

## Tales From the Trenches- Halloween Alternatives

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Okay, I feel like we have just settled into a pattern that is comfortable. The weather is cooling off and I can wear larger sweaters and jackets to cover the stress eating of finding workers. Now it's time to think Halloween and I don't want to do it. Let's just coast a little and enjoy it. If you don't do something, people will call you the devil and wonder why you don't like kids. I wish people would get this excited about volunteering for Extended Teaching Care.

I have tried some of the same things you have tried; Church Carnival (vacuumed hay for the rest of the night), Trunk or Treat and Open House through the church to Trick or Treat each SS classroom. Those are fine but I am interested in moving out into the city as a real outreach event, What about you?

This year we are coordinating "Light the Night" where our Adult departments each host a house where "Light the Night" is in the trick or treat route and meeting people from their neighborhood. As we have been mapping this out, we are finding huge potential of activating our families in outreach as parents bring their children by these houses.

Our goal is ten "Light the Night" homes. There will be approximately a dozen adults from each SS department. I will have a Bounce House inflatable delivered and set up during the day. There will be a couple of carnival games (preschool & elementary), candy for prizes, contests and a grand prize give-a-way parents can sign up for at the welcome table.

I have enjoyed this in my last church with great participation and involvement. I will outline how we made this happen this Thursday in my podcast and post all the notes for you to organize "Light the Night" for yourself. Kids loved it and parents had a good time too. I think the success really came from moving out of the church and into the neighborhoods. They didn't have to come to us because we went to them.

A list of carnival games are on the printable of this post so check it out. What would you add?

For this tip and other ideas for Preschool & Children's Ministry visit [www.mrmarksclassroom.com](http://www.mrmarksclassroom.com)



### List of Carnival Game Ideas:

- Bean bag toss games (Both preschool & children versions)
- Sucker tree- Pull sucker out of Styrofoam (Color on stick indicates prize won)
- Rope pull- Pull the rope laying across the table (Color on rope indicates prize won)
- Dig for candy in dish tub of sand (rice or beans or dried pasta)
- Duck pond or boats- Number or color dot on bottom indicates prize won)
- Pumpkin Roll (Like Bowling ball)
- Ring toss on Pop bottles
- Fishing Game
- Sweep the Pumpkin around the track
- Horse Shoes
- Keys to the Dog Cage- Guess the right key for the lock to win the plush animal inside
- Toilet paper toss (through toilet lid hole)
- Darts for popping the balloon (caution!)
- Frisbee Toss
- POGO stick contest
- Sit N' Spin to win
- Penny toss on paper plates
- Shoot ping pong ball of Golf tee with water gun
- Putt the golf ball into the cup (laying on its side)
- Football throw (Hula Hoop hanging from ceiling or tree branch)
- Basketball free throw (If outside basket is available)
- Clothes Pin Drop- Stand on chair, arm straight out, drop five clothes pins into a frosting container (no stooping over).
- Bonus- IF your group has a comedian, have a "Weight & Age Guessing" booth for parents with kids. It could be a way to use funny banter and get laughs while interacting with the crowd and having fun! (Make funny guesses- "Let me try again-Best two out of three!! How much do you really weigh? How do we know I'm wrong if you don't tell me your age? I need to see your Driver's License...")

