Mini Challenge

Hacking Halloween

Halloween should be fun—and safe—for every child. This month, explore ways to make your celebrations more inclusive for kids with food allergies, sensory sensitivities, or unique needs. Whether you're a parent, neighbor, teacher, or simply a fan of the holiday, small changes can make a big difference.

Review the following list and determine what changes you can make to create an inclusive Halloween experience for everyone. Try at least 5 of these Halloween hacks:

Offer Allergy-Friendly Treats

Stock non-food items (stickers, bubbles, glow-in-the-dark toys) or nut-free, gluten-free candies. Display a Teal Pumpkin to show you are allergy-aware.

Consider Sensory-Friendly Alternatives

Skip loud music or flashing lights in your décor. Set up a quiet trick-or-treat zone.

> Pro Tip: Be aware of individuals carrying a blue bucket which signifies they have autism. The blue bucket can promote a feeling of independence by providing a subtle, dignified way of alerting people that the child or young adult at their door may not be able to participate in all of the traditional aspects of trick or treating.

Inspect the Candy Haul

Before kids dig in, check for allergens, open wrappers, or candies that aren't age appropriate. Make it a fun ritual rather than a chore!

Glow for Safety

Wear glowsticks or use reflective tape on costumes and treat bags. Keep sidewalks well-lit for easier visibility.

Try the "Switch Witch" Tradition

Let kids trade excess candy for a small toy or book left behind by the "Switch Witch" overnight. This can be a fun way for children with allergies to still enjoy the holiday.

Attend a Local Trunk-or-Treat

Trunk-or-treat events offer a controlled, inclusive space for families–great for younger kids or those with autism who prefer lower-stimulation environments.

Donate Extra Candy

Join a candy drive to share excess sweets with shelters, military care packages, or dental donation programs.

Be a Mindful Neighbor

If you're handing out treats, greet kids kindly–without pushing costumes or conversation. Be respectful of kids who don't say "trick or treat" or avoid eye contact.

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