

Green Halloween[®] Blurbs, Articles, “Tweets” & More

* Ideas to inspire *your* readers, fans and followers *

Dear Green Halloween friends and partners,

Below, are many different options for blurbs, “tweets” and tips, for use online, in print materials or wherever they are best suited. (May be used in whole, or in part.) *Please let us know if you need photos.*

Included in this document:

- [Blurb without links](#)
- [Blurb with links](#)
- [10 Simple steps for making your Halloween eek-o-friendly \(short\)](#)
- [10 Steps to a Green Halloween \(long\)](#)
- [How you can help #1](#)
- [How you can help #2](#)
- [3 Tips for going green this Halloween](#)
- [25 Tips for going green this Halloween](#)
- [“Spooky facts”](#)
- [Article: Get ready for an “eek-o-Halloween”](#)
- [Sample “Tweets,” posts for Facebook and other social media](#)
- [Other helpful links \(for more information on GH\)](#)

Just a few guidelines:

1. If you use a portion of the article, include a link to www.GreenHalloween.org somewhere in the body or at the end.
2. If you use an entire article, include the following at the end: Lynn Colwell and Corey Colwell-Lipson are mother and daughter founders of Green Halloween[®] and co-authors of *Celebrate Green! Creating Eco-Savvy Holidays, Celebrations and Traditions for the Whole Family*, available at www.CelebrateGreen.net
3. If you need more information, would like to interview us about an upcoming holiday or celebration, or would like to ask about custom material, please contact Lynn@CelebrateGreen.net or call 425-793-3590 (Pacific time).
4. Please use the registered sign (R in a circle) after “Green Halloween” the *first* time it is used print in each article.

Thank you for your interest, support and partnership!

Warmly,

Corey & Lynn
info@GreenHalloween.org

Blurb without links:

Green Halloween[®]
The “eek-o-friendly” revolution

Who says Halloween has to be unhealthy? And who says healthy can't be fun? Green Halloween[®] is about making Halloween happy *and* healthy and about creating community traditions we can all be proud of.

What is Green Halloween?

Green Halloween[®] is a non-profit, grassroots initiative striving to create healthier, eco-friendlier holidays— starting with Halloween. Launched in Seattle in 2007 by a mother of two, the nationwide movement, now a program of EcoMom Alliance, is all about educating and inspiring communities by showing how easy, affordable, and fun it can be to factor our earth and our health into our daily choices.

To read all about Green Halloween and find fun events near you, visit GreenHalloween.org. You can learn how to get involved locally, sign up for the super nifty newsletter, and get fab DIY costume ideas, recipes, upcycled décor how-to's and more. There's even a trick-or-treat bag design contest for kids!

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10 Simple steps for making your Halloween eek-o-friendly (short):

10 Simple steps to making your Halloween EEK-o-friendly

Kermit was wrong. It *is* easy being green [on Halloween].

Just make choices that are **people-healthy, animal-friendly** and **Earth-conscious**.

We'll show you how with these 10 simple steps:

1. Plan ahead to avoid last-minute shopping which often limits your choices.
2. When it comes to costumes and décor—reuse, borrow, [swap](#), purchase used or do-it-yourself.
3. Treat bags can be anything! For extra fun, match the bag to the costume using something you already own. Here are some ideas: purses, flower pots (cover the hole), cloth sacks, backpacks, lunchboxes.
4. Choose [healthier treats](#). Take baby steps with organic candy and honey sticks, two child-favored choices. (Honey is not for children under two years of two).
5. Choose [fun treasures](#) instead of conventional sweets. Think of the treasures your child collects in her pockets—pretty rocks, coins, etc.
6. If you're giving a [party](#), avoid disposables including napkins, plates, cups, tablecloths and other décor.
7. Walk from house to house instead of driving.
8. Compost pumpkins and any other food, including leftover candy.
9. Collect candy wrappers and help your kids turn them into gift items like purses, bracelets and picture frames. Find directions on the internet.
10. Avoid purchasing any treats made with palm oil.

Check out www.GreenHalloween.org often for hundreds of fun, fresh ideas.

10 Steps to a Green Halloween (long):

10 Steps to a Green Halloween

Want to get on board with making Halloween healthier for kids and the planet but don't know where to start? We've got 10 easy ideas that will help you celebrate an EEK-O fab holiday while keeping all the fun.

The basics

Get a jump start. Unless you're a Halloween junkie, like most moms, you likely hit the stores the week (or even hour) before the festivities begin. But greening your Halloween is a lot easier if you take just a little time to plan. Not too much, just a bit – we promise.

Planning allows you to save money (last minute purchases = impulse buys) and to assemble eco-friendlier items from treats or treasures to décor without the stress that comes from last-minute decision making. So grab a notebook and make a list of what you need. Do you want to hand out [organic candy](#)? Have your kids make their own [costumes](#) from what you've got on hand? Whip up your own [face paints](#) to avoid chemicals in commercial brands? Honestly, none of this takes much time when you plan ahead.

Get the kids on board. The second secret to pulling off a green Halloween is to get kids to buy in – by [your positive attitude](#). Children who are told out of the blue, “We’re not going to buy you a new costume this year,” or “No candy for you!” certainly won’t be interested in supporting green efforts.

