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## Keep children safe on Halloween

There are many ways to keep children safe at Halloween, when their excitement sometimes makes them to forget to be careful.

Sarasota County Fire Chief Ken Ellerbe offers the following tips for parents:

- Help a child select or make a costume that will be safe. Make sure it is fire proof and the eye holes are large enough for good peripheral vision.
- If you set jack-o-lanterns on the porch with candles in them, keep them far enough away so kids' costumes won't accidentally catch on fire.
- If the child carries a prop such as a knife or a pitchfork, make sure the tips are smooth and flexible enough so they don't cause an injury if the child falls.
- Make sure the child carries a flashlight, glow stick or has reflective tape on their costume to make them more visible to cars.
- An adult or responsible teen should accompany young children.
- Kids always want to help with the pumpkin carving. There are many kits available that will make pumpkin carving safe. Let the kids clean out the pumpkin and draw a face on it, which an adult can carve for them.
- Treat kids to a Halloween dinner. They will be less likely to eat the candy they collect, which will help prevent choking, and give you an opportunity to inspect their candy.
- Teaching kids basic everyday safety such as not getting into cars or talking to strangers, watching both ways before crossing the street and crossing when the lights tell them to will help make them safer when they are out trick or treating.

Keeping a child safe at Halloween will add to memories that they'll have for a lifetime.

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