designing Your Home Escape Plan

This guide will assist your family with the development of an effective **Home Escape Plan**.

WHAT IS A HOME ESCAPE PLAN?

- A **Home Escape Plan** is a strategy for a safe exit from your house in the event of an emergency.
- **Exit Drills In The Home (EDITH)** can help people to prepare for an emergency. Most home fires begin between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. This is a time when most people are least prepared. In the middle of the night, fire can be a disaster if you and your family are not familiar with how to escape during an emergency.



HOW TO SURVIVE

Install smoke alarms and keep them in working order. Make an escape plan and "practice" it. Consider installing an automatic fire-sprinkler system.

PLAN YOUR ESCAPE

Once a fire has started, there is no time to plan how to get out. Sit down with your family today, and make a step-by-step plan for escaping a fire.

- Draw a **Floor Plan of Your Home**, marking two ways out of every room - especially sleeping areas. Discuss the escape routes with every member of your household.

- Agree on a **Meeting Place**, where every member of the household will gather outside your home after escaping a fire to wait for the fire department. This allows you to count heads and inform the fire department if anyone is missing or trapped inside the burning building.

- Practice your **Escape Plan** at least twice a year. Have a fire drill in your home. Appoint someone to be the monitor, and have everyone participate. A fire drill is not a race. Get out quickly, but carefully.

MAKE YOUR EXIT DRILL REALISTIC

Pretend that some exits are blocked by fire, and practice alternative escape routes. Pretend that the lights are out and that some escape routes are filling with smoke.

- **Be Prepared.** Make sure everyone in the household can unlock all doors and windows quickly, even in the dark. Windows or doors with security bars need to be equipped with quick-release devices, and everyone in the household should know how to use them.

- If you live in an **Apartment Building**, use stairways to escape. **Never** use an elevator during a fire. It may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning. Some high-rise buildings may have evacuation plans that require you to stay where you are and wait for the fire department.