

Step aside orange; Halloween is green

*Family duo
thinks outside
the candy box*

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Matt Brashears/Reuters Reporter

Zoe Colwell-Lipson, 6, pulls a treasure from a bowl as she, her sister, Finley, 3, and friend, Michael Yates, 4, far left, demonstrate what trick-or-treating would be like if it were "trick-or-treasure," a concept Zoe and Finley's mother, Corey Colwell-Lipson, is trying to promote this Halloween to get parents to avoid unhealthy candy and appeal to children's natural curiosity.

Orange and black are Halloween's traditional colors. But Corey Colwell-Lipson wants to add a color to the mix: Green.

Colwell-Lipson launched Green Halloween just six months ago. With the help of her mother and Renton resident Lynn Colwell, she's since converted many Halloweens to Hallogreens.

"It went from 0 to 110 extremely quickly," the 34-year old Sammamish resident says of the movement. "We thought this was just going to be a year of ideas, but already people are saying, 'Yes, I'm ready to do this.'"

Green Halloween is about "thinking outside the candy box," Colwell-Lipson says. That means finding healthier alternatives to the holiday's traditional candy consuming.

According to their Web site, www.greenhalloween.org, "Going green means making choices that are both people and Earth

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GREEN: Halloween, it doesn't have to be all or nothing

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healthy."

There are four components behind Green Halloween.

1. Is it healthy for children?
2. Is it environmentally friendly?
3. Is it people friendly?
4. Does it give back to the community?

But it doesn't have to be all or nothing, Colwell-Lipson says.

"A family can just pick one of those things," she says. "A sticker is healthier than candy. Those stickers might not be environmentally friendly, they might not be made in America, they might not be fair trade, but that's fine. That's a great place to start. And if it's all four, that's wonderful."

A black poster board pasted with candy alternatives illustrates how to think outside the candy box.

Brightly colored beads, shiny shells, glittery rocks and temporary tattoos are just a few of the eye-catching objects plastered to the board. There's also natural Play-Doh, organic tea and locally-made soap, all in Green Halloween packaging.

"Instead of 'trick-or-treat,' think of 'trick-or-treasure' —

that's the inspiration behind all this," Colwell-Lipson says. "Thinking of things kids will treasure and hold onto past Halloween."

The Colwell-Lipson girls, Zoe, 6, and Finley, 3, already have quite a collection of treasures, many left on their doorstep by the Halloween Fairy, who exchanges candy for gifts.

But Colwell-Lipson didn't think to extend Green Halloween to other families until last Halloween.

"We went trick-or-treating with friends, and a few homes handed out non-Halloween items," she says. "One gave out stickers and the other bubbles. I was so thrilled that someone didn't give out candy that I was waving, saying, 'Thank you!'"

Those non-candy treats got Colwell thinking. "I thought to myself, 'What if people put a sign on their door if they are going to give trick-or-treaters healthier, non-food items?'"

Colwell-Lipson didn't stop at thinking. She sought out and obtained corporate sponsors, including Whole Foods, ParentMap magazine and Overlake Hospital Medical Center. She even selected



Lynn Colwell

Treeswing, a local environmental organization, as beneficiary.

The mother-daughter team is currently working with an assortment of companies — such as those whose products are on the black poster board — to help people think outside the candy box.

"We're not saying you have to stop giving out candy," Lynn Colwell says. "But there are alternatives out there."

Greenhalloween.org lists many candy alternatives. In addition to handing out treasures, ideas include farm trips, substituting parties for trick-or-treating and trick-or-treating

only at homes where Green Halloween items will be distributed.

"I'm not suggesting we get rid of trick-or-treating," says Colwell-Lipson. "But there are so many different ways to reduce waste, reduce excess and give kids the pleasure of fun traditions."

Many have already decided to green their Halloween. The mother-daughter team has heard from churches and schools holding green Oct. 31 parties. Green Halloween signs can be printed off Greenhalloween.org, and a map on the Web site is dotted with green pumpkins, each one indicating a Green Halloween home. The entire Issaquah Highlands is going green this Halloween, Colwell-Lipson says.

And the response from kids passing by the black poster board displayed at a recent Overlake Hospital Medical Center was encouraging.

"We had hundreds of kids come by," Colwell-Lipson says. "It didn't matter if they were 3 or 12, they'd say, 'Oh my gosh, I love this stuff!' It's parents who think we have to give them candy. That's the in-

teresting thing to me. But kids are just totally tuned into this idea."

Colwell-Lipson and her mother want Green Halloween to grow, extending to other areas and holidays.

"We're not trying to create ownership," Colwell-Lipson says. "Our hope is that it gets bigger than us. Maybe at some point people won't even know where it started."

At 62, Colwell says she's seen times change. And she's convinced Halloween can also change.

"It's the perfect moment in history to do this," she says. "There's so much interest in the greening issue and so much interest in the obesity issue."

Colwell-Lipson's daughters are leading the way.

"What do we say?" Colwell-Lipson asks the princess-costumed Zoe and Finley.

"Happy Halloween!" they yell.

"Or Happy Hallogreen?" their mother prods.

"Happy Hallogreen!" they return.

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