

Hometown Heroes

A Unit Study about Firefighters, Law Enforcement, and Paramedics

By Cindy Downes

What is a hometown hero? In Mark 10:43-45, Jesus said, “whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.” A true hero is someone who serves others, and who could be better examples of heroes than our local firefighters, police officers, and paramedics? Every day, these men and women voluntarily offer their lives in the service of many. They work extremely long hours for very little pay; and, in the words of one police officer, they “endure endless periods of boredom” waiting for that next call, “followed by frequent bursts of sheer terror” as they arbitrate domestic violence, administer CPR to a young drowning victim, or engage in a hot pursuit.



Christopher Reeve once said, “I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles.” Why not take a few weeks out of your school year to help your children appreciate their own “hometown heroes” and, at the same time, encourage your children to be the heroes that God has called them to be? Here are some resources to help you.

Firefighters

Questions to Ask

How long have fire departments been in existence? How does a firefighter control fires? What is it like living in a firehouse? How can I prevent fires?

Day 1—Firefighters and the Fire Station

Reading

- *Fire! Fire!* by Gail Gibbons
- *Fire Fighters* by Paulette Bourgeois
- *The Fire Station* by Robert N. Munsch
- *Curious George at the Fire Station* by Margret Rey

Science

- Look at the parts of a fire truck: www.nfpa.org/sparky/firetruck/index.htm
- Listen to fire sirens: www.nfpa.org/sparky/firetruck/gallery/gallery.htm
- Physical science and chemistry: Firefighting: www.factmonster.com/ce6/sci/A0858119.html

Activities

- Composition: Write a letter to your fire company thanking them for the job they do.
- Art: go to firefightingart.com or search www.art.com for “firefighters” to view artwork related to firefighting.
- Art: Visit a fire station. Take your own photographs or create your own artwork related to firemen.

- Quiz: Test your knowledge of firefighting: www.fire.org.uk/kids/home.htm

Day 2—Firefighting History

Reading

- *The Great Fire* (Newbery Honor Book) by Jim Murphy
- *Meet Benjamin Franklin* by Maggi Scarf
- *Who Was Ben Franklin?* by Dennis Brindell Fradin
- *The Story of Smokey Bear* by Robin Bromley

History

- History of firefighting: www.factmonster.com/ce6/sci/A0858120.html
- Firefighters Central: www.firefightercentral.com/firefighter_history.htm
- Brockville Fire—A brief history: www.brockvillefire.ca/ffhist.htm
- Smokey the Bear site (includes Smokey the Bear history, lesson plans, activity book, games, story-maker, and more): www.smokeybear.com

Activities

- Composition: Write a news story about a fire in your area. (Check old newspapers for details.)
- Art: *History of Fire Engines Coloring Book* by A. G. Smith
- Cooking: Bake cookies and take them to your local fire company.
- Music: Listen to “Midnight Fire Alarm”: www.hammerdown.com/midnight.html



- History: Watch old firefighter movies: www.firefightercentral.com/history/old_firefighter_movies.htm

Day 3—Fire Safety

Reading

- *Stop Drop and Roll* by Margery Cuyler

Fire Safety (Internet Resources)

- Fire Safety Lesson Plans: www.usfa.dhs.gov/kids/parents-teachers/lesson_plan.shtm
- Fire Safety Lessons from Hershey: www.dos.state.ny.us/kidsroom/firesafe/lessons.html
- Sparky's Fire Safety Tips: www.sparky.org/safety_tips.html
- Learn how to plan and practice your home fire escape route: www.sparkyorg/miller_escape/m_escape_1.html
- Home Fire Escape Plan: www.nfpa.org/sparky/firetruck/index.htm
- Home Fire Safety Checklist: www.nfpa.org/sparky/firetruck/index.htm
- Hunt for Home Hazards: www.sparkyorg/simpson_hunt/hazards_1.html

Activities

- Fire Safety booklet from Scotties' Fire House: www.scottiesfirehouse.com/SFH/fire_safety/index.htm
- FEMA Fire Safety Color & Learn: www.usfa.dhs.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/fa-176.pdf
- Coloring Page: www.firefightingequipment.com/kid_fire_safety_coloring_fire_truck_page.html

- Music: Sesame Street Fire Safety Songs: www.usfa.dhs.gov/applications/publications/display.cfm?sc=318&mc=24&ol=
- Quiz: USFA Activities (include Jr. Fire Marshal quiz): www.usfa.dhs.gov/kids/flash.shtm

Day 4—Fire Dogs

Reading

- *Fire Dogs* (Dog Heroes) by Donna Latham
- *Sassy the Amazing Firefighting Rescue Dog* by Uncle Fez

Activities

- Bake cookies and take them to your local fire company. If they have a fire dog, take a box of dog biscuits.
- Creative writing: Write a story about a fire dog at work.

Day 5—Careers in Firefighting

Reading

- *I'm Going to Be a Fire Fighter* by Edith Kunhardt
- *San Francisco Fire Department* by John Garvey

Research

- Firefighting Career Information: www.bls.gov/oco/ocos158.htm

Activities

- Interview a fireman.
- Create a brochure or poster about firefighting as a career.



Law Enforcement

Questions to Ask

How do police officers help us? What are the FBI and the CIA? How are police dogs trained, and how can they be used to help local and federal law enforcement? How can I protect myself from strangers?

