



for Parents

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A PROGRAM OF CONNECTICUT CHILDREN'S MEDICAL CENTER

Halloween Safety

For children, Halloween is a time of fun costumes, spooky games, and lots of treats. They aren't aware that Halloween is also a very dangerous time for kids. According to a 22-year study by the CDC, young pedestrians (5 to 14 year olds) are **four times** more likely to be killed on Halloween than on any other night of the year.

Children are more at risk for injury on Halloween because of five factors, related to their body or brain development, until about 12 years old.

1. Young children may not be able to cross the street as quickly, and drivers are not always able to see them, because of their smaller size.
2. Children are more likely to choose the shortest, rather than the safest, route across the street, sometimes running out mid-block or from between parked cars.
3. Children often disregard their peripheral vision and hearing, and lack impulse control.
4. Children do not understand the threats posed by traffic and can't anticipate drivers' decisions.
5. Children may engage in "magical thinking" believing they are immune from harm. For example, children may believe that the painted crosswalk protects them from getting hit by a car.

Because of these and other factors, everyone has a part in keeping kids safe on this night.

For motorists: at dusk and later in the evening, watch for kids in dark clothes; watch for kids on the roadways, curbs, medians, and darting out from between parked cars; and enter and exit driveways and alleys carefully.

For parents: Make sure an adult or older responsible youth supervises the outing for kids under 12 years of age; teach your children to use flashlights, stay on the sidewalk, and avoid crossing yards; restrict trick-or-treating to well-lit houses; and teach children to never enter a stranger's house, even if invited.

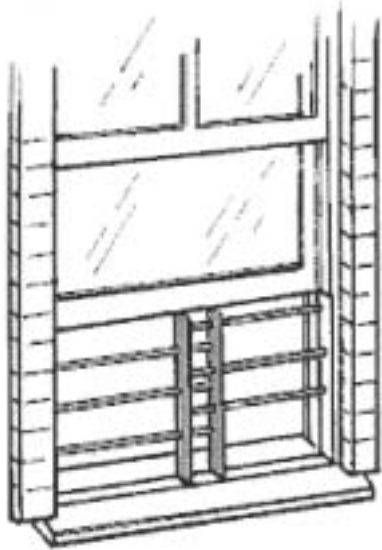
For costumes: Shoes should fit and be easy to walk in so that children won't trip; use face paint or make sure the costume eyeholes are wide enough so the child can see fully; and make sure costume props are flexible, not rigid or sharp.



Window Guard Prevention Program Update

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Since mid April, Connecticut SAFE KIDS has been working in conjunction with Hartford's Healthy Homes to educate parents on the dangers of open windows as well as to distribute and install window guards.

Made possible by a

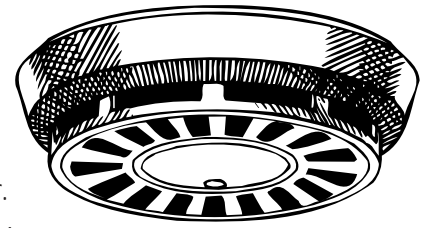
grant from the Allstate Foundation, CT SAFE KIDS was able to purchase over 400 window guards, display thirteen billboards on window safety throughout the Hartford area, and distribute educational materials to families throughout Connecticut.

This program was launched in response to the 4,700 children who visit an emergency department each year with injuries sustained after experiencing a fall from a window. Approximately 18 of these children will die from their injuries. Unfortunately, most of these injuries and deaths could have been prevented with the use of simple safety devices. Through the Window Fall Prevention Program, SAFE KIDS hopes to reduce these numbers by not only educating parents on the dangers of open windows, but by actually providing window guards to these families. These window guards are not only given to the family at no cost, they are also installed by trained outreach workers to insure both compliance and correct set up.

For more information on this program or, for Hartford residents, to find out if you may be eligible for free window guards and installation, please call (860) 545-9916. ■

Change the time, change your batteries

Daylight Saving Time will end on October 27th and at that time, we will set our clocks back one hour.



This is also the perfect time to replace the batteries in your smoke detector and check to make sure that all alarms are working.

Fire is the second leading cause of unintentional death in the home and severely affects children aged 14 and under. Each year, nearly 600 children die in residential fires, and an additional 136,000 children are injured.

There is both good news and bad news concerning smoke detectors. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), about 90 percent of U.S. households have smoke alarms installed. However, CPSC survey found that the smoke alarms in 20 percent of those households were not working, mostly because the battery was dead or missing.

If you have questions, please call Connecticut SAFE KIDS at 860-545-9988 or your local fire department. ■

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