

Recording of mother's voice more effective than smoke alarm

It's every parent's worst nightmare: there's a fire in the house, the alarms are beeping, but the children are sleeping on **oblivious**. Now scientists say they have found a better way to rouse slumbering youngsters.

oblivious 遗忘的; 不知道的

Researchers in the US have discovered that playing a child a recording of their mother's voice is about three times more likely to wake them than a traditional alarm. What's more, it does so faster and is linked to a quicker escape.

"If we can get something that can be **generically** developed and just taken straight out of the packet then that is our goal," said Dr Gary Smith, a co-author of the research.

generically 一般地

Writing in The Journal of **Pediatrics**, Smith and colleagues from the Nationwide Children's hospital in Ohio report how they compared the effects of four different smoke alarms on 176 children aged between 5 and 12 years old.

pediatrics 儿科

While one alarm featured a high pitched **beep** --- the sort commonly found in **households** --- the other three featured the voice of the child's mother calling either the child's name, giving instructions such as: "Wake up! Leave the room!", or both.

beep 哔哔声; 警笛声

household 全家人; 家庭的

The results show that vocal alarms appear to be more effective than **high-pitched** beeps. About 90% of children woke for a voice alarm compared with just over 53% for the traditional alarm.

high-pitched 声调高的

In addition, the children shook off their *slumber* faster, with a *median value* of two seconds for the voice alarm compared with more than two and a half minutes for the traditional alarm. Similarly, escape times were longer in the cases of the beeping alarms.

slumber 睡眠

median value 中位数

Rick Hylton of the National Fire Chiefs Council welcomed the study, but said people should not worry about how effective their current alarms are.