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Blythedale Children's Hospital and Westchester SAFE KIDS Offer Tips for a Safe Halloween

VALHALLA, NY (October 2011) – Halloween is an exciting holiday for children, but they can be vulnerable to injury on this night. To ensure trick-or-treaters stay safe, Westchester Safe Kids recommends that children:

- Always trick- or- treat with an adult until age 10
- Only trick-or-treat in familiar areas that are well lit
- Cross streets at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks
- Look left, right, and left again when crossing; always walk, don't run, when crossing streets
- Make eye contact with drivers and watch for cars that are turning or backing up
- Walk on sidewalks or paths; if there are no sidewalks, walk facing traffic as far to the left as possible
- Never dart out into the street or cross in between parked cars
- Wear light-colored, flame-retardant, costumes decorated with retro-reflective tape or stickers
- Wear well-fitting, sturdy shoes to prevent trips and falls
- Carry a flashlight or glow stick to increase visibility to drivers
- Wear face paint and makeup; a mask can restrict a child's vision

Drivers also need to do their part to keep trick-or-treaters safe from harm. Westchester Safe Kids reminds motorists to be extra careful this Halloween and recommends that drivers:

- Be especially alert in residential neighborhoods
- Drive more slowly and anticipate heavy pedestrian traffic on and near the road
- Be sure to drive with your full headlights on so you can spot children from greater distances
- Take extra time to actively look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs
- Remember that costumes limit children's visibility and they may not be able to see your vehicle
- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully
- Remember that children are excited on this night and may move in unpredictable ways
- Remember that popular trick-or-treating hours are during the typical rush-hour period, between 5:30-9:30 p.m.
- Reduce any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and pedestrians

Blythedale Children's Hospital is the local coalition leader for the National Safe Kids campaign. For further information, please contact coordinator Sue Larkin at (914) 592-7555, ext. 71647.

About Blythedale Children's Hospital

As New York's only freestanding, specialty children's hospital, Blythedale Children's Hospital is dedicated to improving the health status and quality of life of children with complex medical illnesses and disabling conditions through superb multi-disciplinary patient care, teaching, research, and advocacy programs. Blythedale's board-certified physicians, nurses, clinical staff (social workers, respiratory therapists, clinical pharmacists, Child Life specialists, etc.) and New York State's largest hospital-based pediatric therapy department (PT, OT and Speech) work together to provide intensive and innovative multi-disciplinary clinical and therapeutic care to help children achieve their medical and rehabilitative goals for independent living, and return to their communities. Blythedale is also the only Hospital in New York State with its own on-site public school district, the Mount Pleasant-Blythedale Union Free School District. For more information about Blythedale Children's Hospital, visit www.blythedale.org

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