



Trick or Treat Guidelines for Exceptional Education Students and Their Families

1. Plan Ahead

- **Choose the Right Time:** Opt for a time when it's less crowded, usually earlier in the evening.
- **Know Your Route:** Select a familiar neighborhood with accessible houses.

2. Communicate Expectations and Communication Support

- **Discuss the Process:** Talk about what trick-or-treating involves, including how to approach houses and what to say.
- **Role Play:** Practice the steps to build confidence.
- **Support:** Provide support with managing community expectations - e.g. all kiddos may not be able to readily verbalize, "trick or treat". It may be helpful to walk with them when approaching a home, or pair them up with a buddy for walking up to the front door, which also supports safety. Potentially consider utilizing communication/picture cards (see item #6) to help with managing community expectations.

3. Safety First

- **Wear Identifiable Gear:** Use bright costumes or reflective gear for visibility.
- **Buddy System:** Pair up with a buddy or an adult to ensure safety.

4. Choose Appropriate Costumes

- **Comfortable Attire:** Make sure costumes are comfortable and easy to remove if needed.
- **Sensory Considerations:** Be mindful of fabrics, textures, and any elements that might be overwhelming.

5. Be Mindful of Treats

- **Check for Allergies:** Know which treats are safe for your child and have alternatives ready.
- **Limit Candy Intake:** Set boundaries on how much candy can be consumed.

6. Use Visual Aids

- **Picture Cards:** Create cards to help communicate needs or preferences (e.g., “Trick or Treat”; “no nuts”; “thank you”).
([Sample 1](#), [Sample 2](#), [Sample 3](#))
- **Social Stories:** Utilize stories to illustrate the trick-or-treating process.
([Sample 1](#), [Sample 2](#), [Sample 3](#), [Sample 4](#))

7. Be Prepared for Sensory Overload

- **Ear Protection:** Consider noise-canceling headphones if your child is sensitive to sounds.
- **Quiet Breaks:** Plan to take breaks in quieter areas if your child needs a moment away from the hustle.

8. Emphasize Kindness and Gratitude

- **Teach Politeness:** Remind your child to say “thank you” and show appreciation.
- **Share the Experience:** Encourage sharing treats with family or friends to promote a sense of community.

9. Know When to Call It a Night

- **Read the Signs:** Be attentive to your child’s comfort level. It’s okay to end the outing early if they’re feeling overwhelmed.

10. Create a Positive Experience

- **Focus on Fun:** Emphasize the joy of dressing up and spending time together, regardless of the amount of candy collected.

With these guidelines, you can help ensure that trick-or-treating is a fun and positive experience for your child.

