

[**Should teens be allowed to trick-or-treat?**](http://tweentribune.com/tween/should-teens-be-allowed-trick-or-treat) *- Posted October 11, 2012*

When it comes to big kids with pillow-cases begging for candy on Halloween, there seem to be three camps.

The sure, why nots say they overbuy and are happy to let teens scarf up the leftovers so they don't eat it all themselves. The No's find it overly cynical when older kids aren't in costumes that took some planning. And the middle-grounders believe teens aren't in it just for the loot and still truly enjoy the ritual of dressing up and going door-to-door.

So how old is too old for trick or treating?

"I'm cutting mine off at 14, but if teens show up at my door and are polite I'll give them candy," said Betsy Tant in Knoxville, Tenn., mom to a 13-year-old daughter and two younger kids.

Last year, when her daughter was 12, "someone said they felt it was inappropriate for her to be trick or treating, even though she was with her 4-year-old sister," Tant said. "They assumed she was a teen because she's tall. They were mad. I had to intervene and it was very uncomfortable."

Other candy givers who are also parents said it feels more like extortion than good fun when the older teens show up, especially hulk-sized boys mowing over toddlers to get to the door.

"I also think it's about adults not trusting older kids," Tant said. "With teens, Halloween can be more about tricks. Teens tend to be more impulsive and less concerned with consequences."

Laurie A. Couture's 18-year-old son, Brycen, said he went trick-or-treating with his mom until he was 15. He wanted to enjoy the holiday with her after his adoption at age 11.

"I wanted to have that experience with my mom. I've always loved the idea of dressing up in funky costumes," he said.

Couture, in the Boston area, said they never had a candy refusal. "Once or twice an older person would say, 'Aren't you a little old to be trick- or-treating?'"

<http://tweentribune.com/tween/should-teens-be-allowed-trick-or-treat>

**Trick-Or-Treat Age Limit: How Old Is Too Old To Go Door To Door On Halloween?**

By [Adam Lidgett](http://www.ibtimes.com/reporters/adam-lidgett) [@AdamLidgett](http://www.twitter.com/AdamLidgett) On 10/23/15 AT 11:42 AM

The Abrahms family of Fort Greene, Brooklyn trick-or-treat as Brooklyn residents participate in Halloween activities, Oct. 31, 2012 in New York City. Photo: Getty Images

For many grown Americans, Halloween is a time to remember the childhood joys of the primary tradition associated with the holiday — trick-or-treating. It’s the memories of finding the perfect costume, getting the big chocolate bar from the generous lady on the block that every kid went to or even having your parents stuff a snowsuit underneath your vampire outfit to avoid freezing in the late October air that come back up this time of year.

But just how old is too old to trick or treat? Dressing up in costume and going to Halloween parties is something many people do well into adulthood, but the tradition of knocking on strangers’ doors for free candy is one seemingly still relegated to the kids. There is no age set in stone at which people have to end the tradition, but most agree that around the time kids reach the teenage years, it’s time to hang up the masks.

Some cities and municipalities [have](http://www.nydailynews.com/life-style/cities-ban-teenage-trick-treaters-put-age-limits-allowed-halloween-article-1.191844) in the past few years imposed age limits on trick-or-treaters. Certain areas in Virginia started limiting trick-or-treating to those 12 and younger in the 1970’s.

Kate Roberts, a California pediatrician, said most Americans quit the door-to-door activity between 12 and 17 years old. "If you have a teen who throws on an orange T-shirt and walks out the door, they're not really expressing the holiday spirit," she [told](http://www.today.com/parents/halloween-teens-how-old-too-old-trick-or-treat-t47811) Today.com. "Teens can sometimes be disrespectful. You want to make sure your teen isn't going to be causing any issues in the community."

Some Americans still believe, however, that no age is too old to trick-or-treat. Today posted a survey asking at what age should people stop the tradition, and the most common answer was never, with 29 percent of the vote. The next most common answer was a tie at 15 percent for 12 years old and 13 years old.

WITI-TV out of [Milwaukee](http://fox6now.com/2015/10/16/poll-trick-or-treat-how-old-is-too-old-to-go-door-to-door/) conducted a similar poll, with 34 percent of responders saying one is never too old to trick-or-treat. Some 17 percent of people said 13 was too old, while nearly 14 percent said 15 is too old.

Not all people mind teenagers coming to their door for treats. In a poll conducted by [Pennlive](http://www.pennlive.com/entertainment/index.ssf/2015/10/how_old_is_too_old_to_trick_or.html).com in Harrisburg, 30 percent of people said they don’t mind if teens trick-or-treat at their door as long as some effort is put into the costume. The poll also found that 27 percent of people think Halloween is strictly for kids, and that teenagers should stay away.

# Halloween for teens: How old is too old to trick or treat?

Oct. 13, 2015 at 12:39 PM by Lisa Flam a TODAY Contributor

As teens and tweens start growing into more responsibility, do they really need to grow out of the childhood tradition of trick-or-treating?

Halloween is often seen as a night for the littles, those gleeful and giddy princesses and superheroes who scamper through the neighborhood before dark, parents in tow.

But some teens in today's pressure-filled world still like to dress up in thoughtful, creative costumes to collect candy as well, and their parents are all for it. For those families, trick-or-treating is a nice chance for kids to be with their friends, to reconnect with the community and to enjoy a nice evening.

Amy Creel, whose daughters are 11 and 15, sees trick or treating as a form of wholesome fun, something that needs no age limit as long as trick-or-treaters are in the holiday spirit.

Last year, Creel went out with her younger daughter, Daisy, and big sis Alice went trick-or-treating with friends. Alice goes all out in making her costumes, Creel said, and she shows no signs of stopping the annual tradition.

"It's generally a fun and safe way to spend the evening," said Creel, of Silver Spring, Maryland. "I encourage all kids to hang on to that part of their childhood as long as they can. If they want to trick or treat into high school, I think that's great."

Kids in the tween years may begin to lose interest in trick-or-treating and decide to celebrate at a party or haunted house instead. Rather than go on their own candy hunt, they may accompany younger siblings or hand out sweets at home. Some communities limit trick-or-treating, [often to kids 12 and younger.](http://www.today.com/news/some-cities-ban-teens-trick-or-treating-2D80555461)

And some parents think it just seems wrong to open their door to find

a kid who might just be taller than they are on a night known for shaving cream and rotten eggs.

Lisa Maxwell, a mom of four from Cookeville, Tennessee, feels that once kids are 16, the party's over and they are too old to trick-or-treat, though she would still give candy to teens at her door. Her older children, 16 and 18, lost interest in going out before turning the big 1-6.

"I feel like at that age, you can drive and you can get a job," Maxwell said. "I think it's kind of silly. I think it's more of young child's holiday."

Most kids end the door-to-door tradition between 12 to 17, says Dr. Kate Roberts, a pediatrician in Orange County, California. She has no problem with teens who trick or treat as long as they are in the Halloween mindset and are polite, respectful and patient.

"If you have a teen who throws on an orange T-shirt and walks out the door, they're not really expressing the holiday spirit," she says, urging parents to question those kids about why they really want to go out into the night. "Teens can sometimes be disrespectful. You want to make sure your teen isn't going to be causing any issues in the community."

### **Survey of 4,414 people: At what age should kids STOP trick-or-treating? View results**

**10 3%**

**11 2%**

**12 12%**

**13 13%**

**14 10%**

**15 8%**

**16 8%**

**17 8%**

**Never! 36**