

## Ten Things Parents Can Do to Make Halloween Safer

"Halloween is one of the most exciting times of the year for children, but sometimes the most hectic for parents. Nearly 94 percent of children between the ages of four and twelve participate in Halloween activities each year. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) to help educate parents about what they should be telling their children to keep them safe. Parents need to take a moment to consider basic safety precautions that will make Halloween a safer night of fun.

- **CHOOSE** bright, flame-retardant costumes or add reflective tape to costumes and candy bags so children are easily seen in the dark. In addition, carry a glow stick or flashlight.
- **PLAN** a trick-or-treating route in familiar neighborhoods with well-lit streets. Avoid unfamiliar neighborhoods, streets that are isolated, or homes that are poorly lit inside or outside.
- **NEVER** send young children out alone. They should always be accompanied by a parent or another trusted adult. Older children should always travel in groups.
- **ALWAYS** walk younger children to the door to receive treats and don't let children enter a home unless you are with them.
- **BE SURE** children do not approach any vehicle, occupied or not, unless you are with them.
- **DISCUSS** basic pedestrian safety rules that children should use when walking to and from houses.
- **CONSIDER** organizing a home or community party as an alternative to "trick-or-treating."
- **MAKE** sure children know their home phone number and address in case you get separated. Teach children how to call 911 in an emergency.
- **TEACH** children to say "NO!" or "this is not my mother/father" in a loud voice if someone tries to get them to go somewhere, accept anything other than a treat, or leave with them. And teach them that they should make every effort to get away by kicking, screaming and resisting.
- **REMIND** children to remain alert and report suspicious incidents to parents and/or law enforcement.

"Child safety is vital year round, but Halloween is an especially important time for parents and children to pay extra attention to their surroundings and not let their guard down," . "Parents need to exercise a few basic safety precautions to help ensure that Halloween is both fun and safe."