

Participation 101

Having fun on Halloween!

Halloween is an exciting time for children. The opportunity to dress-up, go trick or treating and get candy with family and friends can be really fun. These fun activities, however, can also bring some challenges for children, such as loud noises, bright lights, crowds, porch stairs, cold/rainy weather and allergies to certain treats. If these or other things have limited your child's enjoyment of trick-or-treating, there are lots of other things you can do to make your Halloween fun.

- Get a Halloween CD and dance to the fun, spooky tunes
- Tape up Halloween pictures in your child's play area
- Make pumpkin spice scented play dough
- Bake and decorate cookies (even if your child can't eat it, he/she can get messy when helping)
- Make sensory bins with hay, dried corn, peeled grapes, cooked and cooled spaghetti, jello
- Do crafts, such as foot print ghosts with paint
- Let your child play with the candy wrappers and chip bags – the crinkly sound is fun
- Go to a pumpkin patch on a nice day
- Carve a pumpkin and encourage (or torture!) your child by making him/her touch it
- Roast pumpkin seeds - they are super healthy and can be blended if needed
- Watch the Charlie Brown Halloween movie
- Get Halloween books from the library, check to see if there are any special Halloween events, like a family story time
- Dress up even if you are not going out and share pictures with your family and friends
- Decorate your child's wheelchair with lights, garland, etc.
- Do a Google search to check out cool costumes that can be attached to a wheelchair
- Go to a mall that has indoor trick or treat events, even if it is just to people watch
- Have your child give out candy if they can't go door to door

If you are able to go out trick-or-treating:

- During the day, practice with neighbours and friends who will help your child feel comfortable
- Start a little early so that it is not too dark or too crowded
- Have a sibling or friend come along
- Provide support, but encourage your child to participate as independently as possible
- Record "trick or treat" and "thank you" on a communication switch
- Practice saying or signing "please" and "thank you"
- Have a super fun night!

A Resource from *CanChild's* Participation Knowledge Hub

<https://www.canchild.ca/en/research-in-practice/participation-knowledge-hub>