



HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Halloween is that exciting time of year that children (and adults!) get to dress up in wonderful costumes as they gather treats. Did you know...Halloween is one of the oldest celebrations in the world, dating back over 2000 years to the time of the Celts ?

Coming up with a creative disguise doesn't mean that safety can be forgotten:

- dress for October weather; make sure costumes are loose enough to wear over extra clothes, but not too baggy to be a trip hazards.
- Wear good sturdy shoes with a good tread
- Think about visibility, choose brightly colored costumes or use reflective tape on the costume
- Make-up and face paint is better than masks that can restrict breathing and vision
- Swords, knives or other pretend weapons should be made of soft flexible material
- Look for "flame resistant" labeling (which does not mean "flame proof"), but can be safer than other materials – nylon and heavy weight polyester are best.
- Avoid costumes with baggy sleeves or flowing skirts that may come in contact with candles or fire sources.

Did you know...the ancient Celts thought that spirits and ghosts roamed the countryside on Halloween night, so they wore costumes and masks to avoid being recognized as humans ?

Candy safety tips include:

- inspect all candy before allowing children to eat it
- throw out any treats not wrapped, torn, in loose packages, or with holes
- check toys and novelty items for small parts for toddlers
- consider replacing your own treats with healthier alternatives: sugar-less gum, stickers, multicolored pencils or other craft items

Did you know...the custom of "trick or treating" is also thought to have started with a European custom of "souling" in which people walked through villages begging for "soul cakes" made of bread and currants?

When decorating around your home, remember:

- small children should never carve pumpkins; they can help by drawing the face before cutting
- remove any trip items outside your home and doors; keep areas well lit
- place jack-o-lanterns or candles in areas that children cannot reach
- keep pets inside and safe from becoming frightened or agitated during Halloween
- make sure any decorative lights are certified by a recognized organization such as CSA or ULC.

Did you know...that Jack O'Lanterns originated in Ireland where people placed candles in hollowed-out turnips to keep spirits and ghosts away?

Enjoy Halloween, and remember...

To meet a witch, turn your clothes inside out and walk backwards on Halloween,

Gail "Spooky" Sinclair,
OHS Manager

