

## Trick or Treat – and Everything in Between

By Kinjal Dagli Shah

Along with costumes for their children, some Stouffville moms have come up with interesting alternatives to candy when trick or treaters come to their door at Halloween.

Ashley Denne has quite a long list of suggestions.

"I am a big fan of giving out sticker sheets, balloons, bouncy balls, yogurt tubs, cheese strings and bags of veggie straws or dried fruit. My husband also insists there must be beer for the parents. Sadly, all these options, except for sticker sheets and balloons, are more expensive than the bulk candy one buys from the department store."

Jennifer Babin-Miller, mother of 5-year-old Danica and 3-year-old Ethan, has given out toothbrushes in the past.

"They get so many sweets it's nice to put some other things in their loot. There are less expensive non-candy options too. You can buy paperback classic books for a dollar each but your budget would also depend on how many treaters you get at the door. I sometimes give out mini-bags of Goldfish; they are a favourite. I also keep a couple of cases of bottled water to give out, because the kids are usually running around and get thirsty."

Glow sticks, Organic Vitamin C Pops and Play-Doh are among the ideas catching on with parents who agree that there's too much candy for one night. But there are others who prefer the good old treats and believe the children deserve them.

"I support the candy idea," said Samantha Cee.

"I grew up in a household that only had

healthy and homemade food. My mom even packed milk for a drink in my lunch, so Halloween was the one time of year I got to splurge! My son is only seven months so I haven't yet experienced trick or treating with him, but maybe I'll understand the move to pencils, Play-Doh and toothbrushes in a few years. I actually find the switch a bit depressing."

Michelle Larade-Bullock shares Samantha's point of view.

"While the alternative options are great, I'm giving out chips and chocolate bars just like I do every year. My kids are much older and are in high school now so there's no more trick or treating for them, but I remember that they loved the candy best."

With parents at both ends of the spectrum, there are also those that choose the middle path.

"I give non-candy stuff to small toddlers but regular candy to the older ones who can eat it. I found that when mine were really small I ended up eating all the candy," said Sophie Cunha.

The last word goes to mother-of-two Erin Parkinson-Raymond. "I gave Play Doh one year and had many disappointed children at my door," she recalled. "They're looking for the goodies."

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Austin Denne all kitted out for last year's Halloween celebration.



Ethan and Danica with goodies from a recent campground trick or treat event.

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