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PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN

OCTOBER 2011

Reprinted by:
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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: HALLOWEEN

Make sure to have a fun and safe Halloween

The candy, the costumes, the frights... and did I mention the candy! The fall is here and Halloween is upon us. For you, it may mean the beginning of the holidays. Before you get too busy, take the time to have some Halloween fun with your child.

Here are some tips about your child's costume:

- Your child's costume should be made from flame retardant material. If it is a homemade costume, treat the fabric with a flame retardant spray.
- If possible include a light reflector with your child's costume. You may even consider adding one if there are none on the costume already. Also make sure your child has a flashlight when she goes out to trick or treat.
- Try to avoid heavy jewelry or high heeled shoes for little girls. If she trips and scrapes her knee it may ruin the rest of the night.
- If your child is carrying a prop, such as a sword,



make sure it is made out of flexible materials in case he should fall on it while out. (most are made of plastic that is light and flexible now)

- If your child will be wearing a mask, you will want to make sure that he or she can see easily out of the holes for the eyes. This will help your child see where he or she is going and hopefully will prevent any trips and falls.

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Make sure your child has a flashlight when trick or treating.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- If you have more than one child, you may want to consider saving a costume for the next year. Adding a prop or taking something off the costume can give it a whole new look.

If you are going to be dressing up with your child, here are some tips for *your* costume:

- Make sure the costume fits properly and that it is comfortable. You will be wearing it for several hours and you could be running after your child.
- Make sure that you have some type of reflective materials on your costume and carry a flashlight.
- If you are wearing a mask, make sure that you can breathe well when you have it on and that you do not have blocked vision.
- Make sure your child knows what costume you are wearing, especially if you are in a big group. In case you get separated, your child will be able to locate you.

Once you have the candy picked out, the costumes ready and decorations up be sure to talk to your child about being safe while he or she Trick or Treats.

- **Watch out for cars and traffic** — Remind your child to stay on the sidewalk as much as possible.
- **Watch where your child is going** — With masks and costumes it may be hard for your child to have the same vision that he would normally. Watch out for steps, cracks in the pavement and other ways that your child could trip and possibly get hurt.
- **Make sure that an adult is with your child** — It is fun to go out and trick or treat and it can be even better in a big group with adults. This also is important in case something happens.

Halloween candy

Many children love Halloween because of the big bag of candy they hope to get. Take time to talk to your child about how much candy he will

be allowed to eat. Will he be allowed several pieces that night and then just one or two pieces a day after that? Remember to go through the candy with your child and throw away any unwrapped candy. If your child had allergies to certain foods like nuts, you may have to go through the candy closely to make sure the candy left is safe to eat.

Do not forget to remind your children about the importance of brushing their teeth, especially after eating all of that candy!



REFERENCES:

- KidsHealth.org – Playing it Safe on Halloween, July 2009
- KidsHealth.org – Halloween, October 2009
- KidsHealth.org – Kids Talk About: Halloween Candy, October 2010

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