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## How to Have a Mouth-Monster-Free Halloween

*AAPD's Guide to a Fun and Tooth-Healthy Halloween*

**CHICAGO** (October 17, 2018) — Halloween is known for monsters, but not everyone is aware of the Mouth Monsters! The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD), the leading authority on children's oral health, wants to help all children avoid the Mouth Monsters this Halloween.

### Sweets: a Trick or a Treat

"Sweet treats impact teeth in different ways," says Dr. Joseph Castellano, president of the AAPD. "Some are better or worse for your children's smiles. Try to avoid chewy or sticky candies like caramels, gummies and sour candies."

Better treats for your child include milk chocolate, pretzels and crackers. The best choices for sweets are dark chocolate and sugar-free gum. Non-food alternatives are also great treats, such as temporary tattoos, stickers, toothbrushes, rubber balls, colored pencils or key chains.

### The Sky Is NOT the Limit

Set a limit as to how much candy your child can have after trick-or-treating. Screen your child's treats and let him keep the tooth-healthy options. For the rest of the candy, try these options:

- Participate in a candy buy-back program.
- Give it to the Halloween Fairy.
- Let your child upgrade her bag of candy to a toy.

## **Last Reminders & Tips**

Have your child brush her teeth before bed, and swish her mouth with water after eating Halloween sweets. You could also try hosting a Monster Bash instead of trick-or-treating, but be sure not to invite the Mouth Monsters! Encourage friends and family to dress up in costumes and play games while eating healthy treats. Kids will still have fun, and at the same time, avoid sugary treats.

With these tips, you can keep your Halloween fun-filled and scare-free, at least when it comes to the Mouth Monsters!

## **About the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry**

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry is the recognized authority on children's oral health. As advocates for children's oral health, the AAPD promotes evidence-based policies and clinical recommendations; educates and informs policymakers, parents and guardians, and other health care professionals; fosters research; and provides continuing professional education for pediatric dentists and general dentists who treat children. Founded in 1947, the AAPD is a not-for-profit professional membership association representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its 10,800 members provide primary care and comprehensive dental specialty treatments for infants, children, adolescents and individuals with special health care needs. For further information, visit the AAPD website at <http://www.aapd.org> or the AAPD's consumer website at <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org>.