



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 25, 2021

Contact: mediainquiry@acs.nyc.gov

AHEAD OF HALLOWEEN, ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES & AMERICAN RED CROSS OFFER IMPORTANT TIPS TO HELP KEEP TRICK-OR-TREATERS SAFE

Nationally, Children Are More Than 2X as Likely to Be Hit By a Car & Killed On Halloween Than Any Other Day of the Year; ACS, Red Cross Urge Extra Precaution

NEW YORK, NY – With Halloween fast approaching, the NYC Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the American Red Cross in Greater New York today shared important tips to help keep trick-or-treaters in New York City safe, including tips on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

According to the National Safety Council, across the country, children are more than twice as likely to be hit by a car and killed on Halloween than on any other day of the year. Ahead of Halloween, ACS and the American Red Cross urge parents to make sure trick-or-treaters can see and be seen, ensure children are never trick-or-treating alone, ensure children walk only on the sidewalk, never go inside someone's home and more. Additionally, to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, ACS and the American Red Cross are encouraging families to trick or treat outdoors and even step back 6 feet after ringing the doorbell. Masks that are sold as part of Halloween costumes are ineffective at stopping COVID-19 transmission; children should wear a face mask over any costume mask. Do not wear a face mask under a costume mask, as it may make it hard to breathe.

"This Halloween, we want children throughout the City to have fun but also be safe," **said Commissioner David A. Hansell**. "From choosing the right costume and wearing the right face covering, to planning a trick-or-treat route in advance, packing a flashlight, and more, there's lots of ways to ensure children stay safe this Halloween, including from COVID-19. We are grateful and proud to partner with the American Red Cross on this important safety initiative."

"Being safe on Halloween can still mean a spooky good time for all. Whether you're handing out goodies or going door-to-door, with just a few simple considerations you can make sure your family and those around you are safe and sound. We are proud to team up with ACS to help keep our kids out of harm's way while they enjoy the festivities," **said Mary J. Barneby, CEO, American Red Cross in Greater New York**.

Whether you are trick-or-treating door-to-door, or simply driving through the neighborhood, New Yorkers should follow these Halloween Safety Tips:

Make sure trick-or-treaters can see and be seen.

- Give children a flashlight to light their way.
- Have everyone wear light-colored clothing. Add reflective tape to costumes and trick-or-treat bags so kids are easier to see in the dark.

- Use flame-resistant costumes.

Children should never trick or treat alone.

- Plan the trick-or-treat route in advance.
- A parent or responsible adult should accompany young children door-to-door in neighborhoods.

Walk only on the sidewalks, not in the street.

- Walk, don't run.
- Look both ways before crossing the street, and cross only at the corner.
- Don't cross between parked cars.
- Never walk through alleys or cut across yards. Only cross the street in designated crosswalks.
- Adults should use extra caution if driving. Trick-or-treaters are excited and may forget to look both ways before crossing.

Accept treats at the door – never go inside.

- It's not only vampires and monsters children have to look out for. Be cautious around animals, especially dogs.

Make sure a grown-up checks the goodies before eating.

- Make sure to remove loose candy, open packages and choking hazards.
- Discard any items with brand names that you are not familiar with.

Leave the pumpkin carving to adults.

- Small children should never carve pumpkins. Instead, let them draw a face with markers.
- Use a flashlight or glowstick to light the pumpkin instead of a candle.

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

- Both adults and children should stay home if they are feeling sick.
- Make a mask part of your costume. Masks that are sold as part of Halloween costumes have holes that make them ineffective at stopping COVID-19 transmission. If you are not fully vaccinated, wear a face mask over any costume mask. Do not wear a face mask under your costume mask, as it may make it hard to breathe.
- Plan outdoor activities/trick or treat outdoors rather than inside apartment buildings; and avoid indoor events where the risk of virus transmission is higher.
- Step back 6 feet after knocking on the door or ringing the doorbell.
- Bring hand sanitizer with you while trick-or-treating and use it after touching objects or other people. Wash your hands when you get home.
- Do not allow people to put their hands in a bag or bowl that you are holding. If you are not fully vaccinated, consider leaving a bowl outside your door or going outside to hand out treats.
- For additional COVID-19 Halloween Safety Tips, please see the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's website:
<https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/covid/covid-19-halloween.pdf>

###