

AUTISM AWARENESS HALLOWEEN

BREAK OUT OF THE BOX WITH


AUTISM SERVICES INC.
OF WINDSOR & ESSEX COUNTY
& COMMUNITY PARTNERS
FOR AN INCLUSIVE HALLOWEEN



ARE YOU PLANNING ON HANDING OUT CANDY THIS YEAR?

HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER TO BE INCLUSIVE AND KIND TO ALL!

Be Understanding of Preferences - Allowing children to choose their own candy from the bowl can ensure that all kiddos are getting the treats that fit their preferences.

Be Inclusive of Dietary Needs - Many kids have allergies or intolerances that you are not aware of. To be as inclusive as possible, here are some safer options to consider handing out this year; Dye-free fruit snacks & fruit leather, Popcorn snack packs (non-cheddar), Yum Earth treats, Enjoy Life chocolate candy bars.

Think outside the box - For children with dietary concerns and allergies, non-candy treats may be the safest option. Consider offering non-candy treats, such as stickers, crayons, and other party favour items! If you are planning to offer non-candy items, you can indicate this by adding a **teal pumpkin** to your decorations!

Be Kind & Patient - Some kids may not have the language to say “trick or treat”, to tell you who they are dressed up as, or to say “Thank you”. They are still excited to participate and appreciate the treats! Be kind and accepting!

ARE YOU COLLECTING TREATS AND CANDY WITH YOUR KIDDOS? HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER TO KEEP THINGS SMOOTH, FUN, AND SAFE!

Look before they eat - Before consuming candy, lay it all out and check for tampering. Remove any items with damaged packaging, and items that contain allergens or other restricted ingredients.

Look for the Teal Pumpkin - A teal pumpkin is a way for households to indicate that they are offering non-food treats.

Stay Safe - Certain candies may be unsafe for younger children, or children with oral motor difficulties. Hard candies that are not on a stick can be a choking hazard, so avoid those candies, or stick with suckers which are safer.



HERE ARE A FEW WAYS THAT A NONVERBAL INDIVIDUAL OR SOMEONE WITH A COMMUNICATION BARRIER COULD SAY 'TRICK OR TREAT':

- Use a communication device (iPad, PECS binder, communication board)
- Have a sticker on their treat bag that they could hold up or point to when trick or treating
- Have printed cards that say 'trick or treat' that the individual can hand to the person giving out candy
- Have the phrase 'trick or treat' pre-programmed on a switch device or phone so that all the individual needs to do is push a button to request
- Have an adult or sibling help prompt the individual if they are having difficulty



REQUESTING

WAITING AND BEING IN CROWDED SPACES CAN BE DIFFICULT AND OVERWHELMING FOR AN AUTISTIC PERSON DUE TO UNFAMILIAR PEOPLE, SENSORY SENSITIVITIES, AND EVEN EXCITEMENT ABOUT THE DAY. HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- **Be calm and patient-** Keeping calm body language can help reduce the child's anxiety and could prevent escalating the situation.
- **Give space:** Respect the child's need for personal space and avoid crowding them.
- **Allow the child to move ahead-** Step aside to place candy in the child's bag, or let the child move ahead in line to reduce their wait time, if it seems appropriate to do so.
- **Keep an eye out for early and late trick or treaters-** Some families may take their child trick or treating earlier in the evening or later in the evening to avoid crowds of people and to reduce the wait time.
- **Avoid judgement-** Recognize that the child may be struggling. Offering patience and kindness will be beneficial to the child and the parent/caregiver.



CROWDS

TO BEST SUPPORT EVERYONE AND ENSURE HALLOWEEN INCLUDES OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY PLEASE KEEP IN MIND:

- **General Unfamiliarity-** The child might feel uncertain about wearing something new, whether it be a costume, a mask, or other disguises.
- **Sensory Considerations-** Costumes can be bothersome—itchy fabrics, excessive length, or bright lights may pose sensory challenges.
- **What to wear-** Caregivers don't want to force their child to wear a costume, it might be easier for the caregivers to allow their child to NOT wear a costume, rather, something Halloween related like black and orange. Caregiver might be unsure of what their child is currently interested in, can't find a costume their child is interested in or costumes are sold out.
- **Age of Participation-** Some older children/teenagers may still want to go out trick or treating and dress up because this is what Halloween means to them



COSTUME



Practice or Alternative Participation

Location - Maryvale Campus

Date - Monday, October 28, 2024

Registration Details - at www.autismservicesinc.com

Maryvale

