

# OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Community snapshots from community members



photo by Gloria Campuzano

An area spider strikes a Halloween pose.



photo by Marian Dempsey

Autumn blooms of Datura, or Angel's Trumpet, festoon the Dempsey household.



photo by Mark Mootz

A beautiful October afternoon on the coast near Florence.



photo by Kathleen Hoffman

Isabel and Griffin Thompson on a trip to Sunriver.



courtesy photo

Mandy Giarrusso and Katie Solesbee go tailgating.



## Safety first on Halloween

For kids, few holidays are more anticipated than Halloween. The chance to dress up in costume and patrol the neighborhood with friends while collecting treats is the highlight of many a child's autumn.

For parents, anticipation is replaced by anxiety. While kids are out trick-or-treating, parents may be home or at work hoping their kids are safe and sound. Because Halloween is so popular among kids, it's hard for parents to forbid trick-or-treating. But parents should instruct kids on the following tips to ensure this Halloween is as safe as it is fun.

- Strangers' homes are off limits. Make sure kids know they should never enter the home of a stranger, no matter how friendly or welcoming that stranger may seem.
- There's no going it alone. Kids should not be permitted to go out alone. When trick-or-treating, kids should always be accompanied not only by their friends, but there must be at least one adult chaperone present at all times. Parents should get together several weeks before Halloween to determine who will chaperone, where kids will be trick-or-treating and during what hours.
- Stay close to home. Kids should stay in their own neighborhood and only visit homes of neighbors they know. Advise kids to steer clear of homes whose doors are hidden from street view. Chaperones should accompany kids to the front door if visibility from the street is poor.

- Choose safe costumes. Kids should wear costumes made of light colored material. If a child insists on a favorite costume that uses largely dark material, attach reflective tape to the costume so your favorite reveler is easily visible to motorists during twilight and nighttime hours when it's not always easy for drivers to see.
- No toy guns. Toy guns are just asking for trouble, as many of today's replicas are easily confused with the real thing. Play it safe and choose costumes that aren't accessorized with toy guns.
- Bring a flashlight along. Night falls quickly in late October, so kids and chaperones alike should carry a flashlight to improve their visibility and make them more visible to passing motorists.
- Stick to the sidewalks. Trick-or-treaters should stick to the sidewalks and always cross the street at corners. Don't walk in the street, and never walk between parked cars when crossing the street, as it's especially difficult for motorists to anticipate pedestrians walking or running from behind parked cars into the street.
- Be wary of masks. Many masks restrict a child's vision, so look for one that provides sufficient visibility. If a child's favorite mask is low on visibility, make children agree to remove their mask when crossing the street.

*Parents understandably worry when kids go trick-or-treating. But a few simple safety lessons shared with children can ensure everyone gets home safe.*

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