You know your children best, but a great way to approach them is by selecting one or two ideas from the list below and asking, “What would you think if…” You may be surprised that when you approach from a positive framework, i.e.” This is going to be a lot of fun and we’re going to make it happen together”—most children will get excited.

Once you're got your shopping list and your kids enlisted, it's time to carve out your eco-friendly options.

Here's 10 of our favorite tips:

- 1. Choose no-waste pumpkins.** Instead of purchasing one big pumpkin, how about selecting several smaller ones, then, instead of carving, painting on faces with non-toxic paints or decorating with yarn, ribbon, bottle caps and other found items. Smaller pumpkins can be put in the fridge when not on display to keep them fresher and once Halloween is over, you should be able to cook 'em up instead of tossing.
- 2. Use beeswax candles.** If you do carve and put a candle in your pumpkin, choose 100% beeswax. Most candles are made from paraffin, a petroleum by-product. Beeswax burns cleanly, lasts longer and releases a wonderful, all natural aroma. You may have heard that soy candles are a good alternative to paraffin, but soy is often genetically modified and its planting and harvesting can bring up other environmental issues. Beeswax comes from—bees! It is not modified in any way although natural color may be added to candles.
- 3. Use LED lights.** By now everyone knows that incandescent lights don't last very long, cost pretty pennies to use and burn HOT. LEDs now come in every size from mini-flashlight to outdoor spotlight. They are the safer, more sustainable option.
- 4. Seek out alternatives to conventional candy.** For many families, this seems challenging. But we know that kids will go [for treats and treasures](#) other than what you usually associate with Halloween.

Over the last four years, we've tested the theory with a display board with dozens of alternatives—everything from beautiful colored stones to organic lollipops, whole foods bars, seed packets, pencils made from recycled paper are just a few. Literally thousands and thousands of kids from four to teen have

told us they would be excited if these choices were in their bag. In fact, for the most part, kids are much less stuck on conventional candy than parents think. So go to [Green Halloween](#) and with your kids, look over the long list of treats and treasures, then pick out a few you'd like to try this year. Still skeptical? Offer a choice.

- 5. Set up or participate in a costume swap.** According to Robert Lilienfeld of the *Use Less Stuff Report*, roughly 25 million children in the United States celebrate Halloween. Swapping just half of their costumes would reduce annual landfill waste by 6,250 tons, equivalent to the weight of 2500 midsize cars! And this doesn't even address adult costumes.

You can set up your own neighborhood swap of course, or join the fun on National Costume Swap Day, the second Saturday in October. Check out the [National Costume Swap Day™ website](#) for ideas on how to set up a swap as well as link to swap sites both local and online.

- 6. Make décor instead of buying.** In 2009, spending on all aspects of Halloween totaled \$4.75 billion. This figure of course, includes décor, candy, costumes and other items, since Halloween is the second biggest holiday after Christmas for décor, obviously a huge chunk of change goes toward glowing lawn art, orange and black table decorations and millions of sets of Halloween-themed light strings.

If you're aiming for a Green Halloween, try cutting your décor budget by 25%. Then fill in the difference with handmade items. Just Google "Halloween crafts," and you'll find hundreds of suggestions. One of ours is to make a Halloween tree by taking a branch from outside, then having the kids draw and cut out ghosts, pumpkins etc. and hang them from the tree. More ideas can be found [here](#).

A fun way to get started with "upcycled" décor is to set a timer for 15 minutes, then send family members on a hunt around the house for items that can be transformed into décor. An orange and black t-shirts for instance, can be secured around pillows.

- 7. Hand out less.** Everyone acknowledges we have a childhood obesity problem in this country. Nonetheless, people say, "Why not give out bunches of candy? It's only once a year."

The fact is that kids are exposed to candy and other sweets daily. It's in everything from cereal to the lollipop they get at the bank.

We've shown that Halloween can be just as much fun even when a child brings home significantly less than the average of 10 pounds.

Like everything else in America, Halloween has become supersized. Today's parents can remember being given one or two candy bars. Today it's handfuls.

Whether you opt to give out conventional candy or alternatives, you can help steer children away from excess by offering just one or two items. What a concept, eh?

One successful strategy is to put a variety of items in a large bowl. When the doorbell rings, instead of inviting kids to dig in, explain that you are offering everyone a choice of one special item. Look each child in the eye and ask, “What special treat would YOU like?” As their hands seek out their choice, encourage them and smile and congratulate them on their final choice.

We can hear you saying, “But I get 25 kids at a time storming the door.”

To which we reply, “So?”

What’s wrong with slowing things down? Paying attention to each child, supporting their health (and your pocketbook - think how much less you’ll need to purchase) and having fun is what Halloween should be about. If some kids don’t want to wait, that’s up to them, but more likely, word will quickly get around and line will go around the block!

- 8. Walk in your neighborhood, don’t drive.** One year we lived in Colorado and on Halloween evening the temperature plunged into the teens. We had moved up from Arizona and our blood was still as they say, a bit thin. But we braved the elements and had the best time.

We’re all about driving in this country, along with getting through whatever as quickly as possible. This is what we teach our children when, instead of walking the neighborhood, we drive them house-to-house or even block-to-block on Halloween.

In addition of course, driving creates emissions and idling is even worse. So bundle up and walk.

