

Stay safe on Halloween

Children are twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day

Halloween might be scary for different reasons than you think. On average, twice as many kids are killed while walking on Halloween than on any other day of the year. With a few tips and tricks, kids can stay safe while out walking. Safe Kids Marion County urges parents to prepare their children to walk safely, and remind drivers to be particularly alert this Halloween.

“On Halloween, more children than normal are on the street after dark. The holiday is an exciting time for them and if parents aren’t paying attention, kids may run out into the street without thinking,” said Meaghan Crowley, chair of Safe Kids Marion County and Health Education program manager for the Florida Department of Health in Marion County. “Drivers need to take extra care and slow down on neighborhood roads. And, of course, it is imperative that drivers put down mobile devices to avoid distraction.”

Safe Kids recommends these top tips to keep kids safe on Halloween:

Top safety tips for kids

- Costumes can be both creative and safe. The most important thing is to make sure you can be seen by drivers. Decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors. Masks can obstruct your vision, so choose non-toxic face paint and make-up whenever possible. Carry glow sticks or flashlights so you can see better, as well as be seen by drivers.



Calendar

Oct. 31

- **Halloween**
- **Mini Monster Boo-Bash at the Discovery Center**

Nov. 1

- **Health department at Pedro Baptist Church Fall Festival**

Nov. 3

- **Safe Kids Marion meeting**
- **Healthy Start Childbirth Education class**
- **WIC Breastfeeding class**

Nov. 5

- **WIC Mom & Baby Club meeting**

- Cross the street safely at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks. Look left, right and left again when crossing and keep looking as you cross.

- Put electronic devices down and keep heads up and walk, don't run, across the street.

- Walk on sidewalks or paths. If there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible.

- Slow down and stay alert—Watch out for cars that are turning or backing up and don't dart out into the street or cross in between parked cars.

“Parents need to talk to their children about watching out for cars while trick-or-treating,” said Crowley. “Make sure that kids bring flashlights with them and that their costume has something reflective on it so cars can see them. Having kids wear a glow stick necklace or a reflective slap bracelet is an easy and fun way to increase their visibility.”

Top safety tips for drivers

- Slow down in residential neighborhoods. Remember that popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

- Be especially alert and take extra time to look for kids at

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Have a healthy Halloween!

Halloween is an exciting time for children and families to dress up in fun costumes, participate in fall activities and eat delicious treats. As you and your family enjoy Halloween festivities this year, please be sure to follow these tips for having a healthy and safe Halloween!

Wash your hands

Don't forget to wash your hands! The flu is not afraid of ghouls and goblins. Washing your hands is a significant step for preventing the spread of germs and illnesses. There's no trick to it—healthy hand washing habits are easy:

Wash your hands as often as possible. Make sure to scrub for at least 20 seconds, or try singing "Happy Birthday" twice to make sure you wash long enough to kill the germs. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer wipes or gel.

Stay healthy

Fruits and veggies are a healthy alternative for Halloween parties and trick-or-treat bowls. Try to make banana "ghosts" using chocolate chips or raisins for the eyes and mouth.

Halloween is also a great time to increase your physical activity. Trick-or-treating and Halloween parties encourage walking and dancing, some of the major components of healthy lifestyle.

Visit www.HealthiestWeightFL.com to learn more about healthy eating and active living throughout the year.

Treat your teeth this Halloween

October is National Dental Hygiene month and the Florida Department of Health wants to remind you to keep your fangs healthy this Halloween.

This Halloween, consider giving out fun tooth-friendly alternatives to candy. Think outside the box by distributing festive giveaways such as sugar-free gum, stickers, noisemakers, Halloween erasers and bouncy balls, and word puzzle booklets.

Limit the amount of candy your children eat, and encourage them to drink a glass of water and follow with a thorough tooth-brushing whenever possible.

Beware of Halloween safety hazards

Halloween can be loads of fun, but can also pose several potential safety hazards. To keep children safe on Halloween, parents are encouraged to consider more than just the candy their kids collect.

And don't forget your pets! Halloween is a scary time for them with all of the decorations, costumes and lights. To ensure pets also have a happy Halloween, leave them home when trick-or-treating, do not give them chocolate or raisin treats, and toss away your candy wrappers.

Visit the Safe Kids Halloween safety tips Web page at www.safekids.org/halloween to learn more about keeping your children safe.

Florida Department of Health

Need Info? Call 352-629-0137

Birth & Death Certificates ext. 2064
Communicable Diseases ext. 2088
Dental Clinic 352-622-2664
Environmental Health ext. 2086

Family Planning ext. 2091
Health Education ext. 2195
Healthy Start ext. 2275
HIV/AIDS ext. 2073
Immunizations ext. 2017

Maternity ext. 2089
School Health ext. 2043
Sexually Transmitted Diseases ext. 2073
WIC & Nutrition ext. 2124

Check your emergency kit!

It's best to check your emergency preparedness stockpile once or twice a year. If you need a reminder, take a lesson from the American Public Health Association's Get Ready: Set Your Clocks, Check Your Stocks campaign.

When you change your clocks as daylight saving time ends on Sunday, take a look at your emergency preparedness stockpile. Discard anything that has expired or is leaking or damaged. If you've borrowed items from your stockpile, make sure to replenish them. Place the newer items in the back of your stockpile and rotate the older items to the front.

All Americans should have at least a three-day supply of food and water stored in their homes, with at least one gallon of water per person per day. If you have the space, experts recommend a week's supply of food and water. Choose foods that don't require refrigeration and are not high in salt.

Your stockpile should also contain flashlights, a manual can opener, a radio, batteries and copies of important documents. Depending on your family's needs, you may also need medical supplies, pet food, contact lens solution or diapers.

How can I tell if the supplies in my stockpile are still good?

The easiest way to tell if your foods are still usable is expiration dates. Bottled water can go bad eventually, so look for the stamped date on your water containers. Rotate your bottled water supply every six months.

Sometimes canned foods don't have expiration dates or have dates that aren't legible. So how to tell if the food is still good? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, high-acid canned foods such as tomatoes, grapefruit and pineapple can be stored for a year to 18 months. Low-acid canned foods such as meat, poultry, fish and most vegetables will keep two to five years if stored properly.

Beyond expiration dates, you should physically examine the contents of your stockpile to make sure they are still fresh. Check that none of your boxes or food containers have signs of pests or have been crushed or have opened. On cans, look for rust, bulging, punctures, dents or leaks. Never eat any food if its packaging or contents has come into contact with flood water or has been in a fire. Look for leaks or corrosion on batteries and dispose of them carefully, recycling them if possible.

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks/.

American Public Health Association



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intersections, on medians and on curbs. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.

- Reduce any distractions inside your car, such as texting, talking on the phone or eating, so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.

For more tips on how to help kids become safer pedestrians on Halloween and throughout the year, visit www.safekids.org/.

Connect with the Florida Department of Health online



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