

### “Unhaunting your house and neighborhood”

- Welcome trick or treating at home by posting a sign welcoming them.
- Remove objects from your yard that might present a hazard to visitors.
- Ask your Neighborhood Watch or citizens group to patrol the community.
- Involve students from local college or university to be “witch helpers”. (...i.e. help children cross busy streets and watch out for ghoulish behavior)
- Drive slowly at the designed time for the trick or treating.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to your local police dept.

### Making Safe Costumes

- Check that costumes are flame retardant so the children aren't in danger near candles, lit lanterns or other fire hazards.
- Keep costumes short to prevent trips, falls and other bumps in the night.
- Encourage kids to wear comfortable shoes.
- Try make up instead of mask. Masks can be hot and uncomfortable. Also, more importantly, they can obstruct a child's vision which is 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 especially if it is dark.

### **\*\*DRESSED UP AND DANGEROUS:**

Halloween blood and gore are harmless stuff for the most part. However, sometimes dressing up as a superhero, a scary monster, or a slimy alien from outer space which coupled with the excitement of Halloween brings out aggressive behavior. Also, fake knives, swords, hand guns and other costume accessories can accidentally hurt people. If these objects are part of a child's costume, make sure they are made from cardboard or other flexible material. Moreover, better yet, challenge kids to create costumes that do not need “weapons” to be scary and fun.

### 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.
- Remind kids not to enter a stranger's house or car.
- Set a time limit for children to trick or treat. Together map out a safe route so you know where they will be. Remind them not to take short cuts through backyards, alleys or playing fields.
- Try to get kids to trick or treat while it is still light out. If these events are celebrated at night, make sure a couple of people are carrying a flashlight that works.

### **\*\*\*Pranks that can be a little tricky:**

Halloween is notoriously a night of pranks such as toilet papering a house or filling mailboxes with shaving cream are not unusual. Try to get a handle on your children's plans before they go out. Explain to them that while you want them to have a good time, some tricks could hurt other children or vandalize property. Emphasize that you disapprove of vandalism.

### Eating the treats:

- Kids need to know not to eat their treat until they get home. One way to keep trick or treating 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 their 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 awhile.

Crime Prevention tips from:

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