

TAKING A “BOO” AT HALLOWEEN SAFETY

They charge down the hall and out the door, eager to collect the treats awaiting them. By following the following safety tips, there will be less “fright” in a night meant to be fun for kids of all ages.

- Apply face paint or cosmetics directly onto the face. Makeup is safer than a loose-fitting mask that can make it difficult for a child to see. If a mask is worn, ensure that it fits securely and cut the eyeholes large enough for the child to see in all directions.
- Secure hats so that they will not slip over a child’s eyes and make sure costumes are cut short enough to avoid tripping. Dress children in shoes that fit – adult shoes may look great as part of a costume, but they make it easier for a child to trip and fall. Ensure that any props that are carried, such as swords or knives, are made out of soft flexible material with blunt edges to prevent injury if they happen to fall.
- Buy or make Halloween costumes in light or bright colours to maximize visibility. Decorate costumes and candy bags or sacks with reflective tape to make them more visible during dusk or darkness. Reflective tape can usually be bought in hardware, bicycle and sporting good stores.
- When purchasing or making costumes, masks, wigs and other accessories, look for labels indicating the use of FLAME RESISTANT materials. Although this label doesn’t mean these items won’t catch fire, it does indicate the items will resist burning and should extinguish quickly. Avoid costumes with big baggy sleeves and pant legs, billowing skirts, or those made with flimsy or filmy material. Consider tighter fitting costumes, as they are less likely to come in contact with a flame.
- Regardless of age, never let children trick-or-treat alone. An adult should always accompany smaller children. Older children should travel in groups. Ensure that a child’s name, address, and phone number (including area code) is attached to their costume for all children less than 12 years of age. Teach each child his or her phone number. Make sure older children have change for a phone call in case there is a problem away from home.
- Before letting children go out trick-or-treating, talk to them about trick-or-treating safety. Tell them to walk not run. Remind them to cross only at

intersections and crosswalks, and to stop and to look left-right-left again before crossing. Tell them never to dart out between two parked cars.

- Instruct children to travel only in familiar areas and along pre-established routes. Set a time for them to return home. Instruct them to restrict their trick-or-treating to homes with porch or outside lights illuminated and to never enter a home or an apartment building unless accompanied by an adult.
- Tell children not to cut across yards. Clotheslines, plants, lawn ornaments and furniture are all hazards that can be almost invisible in the dark. Tell your children to stay on sidewalks at all times and have them carry flashlights to see – and be seen – more easily.
- Always inspect all treats brought home. Tell children that no treat should be eaten until a parent has examined it carefully. Don't allow them to eat any unwrapped candy or fruit. Infants and toddlers should not be allowed to eat peanuts, popcorn, gum or small hard candies that may cause choking.
- In preparation for trick-or-treaters at your home, remove breakable items or obstacles such as tools, ladders, and children's toys from steps, lawn and porch. To safely decorate pumpkins in areas where clothing might brush up against a flame, use inexpensive flashlights as an alternative.