



# MAFES Dawg Tracks

October 6, 2014



Halloween  
Safety Tips



Halloween is an exciting time of the year for kids of most all ages, especially the young ones. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) reported that from 2002 through 2005, there were 1,150 reported home structure fires resulting from Halloween decorations. These fires resulted in 3 deaths, 56 injuries, and \$24.8 million dollars in property damage.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a study from 1975 through 1996. This study revealed that there are four times more deaths among pedestrians on Halloween evenings than at any other time of the year. With these facts in mind, we should take all the means available to preserve the safety of all children during the Halloween season.

Following are some tips from the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) that will help in keeping all Halloween "trick or theaters" safer during the Halloween season:

## COSTUME SAFETY-

- ✓ **Purchase only flame-retardant costumes** – Look for the label that identifies the fabric as flame resistant. This doesn't necessarily mean that the fabric won't burn, but it will resist the flame and can be extinguished quickly.
- ✓ **Costume Fit** – The costume should be short enough to prevent children from tripping or getting tangled in the fabric. It should also not have blousing sleeves or a full body of fabric that could come in contact with a flame. Children should wear shoes that are sturdy and comfortable (little girls shouldn't wear Mommy's high heels.)
- ✓ **Increase Visibility** – Consider applying "reflective tape" to the costumes and "trick or treat" bags to increase their visibility. It is also a good practice to furnish a flashlight to both the student and the adult chaperone.
- ✓ **Swords, sticks or canes** – If either one of these items are part of the child's costume, make sure that it isn't too long or too sharp. If so, they might could fall or trip and get seriously hurt.
- ✓ **Masks** – Consider using make-up instead of a mask. The mask, if not fitted perfectly, could interfere with their vision.

## PEDESTRIAN SAFETY-

- ✓ Young children should always be accompanied by an adult.
- ✓ The children should walk from house to house (no running) and stay on sidewalks.
- ✓ Always caution the children to not run out from between parked cars, across lawns, and yards where furniture, ornaments, or clotheslines could present dangers.
- ✓ When children are preparing to cross a street, they should always try to cross at an intersection and look to the left and right and back to the left to be certain of the traffic pattern.

## CHOOSING SAFE HOUSES-

- ✓ "Trick or Treat" only at homes where the occupants are friendly and acquainted with your family.
- ✓ Children should never enter homes or apartments unless they are accompanied by an adult.
- ✓ Home occupants should remove all obstacles from their lawns, porches or steps that could present the potential for a trip or fall.
- ✓ Candlelit jack-o-lanterns should be kept away from landings or doorsteps, where they might cause a fire.

## MOTORISTS SAFETY-

- ✓ Watch for children darting out from parked cars, and walking on curbs, median or roadways.
- ✓ Enter and exit driveways very carefully.
- ✓ At dusk, watch for children in dark clothing.

## PARENT SAFETY CHECKS-

- ✓ Make sure that an adult or older responsible youth is supervising all the children 12 years old and younger.
- ✓ Discuss the route the "treaters" will be taking and know the names of all the other kids in the group. This way you will know the area where they will be and who is with them.
- ✓ Teach your children to only stop at homes that they are familiar, leaving the strange, unfamiliar ones alone.
- ✓ Give them a curfew or time to be at home.
- ✓ Pin a slip of paper on each child's shirt with their name, address, phone number, etc., on it, in case they get lost.
- ✓ Make sure that they know not to touch the candy until they return home and the parents can inspect their "bounty".

## TREATS-

To ensure a safe "trick or treat" outing:

- Give the kids an early meal before they go out.
- Insist that they bring home their "goodies" home for your inspection before they start to eat them.
- Wash fruit and slice in small pieces and look for needle punctures in the fruit.
- When in doubt, throw it out.

If you will practice the tips that we have discussed above, I guarantee that the night will go safer and more enjoyable for everyone involved.

The real "trick" to Halloween is to see that everyone is safe. The Halloween accidents or incidents do not originate with the witches on brooms or spirits, but from falls and pedestrian car crashes.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.  
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Excerpts: American Academy of Pediatrics  
[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

**DON'T BE SAFETY BLINDED-  
BE SAFETY MINDED**

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**SAFETY IS AS SIMPLE AS A-B-C  
<>ALWAYS BE CAREFUL<>**