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TOP TEN FIREWORK FAUX PAS

A STAGGERING six out of ten parents (59%) admit to drinking alcohol while hosting a bonfire night for family or friends despite the fact that children are being injured each year at fireworks events, a survey by Water-jel reveals.

Worryingly, parents are particularly in the dark when it comes to firework safety with almost half (48%) unaware that children under five shouldn't be given sparklers.

The Top Ten Firework Faux Pas survey by Water-jel, which makes Burn Jel, a gel which instantly relieves burns and helps to prevent them spreading deeply into the skin, also reveals that Mums and Dads are equally ignorant when it comes to disposing of sparklers - almost a third (32%) don't realize they must be extinguished in a bucket of water or sand as the burning tips can reach temperatures of more than 200 degrees centigrade.

Despite the fact that there were more injuries to children on bonfire night last year than the year before, one in five (20%) parents said the first thing they'd do is panic if one of their children was seriously burnt.

One in ten parents (10%) are oblivious to the biggest dangers posed by hosting their own bonfire party - it is extremely dangerous to return to an unexploded firework as it could go off in your face.

Making a bonfire is also a mystery to almost a quarter of parents (23%) who wrongly believe there is no harm in using petrol or paraffin to light it - the only safe way to ignite a bonfire is to use firelighters or matches.

Another common misconception for nearly one in five parents (19%) is that you can chuck anything on your bonfire - but foam-filled furniture or combustible items should never be burnt as they can cause explosions.

Alarmingly, most parents (58%) did not know one of the basic rules to observe when having their own bonfire at home - always check the fire before lighting, as it has been known for small animals and pets to curl up inside them.

One in three (33%) parents did not know that if it turned out to be really windy on bonfire night, fireworks had to be cancelled because the variable wind direction could lead to them landing among spectators.

And one in six (16%) didn't know that only fireworks with the registered British kitemark were recognised as safe to buy.

Mark Lait, a spokesman for Water-jel, said: "Children love bonfire night but if parents are going to have their own private party, it is vital they know the basic safety rules and they are sure about what they will do if something goes wrong.

"Unfortunately, children are hurt every year at bonfire events. Most UK ambulances are already equipped with Water-jel products as a matter of course but if Burn Jel is already available in the home and is applied to the burn immediately, an injury will be far less damaging. Anyone who is considering letting off fireworks in their back garden should be prepared. There's no reason why you can't have a fun firework night at home but it is vital that you are prepared for a freak accident."

The Burn Jel range, produced by Water-jel is available from Lloyds Pharmacies and independent pharmacies nationwide, priced at £4.99 for a 60 ml dispenser. A Burn Jel Emergency Burn Kit is also available at £5.99.

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