DOH and FDLE Encourage Floridians to Stay Safe During Halloween

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Tallahassee, Fla.— The Florida Department of Health and Florida Department of Law Enforcement have partnered to share tips that encourage Floridians to stay safe and healthy while enjoying Halloween

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Candy and Treat Safety

Always keep an eye on what your child has in his or her mouth while trick-or-treating.

- **Eat only factory-wrapped treats**, and never eat anything homemade from strangers.
- **Examine all candy** for choking hazards and tampering. Illicit drug producers may target children with candy-colored pills, so parents should thoroughly check Halloween candy for unwrapped items and suspicious packaging.
- **Stay vigilant with products** containing THC, CBD, or other cannabis-related products that may resemble gummies or chocolate. While some of these products can be legally purchased by adults and should be properly labeled, they could be mistakenly consumed by children if not secured properly.
- **Remember: If in doubt, throw it out!**

Costume Safety

- **Do not use decorative contact lenses without an eye examination and a prescription from an eye care professional.** While the packaging on decorative lenses will often make claims such as *"one size fits all,"* or *"no need to see an eye specialist,"* obtaining decorative contact lenses without a prescription is both dangerous and illegal. Using these lenses can

cause pain, inflammation, serious eye disorders, and infections, which may lead to permanent vision loss.

- **Plan costumes that are bright and reflective**. Consider adding reflective tape or striping to costumes and trick-or-treat bags for greater visibility.
- **Make sure that shoes fit well** and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement, or contact with a heating source.
- **Avoid any sharp or long swords, canes, or sticks as a costume accessory**. Your child can easily be hurt by these accessories if he or she stumbles or trips.

Neighborhood Safety

- **Report suspicious activity** to local law enforcement.
- **Trick-or-treat in groups**, if possible, or attend public, organized events.
- **Never allow small children to visit a door without a trusted adult**, and teach children to never approach stranger's vehicles.
- **Children under the age of 12 should not be alone at night** without adult supervision. If kids are mature enough to be out without supervision, they should stick to well-lit and familiar areas.
- **Only approach well-lit homes** where porch or exterior lights are on.
- **Watch for vehicles.** Have kids carry glow sticks or flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
- **Avoid shortcuts** through back yards, alleys, or parks.

Trick-or-Treat Home Safety

If you plan to stay home this year and hand out treats to neighborhood children:

- **Remove tripping hazards to keep your home safe for trick-or-treaters**. Keep the porch and front yard clear of anything a child could trip over such as garden hoses, toys, bikes, and lawn decorations.
- **Check outdoor lights**, and replace any lightbulbs that are no longer working.
- **Sweep wet leaves from sidewalks and steps** to prevent anyone from slipping and falling.
- **Keep pets restrained**, so they do not jump on or bite a trick-or-treater.

Alternative Plans

For those not trick-or-treating, there are still plenty of activities to enjoy the holiday:

- **Carve or decorate pumpkins with family members and display them.** Children can draw a face with markers, and adults can do the carving. Consider using a flashlight or glow stick instead of a candle to light your pumpkin. If you do use a candle, a votive candle is safest. Do not place candlelit pumpkins on a porch or any path where visitors may pass close by.
- **Create a Halloween scavenger hunt** where children are given lists of Halloween-themed things to look for while going from house to house admiring Halloween decorations.

About the Florida Department of Health

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