

StamfordPatch

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It's the Most Sugary Time of the Year!

Area dentists are gearing up for their annual Halloween candy buy-back programs and offering families some helpful tips to keep their kids' teeth healthy this Halloween.

By [Caroline Sadowska](#)

Trick or Treat night is drawing near — how do you make sure your kids enjoy their Halloween traditions while saving their smile?

"I never tell children not to eat candy on Halloween," **Dr. Anna Simonis**, owner of [New Canaan Pediatric Dentistry](#) said. "What I tell parents is to stay away from the really sticky stuff. Chocolate and Reeses are better than Starbursts because the sugar doesn't linger in your mouth. With sticky candy, even if you brush after, there's always something left."

Area dentists are also sponsoring a variety of candy buy back programs to encourage children to enjoy their favorites and then bring what's leftover to the dentist's office to receive cash, prizes, or other incentives. What happens to the candy? In just about every case, it goes to troops overseas.

New Canaan Pediatric Dentistry will collect Halloween candy during office hours through the end of November. They will pay \$1 per pound of unopened candy and also donate \$1 to St. Jude's for each pound of candy they receive.

"Less candy for the kids and more money for sick kids," Simonis said. "What I want to do is donate the total amount on behalf of the children and the town of New Canaan."

Stamford's [Dental Care Kids](#) will be collecting Halloween candy between November 1 and November 8 to send to the troops. This is the fifth year that they have collected leftover candy after Halloween and everyone who participates will be entered to win a new Nintendo 3 DS.

In Norwalk, **Dr. Maria Paras's** [office](#) will host their first annual Halloween candy buy back on November 1 between 3 and 6 pm. They will pay children \$1 per pound for up to five pounds of unopened Halloween candy.

Of course, not every child will be willing to part with any of their hard-earned candy, but there are still things families can do to get through treat-season cavity-free.

In addition to sorting out the more damaging chewy, sticky treats, parents can be mindful of when their children are enjoying their Halloween candy. The [Connecticut State Dental Association](#) (CSDA) recommends encouraging children to consume sugary foods with meals instead of on their own. The increased saliva production will help neutralize acid production and decrease tooth exposure to the acids.

The CSDA also recommends drinking more water with treats and practicing good brushing habits to ensure that a happy Halloween doesn't get in the way of dental health.

For a list of other Connecticut locations participating in candy buy-backs, visit the [CSDA's website](#).

<http://stamford.patch.com/articles/it-s-the-most-sugary-time-of-the-year>

About this column: "About Town" records the neighborhood chatter of Stamford. Let us know if you've heard anything that should be included. The opinions expressed in this column do not necessarily reflect those of Patch or its editors.