

Trick-or-Greeting

My almost 16-year-old autistic son went trick-or-treating last night. I thought we'd be home after going to three houses like past years because he's afraid of the dark. Well, I was wrong. He actually went around the block until his hands got too cold.

Now for my son, trick-or-treating isn't about getting candy. For him, it's greeting and striking up a conversation with every person that opened their door. He'd get so excited about introducing himself, asking if the person knew who he was dressed up as, guess who this person was dressed up as, and then asked if he guessed right. If he didn't guess right, he had to justify to them why his answer should be right. And if they didn't have a costume on, then he would find something to compliment them on. So each house we visited took about 5-10 minutes.

His methodology of trick-or-greeting took me back to when he was about 3-years old. Even at an early age, he would strike up a conversation with folks handing out the treats. My son is passionate about animals, and he had to pet every dog he saw at the park, literally. While trick-or-greeting, he saw a cat heading towards this particular house. Even though the cat was now out-of-sight, he insisted we go to the same house that the cat went to. He knocked on the door and someone answered it. His eyes darted past the guy that opened the door, and once he spotted the cat, he immediately went running inside these strangers' house trying to catch it. This guy didn't know what just hit him as he stood there perplexed. I quickly told him he's autistic, and I never know what to expect. I was so embarrassed and apologized while the wife went chasing after my son. He had never done anything like this before. When the wife caught my boy, he refused to leave. He kept hollering he wanted to pet the cat. Next, the wife tells her husband to get the cat and bring it to her. Once she has the cat, she allows him to pet the cat while she's slowly walking back to the front door. Once I got my hands on him, he continued petting the cat for a few more seconds before I told him it was time to go to the next house. So, he looks at the man that opened the door and says, "Trick-or-treat!"

