



ALL ABOUT SPEECH & LANGUAGE

Speech & Occupational THERAPY

All About Speech & Language Tips for Trick Or Treating On Halloween

Our entire team at AASL wishes everyone as fun, safe, and memorable Halloween! Please inquire with your respective therapist (s) if we can be of any assistance in helping with Trick or Treating preparations!

- ◆ **Work together to determine the best costume idea for your child:** Let your child be an active participant in selecting who/what they want to be for Halloween, and, parents make smart costume choices around materials the costume is made of (i.e. avoid itchy/scratchy costumes and try and find costumes that are of preferred textures, avoid masks or anything that could be potentially irritating to the head/face). Our OT's recommend using familiar clothes (if possible) that your child already has to put a costume together, and is used to seeing, but just adding a little pizzazz with the use of simple add-ons or props.
- ◆ **Practice putting on and wearing the costume around the house/other places:** This will allow a child to work on desensitizing the costume, if necessary. This can also be done during occupational therapy sessions as well!
- ◆ **Make ample preparations:** Take a practice loop around the neighborhood, simulate the sound of the doorbell ringing and practicing the trick or treat process (i.e. this includes what to say, what to expect to hear back, etc.). It may even help to write a social story with your speech therapist around the Trick or Treating process or set "trick or treating rules." You can even show videos of other kids trick or treating to serve as a peer model. Also, if you know your neighbors, give them a heads up! You can give them some fun objects (stickers, tattoos, bubbles etc.) and/or fidgets to pass out when your child comes by. It is also recommended to have a swap bucket to trade out candy with some fun knick-knacks that are non-food oriented, or with snacks that are within restricted diets.
- ◆ **Work Toward and End Goal:** Use a token board as visual reinforcement for completing the Trick or Treating and working toward a desired, end result. Talk to your therapists about how to create one to use!
- ◆ **Plan ahead for dealing with a potential melt-down:** Bring and/or make a "calm down kit:" this would include comfort items, noise canceling headphones, preferred toys/drinks/snacks, etc.). Set a time limit ahead of time so the child is able to anticipate the end of the activity. If you have other kids, plan to have someone else with you so that if your child becomes too overwhelmed and the calm down kit is not enough, he/she is able to go home or take a break.
- ◆ **Bring a wagon or stroller:** Children often get tired from walking and could also serve as a nice calm down area if need be.
- ◆ **Did Someone Say Trunk or Treat? Check** out Trunk Or Treat options in your local neighborhoods, churches, and community events.
- ◆ **Be flexible:** If your child is just not up for trick or treating, he/she can participate in another way; he/she can pass out candy (i.e. again practice the routine in advance and/or make a social story), help put up decorations, make a Halloween craft, make goodies to pass out etc.

www.aaspeech.com | info@aaspeech.com | 813-616-4004

South Tampa Office: 324 N Dale Mabry Hwy., Ste. 201, Tampa, FL 33609

Riverview Office: 6152 Delancey Station Street, Ste. 205, Riverview, FL 33578