

Fall Fest 2022: Special Needs

Sunday, October 23, 5-7pm

Fall Fest is an event hosted by National Park Church for families and children with a variety of special needs.

NPC Member Participant Guide

What? A non-scary, allergy-sensitive, handicapped accessible event for children and adults with special needs to enjoy trick-or-treating.

What's Next?

1. **Sign up** for a Trunk, Station, Candy or Non-candy items. Sign up genius will be available.
2. **Provide Candy** or treats that are free of milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat, fish, shellfish.
 - **Ideas:** Dots, Smarties, PEZ, Dum-Dums, Dubble Bubble, Blow Pops, Ring Pops, Skittles, Starbursts, Sour Patch Kids, Swedish Fish, Airheads, Nerds, Jolly Ranchers. **(place in lobby)**

OR

- **Non-Candy Items** such as light up toys, Halloween-themed toys, glow sticks, squishy toys, pencils, erasers, stickers, temporary tattoos, bouncy balls, slap bracelets, rubber ducks, bubbles, plastic rings, balloons, plastic rings, silly glasses, notepads. **(place in lobby)**
3. **Gather** items for trunk or station.
 4. **Prep** your family for serving. This means we will allow our guests to be respected and we will look out for their well-being.

Note: *A child carrying a blue or teal pumpkin while trick-or-treating will indicate to others that the child has a food sensitivity or special need, such as Autism. In a similar fashion, placing a blue or teal pumpkin on your table will indicate to others that you have non-food items available for trick-or-treaters. Not everyone is aware of the meanings of the colored pumpkins, so make sure to spread the word and educate others whenever possible!*

- This is a NPC activity. ALL AGES. You and/or your family may participate together in Trunk or Treat to serve others.
- Prepare your own children for serving others, addressing what they may see and experience and how to treat others kindly and warmly. Everyone wants a friend and to be accepted.
- We encourage families to go around the stations after setting up to let NPC kids participate and then serve. We encourage all NPC kids to **not** run around but to serve candy, restock stations, help pick up trash, make new friends, pass out goodie bags to families and help others.
- Each trunk or station must offer some type of allergy-sensitive treat or a non-food item.
- Tables must be decorated and volunteers dressed up in **non-scary** decorations and costumes.
- All communication should be Christ-like and positive. Be ready to answer questions about location of sensory room, restroom, medical personnel, food and activity locations, etc. **(map will be provided)**
- Safety/Medical personnel will be on site.

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NPC Member Participant Guide (continued)

Communicate as you would with any person: friendly, big smile, welcoming gaze, soft voice.

What you may notice:

- **Sensory Processing:** Sensory issues may be present in one or more of the sensory areas. A sensory/quiet room is located in Room 1.
- **Self-Stimulatory Behaviors** are a kind of motor overflow in an immature neurological system. However, self-stim behaviors can look odd and be distracting. i.e. flapping arms, fidgeting, facial or body tics, etc.
- **Perseveration:** repeating one story or sentence several times
- **Dominating Conversations:** only talking about what they like
- **Melt Down:** needs time to cool down and regroup
- **Communication Differences:** nonverbal, sign language, autistic patterns

- May have limited language, so requesting them to speak or acknowledge you may overwhelm them.
- May come in their regular attire as sensory or other issues may limit ability to tolerate wearing a costume.
- May have trouble making eye contact.
- May not have the motor coordination to take a piece of candy so be prepared to hand it out, or leave the candy easily placed on a table where a child could pick it up safely.

Thank you so much for participating in Trunk or Treat / Fall Fest 2022!

Have a question? Ask Patrick Luse, patrickluse@gmail.com