

Tricks, Treats, Costumes & Safety



Safety Tips for Kids and Adults

With witches, goblins, and super-heroes descending on neighborhoods across America, the Duncanville Police Department offers parents some safety tips to help prepare their children for a safe and enjoyable trick-or-treat holiday. Halloween should be filled with surprise and enjoyment and following some common sense practices can keep events safer and more fun.



Dangerous and Risky Roads

- Walk, slither, and sneak on sidewalks, not in the street.
- Look both ways before crossing the street to check for cars, trucks, and low-flying brooms.
- Cross the street only at corners.
- Don't hide or cross the street between parked cars.
- Wear light-colored or reflective-type clothing so you are more visible. (And remember to put reflective tape on bikes, skateboards, and brooms, too!)
- Plan your route and share it with your family. If possible, have an adult go with you.
- Carry a flashlight to light your way.
- Keep away from open fires and candles. (Costumes can be extremely flammable.)
- Use face paint rather than masks or things that will cover your eyes.
- (If no sidewalk) walk on the left side of the road facing traffic
- Keep costumes simple. Long and fancy ones could cause children to trip. Costumes should also be fireproof if possible.
- Costumes should be made of white or light colored materials to be easily seen at night. Reflective patches or strips can also be added to the costume for more visibility when it is dark.
- Instead of wearing masks, paint faces with makeup. This will give a clear field of vision to see at night.
- Props, such as guns or swords should be made of Styrofoam or cardboard.
- Accept your treats at the door and never go into a stranger's house.
- Avoid wearing masks while walking from house to house.

Be aware of pets and other animals

- Be cautious of animals and strangers.
- Stay away from and don't pet animals you don't know.
- Children should beware of pets; animals may react negatively to costumes.
- Pets get frightened on Halloween; put them up to protect them from cars or inadvertently biting a trick-or-treater.





Treacherous Treats

- Never eat anything until after an adult inspects the treats.
- Only give/accept wrapped or packaged candy.
- Notify the police if harmful items are found.
- Have a grown-up inspect your treats before eating. And don't eat candy if the package is already opened. Small, hard pieces of candy are a choking hazard for young children.
- Children should stop only at houses or apartment buildings that are well-lit and **never** to enter a stranger's home.
- Give your children small Halloween bags – these will be filled quickly and the kids will return home early.

Parental Protection

Parents of trick-or-treating kids can get so caught up in the fun themselves that they might forget some simple safety ideas that could save everyone some trouble. Having a fun and safe Halloween will make it all worth while.

- Discuss with your children a pre-planned, well-lighted route to follow and make sure you know the area.
- Know the route your kids will be taking if you aren't going with them.
- Try to trick or treat when it is still light outside and be home by 9:00 p.m. at the latest.
- Make sure you set a time that they should be home by. Make sure they know how important it is for them to be home on time.
- If your children go on their own, be sure they wear a watch, preferably one that can be read in the dark.
- Know exactly what route your children are taking.
- Know which friends your children will be with.
- A responsible adult or teen should accompany each group.
- Have the children stay in your own neighborhood and only go to houses which have porch lights turned on.
- Leave your porch light on, so children will know it is okay to visit your home.
- The best bet is to make sure that an adult is going with them. If you can't take them, see if another parent or a teen aged sibling can go along.
- Be suspicious of older children who come to your home more than once because they may be “casing” it for a burglary.
- Attend safe Halloween parties at homes, schools, churches, or community centers. Report all criminal activities such as criminal mischief, rowdy groups of kids, speeding cars, etc.
- Explain to children the difference between tricks and vandalism. Throwing eggs at a house may seem like fun but they need to know the other side of the coin as well, clean up and damages can ruin Halloween. If they are caught vandalizing, make them clean up the mess they've made.
- Explain to your kids that animal cruelty is not acceptable. Kids may know this on their own but peer pressure can be a bad thing. Make sure that they know that harming animals is not only morally wrong but punishable by law and will not be tolerated.





Homeowners

- Make sure your yard is clear of such things as ladders, hoses, dog leashes and flower pots that can trip the young ones.
- Battery powered jack o'lantern candles are preferable to a real flame.
- If you do use candles, place the pumpkin well away from where trick-or-treaters will be walking or standing.
- Make sure paper or cloth yard decorations won't be blown into a flaming candle.
- Healthy food alternatives for trick-or-treaters include packages of low-fat crackers with cheese or peanut butter filling, single-serve boxes of cereal, packaged fruit rolls, mini boxes of raisins and single-serve packets of low-fat microwave popcorn.
- Non-food treats: plastic rings, pencils, stickers, erasers, coins.

PLAYING IT SAFE ON HALLOWEEN

Be a good goblin! Don't damage other people's property.

**If you have any questions or concerns contact the
Duncanville Police Department
(972) 223 – 6111
or you can contact the
Duncanville Police Department's Crime Prevention Office
(972) 780 – 5027
Officer Doug Sisk
dsisk@ci.duncanville.tx.us**