

Laneview School Healthy Halloween October 2015

In an effort to stay in accordance with our Board Policy on Nutrition and Health, we are encouraging our students to enjoy a Healthy Halloween. What may be the most frightening to you at Halloween is not ghosts or goblins but the thought of what all that candy can do to your kids' health and teeth. Here are some ideas for healthy treats, and recommendations for ones to avoid. Steer clear of any snacks or toys — like small plastic objects — that could pose choking hazards to very young children.

Try passing out some of these healthier snacks to trick-or-treaters:

(Keep portions kid-sized! One or two small treats per child is reasonable.)

- Small individual bags of pretzels, microwave popcorn, box of raisins, granola bars, goldfish packages
- Individual bags of roasted pumpkin seeds
- 100% fruit leathers made from real fruit or sugar-free candy
- 100% Juice in a Box

Or surprise your trick-or-treaters with a cauldron full of unique treats:

(Small toys make unexpected treats that last longer than the sweets.)

- Decorated pencils/erasers, mini-pens, crayons, or markers
- Stickers, magnets, fake tattoos, yo-yos, whistles, finger puppets, Tiny Play-Doh or bubble containers
- Halloween party favors like plastic spider rings or rubber spiders/worms

Try to avoid or limit these unhealthy treats:

- Sticky treats like gummy candies, jelly beans, and caramels are bad for dental health.
- Full-sized candy bars. Some chocolate bars contain high amounts of saturated fat.

Having a big pile of candy to nibble at for several days may be fun but it adds extra sugar, calories and unhealthy fats to your kids' diet. Once your kids are back from their neighborhood prowl, remember that one of the healthiest ways to deal with the candy that comes home is to manage its consumption. To avoid arguments when the temptation of candy is staring them in the face, set up the rules with the kids first, before they head out the door to trick-or-treat. Some good tricks that seem to help:

- Let kids know ahead of time the limits and reasons for those limits.
- Send them out with tummies full of a warm and healthy dinner and have them bring a healthy snack to eat while trick-or-treating so they don't come home starved or, worse, eating candy along the way.
- Let your children enjoy some of their Halloween candy in moderation when they have finished trick-or-treating -- after you have inspected the treats for safety. Toss out the most brightly colored candy!
- Store candy out of sight, such as in a kitchen cupboard that only you can reach. Out of sight is out of mind, and you can control how many treats your kids get to eat over the next few days.
- Limit candy to one a day at an agreed-upon time, such as with a glass of milk as an after-school treat, or for dessert after dinner.
- Consider buying back some or all of the remaining Halloween candy. This acknowledges that the candy belongs to the child and provides a treat in the form of a little spending money.
- Consider the “barter” system. Have better snack options, small gift cards, and/or “privilege” coupons on hand with candy values attached that they can trade some or all of their loot for.
- Be a role model by eating Halloween candy in moderation yourself.
- Encourage your child to be mindful of the amount of candy and snacks eaten — and to stop before feeling full or sick.
- Donate candy

And remember that Halloween, like other holidays, is a single day on the calendar. If your family eats sensibly during the rest of the year, it will have a more lasting impact than a few days of overindulgence.