



Too Cute to Spook: Halloween Safety Tips for Autism Families

Trick-or-Treating is one of the best parts of Halloween! For children with autism, it may also feel overwhelming, unpredictable, or even scary. To make Trick-or-Treating safe and enjoyable for all, here are some T.R.E.A.T.S. for parents.

- T** **Teach Your Child:** Use social stories to teach your child about Halloween, trick-or-treating, and to always stay with a trusted adult.
- R** **Rehearse:** Ahead of time, help your child practice by showing them the route they will go in the neighborhood or other areas. We recommend limiting the amount of houses to visit.
- E** **Educate Others:** Educate trusted neighbors about your child, especially if they are nonspeaking, prone to wandering off, or may impulsively run. You can also use cutout cards for nonspeaking children available on our website.
- A** **Adapt to Your Child's Wants/Needs:** If your child shows signs of not wanting to participate in Halloween or wishes to return home after one or two houses, that's okay. Be ready to adapt to their comfort!
- T** **Take Tools:** We all get a little spooked sometimes. If your child has sensory sensitivities, you can take ear-defenders, sensory toys, and other items to help keep them calm.
- S** **Safety First:** Before leaving, be sure to snap a picture of your child and include identification (wearable preferred). Stay vigilant! Keep an eye on your child at all times and use unique light-up items like glow sticks or bracelets to help spot them more easily. For wearable GPS devices, visit [AngelSense.com](https://www.angelsense.com), or look at Apple airtags as a temporary solution.

Carefree & Scare-free

Halloween is supposed to be fun and enjoyable. If your little one would prefer to stay home, that's okay! Traditions don't look the same for everyone. It's important to stay flexible, understanding, and most of all, safe! For tips on wandering/elopement prevention, visit nationalautism.org.



Use these cute cutouts
at nationalautism.org
or create your own!

