

Halloween Safety Tips

Parents of trick-or-treating kids can get so caught up in the fun themselves that they might forget some simple safety ideas that could keep everyone out of trouble. Having a fun and safe Halloween will make it all worthwhile!

Kids love Halloween! They get to dress up and get free candy! What a perfect holiday! Give your kids some precious Halloween memories that they'll have for life.

If you take your kids to a sponsored event, like a safe Halloween thrown by your church or community center, make sure to keep an eye on them at all times. Even though it seems less dangerous, you are still in a strange environment full of people that you don't know. All it takes is a minute with your back turned to find your child gone.

Cell phones are everywhere now! Everyone seems to have one, they can be so affordable. Make sure that your child has a pre-programmed cell phone with him/her if they go out on Halloween night! Make sure that all important numbers are already there and ready for use.

Below are more common sense tips that can help adults keep their kids safe.

- ⚠️ As bad as it sounds, this is just a fact of life now. Get on the internet and check your local state website for sex offenders. Almost every state has one, just do a search for your state sex offender site. Look up your zip code and it should have a list of registered offenders in your area that includes street addresses. Make sure that your kids stay away from these houses!
- ⚠️ Know the route your kids will be taking if you aren't going with them. Let them know that they are to check in with you every hour, by phone or by stopping back at home. Make sure that they know not to deviate from the planned route so that you always know where they will be.
- ⚠️ Trick or treating isn't what it used to be. In most cities it's not safe to let kids walk the streets by themselves. Your best bet is to make sure that an adult is going with them. If you can't take them yourself, see if another parent or two can.
- ⚠️ Help your young child pick out or make a costume that will be safe. Make sure that its fire proof or treated with fire retardant. If they are wearing a mask of any kind, make sure that the eye holes are large enough for good peripheral vision.
- ⚠️ Know what other activities a child may be attending, such as parties, school or mall functions. If they are going to be at a friend's home, get the phone number and make sure that you've met the parents.
- ⚠️ Make sure you set a time that your kids should be home by. Make sure they know how important it is for them to be home on time or to call immediately if something happens and they are going to be delayed.

- ⚠ Kids will be kids. Explain to kids of all ages the difference between tricks and vandalism. Throwing eggs at a house may seem funny but they need to know the other side of the coin as well, that clean up and damages can ruin Halloween for everyone. If they are caught vandalizing, make them clean up the mess they've made.
- ⚠ Some sick people find Halloween a great night to hurt cats. Explain to your kids that animal cruelty of any kind is not acceptable. Kids may already know this on their own but stress the point that it's not acceptable behavior. Make sure that they know that harming animals is not only morally wrong but punishable by law and will not be tolerated.
- ⚠ Serve your kids a filling meal before trick or treating and they won't be as tempted to eat any candy before they bring it home for you to check. Check your local grocery store or craft store for Halloween cook books full of tasty treats on a horror theme for both kids and adults.
- ⚠ Make sure that if your child is carrying a prop, such as a scythe, butcher knife or a pitchfork, that the tips are smooth and flexible enough to not cause injury if fallen on. Make sure that costumes won't get in the way when they are walking, which could cause them to trip.
- ⚠ Teach your kids about not getting into strangers cars or talking to strangers, no matter what the person says to them. Explain to them as simply as you can that some adults are bad and want to hurt children, that they should never go into a house that they don't know, get into a car or go anywhere with a stranger. Also, tell them what to do should this happen, to scream as loud as they can to draw attention and to run away as fast as they can to someplace safe.
- ⚠ Be sure to show your children know how to cross a street properly. They should always look both ways before crossing the street and should only cross at corners or crosswalks. Make sure that if you have more than one child, they know to take the hand of the younger child when they cross a street.

Make Halloween a fun, safe and happy time for your kids and they'll carry on the tradition that you taught them to their own families some day!