Another option to going door-to-door? Wrangle a few neighbors and co-host a Halloween-themed [“progressive party.”](#)

- 9. Bag it, green style.** Instead of buying a single-use, disposable candy-carrier, make your child’s goodie bag from a pillow case or anything else you already own that goes with the theme of the costume. A purse for a princess? A backpack for a mountain climber? A helmet for a football player? Or, purchase a keepsake, reusable [Green Halloween® trick-or-treat ChicoBag™](#). (Designed each year by kids! Enter the design contest [here](#). 10% of the sales support the Green Halloween initiative.)
- 10. “Recycle” candy & natural décor.** Food rotting in landfills leads to the release of methane gas, which contributes to climate change. So don’t toss leftover candy and rotting pumpkins - recycle them! Composting turns food waste and natural décor (such as hay from your scarecrow) into nutrient-rich food for your plants, shrubs and trees. And even if you don’t have curbside composting or a [home-composter](#), you can still compost at home. Watch this [video](#) and see how easy-breezy it is. Here are a few [additional ideas](#) for what to do with leftover candy.

[How you can help #1](#)

Celebrate an “eek-o-friendly” Halloween!

Halloween is a holiday heavy on sugar, not to mention waste, but what if it didn’t have to be? And what if a healthy and eco-friendly Halloween could still be fun?

It can! And it’s easy, too.

Meet [Green Halloween](#)[®], the non-profit, grassroots revolution sweeping the country, giving Halloween a child-friendly, Earth-considerate makeover that everyone can feel good about.

How can *you* help?

By making simple changes in your own traditions and encouraging others to do the same.

Which ideas on this list inspire you?

- Instead of giving away conventional candy, consider items such as pencils made from recycled newsprint, temporary tattoos sporting eco-savvy themes, or 100% fruit leathers. Even organic lollipops are better for children and the planet and some come in compostable wrappers. Dozens of ideas [here](#).
- Instead of buying a costume this year, see if you can make one out of materials you have lying around your house, can borrow from a friend or can find at a thrift store. Or, participate in [National Costume Swap Day](#)[™] and host a costume swap with your neighbors.
- Decorate your front lawn, porch and home with items from nature. Pumpkins, gourds and hay are all great, green items that can be composted when November 1st rolls around. Ideas [here](#).
- Save candy wrappers and instead of tossing them, turn them into treasures. Check the [Internet](#) for cool ways you can upcycle candy wrappers into bracelets, purses, picture frames and more.

For more practical, affordable and fun ways to make your Halloween eco-fabulous, visit www.GreenHalloween.org.

[How you can help #2](#)

Want to help spread the green this Halloween?

[Green Halloween](#)[®], a nationwide, grassroots revolution, invites you play a part by:

1. Logging on to www.GreenHalloween.org
2. Getting inspired by some of the web pages listed below
3. Taking action in your [home](#), [neighborhood](#), [school](#) or place of work

Get inspired, connect, take action and enjoy! The following Green Halloween[®] web links will show you how easy, affordable and fun it is to give Halloween an “eek-o-friendly” makeover:

- [Tips for parents](#)

- [What you can do to help](#)
- Want to [swap costumes](#)? Share recipes? Connect with moms celebrating a green holiday in your area? Connect with Green Halloween on [Facebook](#).
- Follow the [blog](#)
- Enter [contests](#)
- Attend a local Green Halloween [event](#)
- Click through to eco-fabulous Halloween gear [here](#)

www.GreenHalloween.org

3 Tips for going green this Halloween:

1. **Reduce** – Instead of handing out *handfuls* of candy to each little ghost and goblin, consider giving just one of something. You'll save money and your decision will likely be better for the health the children who come to your door (since they'll consume less) and for the planet since fewer resources will go into the making, packaging, transporting and/or disposal of the treat. Reducing can be applied to all of your holiday choices. And if you have reason to be concerned that your guests, kids, neighbors or husband will get scary on you when you announce your new plan to cut back on behalf of kids and the planet? Try reducing by just 25%. Chances are, no one will notice but you and your Mother Earth.
2. **Reuse** – Halloween could be the poster child for reusing. Nearly every aspect of the holiday can be celebrated in style without buying a single thing new. So don't rush out to buy costumes, décor and party games. Instead, stop and think. What can be reused or repurposed to make this holiday a smash hit without costing the planet? Rent, borrow, [swap](#) or construct costumes from existing materials (making Halloween costumes from scratch can increase the fun factor, too), and keep your lawn ghouls and orange LED lights year after year. You might get tired of seeing them, but guaranteed, you're building a tradition – one the kids in your home and neighborhood will remember. You wouldn't want to mess with good memory making, now, would you?
3. **Recycle** – The best way to utilize the third and final R is to first, choose items that are made from recycled content instead of buying products made from raw or virgin materials. When the product you've bought or acquired can no longer be used, it should be recycled. Recycling can happen in many ways such as through your waste management company, your compost pile (yes, most food can be recycled) or through your own creativity. Breathe new life into your husband's old flannel shirt and jeans, for example, by recycling them into a scarecrow for your front porch or a costume for your ten-year-old. And no matter what, always, always, compost made-by-nature Halloween décor such as wilting pumpkins and gourds instead of throwing them in the trash. Uneaten Halloween candy can also be "recycled" just be sure to remove the wrappers first.

