



SMART STEPS TO A HAPPY AND SAFE HALLOWEEN

Halloween injuries to children most often result from falls, car-pedestrian collisions, and accidental contact with flames, objects that cause eye abrasions, or skin irritants.* The following tips can help prevent many of these injuries.

"SEE AND BE SEEN" COSTUMES

- Bright and lightly colored costumes are easier to see at night.
- It's a good idea to purchase reflective tape from a local bicycle, hardware, or sporting goods store and use it on trick-or-treat bags and costumes.
- Rather than a mask, use make-up or face paint so children can see where they are going. You may want to test the paint on a small area of skin first, to be sure it does not cause a rash. If children do wear masks, have them take them off when walking from house to house, and be sure the eye openings are large enough so they can see clearly.
- Only buy costumes and accessories with labels that say "flame retardant" or "flame resistant." Use flame resistant material if you plan to make costumes.
- Avoid loose, billowing costumes that could come into contact with flames from a jack-o-lantern or candle. Keep costumes short enough so that movement is easy and kids won't trip over them.
- Hats and head gear need to fit securely so they don't slip and impede vision.
- Be sure that shoes fit and are comfortable (even if they don't match the costume).
- Depending on where you live, consider fitting costumes so that sweaters or long sleeves can be worn underneath if it's going to be cold.
- Children sometimes try to act like the characters they are portraying--be sure that

any swords or weapons are made out of flexible material.

SAFE TRICK-OR-TREATING

- An adult should always accompany trick-or-treaters (until at least age 12). That said, we know that children will sometimes go out unsupervised, even though this is unwise. If children do go out without an adult, be sure they go in a group and only visit familiar homes. Make sure you know their route, and agree to the exact time they will return. Have children carry your phone number (or a cell phone) and be sure they have a way to reach you in the event of an emergency.
- Give each trick-or-treater a flashlight.
- Review and make sure children know these basic rules:
 1. Don't eat anything until you get home and Mom or Dad have had a chance to be sure the treats are safe. (Serving a big dinner before trick-or-treating can reduce temptation.)
 2. Never enter a home, car, or apartment building unless your Mom or Dad are there and say it is okay.



(continued)

* Based on information from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.



3. Stay on the sidewalks. (Don't take short cuts.)
4. Walk, don't run.
5. Stop at curbs and corners.
6. Cross streets at intersections and stay in cross walks. Look right and left to be sure there are no cars.
7. Do not walk around or between parked cars.
8. Wait for traffic signals and "walk" signs.
9. Only go to houses of people you know, and only go if the porch light is on.



- For young children, get rid of toys or items with small parts that could cause choking.
- If you'd like to give out something other than candy this year, consider stickers, colored pencils or crayons, coins, erasers, party favors, or small coloring books.

LET'S PARTY SAFELY!

- Do not allow children to carve a pumpkin with a knife. Children can decorate pumpkins with stickers, markers or paint.
- Many communities and neighborhoods are offering alternatives to trick-or-treating and traditional Halloween customs. Check with your local schools, religious organizations, libraries, malls, fire departments, and civic groups to see if they are offering an event your children may enjoy.
- If you decide to offer a neighborhood party in your home, use flashlights instead of candles for decorations and in jack-o-lanterns, and keep decorations (corn stalks, crepe paper, etc.) away from any heat sources.
- Keep lawns, porches, and walkways clear of any items a child may trip over. Make sure walkways and porches are well lit.
- Keep pets restrained so trick-or-treaters do not bother them and they do not bother the trick-or-treaters.



HOW SAFE IS THAT TREAT?

- While tampering is rare, we suggest you throw away home-made goodies and anything that is not in its original wrapper.
- Check packaging to be sure the wrapper is not torn and there are no holes.
- Cut fruit into pieces before the children eat it.

For more information,
contact the I'm Safe! Network,
www.imsafe.com.

