



NEWS RELEASE

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UPDATE: House fire in Zionsville Sugarbush subdivision

Four-year-old Zionsville boy saves family from house fire after remembering what he learned from firefighters

A Zionsville family is thanking their four-year-old son for remembering what he learned from Zionsville firefighters last fall during an annual Zionsville Fire Department (ZFD) event.

Connor Minarik woke up early Wednesday morning and smelled smoke. He immediately woke up his parents, Jeremy and Jennifer Minarik. They were able to start evacuating with Connor and his two brothers, Liam (1) and Aiden (7), before smoke began to activate their alarms. By the time the family got outside to safety, smoke conditions were too dangerous to go back inside.

"I honestly think Connor really did possibly save our lives and definitely prevented more damage to the house," said Jennifer. She recalled the recent experience her son had with the fire department's educational programs. "He definitely knew to come wake me and let me know he smelled smoke and thank goodness he did."

Last October during the annual Zionsville Fire Department Pancake Breakfast, Connor learned about fire safety and what to do if there is a fire inside the home from ZFD Public Educator Vincent Randolph.

Fire investigators determined that the wood burning fireplace developed a gap that caused the ceiling of the utility room below to catch fire. The closed utility room door held back the fire and smoke, which delayed the smoke alarm activation but also gave the family more time to escape.

"We are very proud of Connor," said Zionsville Fire Chief James VanGorder. "He remembered what Vincent and ZFD firefighters taught him to do. He alerted his family, and they were able to get out and call us in time to put out the fire while it was still small."

ZFD reminds residents that it is important to check all smoke alarms to ensure they are less than 10 years old, and still work when pushing the test button. It is also important that the family knows how to get outside to a safe place if there is a fire.

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