

Bright Start UpDate

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Healthy Trick-or-Treat Alternatives

Halloween is a festive day that most kids enjoy. They like getting dressed up and getting treats. But parents should realize that Halloween can be dangerous. For example, according to a Yale study on children's choices, children are just as likely to choose a small toy as candy. This can be good news because candy is often a poor nutritional choice but toys can offer other hazards.

Children will enjoy non-food treats like the items typically given in birthday goodie bags. Non-food treats could include:

- small toys and pocket-sized games that are labeled safe for children under three
- glow sticks
- funny Halloween glasses
- stickers, including reflective safety stickers
- rub-on or stick-on temporary tattoos
- bookmarks
- crayons
- small tablets
- coloring pages
- toothbrushes



Try nutritious, tasty foods and non-food items that get children up and moving to use the extra calories they consume. Think outside the box when choosing treats for trick-or-treaters or party-goers. The calories in all those bite-size Halloween treats add up quickly. Make the treat options lower in fat and sugar but providing vitamins, minerals and fiber. The possibilities for



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healthy food treats are endless. Set a good example for your own children and the neighborhood kids by passing out healthy treats like these instead of giving them candy.

- cereal bars
- packages of low-fat crackers with cheese filling
- animal & fish crackers
- graham crackers
- 100 calorie packs of various products
- single serve boxes of ready-to-eat cereal

Fresh fruits (e.g. apples, bananas and oranges) are very nutritious treats, but they are no longer safe options. Remember that individually wrapped items are best.

Encourage kids to be more physically active by giving small, inexpensive toys to get them up and moving. Treats to promote activity:

- a bouncy ball (remember to make sure the ball is not a choke hazard)
- sidewalk chalk for drawing a hopscotch or foursquare game
- a beanbag or hacky sack
- a plastic or foam flier

Remember that sugary Halloween candy contributes to tooth decay. Candies do far more damage to teeth than to wrecking a diet or behavior. Tooth brushing and flossing are extremely important after eating sweets or any foods that stick to the teeth.

When trick or treaters ring your doorbell, what will you give them?

Prepared by Ellen Eddy, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

Source: Journal of Nutrition, Education and Behavior, Vol. 35: pp 207-209. Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service, HGIC 4112 Healthy Halloween Treats



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From a Parent's Perspective – Go, Go, Go... & Then Go Some More!

As the parent of a very active two-year-old, my husband and I like to get him outdoors as much as possible. We like to visit the local park/swimming pool and go for family walks about 2-3 times a week, but as the weather turns cooler, I have a hard time finding the motivation to head outdoors.



However, one of the activities that I do find myself looking forward to is the apple orchard and pumpkin patch. Memories of last year included a colder day with a brisk wind. We rode amongst straw bales in a trailer pulled by an older horse with children and families chattering excitedly. The fields were

littered with so many large, small, round and oblong pumpkins that it was hard to come home with just one!

In addition to the pumpkin patch and apple orchard, there were large blow-up jumperoos, face painting, a small train and a small petting zoo sprawled out over a large area. After working up an appetite with the various activities, hot chocolate was enjoyed by all. Such an easy outing to plan with fond memories to accompany!

Once the seasons change, many plan indoor activities for their children, but keep in mind that preschoolers need sixty minutes of physical activity each day. Wondering if your preschooler is getting enough? Ask yourself the following questions from MyPyramid.gov:

- Does your preschooler play outside several times a day or in a room inside where they are free to run around?
- Does your preschooler watch less than two hours of television daily?
- Do you make sure that your preschooler doesn't sit for more than sixty minutes at one time?
- When actively playing is your preschooler breathing quickly and/or sweating?

Your preschooler is probably getting enough physical activity if you can typically answer yes to these questions.

Prepared by Amanda Larson, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

Source: MyPyramid at www.mypyramid.gov.

Family Mealtime – Start Halloween off Right

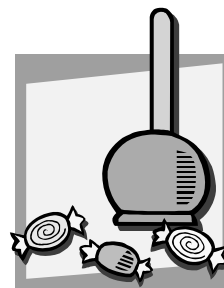
Halloween is a special time for children of all ages. Along with all the fun also comes a load of high sugared treats. Before your little ghosts and goblins hit the streets for trick-or-treating, it is a good idea to start them off with a healthy meal or snack. Here are some tips to help give your family a more fun and healthier Halloween this year:

- Make a meal that your kids really enjoy. This will help entice them to sit and eat even though they are excited to get going. Add a little extra

Halloween fun to the meal by making Jack-o-Lantern faces on your cheeseburgers or on your English muffin pizzas. You could even color your milk with a drop or two of orange or green food coloring to create a festive mood!

