



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Friday, October 26, 2001

For more information, contact:
Cal Cazier
Violence and Injury Prevention Program
Media Coordinator
801-538-6863

Halloween Safety Is No Trick

(Salt Lake City, UT) - As Halloween creeps up, kids will dream of spooky costumes, jack-o'-lanterns and haunted houses. Halloween is one of the most thrilling nights of the year for children, and also one of the most dangerous. As kids hit the street to trick-or-treat, the potential for unintentional injury rises. In fact, children are four times more likely to be hit by a car on Halloween than any other night of the year. Halloween can indeed be scary, with increases in pedestrian injuries, burns and falls among children. Check out the Halloween safety checklist and learn how you can keep your children safe this Halloween.

TREATS

- Parents should inspect all treats before letting children eat them.
 - Discard any unwrapped or loosely wrapped items.
 - Wash fruits and slice them up into small pieces to check for tampering, before eating.
 - If you are suspicious that any item may have been tampered with, report it immediately to the police.
 - Giving children a meal before they go will make them less likely to eat treats before you inspect them.
 - Homemade items should be discarded, unless you know personally who gave them to you.
 - The presence of a white powder on many confectionary products is common and not at all unexpected. It could originate from several sources including starch, sugar, or chocolate "bloom" (Bloom is fat separated from the chocolate and looks like a white or grayish powder on the surface of the chocolate).
- Remember – you do not have to open or eat the item – **you can throw it away!**

COSTUMES

- Design costumes so children can walk, see and be seen easily. Masks, wigs and beards can restrict breathing and vision, use makeup instead. Costumes should be short enough to prevent tripping, and shoes should be comfortable and fit well. Light colored material, reflective tape and flashlights will help motorists see children.
- Buy flame-retardant costumes and material.
- Design costumes so that warm clothing can be worn underneath.
- Include your child's name, address and phone number inside clothing, where it is not visible.
- Make knives, swords and other accessories out of cardboard or soft material. Never let children carry sharp objects.

- more -

Page 2 of 2 - Halloween Safety is no Trick

INSTRUCTION FOR CHILDREN

- Children and parents should plan a trick-or-treating route before leaving, and set time to return home.
- Avoid riding bicycles. Costumes can get caught in the chains and spokes.
- Children under 12 should go with an older child, and children should trick-or-treat in groups.
- Instruct children to save their treats until parents have inspected them.
- Walk on sidewalks, not in the street.
- Cross busy streets at intersections or at crosswalks, and look both ways before crossing.
- Do not run out between parked cars.
- If sidewalks are not available, walk on the left side of the road, facing traffic.
- Provide children with change, for a phone call if necessary.

SAFETY TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS

- Keep dogs and other animals away from the door and out of the yard, so they don't frighten or harm children.
- Keep an outside light on to welcome trick-or-treaters.
- Keep walkways and yards free from tools, playthings or other objects that children might stumble over.
- Use flashlights in jack o' lanterns, it is safer than candles.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MOTORISTS

- Slow down, especially in residential areas.
- Obey all traffic signs and regulations.
- Watch for children darting out from between parked cars.
- Watch for children dressed in dark clothing.
- Watch carefully when backing out of driveways.
- Make sure children use child safety seats or seat belts when driving them around.
- Have children get out of the car on the curbside away from traffic.

For more information, contact the Utah Safety Council at (801) 262-5400 ext. 303 or (800) 933-5943 ext. 303, The Utah Department of Public Safety at (801) 965-4461, or your local Health Department.

#