

The write time to ditch the tradition

Phyllis Humby - October 2020

It cracks me up when I read about the parents who are fighting to save Hallowe'en. It's hard to believe that people are trying to salvage that old trick or treating tradition. It should have been ditched years ago. Has there ever been a crazier idea than dressing up a little kid in a costume with a mask that impairs their vision, and sending them out into the dark to collect food from strangers? Parents actually coax and bully their toddlers to walk up to a house they've never visited, and ask for candy. As I add my contribution to the plastic pumpkin with all the others, I wonder how many Pringles a two-year-old can eat.

Some of these trick or treaters can't even walk yet. It's true. Their costumes consist of a few pencilled whiskers and a black smudge on the tip of their nose. Their parents carry them from house to house. Mom or Dad holds out a bag at each door hoping for full size candy bars and a can of cola. Gimmeabreak. Just go home and open a beer. I'll order you a pizza.

And if that isn't goofy enough, people want their kids out there scavenging while the entire world is engulfed in...are you ready for it... a pandemic. A freaking pandemic! Yegottabekiddinme. I'm not afraid to use the four letter word here; we're talking about Covid – oops, that's five letters. Well, anyway, it's a virus that has us masking up, self-isolating, and quarantining, and parents are still fighting to have their toddlers and youngsters go out en masse to people's homes. For what? A juice box and a couple of suckers? Seriously?

Aside from that obvious reason – well, obvious to most of us – that Hallowe'en isn't a good idea anymore, is the fact that there are sick people out there who put pins and who knows what into the stuff they hand out. There's a wacko in every neighbourhood. Well, maybe not, but, still...

If you ask the kids what they like best about Hallowe'en, it comes down to costumes and candy. That's it. Not one child is going to say that they love being out in the dark walking up and down the street knocking on doors. That shouldn't come as a surprise.

If you want your kids to celebrate Hallowe'en, find a safe and fun way to do it. In ideal conditions, it would be a school party or a gathering of friends. The parents donate the goodies, orchestrate the games, the costume parade, the spooky music, and floating ghosts. And it's a fun-for-all!

In less than ideal conditions, Covid regulations might restrict those gatherings. The school party is off for this year. Forget about emptying out that double garage for food tables, and games; you won't be partying with princesses and super heroes in 2020. It is what it is. Be safe, not sorry. Plan a spooktacular home celebration for the family. You can have a howling good time with a spine-tingling movie and some creepy snacks. They'll line up for the skeleton cookies and bite-size eyeballs. Have the kids put together their own devilish disguises. Mom and Dad can dress up too. Light up social media with a parade of ingenious get-ups.

If you're that crazy about the occasion, be sure to decorate your porches and yards with ghosts, goblins, and other ghoulish apparitions. The whole family can help. String orange and black lights and play creepy music. But don't force these little kids onto the streets for Hallowe'en. That's scary!