Day 1—Policemen

Reading

- Bible: Romans 13:1
- *Day in the Life of a Police Officer* by Heather Adamson
- *I Want to Be a Police Officer* by Dan Liebman
- Police/Detective Career Information: www.bls.gov/oco/ocos160.htm

Activities

- Art: Police officer craft: www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/miscellaneous/mpolice.htm
- Art: Police-related art: www.art.com/asp/display-asp/_/id--14936/Police_Officer.htm
- Field trip: Visit your local police department.
- Composition: Write a letter to your local police thanking them for the job they do.

Days 2 and 3—Other Law Enforcement Careers

Reading

- *The FBI* by Brendan January
- *Special Agent and Careers in the FBI* (Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Careers) by Ann Gaines
- *The Story of the FBI* (Cornerstones of Freedom) by Jim Hargrove
- A Day in the Life of an FBI Agent: www.fbi.gov/kids/6th12th/daynlife/daynlife.htm

- FBI History: www.fbi.gov/kids/6th12th/history/history.htm
- *The CIA* by Brendan January
- *The CIA* (Defending the Nation) by John Hamilton
- CIA History: www.cia.gov/cia/ciakids/history/index.shtml
- Tour the CIA with Ginger: www.cia.gov/cia/ciakids/ginger/index.shtml
- CIA Careers: www.cia.gov/careers/index.html
- *Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 1873-1987* by David Ross
- British Bobbies: www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/England-History/SirRobertPeel.htm

Activities

- Composition: Choose one law enforcement career to research. Write a report on your findings.
- FBI Kids Page: www.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/kidsk5th.htm
- Game: Special Agent Undercover: www.fbi.gov/kids/games/undercover.htm
- Game: FBI Investigates: www.fbi.gov/kids/spykids/invest/investigates.htm
- Game: CIA Games: www.cia.gov/cia/ciakids/games/index.shtml

Day 4—Police Dogs

Reading

- *Police Dogs* (Dog Heroes) by Frances E. Ruffin
- *Jack and Rebel, the Police Dog* by Patricia Finney
- *Hero Dogs: Courageous Canines in Action* by Donna M. Jackson
- *Search And Rescue Dogs* (Dog Tales: True Stories

About Amazing Dogs) by Marie-Therese Miller

- Search Dog Foundation: www.searchdogfoundation.org
- How Police Dogs Work: people.howstuffworks.com/police-dog.htm

Activities

- McGruff the Crime Dog: www.mcgruff.org
- FBI Kids Working Dogs: www.fbi.gov/kids/dogs/doghome.htm
- Interview a police dog handler or trainer. Write a report about your findings.

Day 5—Stranger Danger

Reading

- *Stranger Danger* by Peggy Pancella
- FBI Safety Tips: www.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/safety1.htm

Activities

- Coloring: Police and safety coloring pages: www.boogyland.com/coloringpages.html
- Discuss what you should do if approached by a stranger.



EMTs and Paramedics

Questions to Ask

What's the difference between an EMT (emergency medical technician) and a paramedic? What is it like to drive an ambulance? How can I learn first aid?

Day 1—Paramedics and EMTs

Reading

- *Paramedics* (Everyday Heroes) by Nichol Bryan
- *Paramedic* (When I'm at Work) by Debbie Chancello
- *Emergency Squads* by L. B. Taylor, Jr.
- *Ambulances* (Machines at Work) by Gary M. Amoroso

Activities

- Research: What is an EMT? www.wisegeek.com/what-is-an-emt.htm
- Research: What is a paramedic? www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-paramedic.htm
- Composition: Write a journal entry describing a day in the life of a paramedic.
- EMS Coloring Book: www.acutecare.com/emscoloring.htm
- Webquest—Derailment Incident: academ.hvcc.edu/~ricksbre/sln/webquest.htm
- Watch the movie *The Girl in White* starring June Allyson (1952). Based on the true story of Emily Dunning Barringer, the first female ambulance surgeon.

- Quicktime movie of Dr. Emily Dunning Barringer: www.nlm.nih.gov/changingthefaceofmedicine/video/23_1.html

Day 2—Paramedic and EMT Careers

Reading

- *Choosing a Career As a Paramedic* by Sandra Giddens

Activities

- Research: EMT Career Info: www.bls.gov/oco/ocos101.htm
- Research: EMT and Paramedic Career Information: www.naemt.org/aboutEMSAndCareers/CareerResources/
- All About Ambulances, Paramedics, EMTs, and Dispatchers activity book: www.hallamb.com/Images/clrbook.pdf
- EMT Word Knowledge Quiz: www.quia.com/jg/136349.html
- Create a recruitment poster about a career as a paramedic or EMT.

Day 3—First Aid

Reading

- *The Kids' Guide to First Aid: All About Bruises, Burns, Stings, Sprains and Other Ouches* by Karen Buhler Gale
- *Family First Aid* by Nursing Staff of the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford
- *What to Do When There's No One But You* by Harriet Margolis Gore

Activities

- First Aid: www.healthy.net/scr/MainLinks.asp?Id=170
- First Aid Kit: kidshealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe/home/firstaid_kit.html
- First Aid Lesson Plan: lessonplancentral.com/lessons/Health/First_Aid/index.htm
- Code Red Rover Safety Resources: www.coderedrover.org/index.html
- EMT Safety Fun Book: www.ottawa.ca/residents/ambulance/public_ed_illness/kids/booklet_en.pdf
- First Aid Safety & Burns Game: www.quia.com/cb/62173.html

- Demonstrate first aid techniques to your family. 🏠

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