

# Too many sweets in Halloween treats?

One of Halloween night's joys is a child's uncertainty about what awaits them after they press a doorbell for trick-or-treating.

Are they going to get a Peanut Butter Cup or will it be a dreaded box of raisins?

All Hallows' Eve can also be a day of handwringing for parents.

While their children are sitting squarely on cloud nine because they've accumulated a load of candy, some mothers and fathers worry about all that sugar sitting in plastic pumpkins and trick-or-treat bags.

The odds are good that Halloween candy is going to be around the house for a long, long time. The temptation to eat a piece of candy throughout the day for weeks is often too much for children.

Danielle Miller takes a wait-and-see approach when it comes to Halloween. The Bel Air resident and St. Margaret parishioner wants a memorable night for her two daughters, 7-year-old Gabrielle and Jordan, who is 2.

"We always make it fun," Miller said.

The build-up to Halloween is big for the Millers. The girls have already picked up their Disney-related costumes. Gabrielle will be dressed as movie heroine Mulan, while Jordan will be Minnie Mouse. Miller's husband, Rob, always sits down with the girls and carves a pumpkin day before Halloween.

On the night of Halloween, the Millers walk Danielle's sister's neighborhood for candy.

"They get this big excitement about everything," Miller said. "It makes you feel like a kid again watching it."

Jordan likes pretty much anything sweet at this point and Gabrielle is tickled when

she sees something sour lately.

Once they get home, the Millers comb through the bag to see if there's anything of concern.

"If there's something out of the wrapper, I just throw it out," Miller said.

Parents are encouraged not to feed children younger than 3 years old peanuts, so Danielle picks out candy with nuts in Jordan's bag. Sugar sticks are off limits every day for Gabrielle, so Halloween is no different. Gum and taffy aren't chewed much in the house, so an extended family member usually ends up a beneficiary.

Other than that, "pretty much everything is fair game."

Miller wants the best for her children and takes caution by rationing the candy. Danielle admits that she and Rob even dabble in the large sweets stash.

Much of it is stored away from little hands.

"They definitely like sweets," Miller said of her children, "so it's often out of sight, out of mind."