

SCHOOL HEALTH

Betty Sue Hinkson RN, School Nurse

HALLOWEEN SAFETY

Most people think of Halloween as a time for fun and treats. However, roughly four times as many children ages 5-14 are killed while walking on Halloween evening compared with other evenings of the year, and falls are a leading cause of injuries among children on Halloween. Many Halloween-related injuries can be prevented if parents closely supervise school-aged children during trick-or-treat activities.

Parents can help prevent children from getting injured at Halloween by following these safety tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Safety Council.

Children should-

- Go only to well-lit houses
- Do not enter houses
- Travel in groups with an adult
- Know their phone number and carry coins for telephone calls
- Have names and addresses attached to costumes
- Bring treats home for inspection by parents before eating anything
- Use costume knives that are flexible, not rigid or sharp

When walking in neighborhoods-

- Use flashlights
- Stay on sidewalks
- Cross streets at corners
- Do not cross street between parked cars
- Stop at all corners and stay together
- Wear clothing that is bright, reflective and

flame retardant

- Avoid masks (they obscure the child's vision)
- Avoid hats that could slide over the child's eyes
- Avoid wearing long, baggy or loose costumes or oversized shoes (to prevent tripping)

Parents and Adults should-

- Supervise children
- Establish curfew for older children
- Prepare homes for trick-or-treaters by clearing porches, lawns, and sidewalks
- Inspect all candy for safety before children eat it
- If driving - drive slowly
- Exit driveways carefully

And a few tips about pumpkins-

- Carve pumpkins on stable, flat surface with good lighting
- Have young children draw a face on the outside of pumpkin, then parents should do the cutting
- Place lighted pumpkins away from curtains and other flammable objects, do not leave lighted pumpkins unattended.

One last thing-

Head lice love Halloween! As children try on costumes, masks and hats on head lice can travel from one child to another. Remember, you do not know who tried that mask or hat on at the store before your child did. Remind your child not to share costumes and accessories with other children.

