

How Can You Make Halloween a 'Treat'?

When you're working out a child custody agreement, a fun & special day like Halloween can be overlooked...until its a conflict. One or both parents may see it is a great day to spend with the children. The kids may see it as a fun day to spend with friends. Eliminate some of the conflict by looking at what makes the most sense logistically and geographically for the kids. Make this special day a fun treat for them. Plan Halloween as the first "hurdle" in navigating the holidays which will be here in a blink. Thanksgiving is 5 weeks away and Christmas is 9...YIKES!!!



Try These Tricks to Make This Halloween a Treat*!

* = Works for other holidays too!

- 1) **Keep the holiday about the family & the kids.** Holidays and special events are about family and the kids. When you keep that in mind, scheduling decisions are easier. Separate and if possible, remove your hurt, resentments and anger from the equation. Use the child's welfare (which is a subjective measurement) as your primary consideration. Easier said than done.
- 2) **Anticipate the Fail Points...what could go wrong! and don't create problems where none exist.** The relationship between you and your ex-spouse (or soon-to-be-ex) or other family members who have ideas about what YOUR schedule should look like, may be challenging. Strive for civility or courtesy or kindness anyone is a good option. Arguing about the kids costumes, how much candy/sugar they're allowed to eat, or if they're even allowed to trick or treat at all...aren't *really* what you're arguing about. Rather than giving the kids a reason to look at the special day in a negative light, create opportunities for them to enjoy the time.
- 3) **Look for satisfactory ways to take the pressure off and present a united front.** Being together as Mom & Dad, even for a few hours (shared trick-or-treating, a school event, a holiday meal) can be stressful. But it doesn't always have to be. Look for an opportunity to expand the fun. Trick or treat with a large neighborhood "buffer" group, plan the time Kids with Dad 4-6, with Mom 6-8 or with friends, cousins, other family...whatever makes sense for your family.
- 4) **Be the parent you want to be for your kids, especially for the holidays.** A "new normal" during the holidays is a specially tough situation for kids to navigate. It's hard for the adults who have a lot more

Justinian Charity Ball & Halloween Party
October 25, 2019
6:00 pm
Diamond Ballroom @
Doubletree Suites
211 Butterfield Rd.
Downers Grove, IL

Contact:
Michele Doyle
mdoyle@spydavlaw.com
630-810-8884

Rockford Mediation Training
Winnebago County Bar Association
October 28, 2019
10:00am - 4:00pm
Giovanni's Restaurant
610 N Bell School Rd.
Rockford, IL 61107

Contact: Holly Nash
Director@wcbrockford.org
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Lawyers' Assistance Program Annual Dinner
November 14, 2019
5:30 - 8:30
Union League Club
65 West Jackson
Chicago

Contact LAP
312-726-6607

life experience than the children. Regardless of what transpired, try to coordinate your efforts, present a consistent, positive message. Badmouthing backfires... it creates the perceived need that someone, the other parent, extended family members, or friends need to correct the statements, creating more conflict. The kids may feel or act like they must defend, justify or report the actions/badmouthing of the other parent.

5) Look for alternatives to the "usual" holiday activity on the usual or unusual date. "Trick or Treat" events are often held by local shopping malls, churches, libraries and community centers. Events like a Halloween block party or Open House are also good options, and the kids can take a major role in their planning. If you are celebrating on a 'non holiday day' Make it fun! Create a new tradition. Stock up on favorite treats and watch an (age-appropriate) scary movie, go to an activity during "your time". Hard to remember, the day itself is just a day - what's most important is to celebrate the time you spend with your children.



**Guardian Ad Litem
Training**

November 15 & 16
18th Judicial Circuit & DuPage
County Bar Association
421 N. County Farm Road
Auditorium
Wheaton, IL 60187

Contact:
Barb @ 630-653-7779

"Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude." -- William James

The holiday season will be here before you know it: do you have your parenting time schedule figured out? If your answer is 'yes', Congratulations on being proactive!

If you need any assistance in reducing the stress and worry about where the kids will be and when during the holiday season, get the details of your holiday parenting schedule worked out. Call the office today at 630-221-9300 to schedule a consultation or mediation session.

The Law Office of Brigid A. Duffield, P.C. wishes you a Halloween that's fun, a bit scary, and conflict-free!

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