

Guest Column

Healthy Halloween Treats Offered By Supervisor Gioia

Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia explains why his office in El Cerrito is offering free samples of healthy Halloween treats this week.

By [John Gioia](#)



Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia is offering a free sample of small toys, art supplies and other kid-friendly accessories that can be given out this Halloween instead of candy. The items will be available Oct. 24-28, 2011, at his office in El Cerrito, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed noon to 1 p.m.).

Grown-ups and kids are invited to “trick or treat” at my office this week, October 24 to 28, to pick up fun, healthy alternatives to Halloween’s usual sugary fare.

As both a parent and a public official, I strongly believe in the importance of encouraging healthy eating, as our country faces an epidemic of childhood obesity. Obesity is linked to many serious health problems including diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer.

Our community needs to counter the billion dollar advertising blitz waged by junk food manufacturers, much of which targets children. Young kids, in particular, often lack the education and maturity to make wise eating choices, and are vulnerable to advertising’s sugary “buy me” messages.

Halloween treats can be colorful and festive **without** the sugar, fat, and empty calories of candy. Stop by my office for a free sample of small toys, art supplies and other kid-friendly accessories that can be given out this Halloween. My wife and I will be giving out these alternatives to junk food when trick or treaters come to our door.

Years ago, candy and sweets were truly “treats” in our diet, for special occasions. Today, unfortunately, they’re a daily component in many children’s lives, in the form of candy, soda, fried chips and other non-nutritious snack foods.

I'm not anti-candy; my family and I will certainly enjoy some sweets over the holidays. But we strive for moderation, as part of a balanced diet, and will help trick or treaters at our house do the same by giving non-candy treats without the trick of empty calories.

Stop by my office for a sample.

What: Healthy Halloween Treat Give Away **One sample bag per household, while supplies last.**

When: Monday, Oct. 24 to Friday, Oct. 28, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed from noon to 1 p.m.)

Where: Office of Supervisor Gioia, 11780 San Pablo Avenue, Suite D, El Cerrito 94530

Contact: Luz Gomez, 510-374-3231 or Luz.Gomez@bos.cccounty.us

Wishing everyone a Happy "Healthy" Halloween.