

Six Smart Ways That Parents Can Make Halloween Safer for Young Children

Children love the costumes, treats and friendly frights of Halloween parties and going door to door. These can be safe and fun activities for all of us, even younger children. But the City of Olean Fire Department wants parents to know that flames can quickly ruin Halloween festivities.

You can keep your child safe from fire and burn injuries by following these six tips:

1. Children are naturally drawn to glowing jack-o'-lanterns and other flickering lights. Instead of flames, use battery-powered candles or flashlights to decorate. Lit candle flames can burn children. If children come too close to the flame, their clothing can catch on fire. Battery-powered candles are the safer choice.
2. Make sure that all decorations are kept away from flames and other types of heat.
3. Keep all matches and lighters locked up. They should be in a high place out of your child's reach. Teach young children that they must not touch or play with these tools, ever. If they find matches or lighters, they should tell an adult where they are.
4. Choose a costume with fire safety in mind. Fabric can catch fire if children walk close to flames. Avoid loose fabric and features that dangle or drag behind the child. Keep costume sleeves tight. Look for a fabric label that reads "flame-resistant" or "flame-retardant." Keep a close eye on your child. Even flame-resistant fabric can burn.
5. Never let children play with or carry lit candles. Give each child a flashlight to carry while trick-or-treating. Check porches for lit candles, torches and other flames before letting children approach the door.
6. The last tip is the most important: Young children need adult supervision at all times. Stay alert. Watch children closely at parties and as they go door to door.