



## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Project Harmony Provides Halloween Tips for All**

**Omaha, Neb.** - Halloween is one of the most exciting nights of the year for children. At the same time, Halloween presents a level of potential risk to children unlike any other night of the year. Halloween can indeed be scary, with increases in pedestrian injuries, burns, and falls. Many of the risks children face on Halloween can be avoided if parents discuss important safety precautions with their children. However, the responsibility of keeping kids safe does not fall solely on parents.

“Everyone is responsible for a child’s safety,” says Project Harmony Executive Director Gene Klein. “From parents and guardians to homeowners and motorists, everyone plays a part to ensure children come home safely this Halloween.”

Here are a few tips for Halloween safety that bear repeating.

### **Tips for Parents and Guardians:**

- Make sure your children dress safely.
- Keep costumes short to prevent trips, falls, and other bumps in the night.
- Use make-up instead of a mask, which can be hot, uncomfortable, and, more importantly, obstruct a child's vision - a dangerous thing when children are crossing streets and going up and down steps.
- Trick-or-treaters should always be in groups so they aren't tempting targets for would be perpetrators.
- Make sure older children trick-or-treat with friends. Map out a safe route together so you know where they'll be. Tell them to stop only at familiar homes where the outside lights are on.
- Make sure children know not to enter strange houses or strangers' cars.

- Parents, older siblings, or adult chaperones should always accompany small children while they are trick-or-treating and should pay attention to suspicious individuals who may intend to do children harm.
- Make sure older children have access to a phone in case they have a problem away from home.
- Instruct children never to enter a home or an apartment building unless accompanied by an adult family member or trusted guardian.
- Set a time for children to return home.

### **Tips for Homeowners:**

- Turn on all exterior lights to illuminate walkways, stairs, and porches.
- Ensure that extension power cords used to illuminate exterior decorations do not extend over any pedestrian walkway.
- Remove personal vehicles from the street. Park off-street in the driveway or garage where possible.
- Keep your pets indoors.

### **Attention Motorists!**

On Oct. 31, the Omaha Metro Area will be invaded with goblins and monsters and we ask all motorists to be alert. Reduce your speed and always be prepared to stop. You never know what a little Power Ranger or Super Hero might do. Use extra caution when approaching an intersection.

- Don't pass stopped vehicles. The driver might be dropping off children.
- Communicate to other drivers. Always use your turn signals and use your hazard lights if dropping off or picking up your own children.

### **ABOUT PROJECT HARMONY**

Project Harmony is a nonprofit, community-based organization that has served more than 32,000 children during the past 21 years by providing a child friendly environment in which specially-trained professionals work together to assess, investigate, and resolve child abuse cases. In one centralized location, Project Harmony co-houses with Omaha Police Department Child Victim/Sexual Assault Unit and Domestic Violence Unit, Nebraska Health & Human Services/Child Protection Service Initial Assessment and Child Abuse Hotline, Lutheran Family Services and Child Saving Institute. Project Harmony exists to protect and support children, collaborate with professionals and engage the community to end child abuse and neglect.

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