

Halloween apps for a spooky and safe night

Natasha Baker, Reuters

(Reuters) - Whether it's tracking the safety of trick-or-treaters, finding a last-minute costume or giving your house a haunted vibe, there is a Halloween app for it.

Although Hurricane Sandy will disrupt Halloween along the east coast of the United States, millions of children across the country are expected to celebrate the spooky holiday.

While children are eager to go trick-or-treating, parents are concerned about the safety of their children. The Trick or Tracker app from Iconosys lets parents monitor the location of their children by providing location updates which arrive via text messages.

"It allows not just mom and dad to find the kids, but the kids to find mom and dad," said Wayne Irving, CEO of California-based Iconosys, adding that children can also send a distress signal, which instantly sends their location to a parent.

The Android app, which is free until Halloween, also sets a maximum distance that the child can stray from home, and notifies the parent when they have gone too far.

Although some apps are branded for Halloween, others not linked to the spooky holiday perform similar functions, including Life360. The free app for iPhone and Android devices lets parents create routes ahead of time.

A spokesperson for Life360 said parents should ensure their children's phone has a fully charged battery with GPS turned on, and they should set ground rules with their child on how often they should be checking in.

If choosing a costume is problem, a free app called Digital Dudz lets users create an instant costume using their smartphone, a T-shirt and some duct tape.

The app features animations such as a live beating heart filmed during open heart surgery and erratically moving eyeballs. Users can incorporate the animation into their costume by making a cut out in the T-shirt and securing the smartphone with duct tape.

The animations also have sound effects and are interactive.

"Double tap on the heart and it turns into maggots. Double tap again and it turns into snakes," explained Digital Dudz creator Mark Rober.

To get into the Halloween spirit an app called Pumpkin Pal, which costs 99 cents, lets people create their own virtual jack-o-lanterns. Users can carve custom designs into their virtual pumpkins then set their [iPad](#) [1] in their window as a last-minute

Halloween apps for a spooky and safe night

Published on Electronic Component News (<http://www.ecnmag.com>)

decoration.

Another app, Halloween Sound Shelf, provides soundtracks to create a haunted environment, such as ghostly laughs, frightening screams and thunder and lightning. The app for iOS devices is a free.

(Editing by Patricia Reaney and Paul Casciato)

Source URL (retrieved on 11/26/2014 - 5:08pm):

<http://www.ecnmag.com/news/2012/10/halloween-apps-spooky-and-safe-night>

Links:

[1] <http://www.reuters.com/subjects/ipad>