

Helpful Halloween Tips #4



Trick or Treating



Trick or treating is not mandatory, in fact it is on the decline. Many people are now having private parties where parents can control the environment and the type of sweets their child receives. This is perhaps not surprising as it tends to contradict 'stranger danger' safety and it can often be confusing for children; particularly those who have difficulties understanding social rules.....If you do Trick or Treat:

- Remember Preparation is Key! Practice the route with your child ahead of time.
- For children who have difficulty with social skills, find a few neighbours to do a test run, where your child just practices knocking on the door, saying trick or treat, and then thanking them.
- Some practical things before you go out - have something to eat and make sure you make a 'loo stop'. Go out at dusk or before it gets very dark.
- It's good to stay close to home, visiting neighbours, family or friends. The event can already have many uncertainties so stick with the familiar and head to houses your child knows.
- Be aware of your child's sensory differences and if needs be skip homes with flashing lights, loud noises, and scary decorations.
- If your child has food sensitivities or allergies, it may be useful to bring a bag of treats they can eat. After each house visit give them the opportunity to "trade" the sweets they got for the treats you brought for them.
- Remember, success should be based on the quality of your child's experience rather than how many houses you visit. Know when to call it a night before it gets overwhelming.
- Consider alternative ways of letting your child participate in trick or treat, e.g. why not get dressed up at home and have people stand in different rooms, let your child come and knock on the door of each room.

