

**Subject: Favorite Website**  
**Submitted by: Marelou Marson**

Hi fellow children's ministry advocates,

I am a former Director of Youth and Family Ministries at the Center for Spiritual Living in Seattle and at two Unity churches. I have written two books related to children's ministry, produced two teacher training videos, written curriculum, created and directed spiritual camps for children, been a parent education instructor and love networking with others who are working in their churches on behalf of the children. I would like to support you in using this listserv to share your ideas, ask for help, do some planning, lift your programs to a higher and more successful place. You are each brilliant and have something to share. Let's hear from you. Be sure to tell us who you are.

I want to share my favorite and most helpful website with you: [www.kidsdomain.com](http://www.kidsdomain.com). I use it for craft ideas, holiday gift ideas and holiday puzzles to copy and put out for the older children (Some learning styles relish this type of activity) for special events such as the Sunday before Halloween.

#### **HALLOWEEN CELEBRATION:**

To create a little pizzaz in your program, generate fun and camaraderie consider the Sunday before a holiday as a great place to start.

The Sunday prior to Halloween, invite the children to wear their costumes.

Ahead of time make orange playdough and put out some simple decorations. An assortment of crossword or wordsearch puzzles can be offered along (download from kidsdomain) with simple Halloween crafts. Sing pumpkin carols (if you're interested, let me know and I'll share them), and do a group participation story (my favorite is The Little Old Woman Who Wasn't Afraid of Anything. Divide the group into sections and assign one of the sounds for them to repeat as the story is read). Talking about being afraid can lead into the history and symbols of Halloween.

It's fun to present to the children the metaphysics of Halloween. Begin with the history of Halloween (check out <http://wilstar.com/holidays/hallowen.htm>). Children can list all the symbols of Halloween (have pictures ready) such as pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns, witches, ghosts, goblins, and children in costumes. Invite them to consider that these symbols/pictures might stand for spiritual ideas. For instance the jack-o-lantern with its glowing candle inside reminds us of the Light of God that reflects outward from each of us. When we look at each other, we can see this beautiful light reflected in our eyes. Witches, goblins, ghosts can represent the negative thoughts we all have from time to time that we can brush away and not give our power to. The fun of dressing up reminds us that trying on

different ways of being strengthens our respect for our diversity. What other ideas might be explored?

Offer awards for each costume---each child can be "the best something" (gold notary public seals from Office Depot with blue ribbons attached--write on the labels with a vis a vis marker )and, of course, have some fun snacks.

Blessings,  
Marelu  
marelum@comcast.net