



Making Halloween Safe For Young Children

By Louie Delaware

Although Halloween is a fun time for children, most people are not aware that it is the most dangerous day of the year for child pedestrians as they are 4 times more likely to be killed while walking that day than any other day of the year. So it is very important for parents to either be with their children at all times or prepare them to be safe.

Some things to consider while your children are walking around:

- ◆ Children under 12 should be escorted by an adult. Older children should stay on routes that have good lighting.
- ◆ Walk on sidewalks, or there is not one available, walk as far left as possible so that you are facing traffic so you can see oncoming vehicles.
- ◆ Cross only at a corner or where it is safe. Make certain that not only can you see a vehicle but that the driver can see you. Be aware that cars that are backing up have a very long blind spot behind them.

There are many other practical safety tips for parents while out Trick or Treating. These include:

- ◆ Have the child wear light colored costumes, or apply reflective tape onto the costume so that drivers have a better chance of seeing them.
- ◆ Use costumes that don't cover their face, or if it does ensure that the eye holes are large enough for them to be able to see where they are going. A great way to do this is using face paint. And make certain that their costumes are fire-resistant.
- ◆ Also, to prevent tripping select a costume that is not too long.
- ◆ Don't allow children to wear high heeled or overly large shoes.
- ◆ If a child wants to carry something, make certain that it is made out of a flexible material and don't allow a child to carry an object that may have a sharp point or edge.
- ◆ Have them carry a flashlight or glow-stick with them so they can see where they are going.
- ◆ Only visit homes that have lights on.
- ◆ Accept the treats but never go into their home.
- ◆ Have a grown-up inspect the treats before you eat for tampering and safety (especially for children who may have food allergies).

Some home safety tips for Halloween:

- ◆ Children will want to help in carving the pumpkins. Obviously, a child should not use a sharp knife. Instead, there are many pumpkin carving kits that have saws that are safer. Or let the child draw what they want on the pumpkin and you carve it for them.
- ◆ If you put candles in pumpkins, make certain that they are placed a distance away from where a child's costume will be to prevent from setting on fire. Or consider using the battery candles that create the illusion of a flame.
- ◆ Make certain that your sidewalk, stairs and porch are safe for those little hobgoblins coming to your home. Add extra lights to better illuminate their way (ensuring that the extension cords don't pose a tripping hazard).



By doing these tips, it will help make Halloween's fun festivities safer and all the more memorable for all of your little ghouls.

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