PROPER COSTUMES: SAFETY IN DISGUISE

• Choose brightly colored costumes or add reflective tape to increase visibility.

• Ditch the masks. They make it harder to cross streets safely. Instead, opt for face paint.

• Choose flame resistant costumes. If buying a costume, check for a “flame resistant” notification on the label.

• Glow sticks or flashlights are another way to increase the visibility of your children.

• Avoid pointy swords and sticks. Instead use cardboard and tape to make bendable props and accessories.

REFERENCES:

1. National Retail Foundation, “The (Not so) Spooky Stats for Halloween 2013”
2. U.S. Census Bureau, “Population Estimates”
3. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, “Pedestrian fatalities in motor vehicle crashes occurring between the hours of 4:00 pm and 10:00 pm by crash year, hour, age, and Halloween time period.”
4. Food and Drug Administration, “Halloween Food Safety Tips for Parents”
6. Consumer Reports, “Trick or treat! Tips for Halloween safety: More kids get hit by cars on Halloween than any other night”
8. Miami-Dade Police Department, “Halloween Safety Tips”
9. Joint Base Charleston, “Halloween safety information for parents”

Have a safe Halloween from your friends at Protect America!
Every year, over 150 million Americans participate in Halloween festivities. Of these, 41 million children age 5 to 14 will go trick-or-treating.

However, the quest for candy isn’t all fun and games. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, more than twice as many children are injured in pedestrian accidents on Halloween than other days throughout the year.

In addition to learning about pedestrian safety, Halloween is a great chance to talk to your children about:

- Food safety,
- Fire safety, and
- Situational awareness

**CONTROL THE CANDY**

Feed your children a light meal or snack before going trick-or-treating. This will discourage them from snacking on their bounty. Urge your children to wait until they get home to eat their candy. Inspect their candy when they get home.

**FLAME OFF**

Avoid using Halloween decorations with real flames. Instead, use battery-operated lights to illuminate your jack-o-lanterns. If you must use actual candles, never leave them unattended and keep them away from curtains.

**WALK THE WALK**

Always accompany your children when trick-or-treating. Walk, don’t run, from house to house. Only cross streets at crosswalks. Teach your children to look both ways before crossing the street.

**HOUSE RULES**

Go with your children to the door of every home you visit. Never let your children enter a stranger’s home without your permission. Only approach homes with lit porch lights or ones that clearly are inviting trick-or-treaters.

**CONSIDER YOUR ALTERNATIVES**

If you’re at all concerned about your children’s safety during Halloween, consider going to a party at a friend’s home or attending a well-planned, local event. Many schools, malls, or theme parks offer trick-or-treating events.