

Halloween Costumes and Stereotype Biases

When considering purchasing or creating a Halloween costume for your child, we urge you to look critically at the various types of costumes that are marketed to children and the stereotypes and/or biases that some costumes may be promoting. This can be done by asking a couple of key questions and discussing with your child:

- *Are there any ways in which a Halloween costume might represent something hurtful or harmful to people's ideas or feelings?*
- *Why might it be important to carefully review and analyze Halloween costumes before purchasing or deciding to wear one?*
- *What type of costumes perpetuate racial, cultural, and/or gender stereotypes or reinforce limited and/or hurtful ways of thinking about people? (Pocahontas, Native Americans, geishas, etc)*
- *Analyze the messages that a Halloween costume can reveal harmful ideas beneath the playful surface.*

The general rule of thumb is that if a costume is related to someone's identity or culture, then it is not something respectful to that person or culture because that is a part of someone's identity, part of who they are. "We are a culture, not a costume."

Halloween is an opportunity for us to reach a better understanding of the concepts of diversity, inclusion, and respect for each other as individuals and as a group.

Please see [this](#) article as on "How Halloween costumes can promote gender bias".

