

Playing it Safe on Halloween: Pointers for Parents

Halloween may be a fun holiday for kids, but for parents, trick-or-treat time can be a little scary. Concerns about children's safety—whether they are out in the neighborhood or back at home with bountiful bags of goodies—can cast a spell on the evening's festivities. But not to worry! Following a few safety tips will ensure that Halloween will be a “howling” good time for all.



“Unhaunting” Your House and Neighborhood

- Welcome trick-or-treaters at home by turning on your exterior lights.
- Remove objects from your yard that might present a hazard to visitors.
- Drive slowly all evening—you never know what creature may suddenly cross your path.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to the sheriff's office.

Making Safe Costumes

- Check that costumes are flame-retardant so the little ones aren't in danger near candlelit jack-o-lanterns and other fire hazards.
- Keep costumes short to prevent trips, falls, and other bumps in the night.
- Encourage kids to wear comfortable shoes.
- Try makeup instead of a mask. Masks can be hot and uncomfortable and, more importantly, they can obstruct a child's vision—a dangerous thing when kids are crossing streets and going up and down steps.
- Make sure kids wear light colors or put reflective tape on their costumes.

Preparing Ghosts and Goblins for Their Tricks and Treats

- Make sure older kids go out with friends. Younger children should be accompanied by an adult. If you live in a rural area, offer all kids a ride in the car.
- Set a time limit for children to trick-or-treat. Together, map out a safe route so you know where they'll be. Remind them not to take shortcuts through backyards, alleys, or playing fields.
- Remind kids not to enter a strange house or car.
- Try to get kids to trick-or-treat while it is still light out. If it is dark, make sure the children are carrying flashlights that work.

Eating the Treats

- Kids need to know not to eat their treats until they get home. One way to keep trick-or-treaters from digging in while they're still out is to feed them a meal or substantial snack beforehand.
- Check out all treats at home in a well lighted place.
- What to eat? Only unopened candies and other treats that are in original wrappers. Don't forget to inspect fruit and homemade goodies for anything suspicious. By all means, remind kids not to eat everything at once or they'll be feeling pretty ghoulish for a while.



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