



Multiple District “A” Accessibility Committee Making Halloween Inclusive and Accessible for All Children

Creating an inclusive and Accessible Halloween Experience:

Halloween should be a fun and memorable occasion for every child. In North America, over one in ten school-age children have a disability. Many of these children face unique challenges during Halloween. Loud sounds, flashing lights, crowded spaces, and unfamiliar costumes can be overwhelming for those with sensory or cognitive needs. Furthermore, uneven sidewalks and steps may block access for children using wheelchairs, and children with communication differences might require extra support to participate in trick-or-treating. With thoughtful planning and simple accommodations, you can help make Halloween accessible and enjoyable for all children.



Welcoming and Accessible Candy Stations:

Transform your home into a safe and inviting stop by eliminating barriers and demonstrating inclusivity. Set up your candy station on a driveway or sidewalk rather than on front porch steps and ensure that paths are clear of clutter and obstacles. Make sure pathways are well lit and wide enough for wheelchairs or strollers. If space is limited, consider using your car for a “Trunk or Treat” setup to create an open area for children to access treats comfortably.



Barrier-Free set up:

Remove any steps, curbs, or steep walkways in front of your home to facilitate easy access. Place treats on a table at a reachable height, such as at the end of your driveway, so children in wheelchairs or those with walking aids can participate independently. If you have a ramp, ensure it is clear of obstructions and is easily identifiable for those who need it.

Sensory-Friendly Decorations:

Be mindful of decorations that may be overwhelming for some children. Avoid strobe lights, fog machines, loud sounds, or sudden noises that could trigger sensory overload. Keep decorations at a moderate volume and brightness, and if you use music, play it softly. Remove pets or other potential scares from the entry area to maintain a calm environment.

Offering Non-Food Treats:

Recognize that not every child can eat candy. Provide a separate bowl of non-edible goodies, such as stickers, glow sticks, bubbles, pencils, toys, or other creative alternatives. Items like small fidget toys or colourable activities can be exciting options for children with food allergies, sensitivities, or diabetes, ensuring everyone can share in the fun.





Displaying Welcome Signage:

Use visual cues to signal your home’s accessibility and inclusivity. Display a Treat Accessibility Sign, often featuring a wheelchair symbol, to let families know you support inclusive trick-or-treating. These signs are available at Pet Valu stores. Place a teal pumpkin or printed teal sign on your porch to indicate the availability of allergy-friendly and sensory-friendly treats. A blue pumpkin signifies an “autism-friendly” home, while a purple pumpkin is used for epilepsy awareness. These signs help caregivers plan their route and ensure children’s needs are met.



Showing Patience and Kindness:

Every child is unique. Speak calmly and describe the treat you are offering, which helps children who may not be able to see well. Wait patiently while the child or their parent communicates; some kids may hand you a “Trick or Treat” card or use sign language. A smile and understanding attitude help create a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone.

Becoming an Accessibility Hero:

By taking these steps, you can be an “Accessibility Hero” on Halloween. Small gestures, such as moving a chair, adjusting a few feet of space, or lighting a lamp, can make a significant difference for a child who might otherwise be unable to participate in the festivities.