25 Tips for going green this Halloween:

25 Green Halloween® tips

Halloween is meant to be enjoyed, but somewhere in between “planning” and “cleanup,” many parents find themselves feeling overwhelmed. It might seem that attempting to consider the Earth while planning a great ghoulish party is just too much work and way too expensive. Some fear it might even zap the fun right out of the day. But creating an eco-savvy Halloween doesn't have to be scary, nor does it have to cost an arm and a leg when you follow these pointers:

1. **Consider your costumes.** The truth is many store-bought costumes and accessories contain toxic chemicals that not only are a potential hazard to your child, but also to the environment and the people who helped to make them. Choose fabrics such as cotton, wool and silk or make costumes yourself from materials you know to be safe.
2. **Go au natural.** When decorating your home for Halloween, skip the plastic black cats and paper skeleton streamers made in China. Instead, use décor inspired by Mother Earth by choosing fallen leaves, gourds or pumpkins, and 100% beeswax candles.
3. **Trim your trick-or-treats.** Hand out less _____ (fill in the blank). Preferably your goodies of choice are [healthy and/or Earth-friendly](#), but even if they're not, handing out just *one* (rather than the conventional *handful*) of something is better for kids, better for the planet and better for your bank account.
4. **Apply the 3Rs** (reduce, reuse, recycle) to all of your holiday choices: costumes, décor, goodies, etc. Of the 3 R's, reducing is the best for the Earth, our wallets and, in regard to food, our waistlines. Rent, borrow, [swap](#), make or acquire used, when possible, to avoid buying new, especially disposables.
5. **Choose eek-o-décor.** Say 'no' to disposables and instead, re-use or re-purpose items you already own. Look also for items from nature and don't forget to decorate with food (consumable décor). If you must use disposables, look for products that are compostable and then be sure to compost them. Or, [choose recycled](#), reusable and recyclable items like [Preserve products](#). Too bad they don't come in Halloween colors... yet.
6. **Go kid powered.** Give your child a shakable or [hand crank flashlight](#) to light his way.
7. **Love LEDs.** Use decorative [Halloween LED](#) and/ or solar lights for trees, outside of your home, and for lighting the path for trick-or-treaters. They come in every shape, theme and color imaginable!
8. **Bag it, green style.** Instead of buying, make your child's goodie bag from a pillow case or anything else you already own that goes with the theme of the costume. Or, purchase a keepsake, reusable [Green Halloween® trick-or-treat ChicoBag™](#). (Designed each year by kids! Enter the design contest [here](#). 10% of the sales support the Green Halloween initiative.)
9. **Get creative.** Turn costume making into a creative and fun experience for your child. Hunt through the house, at neighborhood garage sales, or a thrift store for costume-worthy items. Enjoy the process *and* the product! Another idea: host a costume exchange as part of [National Costume Swap Day™](#) (second Saturday in October).
10. **Switcheroo.** Instead of allowing your child to eat all the candy he collects, ask him to select a limited, pre-agreed upon amount and then leave the rest out for the [Halloween Fairy/ Witch/ Great Pumpkin](#), who will, while your child is sleeping that night, swap the candy for goodies such as books, games or "pumpkin points" redeemable for outings.
11. **Green the YUM.** Make the party [meal](#) using foods that are mostly orange, black and green. Create spooky names for the food, if you can. Shop locally (support local farmers) and choose organic, whenever possible.
12. **Recycle the unexpected.** Compost all leftovers, jack-o-lanterns, natural décor and unconsumed candy - remove wrappers unless they're compostable. In some places of the country, you can add compostables to your yard waste bin.
13. **Celebrate others.** Host your Halloween party at a retirement home, children's hospital, organic farm or similar.
14. **Say 'no' to toxic chemicals.** Make your own face paints. [Here's the recipe](#). Or purchase [mineral-based, lead-free paints](#).
15. **Choose eco sweets.** If buying [candy](#), choose organic – you'll be surprised at how affordable some brands are! If buying chocolate, look for triple certified: organic, shade grown, Fair Trade.
16. **Think outside the {conventional} candy box.** Instead of giving out conventional candy: give away [healthy and/or Earth friendly treats and treasures](#).

