



THE SPOOK-TACULAR SUPPORT KIT

TIPS FOR A HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Every child deserves a fun and memorable Halloween! That's why we've rounded up **FREE** tips to help families navigate sensory sensitivities, physical disabilities, food allergies, and other considerations so everyone can enjoy a safe, inclusive, and fright-free celebration.

Experiences like trick-or-treating and Halloween parties can sometimes present additional challenges for children with sensory sensitivities, disabilities, food allergies, or other needs. Creating inclusive opportunities helps ensure every child can take part in the fun and feel connected with friends, family, and their community.

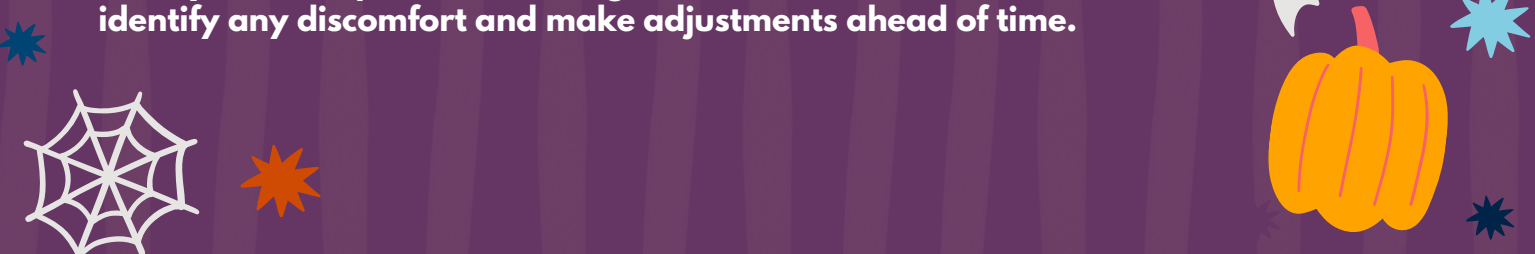
Preparing your child for what to expect can help make Halloween a more comfortable and enjoyable experience for everyone. Explore these helpful tips, costume ideas, and resources to help make the celebration safe, fun, and memorable!

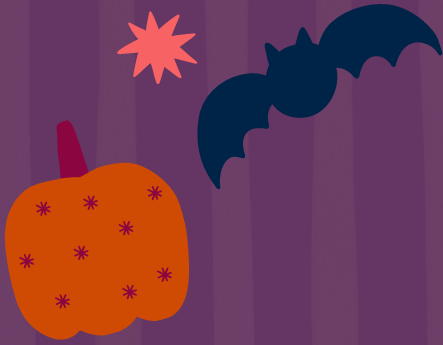
PREPARE & EDUCATE

- Watch family-friendly cartoons and movies with positive scenes of children trick-or-treating and attending Halloween activities.
- To help your child with scary decorations, remind them that the sounds and decorations aren't real.
- Reduce any possible anxiety by maintaining your child's regular routine.
- Practice or role play trick-or-treating. This can be especially beneficial to children who are sensitive to new situations or environments.
- Knowing and respecting your child's limits will ensure that everyone has an enjoyable time.
- This also provides an opportunity for your child to succeed, which builds their confidence and self-esteem.
- Avoid crowded areas - they can be overwhelming or distracting for children with certain disabilities. Big groups can also make crossing the street or going up and down curbs more dangerous.

SENSORY NEEDS

- Bring items that support your child's sensory needs, such as noise-canceling headphones, earplugs, weighted vests, or comfort items. Bonus points if these can be incorporated into their costume.
- Pack any sensory tools or comfort items your child may need throughout the evening to help them feel secure and regulated.
- Have your child practice wearing their costume before Halloween to identify any discomfort and make adjustments ahead of time.





THE SPOOK-TACULAR SUPPORT KIT

TIPS FOR A HAPPY HALLOWEEN

HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

- Check the pajama section for costume-inspired options that are soft, familiar, and comfortable to wear.
- Choose costumes made from non-irritating materials, or size up so your child can wear preferred clothing underneath.
- Skip masks and other face coverings, which can be uncomfortable or overwhelming for some children.
- Have your child try on their costume before Halloween to ensure a good fit and allow time to make any needed adjustments.
- Limit accessories and props that could contribute to sensory overload.
- Let your child take the lead. When they feel comfortable and excited about their costume, they're more likely to enjoy the experience.

