

# Anti-Bias & Halloween

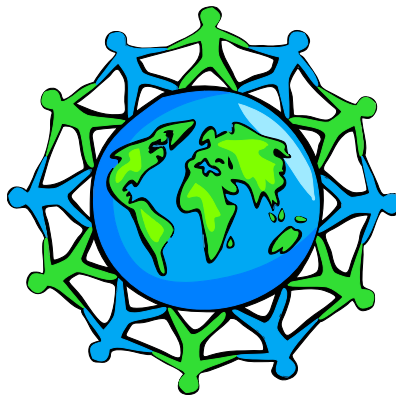
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Our schools are engaged in a practice of Anti-Bias Early Education. As outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Anti-Bias Early Education is a philosophical and tactical approach to creating equitable, open, and nurturing spaces for all children and adults to learn, thrive, and grow.

Little Sprouts respects all of our children's and families' traditions, backgrounds and differences. Anti-Bias is a daily practice aimed at helping everyone feel welcomed and comfortable in the classroom. One meaningful way that we maintain our anti-bias practice is our approach to holidays.

There is an important difference between celebrating a holiday and learning about it. There are even many teachable moments around holidays, including the idea of fair and unfair and differences in family customs.

Here are some ideas and suggestions about practicing anti-bias and learning about holidays at the same time.



ANTI-BIAS is about making everyone feel **welcomed and safe.**

# HALLOWEEN

Falling on October 31, Halloween kicks off a holiday season that continues through the end of the year and into spring. While dressing up in costume is very fun, and many children participate out of school, it is important to remember:

Not all families celebrate Halloween.

Not all children who dress up have store-bought costumes. Asking children to wear a costume may be a hardship on some families.

Halloween often portrays the color black as bad or evil, and elderly women as witches. There is bias in both of these stereotypes.

## We know - dressing up is FUN.

Throughout the year, there are many times when your school may specifically invite children and families to dress up. For dress-up days near Halloween, please be sure to:

- Stress it is an invitation only, not a requirement.
- Host it after Halloween so children can reuse a costume if they choose.
- Think about the purpose. If the classroom will have a parade around the school, make sure every child feels included.
- Consider inviting children to have a pajama day on Halloween itself as a fun alternative.
- If a child wears a costume on Halloween, that is their personal choice.



## Encourage families to NOT BRING CANDY to school.

If a family asks about sending candy to school, please direct them to our allergy-aware policy and encourage only healthy snacks.



## Focus on the season of AUTUMN.

Decorations of objects like leaves, pumpkins, and gourds celebrates the outdoors and nature, which everyone can enjoy.



## Curriculum & Adult-Child Interactions

- Talk to children about their interests.
- Plan "open-ended" art (not "put faces on pumpkins")
- Allow children to make choices about their day and activities.

Remember: Teachers should always be available to talk to children about their interests and home customs. If a child initiates play that is holiday-related, that's okay. Talk to them about it and encourage critical thinking. If they build a haunted house in block area, or draw ghosts at art, talk to them about it and ask the same open-ended questions you would with any other activity.