

# Twin boys die in fire

An Eerste River family is devastated after four-year-old twins who were playing with a cigarette lighter died in a fire at their home. The boys' three-year-old cousin also suffered serious burn wounds but survived the tragic blaze on Friday afternoon.

Authorities say E-Jay and Em-Jay Eksteen and their cousin were in an upstairs bedroom of their Erica Street, Kleinvlei, double-storey home, when the bed caught alight. The three boys were rushed to hospital with severe burn wounds and doctors fought to keep them alive. Tragically, the twins passed away.

According to a family member, there was one "miraculous moment" when E-Jay's heart started beating again.

However, the little boy succumbed at about 2 am on Saturday.

The distraught father of the twins, Earl Eksteen, took to Facebook to pray and beg God for the lives of his children in a heart-wrenching message: "My worst night ever....Plz Lord give me my boys back....can't live without my boys.....plz plz plz plz.....come back."

He continued posting images of his sons, as condolences pour in from friends, family members and their community. The *Daily Voice* visited the family's home in Erica Street on Sunday, but was told that the distraught parents had just left for Red Cross Children's Hospital in Rondebosch.

A relative said the family was "not ready to speak yet".

The house still smelled of smoke and another relative said they had already cleaned the burnt room and removed the damaged furniture to the backyard. Spokesperson for the City's Fire and Rescue Services, Theo Layne, said the fire was started when the children were playing with a lighter and the bedroom started burning.

"Three children playing with a cigarette lighter set the bed alight," Layne said.

"All of them sustained burn wounds and were taken by private transport to hospital. Two of the children unfortunately died of their injuries in hospital. They were in the bedroom on the first floor of their home."

It is understood the boys were being looked after by a relative at the time of the fire.

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