17. **Make décor to DIY for.** [Make your own Halloween décor](#) by visiting craft sites and swapping conventional materials for eco-supplies. For example, if you are going to make some paper ghosts for your window, be sure the paper is reused, recycled or tree-free.
18. **Invite sustainably.** Use e-invitations or make your own from reused, recycled or tree-free sources. Kids will love [Mr. Ellie Pooh](#)'s Elephant dung paper! It comes in gorgeous fall colors (all scent-free!). The orange cardstock is *perfect* for Halloween invites, place cards and more. Supporting Mr. Ellie Pooh means supporting the Elephants in Sri Lanka, who are losing their lives because without profit associated with them, they are seen as liabilities to local farmers.
19. **Reclaim wrappers.** Collect candy and bar wrappers and turn [them into picture framed, purses, jewelry](#) and more. Tweens and teens especially love this activity. Contact [Terracycle.net](#) for a collection box.
20. **Trick-or-treat for good.** When tweens and teens are too old to trick or treat, but still enjoy the traditions, encourage them to take a look at how they can [turn trick or treating into an activity that benefits others](#) such as: Reverse Trick-or-Treating, trick-or-treating for cell phones, or of course, UNICEF's program.
21. **Start small and build your confidence.** Start simply by having (and using) a recycle bin at your party or by going bottled water-free. You can green up each of your next celebrations a little bit at a time until celebrating green-style becomes old hat.
22. **Plan ahead to avoid costly impulse buying.** You're less likely to invade the local super party store at the eleventh-hour when you make food, gift, décor and activity decisions in advance.
23. **Get the family involved.** Ask your kids to come up with three ways to give Halloween a green makeover. Write all of the viable ideas down on paper, toss them in a bowl and select three to try this year.
24. **Don't drive to trick or treat.** [Encourage your neighbors](#) to go green and then go door-to-door near you. It's good for you and the planet and builds community.
25. **Learn more.** For more great tips and tricks sign up for the e-newsletters from [www.GreenHalloween.org](#) and [www.celebrategreen.net](#). And don't forget to buy a copy of [Celebrate Green!](#) It features ideas, recipes, crafts, gift suggestions and more.

[Spooky facts and the importance of being green](#)

Importance of being green on Halloween

Halloween is big on fun but, unfortunately, it's also big on unhealthy traditions and waste. Many moms worry about the impact of this holiday on the health of their kids and the planet. And for good reason. Almost \$6 billion a year is spent on costumes, candy, décor and other accessories, most of which are made from unhealthy, unsustainable materials, by people who may not be paid living wages or treated fairly. Most of the stuff – what isn't consumed - winds up in landfills. And scary news about high-fructose corn syrup, artificial colors, lead laden accessories just fuel parent's concerns.

But our goal is to show families that it's easy and affordable to keep the fun, while losing the unhealthy, un-Earth-friendly traditions. It's not about telling parents how they should celebrate – it's about inspiring them to make choices that make sense to their families, their budgets and their schedules. And when many families make healthier and more sustainable choices for Halloween – taking even the smallest of steps – big impacts can be made for the short and long term.

Here are a few of the “spooky statistics” that might fuel your desire to help change the way you celebrate Halloween:

- Today's trick-or-treaters have a life expectancy that is shorter than their parents.
- One in three trick-or-treaters born today will develop diabetes.

- One-third of America’s trick-or-treaters are overweight; 17% are considered obese.
- EPA considers that 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides and 30% of all insecticides found in non-organically grown food- including “goodies” - are carcinogenic.
- Over 6,000 synthetic chemicals are used in the processed-food industry. Most Halloween “treats” are processed.
- A 2004 study with 1800 three year old children found that behavior measurably improved after a one week diet without preservatives and artificial colors and dramatically worsened on the weeks they were given preservatives and artificial colors (present in most Halloween candy).
- Coco beans used for chocolate that are grown in full sun (as opposed to shade) are susceptible to disease and therefore require heavy doses of toxic pesticides and synthetic fertilizers.
- The chocolate industry has engaged in the use of child slaves and other unethical treatments of growers.
- Store-bought costumes, makeup and accessories may contain phthalates, lead and other toxins.
- One test of multiple brands of face paints found detectible levels of lead *in all of them*. (According to experts there are NO safe levels of lead).

For more “why’s” of Green Halloween®, click [here](#).

How easy it is to celebrate green

Busy parents need greening to be simple. Whatever the choice may be (goodies, costumes, décor, etc.), adding an eco-friendly twist shouldn’t increase stress and chaos to an already hectic holiday season. But making healthy and green choices is, in fact, easier than it seems. The key is thinking (and acting) outside the conventional candy box.

1. **Plan ahead.** Halloween is a fairly last minute holiday, resulting in a lot of knee-jerk choices that aren’t good for kids or the planet. But if you make a habit of thinking ahead, you can find exactly what you want while saving time, energy and reducing stress. One idea is to create a reoccurring appointment in your calendar for each October 1st. Decide what you are going to give away this year and, if necessary, order it online or pick it up. If you have the bandwidth to coordinate with a few friends or co-workers, you can save money by buying online, splitting the quantities and dividing the shipping charges. If the recycled plastic tops or eco-themed temporary tattoos are a hit, make it easier on yourself by giving the same thing away next year. (Make your [green goodies](#) a tradition.)
2. **Take a different road.** Who said goodies have to be bought at grocery stores? Most of us run out to the grocery store the night before Halloween to pick up that 10 pound bag of candy (or two), but what if we realized that great, green goodies can be found elsewhere, too? What about picking up some seeds while you’re at the nursery? Or some cool glass beads when you drive by the art supply store? Playing cards with magic tricks, recipes and Halloween jokes can be found at bookstores and toy stores. Lots of ideas for “treasures” can be found [here](#).
3. **Include the kids.** Going green is a family affair, so make it easier on yourself and include the kids by asking for their ideas. When they’re involved from the get-go, they’re more like to stay involved and to have positive attitudes.
4. **Relax.** Going green isn’t an all or nothing deal and busy moms have a lot on their minds and plates. So start with simple green steps that will work for your family this year. You can always add more the next time around. Holidays should be about the fun, not about the stress. Even green choices, if stressful, won’t be sustainable over the long haul.

