

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HALLOWEEN CAN BE SCARY WITHOUT FOLLOWING SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

CHICAGO (Sept. 28, 2007) – Whether it be witches or vampires, angels or devils, children of all ages will be celebrating Halloween by donning their costumes and heading out to parties or trick-or-treating. Every year, Halloween becomes more and more popular with spending on decorations, candy and costumes rising. And, celebrating Halloween isn't just for small children. In fact, close to 60 percent of 18-24 year olds will be dressing up this year.

That's why Prevent Blindness America has dedicated the month of October as Halloween Safety Month in an effort to remind everyone to keep Halloween safe and fun.

"We can keep Halloween safe for everyone by taking a few easy precautions," said Daniel D. Garrett, senior vice president of Prevent Blindness America. "Our vision can be compromised by costume accessories, make-up, or simply by being out at night without proper lighting."

Prevent Blindness America also recommends the following:

- Always wear hypoallergenic or non-toxic make-up. Only adults should apply the make-up to children and remove it with cold cream or eye make-up remover instead of soap.
- False eyelashes and costume make-up can also irritate eyes. It's very important to follow the directions on the product package on how to apply and remove safely.
- Never wear costumes that could block vision such as some masks, wigs, hats or eye patches.
- Make sure that shoes fit well and that costumes are short enough to prevent tripping and falling.
- Take extra effort to eliminate tripping hazards on your porch and walkway such as hoses, potted plants, etc. Make sure jack-o-lanterns are also placed out of the way.
- Look for costumes made of flame-retardant material.

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- Avoid props or accessories that have sharp edges or pointed ends such as pitchforks, spears, knives, swords or wands.
- When trick-or-treating, always wear bright, reflective clothing or decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape/patches. Carry a bright flashlight to improve visibility.
- Always accompany children while trick-or-treating. Only go to houses you are familiar with and only visit homes that have the porch light on.
- Carefully examine all trick-or-treat items for signs of tampering before allowing children to eat them. Inspect any toys or novelty items received by kids age 3 and younger as they may pose a choking hazard.

Prevent Blindness America also wants to remind the public that it is illegal to purchase contact lenses without a prescription. Even if the lenses are cosmetic or non-correcting, such as those that look like snake eyes or cat eyes, they are still considered medical devices. Those interested in buying these lenses must go through a licensed eye care professional. Improper use and cleaning of lenses can lead to painful eye infections or even vision loss.

For more information on Halloween safety or contact lens safety, please call 1-800-331-2020 or log on to www.preventblindness.org.

About Prevent Blindness America

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness America is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness America touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screenings, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, divisions and chapters, it's committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, or to make a contribution to the sight-saving fund, call 1-800-331-2020 or visit us on the Web at www.preventblindness.org.

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