

Boo!

Halloween's over,
but debate is not

Now that you've put the skeletons and superhero costumes away... as Halloween grows from a minor event a generation ago to a certified major holiday today, many Americans are objecting.

Some 27% of people who attend religious services weekly object to the one-day event "on religious grounds," according to a new Gallup Poll. About 1,000 adults were questioned just before the Oct. 31 celebration.

Nationwide, about 11% object for the same reasons. But that doesn't keep people from participating in some way. Of those polled, 2-of-3 say they pass out treats and 1-in-6 attended a Halloween party. ☺

Ripple Kids, Inc.

New program teaches them to give back



Showing kids they can take action and make a difference in the world, the non-profit Tustin-based organization, Ripple Kids, Inc., has created a nationwide place for inspiration.

Started by Bridget Belden in 2003 after being motivated by her own charitable two children, Ripple Kids, Inc. features youth who are changing their community. The organization hopes that a "ripple effect" will cause other kids to follow in their footsteps.

"We have a lot to learn from kids," Belden says. "They think not 'if' but 'I can.'"

Kids register on the website (stage.i2net.com/ripplekids.org/), read about others who have helped their community, get inspired and share ideas. On the website there is a list of volunteering options and organiza-

tions: Just plug in a zip code and it will show local opportunities.

"They're [kids] an invaluable resource, and parents overlook their ability," Belden says. "It doesn't matter what the end result is as long as they're taking action."

Whether it's having a bake sale with proceeds going to Hurricane Katrina victims or donating one's hair to Locks of Love, an organization that makes wigs for children with cancer, Ripple Kids, Inc. doesn't focus on how big the contribution is but that kids are actually trying to contribute to their community and world. ☺

Information about the Ripple Kids program can be obtained online or at 714.602.2295.

— Ashley Elliot

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