



## **Jodi Blenkinsop from Lincoln**

Heavily pregnant Jodi Blenkinsop was at home with her five year old son Jake when the electricity cut out, leaving the pair in darkness. Jodi lit some candles, placing one on top of the television and after Jake began to get cold, went upstairs to read him a story in bed.

Twenty minutes later, Jodi heard the smoke alarm and rushed downstairs to find the living room engulfed in smoke and the TV on fire. Fearing an explosion, Jodi rushed back upstairs to find Jake and took him into the bathroom, which was one of the escape routes recommended during her free Home Fire Risk Check.

Jodi and Jake were rescued by fire fighters from the roof of their house in the freezing cold. Jodi, who was due to give birth at any moment, was too big to climb down the ladder backwards, so had to go bump first!

Jodi lost everything in the fire, but thanks to her smoke alarm managed to escape safely and six days later, gave birth to a beautiful baby boy called Jae Jae. She says: "Despite the fact that we have lost everything, I'm so grateful that I have my boys and that we're alive and well. I owe everything to Lincolnshire fire and rescue service for installing my smoke alarm, without which we might not be here today.

"I hope that my story will encourage more people to get a free Home Fire Risk Check, especially if they have children. All you have to do is call your local Fire and Rescue Service, the number is in the phone book - it could be a call that saves your life."

## **Martyn Davies Family from Scarborough**

On December 11 2006, James Martyn-Davies (15) fought through thick smoke to call 999 as his family home was burning. The emergency call to North Yorkshire FRS saved the lives of his mother, his disabled father and young sister (5) who were trapped upstairs.

The family from North Yorkshire were woken by their smoke alarm at 3.15am. The fire was ignited in their living room by a faulty transformer on Christmas tree lights. Fire quickly engulfed the furniture in the living room and dense smoke spread throughout the house. James instinctively ran out the front door when hearing the alarm, but on realising the rest of his family hadn't made it out he returned inside to call the fire and rescue service.



Meanwhile his mother and sister had wrapped themselves in wet towels and made their way to the attic in an attempt to escape the rising smoke. His father, who recently lost his leg in a car accident, was originally trapped in a back room, but managed to work his way upstairs to the attic to join his wife and daughter.

Thanks to the quick thinking of James, The North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service arrived on the scene within minutes and managed to save the family trapped upstairs. The fire caused over £62,000 worth of damage to the home and consequently made the premises unliveable.

Mrs Martin Davies believes that without the smoke alarms installed free of charge by the North Yorkshire FRS and the training received from the service on how to deal with emergencies her family would certainly not have had time to escape the flames and smoke to safety.

### **Victoria Ganely and Kirsty MacDonald - students from Lincoln University**

Two students at Lincoln University never thought a fire would happen to them. During the early hours of 15th February 2007, both girls and their housemate narrowly escaped a devastating fire in their two storey terraced house.

After a night watching films, the students went to bed. The light wasn't working in their housemate's room, so in order to get ready for work that evening he lit some tea lights, some of which were placed on top of the TV. Unfortunately he left the room without extinguishing them properly and they started to melt into the TV which began to smoulder.

At 1.45am, the three housemates were woken by the smoke alarm. Victoria, assuming that someone was cooking in the kitchen went downstairs to investigate. Finding no sign of smoke in the kitchen, she opened the door to the downstairs bedroom to be met with a big cloud of thick black smoke. With low visibility and an intense heat, the housemates sought refuge in an upstairs bedroom, locked the door and blocked the gaps with pillows and a duvet to stop the smoke from coming in. Within minutes, the downstairs floor was engulfed in smoke and they had no means of escape.

Luckily, both girls and their male housemate managed to escape the house with nothing more serious than a few cuts and bruises, however they were all in a state of shock. The house was badly damaged in the fire, with all the student's possessions either burnt or covered in black soot. The fourth housemate that lived in the downstairs bedroom lost everything.



## Case studies from the Pull your finger out! campaign

Kirsty says: "I knew that we had smoke alarms but never really thought about the possibility of actually having a fire in my house. We were so lucky not to be injured or even killed. If we hadn't had a working smoke alarm I'm sure it would have been a different story."