FireFLiES

THE KID'S SAFETY SOURCE

CITY OF FIRE DEPT. SEATTLE

Feature Firefighter

Jen Bessler

Meet Firefighter Jen Bessler

Firefighters do many different jobs. Firefighters put out fires and help people who are sick or hurt. Firefighters teach fire safety and inspect buildings to make sure they are safe. Firefighters also answer 911 phone calls in Seattle. This is an important job. These firefighters are called dispatchers.

Meet Firefighter Jen. She is a dispatcher for the Seattle Fire Department. Her job is to answer phone calls from people who call 911. She sends help to you or to whoever needs it.

It takes a lot of work and concentration to do her job. She has to know where all the firefighters from different fire stations are working in the city at all times. This way she can send the closest firefighters to any emergency call. She has four computer screens and two keyboards to help her keep track of everything.

Firefighter Jen works as a part of a team. Every day there are six dispatchers working. They answer emergency phone calls over 300 times everyday! The dispatchers work together to make sure people get the help they need. Firefighter Jen says, "Listening is an important part of my job." She can listen to many different things at once. While the dispatchers are listening to the person calling 911, they are also listening to the firefighters on the radio and to each other.

Listening is an important job for you if you ever need to call 911. The dispatcher will ask you questions. You will need to listen to them and answer carefully. Firefighter Jen says, "Kids who have to call 911 do a good job. Kids always know their phone number and address. Sometimes kids do better than the grown-ups when they call 911. Kids are good listeners."

L to R: Joe Coultman, Carol Solberg, Jen Bessler, Mark Coons, John Ellis

911 Police, Fire or Medical – What is the Emergency?

What to Know When You Call 911

These are the things you need to know if you ever need to call 911

The type of emergency

- ❑ Is it a fire?
- ❑ Does someone need emergency first aid?
- ❑ Is it a crime?

The address of the emergency

_____

_____

_____

Your name and telephone number

_____

_____

As much information about the emergency as you can tell the dispatcher

- ❑ If there is a fire, what is on fire? Do you see smoke or flame?
- ❑ If someone is sick, are they awake? Are they breathing?

Story Problem

If the 4 dispatchers at the Fire Alarm Center receive 300 emergency calls each day, how many calls does each dispatcher answer in 24 hours? In 1 hour?

The dispatcher might ask you many questions. Answer them the best you can and always follow the dispatcher's instructions. Remember that while they are talking to you, they have already sent help on the way to the emergency.