



Neighborhood action kit

It all started with one mom who told another mom, who told her husband, who told his friends, who told their neighbors that it was time to make a change. Join the Green Halloween revolution and be the change you envision.

Want to join the revolution? It's easy.

Green Halloween® is a **not-for-profit** community effort to make all holidays, starting with Halloween healthier for people and the planet. It will only succeed if individuals and families decide to take part and do something different starting this year with this holiday. Whether it's switching from conventional candy to honey-sticks, turning an annual Halloween party green, or spreading the word, everyone can play a role.

Read through the information here, then pick up the phone, walk next door or email everyone you know to get them on board.

And keep in mind these "good neighbor" principles:

- Small steps are fine. Don't expect everyone to embrace every suggestion. Offer two or three ideas at a time if people seem a bit skeptical. Let them choose one and congratulate them on taking *any* step.
- Approach everyone with a positive attitude. Keep it light. Avoid inundating people with statistics unless they ask for them.
- Offer to make changes as easy as possible for everyone. For instance, if neighbors usually drive kids around on Halloween, suggest walking and start everyone off at your house with a Halloween treat like some organic cider and cookies.
- If you're willing to be a collection point for unwanted candy that can be composted (once unwrapped), be sure to your the neighbors know in advance.
- Let neighbors know that you're open to suggestions.
- Remember to let the neighborhood know you are going green by making a Green Halloween door or window sign or purchasing one at our [online marketplace](#). If you'd like, you can print out [our logo](#) from www.GreenHalloween.org to share with friends and neighbors or simply point them to the site so they can do it themselves. (Suggest they print on the back of used paper and recycle or save for next year.)

Treats and Treasures

For starters, if you are planning on handing out candy this year, consider going conventional candy-free and think *treasures* in addition to or instead of *treats* :

- Honey sticks,
- 100% Fruit leather

- Polished rocks
- Stickers
- Soy or beeswax crayons
- Glass beads
- Seeds
- Play doh (store bought or homemade)

Some products can be purchased through our [marketplace](#), but dozens more ideas can be found on our ["treats and treasures page."](#) Be sure to check local stores that may carry these items (we have a partial listing [here](#).) Even big box stores like Costco offer creative alternatives to candy.

Hosting a neighborhood party? Whether buying food, décor, treats, treasures or prizes for your Green Halloween party, thinking green is just as much about what you don't buy as what you do buy. Reducing the amount of waste we generate by cutting down on excessive shopping is not only better for our planet (and easier on our wallets) but reducing the number of products we buy also teaches our children the art of simplicity as well the value of moderation.

When purchasing items for your Green Halloween, it may help to consider whether the items you're buying are of quality and can therefore be enjoyed past November 1st. If not, can the items be reused or recycled? In addition, look for products that meet one or more of the following green criteria:

Child Healthy

- Organic or pesticide-free
- Food items are made from healthy and whole ingredients and do not include hydrogenated oils, trans-fats, artificial colors or flavors. The items have limited or no salt, sugar or caffeine (except chocolate)
- Non-food items are made from safe materials and do not pose any suspected immediate or long-term health risks

Planet Healthy

- Made with Earth-friendly practices, such as by organic farming
- Preference given to locally grown or made goods (which alleviates environmental impact from shipping.) Get to know your local farmers and shop with them as often as possible.
- Non-food items are made from Earth friendly materials such as sustainably harvested wood or recycled plastic
- The item contains as little packaging as possible

People/Community Friendly

- The people making the items earn fair wages and work in safe conditions (ideally, imported goods are certified Fair Trade)

Let parents know:

It can be difficult to find products that meet all three criteria, so we suggest that parents consider one or more factors when shopping for Halloween. We also know that when enough consumers request items that meet these criteria, businesses will begin to step up to meet the demand. So be sure to encourage your neighbors to talk to your local store owners.

Top 3 reasons to go healthy and green this Halloween

1. Our Children

- This generation of kids has a life expectancy that is shorter than their parents.
- 1 in 3 children born today will get diabetes and 2 million youngsters suffer from high blood pressure.
- 1/3 of America's children overweight; 17% are considered obese.
- Since the 1970's, the number obese children has more than tripled.
- 57 percent of girls and 33 percent of boys attempt to control their weight with cigarettes, fasting, or skipping meals
- In 2003 the average trick-or-treater collected 5,435 calories worth of candy containing more than 3 cups of sugar.
- EPA considers that 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides and 30% of all insecticides found in non-organically grown foods are carcinogenic.
- Over 6,000 synthetic chemicals are used in the processed-food industry.
- A 2004 study with 1800 three year old children found that behavior measurably improved after a one week diet without preservatives and artificial colors and dramatically worsened on the weeks they were given preservatives and artificial colors.

2. Our Planet

- Organic farming conserves energy, protects the water supply and prevents soil erosion.
- Coco beans used for chocolate that are grown in full sun (as opposed to shade) are susceptible to disease and therefore require heavy doses of toxic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.

3. People

- According to UNICEF, coco-bean plantation owners are notorious for child slavery and paying low wages to farmers because of market deregulation.
- Organic farming protects the health of farm workers.

Fact: A 2003 Yale University study found that nearly half of 284 young trick-or-treaters picked a small toy over candy when given the choice.

Got a great group going green for Halloween? Please send photos, videos and stories about your adventure to Corey@GreenHalloween.org

And if you have neighbors who are joining you in greening Halloween, please collect their names and ask them if they'd like to receive news and updates and tips from www.GreenHalloween.org If so, sign them up below, then email Corey@GreenHalloween.org with your name and information along with the list.

Name, city, e-mail, notes

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Hundreds of ideas for greening Halloween can be found at:
www.GreenHalloween.org and www.CelebrateGreen.net