Other ideas:

The loot

- When it comes to which goodies to hand out, take a cue from doing laundry. Why? What “treasures” do your kids stash in their pockets? Polished rocks, feathers, seashells, and other items from nature are [timeless treats for children](#) of all ages. (And we’ve polled thousands of kids – toddlers to teens – who say goodies like these get two thumbs up!)
- No matter what goodies you give away, give just one (instead of handfuls). When we were kids, most of us received one treat and each door, but now everything is supersized – including trick-or-treating. Giving away just one of something is easy to do, costs you less and is better for children and the planet. And here’s a tip: Place goodies in a bowl and let kids know - with barely contained enthusiasm - that they can choose just one *really special* treat. When you do, something magical will happen. The kids will get excited about picking that one perfect treasure – more excited than if they had received a handful.
- Many stores have [healthier options](#) for Halloween, but they might not know it (or market them as such). Take a quick stroll through the aisles and consider treats and treasures such as: [Larbars](#), honey or agave sticks (may cost as little as 5-10 cents apiece), [Stretch Island](#) fruit leathers, all natural gum (like [Glee Gum](#)), or mini packs of all natural or organic crackers, [granola or granola bars](#), cookies, or dried fruit. For treasures, [stickers](#), [bookmarks](#) and [pencils](#) all made from recycled materials. Click [here](#) for a big list of ideas.
- If you want to give out [candy](#), consider organic options such as [Endangered Species](#) “Bug Bites” and look for candy in bulk. While still made with sugar, organic and all natural ingredients are better for children and growing foods organically is better for the planet and the people who grow them. Companies such as [Surf Sweets](#) sell organic candy with low price points.

Costumes

- Go green, save time and money by shopping for your child’s costume at a consignment or thrift shop such as [Goodwill](#).
- Celebrate National Costume Swap Day™ ([www.CostumeSwapDay.com](#)). Have a lunchtime costume exchange with co-workers who are parents, or with your church, after a weekend soccer game or combine it with a ladies night.
- Set the timer and let your kids go on a hunt through the house looking for Halloween costume components. (Be sure to tell them if any parts of the house are off limits). Let their imaginations fly. Instead of being a superhero or television character, the might just want to flex their creative muscles and be something unique.
- If buying, look for [costumes made from petroleum-free fabrics](#) that are less likely to contain phthalates, lead or other toxins.
- For the goody bag – use something you already own that goes with their costume. A chef can carry a bowl, a mountain climber a backpack, a princess a purse, football player a helmet, etc. Or go with the adorably eco, keepsake, reusable [Green Halloween® trick-or-treat ChicoBag®](#).

Décor

- Instead of buying petroleum based or disposable décor items, think about using items from nature such as pumpkins, gourds, hay, etc. When you’re done, simply toss them into your yard waste bin (if allowed in your area) or compost. Or buy items that are recycled, upcycled, handcrafted or ethically sourced (e.g. Fair Trade) such as those [found here](#).
- Candles are a popular Halloween décor item, but paraffin is an unsustainable product and contributes to poor indoor air quality. Instead choose 100% beeswax candles (available at most health food stores in a rainbow of colors, shapes and sizes). They burn cleaner and longer and don’t make as much of a mess. They also smell naturally sweet.

- Instead of buying décor for the entire lawn, consider decorating just the doorway. Go simple in the house, too, by choosing one area to spruce up. Focusing and simplifying will save time, money and resources.
- At the end of the holiday, pack reusable décor away carefully so that it stays in good shape and can be used for years to come. (Remember, when it comes to holidays, reusing=traditions.) While it may take some extra effort at clean up time, doing so will save money, time and resources in the long run.

Party food

- Don't make [food](#) ahead, instead, make it an activity. Here are a few ideas that are easy and fun to make (not to mention healthy and high on the 'yum' scale):
 - Pumpkin smoothies
 - Pumpkin seed "gorp"
 - Halloween pizzas (use pre-made, whole wheat crusts and have available orange, black and green veggies to customize)
 - Halloween-ka-bobs (let kids make their own with [Halloween colored foods](#))

Putting some green into your Halloween does not have to be difficult or costly. In the continuum of being green, all families can hop on board! You can start wherever you are. For example, if your family eats organic and shops mostly locally, Green Halloween offers additional ways you can make your holiday even healthier and more green with tips even seasoned health-conscious parents will find useful. If your family has yet to try healthy alternatives, this is a great year to start. The Green Halloween website (www.GreenHalloween.org) offers even green-newbies fun, easy and affordable ways to start new holiday traditions your whole family will enjoy. Being a part of Green Halloween means trying one new tradition—or trying them all. By going green for just one part of your Halloween, you'll be making a difference you and your family can be proud of.

Article: Get ready for an EEK-O-friendly Halloween

Halloween should be fun, but every year it gets scarier—for parents and the planet. From the discovery of [lead in fake teeth](#) and [candy](#), to [chemicals in costumes](#), to the garbage left in the holiday's wake, it's a wonder more of us haven't given up the festivities and spent October 31 watching *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*.

The good news is, there are loads of child- and earth-friendly alternatives to the usual Halloween fare.

