

Helpful Halloween Tips # 1



Preparation is Key



- Try to start early in explaining Halloween to your child. Children, whether they have a sensory processing difficulty or not, do much better when they feel a sense of control.
- Spend time with your child discussing what kind of things they might see (e.g. scary costumes, masks, fake blood), what kind of things they might hear (e.g. spooky music, unexpected loud noises such as fireworks or bangs, people saying "Boo!").
- Allowing children to express and discuss their concerns is valuable and stress relieving.
- Give your child a clear plan (and even a schedule) of what will be happening, where and when.
- You may like to use books and social stories to help prepare your child for many of the sights, sounds and routines they might experience.
- If things are going well, don't push it. Your child is probably working really hard to hold it together and if at all possible you want to end with success.
- Have a plan in place or somewhere you can retreat to if your child gets overwhelmed and can't handle any more stimuli.
- Use calming strategies that you know work well for you child, before, during or after any events that have the potential to cause distress. For example, if your child is anxious about crowds or loud noises, you may like to use noise cancelling headphones. You can even incorporate these into their costume, such as taping bunny ears or monster horns to the headphones!

