



Columbus Police Department Halloween Tips



As ghosts and goblins take to the sidewalks tonight, the Columbus Division of Police will provide a watchful eye to ensure their safety. Halloween is anticipated by children all over Columbus as a time for candy and fun with friends. However, for parents Halloween can raise fears about child safety that can ruin the evening's festivities. The following safety tips will help lessen those fears.

Costume Safety

- Check costumes are flame-retardant so children aren't in danger near candles or jack-o-lanterns and other fire hazards.
- Keep costumes short to prevent trips and falls.
- Encourage children to wear comfortable shoes.
- Use make-up instead of masks. Masks can be hot and uncomfortable and may obstruct a child's vision.
- Make sure children wear light colors or put reflective tape on their costumes.

Halloween make-up is harmless for the most part. However, dressing up coupled with the excitement of celebrating Halloween can bring out aggressive behavior. Fake knives, swords, guns, etc. can accidentally hurt people. If these objects are a part of your child's costume. Make sure they are made of cardboard or other flexible material.

Unhaunting Your House and Neighborhood

- Welcome trick-or-treaters at home by turning on your exterior house lights.
- Remove objects from your yard that might present a hazard to visitors.
- Ask your neighborhood blockwatch or citizen's group to patrol the neighborhood.
- Drive slowly all evening. Children caught up in the excitement of the evening may run out into the street without warning.
- Report any suspicious or criminal activity to your local police or sheriff's department.

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Preparing Trick or Treats

- Have an adult accompany younger children. If you live in a rural area offer all kids a ride in the car.
- Set a time limit for children to trick-or-treat. Together, map out a safe route so you know where they'll be. Remind them not to take short cuts through backyards, alleys, or fields.
- Remind trick-or-treaters not to enter a stranger's house or car.

Try to have children trick-or-treat while it is still light out. If it is dark, make sure a couple of people carry flashlights that work.

Eating Treats

- Kids need to know not to eat their treats until they get home. One way to keep trick-or-treaters from digging in while they're still out is to feed them a meal or substantial snack before they go out.
- Check out all treats at home in a well-lit place.
- Before giving your child the okay to dig into their evening's haul, take out all opened candies or other treats not in their original wrappers. Inspect all fruit and homemade goodies for anything suspicious.
- To take the extra step to ensure your child's candy is safe, check with area hospitals to see which hospitals have candy x-raying services available on Halloween.

The above are but a few pointers to help ensure the biggest problem your child has from Halloween is an upset stomach from eating too much candy! Have a safe and enjoyable Halloween!

Visit the Columbus Division of Police website at www.columbuspolice.org for information on forming a block watch in your community and for safety tips to keep you and yours safe!