The most important point when planning to green up any holiday or celebration, especially those involving children, is to get their "buy-in." And of course, your approach makes all the difference. Telling kids, "We're going green this Halloween—that means, no candy," isn't helpful. What can be is a discussion about the challenges that Halloween brings. Obviously, what you say (or don't), depends on the age of your children. But helping them to see the wider ramifications of their actions can help make transitioning to healthier choices more appealing or at least understandable.

Many kids are learning about eco-issues in school. They often want to do something about them, but need guidance on where to begin. Talking to them about the excess and waste associated with Halloween (and all holidays and celebrations) and discussing how *they* can make a difference, may spark their altruism and inspire them to act in positive ways.

A great way to start a discussion is to list each aspect of Halloween (costumes, treats, decor and activities), and brainstorm child- and earth-friendly choices to what you've done in the past. Then,

encourage your kids to choose one or two of the ideas to implement this year. After Halloween, talk about what worked, what didn't and what you'll do next year.

Costumes

In the "olden days," (the eighties?), many kids made their costumes, often with help from parents. Making the costume was actually an enjoyable, bonding activity. Today, millions of people spend millions of dollars on costumes that are made from non-sustainable materials (like petroleum), that are worn once, then discarded.

But there are earth-friendlier alternatives. If you usually buy costumes, consider:

- **Making them.** Kids are incredibly gifted and creative when we encourage them. There are almost no costumes that cannot be handmade. If your children are stuck on turning a popular TV or movie character into a costume, brainstorm how you can make it happen with items you already own or can get at no cost by borrowing or making. Be sure to check online for ideas.
- **Purchasing costumes made from more eco-friendly materials** or at least not from plastics. Choose cotton, organic cotton, silk or hemp, for instance. Unfortunately, these alternatives are not yet widely available, but if you're interested in them, visit the [Green Halloween® marketplace](#) or ask local stores to consider carrying them next year. And check at the end of this post for some other great online sources.
- **Trading them.** Arrange a costume swap for [National Costume Swap Day™](#) (second Saturday in October) with neighbors, check online at swap sites like [Green Halloween](#), or see if you can interest a local child-focused organization in sponsoring a swap.

When Halloween is over, don't throw costumes away. Save them, dismantle and hold on to the "parts," trade or take them to a thrift store such as [Goodwill](#).

Treats and treasures

Halloween may be all about the treats, but happily, there are great alternatives that kids, when given the option, will happily embrace. You can't do much about the sweets your children receive on their foray around the neighborhood (although you can have the "Halloween Fairy" replace the confections with a wonderful gift when the children are brushing their teeth...shhhh...), but when it comes to what your family hands out, planning ahead so that you are not making a last-minute dash to the grocery store, will help you avoid limiting choices to what's on the shelves at the moment.

If you have a local natural foods store, check out their offerings. Take your kids along and choose a few items to sample if you don't normally shop there. Honey sticks are a favorite and are very inexpensive (never give honey to children under age 2). Many natural food companies, like [Larabar](#), make small "bars" in flavors kids love like peanut butter and chocolate. Assuming you have the time to order online, check out www.GreenHalloween.org for dozens of alternatives.

One issue that often comes up when discussing organic or green choices is cost. While it is true that many healthier items cost more, there is a simple solution. Instead of handing out fistfuls (or allowing kids to take as much as they want, which has become the norm), try this: Fill a bowl with a variety of great choices, whether sweets or "treasures" like sparkly stones, feathers (yes, kids love these), hair decorations, temporary tattoos, stickers etc. Cover the bowl with a cloth. When children come to the door, get down to their level and whisper, "At our house, we have some very, very special treats and treasures.

You may now choose your favorite." Then with a flourish, whip off the cloth and let them sift. Compliment them on their choice afterwards.

If you're not yet ready to totally embrace greener treats and treasures you can still help cut down on expense and waste by choosing one of these options:

- Put out two bowls, one with conventional candy, the other with "treasures." Let kids choose one item from either bowl.
- Hand children whatever you are giving them. Do not allow them to take as much as they want.
- Let older children know that unwrapped candy can be composted.

Whatever you do this Halloween, taking time to plan and implement will make the holiday a lot less spooky!

Sample "Tweets," posts for Facebook and other social media

Social media tips:

Twitter: When posting on Twitter, if you can, please use @GreenHalloween with hashtags #GH, #GreenHalloween, #Halloween, #HealthyHalloween or #CostumeSwap, when appropriate. To shorten long links, use <http://bit.ly>

Facebook: For Facebook, please "like" us (<http://www.facebook.com/greenhalloween>), *then* use "@Green Halloween" in the post so that our FB page is linked to.

Also... Please follow us on Twitter @GreenHalloween, @CelebrateGreen and @CostumeSwapDay and on Facebook /GreenHalloween, /CelebrateGreen and /CostumeSwapDay so that you can re-tweet and "share" our posts. Of course, we'll do the same! Our blogs are at: www.GreenHalloween.org/blog and www.CelebrateGreen/blog.

