

Halloween is right around the corner and pretty soon our streets will be full of little goblins and witches! Can you believe it? Neither can I! This year has gone incredibly fast. But with the season change, comes all the little children. Well...most of the little children. You see, every year many adorable little pumpkins do not get to participate in the annual Trick or Treat due to food allergies.

Today, 1 in 13 children have a food allergy, that is two kids in every classroom (source). Some of these allergies are LIFE THREATENING. Halloween can be a very tricky time for these parents. Your child wants to trick or treat and be just like all the other kids but you, as the parent are terrified that they are going to get that candy bar with a peanut (or wheat, eggs, soy, tree nuts, milk, etc. etc...). Or worse, your kid gets to trick or treat but then they have to give all the "good stuff" away. Either way....your precious pumpkin loses. What if there is a better way? A way for ALL children to have a blast on this holiday?

Enter the Teal Pumpkin Project. The Teal Pumpkin Project was inspired by a local awareness activity run by the Food Allergy Community of East Tennessee (FACET) and launched as a national campaign by FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) in 2014. In two short years, the movement has grown and every day more and more people pledge to make Halloween as inclusive as possible for everyone.

WHAT IS THE TEAL PUMPKIN PROJECT?

In a nutshell, you pledge to offer non-food items to trick or treaters who visit your home. In order for others to know you are offering non-food treats, you place a teal pumpkin by your door (driveway, wherever decorations are as long as it's easy to see). Here are some fun Teal Pumpkin ideas that I found on Pinterest to give you inspiration!

tpstickerthumbAin't nobody got time for that Pinterest nonsense! I hear ya! It's SO easy to visit the FARE website where they have a huge selection of printable signs and posters to signify that you are participating in spreading food allergy awareness and that you offer safe goodies.

WHAT KIND OF NON-FOOD ITEMS?

Here is a handy list of non-food treats that kids so bonkers for. Many of these items are very inexpensive, too so you aren't going to be spending a fortune to participate.

- Glow sticks, bracelets, or necklaces
- Pencils, pens, crayons or markers
- Bubbles
- Halloween erasers or pencil toppers
- Mini Slinkies
- Whistles, kazoos, or noisemakers

Bouncy balls
Finger puppets or novelty toys
Coins
Spider rings
Vampire fangs
Mini notepads
Playing cards
Bookmarks
Stickers
Stencils

Ramona is a vibrant and close community. We look out for each other and with this new epidemic of food allergies, we need to be looking out for our kids, too. The Teal Pumpkin Project is a wonderful way to get involved and ensure the safety of our community kids. For more information and to get involved please visit The Teal Pumpkin Project website.

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