



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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On a Night of Fun and Frights, Pedestrian Safety Should Be A Primary Focus

This Halloween – drivers, parents and children are urged to slow down for safety

Salt Lake County- Safe Kids Salt Lake County is reminding drivers and parents to prioritize safety this Halloween. Alarming statistics show child pedestrians are 4 times more likely to be killed on Halloween than any other evening of the year.

In preparation for the weekend, Safe Kids Salt Lake County and volunteers from Walk This Way, a program sponsor of FedEx, are providing reflective materials to Monroe Elementary, Valley Crest Elementary and at the West Valley Recreational Center. Items include trick-or-treat bags, zipper tags to attach to costumes and important safety information for children, parents and drivers.

Clocks turn back an hour on Halloween night this year, but kids will still be out while it is dark. It is important for drivers to slow down and watch out for trick-or-treaters, especially around crosswalks. Pedestrian safety is not only the responsibility of drivers but also of parents. Moms and Dads should emphasize pedestrian safety before trick-or-treating.

“Slowing down on neighborhood roads will not only make Halloween more enjoyable, but also save lives and prevent injuries,” said May Romo, Safe Kids Salt Lake County Coordinator. “Children 12 and younger should not be crossing streets at night without an adult. If older kids are mature enough to go trick-or-treating without adult supervision, parents should suggest traveling in a group with a predetermined route and good lighting.”

Halloween is an exciting holiday for children, but they can also be at risk.

- **Risk #1: Pedestrian-Car Collisions:** Child pedestrians are 4 times more likely to be killed on Halloween than any other evening of the year. (2)
- **Risk #2: Non-Intersection Crossings:** Half of pedestrian fatalities on Halloween occur at non-intersections. Darting out from parked cars and mid-block crossing suggest these behaviors may have contributed to deaths.(3)
- **Risk #3: Drunk Driving:** Drunk driving on Halloween has surpassed New Years drunk driving. In 2008 58% of all highway fatalities involving a driver or motorbike rider were alcohol related.(4)
- **Risk #4: Falls:** Falling is one of the leading causes of injury on Halloween night.
- **Risk #5: Burns and Fire Injuries:** Medical professionals cite an increase in eye and burn-related injuries on Halloween.

To ensure safe trick-or-treaters, Safe Kids recommends that children:

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- **Be mindful at intersections**
- **Walk on sidewalks or paths**
- **Slow down and stay alert**
- **Keep Costumes safe and creative**

FedEx reminds motorists to be extra careful this Halloween and recommends drivers:

- **Slow down** in residential neighborhoods and school zones. Remember that popular trick-or-treating hours are 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.
- **Be especially alert** and take extra time to look for kids at intersections, medians and curbs. Children are excited on Halloween and may move in unpredictable ways.
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys **slowly and carefully**.
- **Reduce any distractions** inside your car, such as talking on the phone or eating, so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings.

2) CDC Wonder Childhood Pedestrian Deaths During Halloween US, 1975-1996 mmwr 46(42);987-990(7/24/1997)

3) National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as quoted by the Independent-Mail, 10/27/2008

4) According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

While pedestrian safety is a main concern, parents and kids should be mindful of tampered candy as well. “While kids never want to wait to dive into their candy, it is best to check sweets for signs of tampering” said Romo. “Remind children to only eat treats in original and unopened wrappers.”

FedEx and Safe Kids Worldwide have been working together for 10 years to educate children, parents, teachers and motorists across the country about walking safely and preventing pedestrian-related child injury.

For more tips on, visit www.usa.safekids.org/wtw/halloween2009.html.

About Safe Kids Salt Lake County Coalition

Safe Kids Salt Lake County Coalition works to prevent unintentional childhood injury, the leading cause of death and disability to children ages 1 to 14. Safe Kids Salt Lake County Coalition is a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing unintentional injury. Safe Kids Salt Lake County Coalition was founded in 1997 and is led and supported by Salt Lake Valley Health Department.

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