HALLOWEEN COSTUME IDEAS

- Walkin' Rollin' Costumes
- The Disney Store - Inspired by favorites from Disney, Pixar, Marvel, and Star Wars!
- Target - Search for "Adaptive Halloween Costumes" or "Adaptive Costume"
- Amazon - Search for "Adaptive Halloween Costumes"
- Hanna Anderson - Search for "PJ Costumes"
- Spirit Halloween - Search for "Adaptive Costumes" or costumes with soft and non-itchy material
- Walmart - Search for "Adaptive Halloween Costumes" or "Adaptive Costume"

PUMPKIN CARVING AND PAINTING

- Adaptive pumpkin carving makes this beloved Halloween tradition more accessible by incorporating adaptive tools, flexible techniques, and creative modifications that help individuals of all abilities participate safely and confidently.
- Pumpkin painting offers a fun, sensory-friendly alternative to carving. It allows individuals to express their creativity without the mess or safety concerns associated with traditional pumpkin carving.



THE SPOOK-TACULAR SUPPORT KIT

TIPS FOR A HAPPY HALLOWEEN

TRICK-OR-TREATING

- Visit the neighborhood or location where you'll be trick-or-treating ahead of time to help your child become familiar with the area.
- Consider trick-or-treating in a quieter neighborhood, such as one near family or friends. These areas often have fewer crowds and less noise.
- Explore daytime trunk-or-treat events hosted by local schools, churches, community centers, or daycare programs.
- Head out early when possible. Earlier hours typically mean smaller crowds and fewer elaborate or potentially frightening costumes and decorations.
- If your child uses a communication device or alternative communication method, consider providing a card or symbol that says "Trick or Treat" to help them interact with neighbors.
- Printable cards: [option 1](#) or [option 2](#).
- Practice trick-or-treating at home. Rehearsing the experience can help your child feel more comfortable and confident on Halloween night.

SAFETY

- Before heading out to trick-or-treat, take a photo of your child in their costume. Having a recent picture can be helpful if they become separated from you.
- Make sure your child is easily visible to both you and others, especially if they have a tendency to wander.
- Use glow sticks, glow-in-the-dark bracelets, or light-up necklaces to increase visibility.
- Add reflective tape to costumes, jackets, shoes, and trick-or-treat bags.
- Wear something distinctive yourself so your child can easily spot you in a crowd.
- Ensure your child has identification and a way to communicate that they are lost.
- Consider a bracelet, necklace tag, or ID card that includes important contact information.
- Place a note with parent or guardian names and phone numbers in your child's pocket.
- If appropriate, use a temporary tattoo or write emergency contact information in a discreet location.
- In crowded areas, keep your child nearby or hold their hand. If multiple adults are present, consider the "bookend" approach, with one adult walking on each side of the child.

THE SPOOK-TACULAR SUPPORT KIT

TIPS FOR A HAPPY HALLOWEEN

DECORATIONS

- Avoid houses with scary or intense decorations while trick-or-treating.
- Reassure your child that Halloween decorations, sounds, and special effects are pretend and cannot harm them.
- If changes to familiar environments are challenging for your child, introduce decorations gradually. Looking at photos of decorated homes from previous years can also help them know what to expect.
- Incorporate Halloween-themed sensory items into your celebrations, such as slime, squishy toys, stretchy skeletons or spiders, and other tactile decorations your child can safely touch and explore.
- If you're handing out candy, be mindful that some children may be sensitive to loud noises, bright lights, or sudden movements from animated decorations.
- Consider turning off sound effects or reducing sensory-triggering decorations during peak trick-or-treating hours.
- If possible, place spooky decorations away from the main walkway or front door to create a more welcoming path for visitors.

TIPS FOR INDIVIDUALS HANDING OUT CANDY

- Display an autism and disability friendly trick or treat printable sign to let families know your home is a welcoming and inclusive stop.
- Remember that not all children communicate verbally. A smile, wave, or simple greeting can go a long way.
- If you're greeting trick-or-treaters at the door, choose costumes that aren't overly frightening and speak clearly and patiently when interacting with children.
- Be welcoming, patient, and accommodating. Give children plenty of time to choose their treat without feeling rushed.
- Consider sitting at the end of your driveway or near the sidewalk, especially if your home has stairs, uneven surfaces, or a steep driveway.
- Distributing candy closer to the street can make your home more accessible and may feel less intimidating for children who are anxious or hesitant to approach the door.
- Keep outdoor lights on to help children and caregivers safely navigate walkways, steps, and other potential obstacles.
- If possible, offer non-food treats such as stickers, bubbles, glow sticks, small toys, or fidget items for children with food allergies, dietary restrictions, or feeding tubes.
- When offering treats to a child who is blind or has low vision, describe the available options and allow them to make their own selection.
- Be mindful of loud noises, flashing lights, and animated decorations, as some children may be sensitive to these sensory experiences.