- If a sit-down meal won't work, send them out with a healthy snack such as some cheese and crackers or fresh fruit.
- For those little ones that find it hard to resist eating the

treats they receive before they are carefully inspected, take along your own snacks of cereal, animal crackers, or low sugar cookies.



Prepared by Bobbi Larsen, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

Sources: University of Illinois Extension. Healthy Halloween Treats. 2007. It's a Family Affair: Preparing Healthy Meals. www.eXtension.org. 2009

Healthy Baby – Halloween Safety

Halloween is a fun filled holiday that children enjoy. To make it a safe holiday, follow these safety tips. It is best to choose a light-colored costume or add glow-in-the dark tape to the front and back of the costume so the child can be easily seen in the dark as they venture out to trick-or-treat in the neighborhood. Give each child a flashlight so they can see where they are going while also enabling others to see them.

Avoid clothing that is too large or oversized shoes that could cause the wearer to trip and fall. Using face make-up versus

wearing a mask will allow the child to be able to see and breathe easier. Props such as wands, swords and knives should be flexible and not be a harmful item that could inflict injuries to themselves or others.



Adults can join in the Halloween fun by dressing in their own costume as they walk with their children when they go trick-or-treating and stand by the door when they stop at a home. Parents should always

keep an eye on their children at all times and check out the treats. Inspect the treats first and discard any thing that is not sealed or looks questionable. Younger children can choke on chewy candy, gum, nuts and hard candy, so monitor the candy bag contents.

Have a safe and happy Halloween.

Prepared Laurie Tangen, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

Source: Halloween Safety, University of Minnesota

Books for Babies – Books, Fears and Halloween

By now most parents and caregivers are aware of the growing importance of reading to infants and young children on a daily basis. Using themed books and stories at different times of the year is a great way to promote reading. Board or touch and feel books are especially good options because young children learn so much through sensory experiences.

One example of a theme is the Halloween holiday, typically filled with ghosts, goblins and a variety of other spooks.



Toddlers and young children have a growing awareness of causes and consequences and that leads them to recognizing new fears. Some common fears that young children have include animals, night terrors and being abandoned. And, let's not forget the big one...monsters!

Now, monsters aren't all bad; think Mike & Sully in Disney's *Monsters, Inc.* But young children can't always easily distort between good and bad. So what is the best way to deal with these fears? First, don't overreact. While you don't necessarily want to "baby" these fears, you don't want to ignore them. For example, when dealing with monsters you and the child might go searching under the bed or in the closet. Finding nothing, the toddler still insists that the creature will return once you leave. This is a time for reassurance and understanding – you will be there if needed. A nightlight or open bedroom door can also help.

Fear is a constant that changes with age and development. During the Halloween season a child might be exposed to new and scary (or different) figures and ads. Introduce the child to

age appropriate books that focus on positive stories of the season. This will provide parent/child time, promote reading and language development and allow for some fun along the way. Some Halloween themed book suggestions include:

- Touch & Feel Halloween (Board Book) by DK Publishing
- Eek-a-Boo by Joan Holub
- Clifford's Halloween by Norman Bridwell
- Biscuit Visits the Pumpkin Patch by Alyssa Capucilli
- Boo! A Halloween Peek-A-Boo! Book by Lark Carrier
- Five Ugly Monsters (Board Bok) by Tedd Arnold

Prepared by Deb Rombough, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

Sources: Scholastic, Inc.; Zero to Three: A National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

Web Wise – Getting Ahead

Fall is a time of holidays and money is often on the minds of most Americans. In fact, according to the American Psychological Association's 2007 Stress in America survey, money and work are the top two sources of stress for almost 75 percent of Americans.

- Learning positive money management techniques can help you and your family adapt to today's increasing prices. To build your financial security, use the following Extension web resource. Go to <http://www.extension.org/personal%20finance>

Prepared by Karen Slunecka, Extension Educator/Family and Consumer Sciences, South Dakota State University

A Special Note of Thanks! THANK YOU- THANK YOU- THANK YOU!!!

The South Dakota State Cooperative Extension Service would like to thank Deb Sundem for her leadership and commitment to the Bright Start Newsletter and to South Dakota's youngest citizens. Deb's dedication to providing research-based information in a reader-friendly format to families is outstanding. Again, a great thank you to Deb Sundem for helping South Dakota's families and communities become stronger.

The **Bright Start UpDate** is a monthly publication for South Dakota parents with young children under the age of five. It is brought to you as part of Governor Rounds Bright Start Program, an early childhood initiative with a number of different programs. **Bright Start UpDate** is published by the Office of the Governor 4,470 copies of this publication were printed at a cost of \$.46 per copy. You are welcome to make copies and distribute as needed. You can reach us by calling 1-800-305-3064 or check our web site at: <http://www.sdbrightstart.com>

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