

AUTISM ACADEMY

for Education & Development



AUTISM NEWS

October 2022 Edition

HALLOWEEN FUN IS POSSIBLE FOR EVERYONE!

Halloween is coming up fast and many families look forward to all of the events, costumes, and treats that this season includes. When you have a child with autism, however, these same things that can be fun also bring stresses and, possibly, meltdowns. For your families, the changes in schedule and overload of sugar can leave you dreading rather than enjoying the season. Parents and children want to be a part of the fun but also know that structure, routines, and sensory needs cannot be ignored. It's a balancing act for sure!

Parents and researchers have been working together to find ways to make Halloween as enjoyable as possible, so check out these helpful hints:

Plan Ahead

- Keep routines as normal as possible. Bedtime, mealtime, and morning routines are especially important for children with autism so try to schedule your events to accommodate for the "must-do" routines.
- Use a social story. Social stories help children prepare for new or difficult things. They teach your child what to expect and how to behave before they arrive. You can also use social stories to teach your child what to say and how to show appreciation for the many treats they will receive.
- Looking for a social story? Autism Little Learners has created a free social story that you can download here. [Click here to view the free social story!](#)
- Think about an alternate form of communication. While it can be convenient to try to speak for your child or ask other children to do it, many autistic individuals prefer to communicate for themselves. If they use an AAC device, program in the phrase "trick or treat!" and be sure your child knows how to use it to say "thank you". Don't have an AAC device? Make a sign that your child can hold up with the phrases you want them to use. Even verbal children may like having a sign in case they get nervous and forget what to say.
- Need a sign? You can download one of ours here: [Click here to download the trick-or-treat sign.](#)

Bring Reinforcements

- Connect with friends and family to trick or treat together. Often children are more confident when surrounded by peers that understand and know them. Siblings, cousins, friends from church, or neighbors are a great place to start. Not sure who to connect with? Reach out to other parents from your child's class or connect with your campus P3 group.
- Choose to trick or treat at familiar places. You don't need to visit every house on the block. Stop at homes of people you know or with decorations that are more sensory friendly.
- Parents need support too! It can be incredibly challenging to supervise children in crowded environments, especially if you have other children to watch too. Bringing along another adult can be a real lifesaver and help you take time to enjoy these special moments too.



Looking for more information?

<https://azparenting.com/making-halloween-a-treat-for-all-kids/>

<https://www.metroparent.com/parenting/special-needs/trick-or-treat-with-blue-buckets-on-halloween/>

<https://www.parentingspecialneeds.org/article/children-sensory-participate-halloween/>



Take Time To Enjoy

- Bring a sensory tool kit. Halloween events often include scary costumes, characters jumping out at you, strobe lights, and scary music. Having tools on hand can help your child have more fun without being overwhelmed. Tool kits should include the sensory items your child uses like headphones, sunglasses, weighted items, fidgets, or a favorite stuffed toy to hold.
- Consider alternatives to traditional trick or treating. If your child can't eat candy or doesn't enjoy a long night of walking around from house to house, find other events to attend. Churches, schools, and city celebrations may be more fun and provide a more engaging experience for some children.
- Know when to call it a night. If the evening is not fun anymore, go home or take a break somewhere quiet. You may find the entire experience more fun if leave before your child is overwhelmed or overtired.
- There can be a lot of pressure to attend every event. Schools, neighborhoods, churches, and towns all love to host some sort of party. Choose only the events that fit your schedule and won't be too overwhelming for your child. Try decorating pumpkins, making slime, or watching favorite Halloween movies instead. For some families, these alternatives make for more enjoyment and lots of happy memories.

Craft / Snack Ideas

Fun Ideas To Try At Home!

1. Rubber Glove Candy Goodie Bag



2. Easy Tissue Paper Pumpkin Goodie Bags



5. Marshmallow Ghost Cupcakes



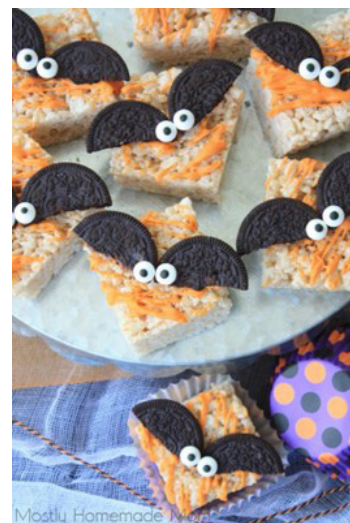
6. Witch Cauldron Brownie Bites



3. Paper Tissue Ghost Lollipops



4. Spooky Bat Halloween Rice Krispies Treats



7. Rice Krispie Pumpkin Treats



8. Halloween Mummy Treats



Autism News

October 2022 Edition



Parent Partnership Program

Need more information? You can email P3 for your campus. We would love to see you there!

Tucson - p3tucson@aaed.org

West Valley - p3westvalleyaaed@gmail.com

Gilbert - p3.gilbertcampus@gmail.com

Tempe - p3tempe@aaed.org

October Trivia

Trivia Time!

A small gift will be sent to the first 10 families to send the correct answer to autismnews@aaed.org.

October Question: Many people with autism use a “talker” or AAC device to help them communicate. What kind of therapist can help them learn to use these devices?

Thank you to everyone who responded to the September trivia question. Congratulations to the Healey, Cantrell, Elwood, Strauss, Erickson, Stempkowski, Kaplan-McWilliams, Herr, and Manubag-Casillas families!

September Answer: There are 4 Building Blocks



Upcoming Events - Valley & Online

October 28, 1pm-3:30pm - Gilbert Campus Trick or Treating

October 29, 5pm-7pm @ Peoria - West Valley Campuses Trunk or Treating

October 29, 6pm-8pm - Tempe Campus Halloween Dance

November 4, 1:30pm-3:30pm - Glendale Campus Transition Fair

Upcoming Events - Tucson

October 28, 4pm-6pm - Tucson Campus Trunk or Treat Event

Upcoming Events - Off Campus

October 22 - Tucson AAED Car Show Benefit

October 23 - Yes Day For Autism!

