

## Steps to Success

# LESSON PLAN FOR SCHOOL VISITS



### Grade level: K-3

The goal is to increase awareness of students (from kindergarten to third grade) about building safety and the important role code officials play in keeping them and their families safe.

### Objectives:

- The students will learn what a code official does and the role of a building department.
- The students will recognize building safety components in buildings or homes.

### Time: 60 minutes

### Lesson Plan Summary:

1. Introduce the code official and the building department and how they fit in with other public safety professionals.
2. Personalize building safety for students by having them inspect various building components that may be in their homes.
3. Explain what the building code is and how it fits in with building safety.
4. Examine different building materials and discuss how the code official makes sure they are used correctly to keep homes safe and protect students.
5. Conclude with a review and invite the students to become part of the building safety team.

### Materials:

- Pictures or examples of a smoke detector, window, stair rail, tub-shower, fireplace and hearth, pool fence
- Inspector stickers (available for order on the Building Safety Month website)
- Building code
- CODiE the Code Official's Building Safety Activity Book (available for download)
- Building safety pencils (available for order)
- Building materials (pipe, brick or rock, wood, wire)



Presented by



## Lesson Outline:

1. **Introduction** – Introduce yourself and the name of the department where you work. Discuss how the code official protects people by making sure their homes and buildings are safe. Talk about how the building department is similar to the police department and fire department because they all protect people. (5 minutes)
2. **Inspecting for Safety** – Explain what building inspections are and how they keep people safe. Hold up the pictures or actual items listed below and ask students what it is about these items that helps keep people safe. After students respond to each one, provide clarification about why the item is included in a house and how the code official checks to make sure it is in the home to keep people safe. (15 minutes)
  - a. **Smoke Detector** – Warns about smoke and fires. Placed in every bedroom.
  - b. **Window** – Provides another emergency escape route.
  - c. **Stair Rail** – Helps people walk down stairs. Prevents falls.
  - d. **Tub-Shower** – Includes device that prevents hot water from burning people.
  - e. **Fireplace and Hearth** – Prevents burning logs from rolling onto the floor.
  - f. **Pool Fence** – Reduces risks of drowning. Prevents children from entering the pool area without adults.
3. **Review Activity** – Ask students to turn to their partners and tell them three things that code officials check to keep their homes safe. (Give a hint that you just mentioned six of them.) (5 minutes)
4. **Introducing the Building Code** – Show students the building code and explain that it gives directions and contains rules for everything from putting on a new roof to adding on a new room. The building code is what architects, engineers, builders, construction workers (people who build houses and buildings) and even homeowners need to follow when they are building something in their house so it will be safe. (10 minutes)
5. **Materials Hands-On Activity** – Pass out building materials (PVC pipe, wood, brick, wire, etc.) to students. Ask if they know what each is and what it is used for. Explain that they are materials used to build a house. Ask them what might happen if a weak board were used for a frame or if a worn wire were used to wire a house. Explain that it is the code official's job to make sure the right materials are used to make a house or building safe. Remind them about the story of the three pigs. (15 minutes)
6. **Closure** – Review what the building department does to keep people safe, how it uses the building code, and how the code official makes sure the right materials are used to build houses and buildings. (10 minutes)

Optional:

  - Distribute CODiE Activity Books.
  - Distribute building safety inspector stickers and pencils.
  - Using the information they learned today, invite the students to share and complete these activities with their parents.
7. **Extension Activities** – If time allows, you might do one of the following activities, or they can be left with the teacher to do in the classroom or given as homework.
  - **Building Safety Treasure Hunt** – Break students into teams. Have each team go on a walking field trip of the school and find as many safety features in the building as they can, such as the exit signs, sprinklers, railings, etc. The students or the teacher can make a list of the items – or draw each of the items they find. Alternate – Use a picture checklist to check off items. (Grades K–3)
  - **Posters** – Students design their own Building Safety Month posters. (Grades K–3)
  - **Essay** – Students write an essay describing the importance of code officials. (Grades 2–3)
  - **Class Book** – Students write/illustrate a class book about the importance of code officials. (Grades K–3)