Ideas:

- Kick off your Green Halloween with National Costume Swap Day! October 8, 2011: www.CostumeSwapDay.com
- NATIONAL COSTUME SWAP DAY is coming October 8th! Register your swap TODAY. <http://www.greenhalloween.org/CostumeSwap/find.html>
- Follow of the day: Green Halloween! <http://www.greenhalloween.org>
- Have you heard about the Green Halloween initiative? SO COOL! <http://www.greenhalloween.org>
- Check out the Green Halloween BUZZ! <http://www.greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=press>
- Join us in giving Halloween a healthy makeover (while keeping all the fun)! <http://greenhalloween.org>
- Free healthy goodies at Halloween events zoos and aquariums across the country! <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=azafamilies#locations>
- Can't get enough of Green Halloween's great tips for celebrating a healthy Halloween. Love their eco-craft and décor ideas, too! <http://greenhalloween.org/blog>
- Festive Halloween virtual fun. Play Green Halloween's "Haunted Hybrid": <http://www.greenhalloween.org/hauntedhybrid.html>

- Kids! The ChicoBag-Green Halloween design contest is now underway! Enter today to have your design featured on a trick-or-treat bag sold across the country. <http://greenhalloween.org/chicobag>
- Teachers, download a Green Halloween action kit for FREE: <http://greenhalloween.org/downloads/GuideForTeachers.pdf>
- You can stage a Green Halloween party: <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=helpout>
- Make your own (healthier) Halloween face paints: <http://greenhalloween.org/blog/?p=235>
- Green Halloween crafts your kids will love: <http://greenhalloween.org/blog/?cat=27>
- Whole Foods Markets across the country jump in to celebrate Green Halloween. Is yours on board? <http://greenhalloween.org>
- What do kids think about Green Halloween? <http://www.greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=faq>
- Which is your favorite Green Halloween treat or treasure? <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=treats>
- Eliminate Energy Vampires and other ways to celebrate a Green Halloween: http://www.greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=halloween_energy
- Tips and tricks for teachers: How to celebrate a Green Halloween in your classroom. <http://www.greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=schools#teachers>
- Great, Green Halloween activities for your festivities: <http://greenhalloween.org/GHactivities.pdf>
- Host a Green Halloween “progressive party” <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=host>
- Check out Green Halloween in the October Issue of *KIWI* magazine! <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=press>
- Here’s what people are saying about Green Halloween. What do you think? <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=quotes>
- Get your FREE Green Halloween neighborhood action kit here: <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=helpout>
- Check out the NEW kid-designed reusable Green Halloween trick-or-treat bag by ChicoBag. 10% of sales support Green Halloween. <http://greenhalloween.org/chicobag>
- Tips, recipes, craft ideas and more with Green Halloween’s e-news: <http://oi.vresp.com/?fid=a07ac147d9>
- If you love Green Halloween, you’ll love Celebrate Green!, too: <http://www.celebrategreen.net>
- Swapping ½ the costumes kids wear at Halloween would reduce annual landfill space by 6,250 tons: <http://www.greenhalloween.org/CostumeSwap/register.html>
- Download/print (on recycled paper please!) this flyer to distribute for your costume swaps! <http://bit.ly/9xu4hE>
- If you are unsure on how to do a Costume Swap, check out our "how-to" page for tips and ideas! <http://bit.ly/aRkCjg>
- Learn how to organize a friendly neighborhood Halloween bash! <http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=host>
- Meet, share and connect with others at our community boards! <http://www.greenhalloween.org/community/>
- Grab our “10 Easy Steps” tip sheet here! <http://greenhalloween.org/downloads/10steps.pdf>
- Want to find out if your city is having a Green Halloween? Find out here! <http://bit.ly/cUEyID>

- Head on over to Green Halloween to find healthy organic alternatives for candy options this year!
<http://bit.ly/cswLNH>
- Green Halloween has great tips for celebrating a healthier Halloween
- Head on over to Green Halloween's blog for wonderful eco-craft and decor ideas!
<http://greenhalloween.org/blog>
- Join us and have a blast while giving Halloween a green and healthy makeover!
- Kick off Green Halloween w/ National Costume Swap Day 10/8/2011!
www.CostumeSwapDay.com
- Learn how to conserve energy during Halloween
http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=halloween_energy
- Looking for ways to make Halloween even more FUN? Check out these ideas
<http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=kids>
- Trick-or-Treasure! Great Halloween treat replacements tips and ideas.
<http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=treats>
- Green Halloween crafts your kids will love: <http://greenhalloween.org/blog/?cat=27>
- Have lots of candy leftover after Halloween? Host a candy composting party!
<http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=helpout>
- Great, Green Halloween activities for your festivities: <http://greenhalloween.org/GHactivities.pdf>
- Love the Green Halloween marketplace. Sustainable costumes, décor & more.
<http://greenhalloween.org/content.php?page=products>

Other helpful links:

- [Green Halloween homepage](#)
- [EcoMom Alliance partnership](#)
- [Celebrate Green homepage](#)
- [National Costume Swap Day™ \(second Saturday each October\)](#)
- [ChicoBag trick-or-treat bag design contest](#)
- [What is Green Halloween?](#)
- [Why Green Halloween?](#)
- [Green Halloween's non-profit partners](#)
- [How parents can get involved](#)
- [Teacher/ school information](#)
- [About Green Halloween](#)
- [Downloadable toolkits](#)
- [For parents](#)
- [For kids](#)
- [Green Halloween events](#)

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