



## Who's Afraid of the Dark?

Halloween is coming up and what better time to talk about things that scare us! Some of us enjoy being scared and some of us don't. Do you like scary movies, haunted houses and horror stories? What scares you the most? As children, we tend to be scared of the dark, ghosts, monsters, shadows, etc. Young children under the age of 5 have difficulty in distinguishing fantasy from reality.\* Things that adults may not perceive as scary may actually be scary to them. It is important to acknowledge our children's fears and take them seriously. They should feel comfortable telling you about things that scare them. How do you react to your child's fears?

It is human nature to fear that which is unknown or what can't be seen. Many children are afraid of the dark. You may remember hiding under the covers whenever the lights went out. What things may be lurking under your bed or inside your closet? What if my arm slips off the bed and something grabs it! That shadow looks awfully scary! Even as an adult, we can't deny that these thoughts may still cross our mind. I know I won't let my arm hang off the bed at night! You never know what may come up and grab it!!

As parents, it is our duty to teach our children about the world and help them minimize their fears. We need to help them build their confidence and be respectful of their feelings. There are several ways to address our children's fears. Below are just some examples and suggestions:

- Do not tell children that their fears are silly. To them, their fears are real and serious. They should not feel ashamed to tell you.
- Communicate and validate their fears as it can help them build trust and open up to you.

- Ask them what they are afraid of and how they think you can help. Let them know it is normal to be scared.

- Provide comfort and help them feel safe but try not to overprotect. If you show anxiety or overreact to their fears, it may have a negative effect.

- Make their bedtime routine fun and relaxing. It's probably not a good idea to read them a scary story before bed time! Also avoid screen time prior to bed. Instead, play in the dark and let them see it's natural to do things in the dark.

- Teach children to face their fears. Do it together. If your child is scared of a shadow, try to find out what is making the shadow together. Let him/her see that there is nothing to be afraid of.

- Help children cope by putting a night light in the room, hallway, and/or bathroom.

- Teach children to self soothe. You can provide a security object such as a favorite stuffed animal or blanket.

- Use positive reinforcement. Let them know they're doing a great job when they tell you they're not scared.

Being scared is natural! Our little ones can learn to cope with their fears, and we as parents and/or caregivers play an important role in helping them overcome these fears. Don't fret and help them enjoy this Halloween - ghouls and all!

*Happy Halloween!*

- Mey-ling Cortiñas

\*[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/fear-and-anxiety-children](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/fear-and-anxiety-children)

## News & Events

### •VIVA Pediatrics is turning 10!

Join us in celebrating our 10 Year Anniversary proudly serving our special needs families! Stop by any of our offices during the month of October for a free Giggles Giraffe (while supplies last)

•VIVA is celebrating its 10 year VIVAversary! Attention all VIVA families and employees: Don't forget to join us for our 10 year VIVAversary family picnic which will take place on Saturday, November 17 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at 3400 Waterview Pkwy. Richardson, TX 75080. We will have Kona Ice, train rides, petting zoo, great food and much more!

### •JumpStreet Special Needs Hours

First Saturday of every month from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. The first hour (9:00am-10:00am) is exclusive to children with special needs and their families only, the second hour is open to the public. To find a location near you click link below: [www.gotjump.com/](http://www.gotjump.com/)

### •Alamo for All Sensory Friendly Showings

All shows starting before 2 pm on Tuesdays follow Alamo for All rules, with more shows on the weekends. Click link below for showings. <https://drafthouse.com/program/alamo-for-all>

### • Rays of Light Night Lights

Giving parents of special needs children 4 parent night out hours. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Friday of every month - 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, at White Rock United Methodist on the 1st Friday, and at Christ Foundry United Methodist Mission on the 3rd Friday for Spanish - speaking families. [www.raysoflightdallas.org/programs](http://www.raysoflightdallas.org/programs)

## Resources

### • **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: [www.vivaped.com/resources](http://www.vivaped.com/resources)

For current events visit us on Facebook. [www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds](http://www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds)

### • **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! [www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp](http://www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp)



### • **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at [www.theparkerleeproject.org](http://www.theparkerleeproject.org)

### • **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: [www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids](http://www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids)  
For more info visit: [www.protecttxfragilekids.org](http://www.protecttxfragilekids.org)

### • **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. [www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory](http://www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory)

### • **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



## Get Healthy with Giggles

### Halloween Goodies

With Halloween just around the corner, kids are thrilled with anticipation to dress up in costumes and Trick-or-Treat. Fun-filled memories are made trotting from house to house, or through the local community carnival all dressed up with friends and family.

Do you have a favorite Halloween memory? Did you love bobbing for apples, strolling through a cornfield maze, or maybe you were just brave enough to take on a haunted house? Or did you just have your eye on the prize, the bucket full of C-A-N-D-Y, that is.

In efforts for all things healthy and wise, Giggles recommends stocking up on non-sugary and possibly even non-edible treats this Halloween. How fun would it be to hand out mini puzzle books, slime, stickers, bubbles, or glow bracelets? Create a new tradition with handing out fun toys, or activity sets. Not only would you be providing healthy alternatives, but many kids with food allergies or feeding difficulties are unable to indulge in Halloween candy, so you would be putting an extra smile on these kids' faces.

If you do choose to offer non-edible treats for Halloween, check out the Teal Pumpkin Project on Facebook. The project promotes a safe Halloween and inclusion for those with food allergies. To participate you simply offer a non-edible treat for Halloween, put a Teal pumpkin on our porch (this signals you have non-edible treats available), then add your home to the Teal Pumpkin Project map if you wish. What a great way to make Halloween safer and healthier!

VIVA Pediatrics wishes you and yours a Happy and Safe Halloween!

- Jennifer Ward, BSN, RN

## Food for Thought



### CANDY CORN PARFAIT

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup pineapple chunks
- 1/2 cup orange slices, cut into chunks
- 1/4 cup unsweetened yogurt
- 1 tsp raw honey
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

#### Directions:

In a clear glass tumbler, layer the pineapple chunks and then the orange chunks. Mix the yogurt, vanilla extract and honey thoroughly together. Spoon the yogurt mixture on top of the fruit.

*Enjoy!*

What do you call wood when it's scared?



Petrified!



Just for Giggles!