



SAFE HALLOWEEN

Halloween is that magical time of year when children get to dress up in wonderful and outrageous costumes as they gather a bag full of treats.

Halloween is really for children and children should ideally participate in all aspects of Halloween from helping to decorate the house to helping pick their costumes.

Costume Safety

Coming up with a creative disguise doesn't mean that safety needs to be forgotten, so here are some safety tips to keep in mind.

- October 31 can be a chilly night so make sure that costumes are loose enough to be worn over warm clothing but not so baggy or long that trick or treaters can trip over their costumes.
- Trick-or-treaters should wear sturdy walking shoes.
- Choose brightly-colored costumes that will be clearly visible to motorists. For greater visibility, add or incorporate reflective tape into the costume.

- Make-up and face paint are better than wearing masks which can restrict breathing and/or vision. If you choose to use a mask make sure it is one that allows the child to see and breathe easily.
- Swords, knives and similar accessories should be made of soft, flexible material.
- Look for costumes, beards and wigs labeled "Flame-Resistant" -- nylon or heavyweight polyester costumes are best. Flame Resistant does not mean 'fire proof'. Avoid costumes with baggy sleeves or flowing skirts to minimize the risk of contact with candles and other fire sources. Costumes made of flimsy materials have been found to burn more quickly when exposed to fire sources.
- Think twice before changing the color of your eyes with cosmetic contact lenses. These cosmetic lenses should be used only under the supervision of an eye-care professional. In addition, wear time should be limited to the shortest duration possible. The lenses must never be worn while asleep, and cosmetic contact lenses should not be shared with others. If you should choose to wear these lenses, be certain that they are cleaned properly.

Decorating Your House

By decorating your home, you signal to other trick-or-treaters that your household is taking part in Halloween.

- Children too young for trick-or-treating can dress up in costume and help

answer the door with a parent nearby.

- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Instead, let your child draw a face on the pumpkin.
- Make your home safe for trick-or-treaters. Remove all objects around the outside of your house that could cause children to trip or fall. Turn your outside light on so children will know they can visit your home.
- Keep candles, jack-o-lanterns, matches and lighters in a place that children cannot reach.
- Halloween candles with multiple wicks close to one another are hazardous and should not be used. When lit they can produce a single high flame or several large flames close together resulting in intense heat and the danger of igniting nearby materials such as curtains or window sills.
- Keep pets inside and away from trick-or-treaters and lit candles, especially if they are easily frightened or become over-excited in the presence of strangers.
- If using decorative lights indoors or outdoors, check lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires or loose connections. Discard damaged sets. Do not overload extension cords.

Trick-or-Treat!

On Halloween, most trick and treaters set out around dusk but the youngest wave of ghosts, witches and rock stars might begin ringing your bell in the late afternoon.

Parents should accompany their children each year until the children are old enough to go by themselves. Still, safety-minded parents can follow along at a distance to keep an eye on the children.

Other Tips:

- Tell your children not to eat any goodies until you see them. Make sure that your child eats dinner before they set out, so they'll be less tempted to eat their goodies along the way.
- It might be a good idea for parents or children to take along a backpack to empty the goodies into if the trick-or-treat bags become too heavy.
- Children should stay in well-lit areas and should only visit homes that have their outside lights turned on. Children should never go inside homes or cars.

Children should walk, not run, from house to house and stay on the sidewalk or at the side of the road facing traffic, cross the road at the corner and look both ways before crossing the road.

The Goodies

The best part about Halloween! But before your children begin to eat their loot, make sure you examine it first.

Throw out any treats that are not wrapped, those in torn or loose packages, or any that have small holes in the wrappers.

Check toys or novelty items for small parts and do not allow children under three years to play with them.

You might want to offer an alternative to sugar-based treats. Gum should be sugarless.

Stickers, multicolored pencils or beads can be a nice surprise in place or in addition to traditional treats. Ask your children what they think a good treat would be.

Then sit back and enjoy. Happy Halloween!

Tips For Drivers

Halloween brings a well known fact - there will be more children out on the streets in residential areas. Extra care needs to be taken by all drivers on Halloween to keep our kids safe.

- Drive slowly in residential areas where children are more likely to be trick-or-treating. Remember to drive the speed limit through residential areas, anticipating more pedestrian traffic on both sidewalks and roads. Enter and exit driveways slowly and carefully.
- Watch out for kids, many of whom may be wearing costumes with visibility reducing features. While driving be aware of the kids around you at all times. Kids are fast and they tend to forget simple pedestrian safety rules, especially with the excitement of Halloween. Remember also that

costumes can limit a child's vision and they may not be able to see your vehicle.

- Reduce your distractions and stay alert. Make sure you reduce the number of distractions in your vehicle, i.e. Cellphones, loud music, etc. ***All your concentration should be on the road, especially in residential neighborhoods.***
- Frequently check your speed and reduce it during peak trick-or-treating hours. When driving in residential areas, frequently check your odometer and make sure you are driving the posted speed limit.