FireFightingNews.com

New Years Eve Fire Kills Queens 7 Year Old

January 2, 2014

New York - A raging New Years Day house fire killed a 7-year-old Queens boy as he struggled to make it down the stairs to the front door, fire officials said. Christopher Miller collapsed on the stairwell landing just a few feet away from escaping the blaze that left his 13-year-old brother with serious burns.
"(Christopher) was on his way out, but he just couldn't make it — too much smoke," said FDNY Deputy Chief Mark Ferran of the fire that broke out just after 9 a.m. Wednesday at the East Elmhurst home.

"There was so much fire when we got here that there was nothing we could do."

Fire officials said two 20-year-old friends visiting the family from out of town set a blaze in the fireplace on the first floor to keep warm. Then they fell asleep, Ferran said.
"But the fire spread across the fireplace," he said. "It caught into Christmas decorations, couches and other furnishings."
The commotion woke the two brothers who had been sleeping upstairs, and they both tried to make it down to the first floor of the 90th St. home, where the fire was raging.
Christopher's 13-year-old brother Matthew is being treated for second-degree burns on his arms and hands.

Christopher died, and his 13-year-old brother — whom neighbors identified as Matthew — suffered second-degree burns on his arms and hands and was rushed to New York-Presbyterian Hospital Cornell.
"He opened his eyes. He's responsive, but he doesn't know what's going on," a frantic relative said. "It's a good thing he's going to be all right . . . . But it's going to take a while."
Family friend, Amanda Bejarano, of the victim of a house fire is comforted by a friend.

The two visitors, who were not identified, guided the teen out through a back entrance. The children's grandfather, who had been asleep in the basement, also got out, officials said.
The two guests may have tried to put out the fire and delayed calling 911, Ferran said. "By the time they called, we arrived to an advanced fire," Ferran said.

Rescuers were unable to find any smoke detectors.
The parents, who were out ringing in 2014, came back to find their house burning, neighbors said. "They were out at a New Year's Eve party . . . they got home and learned their child was dead," said neighbor Victor Carrera. "It's horrible."
Fire officials said the mother, identified by neighbors as Natalia, had to be taken away by paramedics because she was overcome with emotion.

Neighbor Marie Bouzy said she ran to try to rescue the children. "There was a lot of smoke and glass coming out. It was too much," she said. "I heard screaming, like children screaming. Then it stopped."

Written by Edgar Sandoval and Tina Moore

FireFightingNews.com - FireFighter Owned and Operated
©2014 e-Firefighter, LLC - All Rights Reserved.