

Mom's Guide To Fun Easy Kids Birthday Parties

Kid's Birthday Parties Made Fun and Easy for Everyone

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Birthdays are always fun and games, especially for the children involved. However, that's not the story when it comes to the parents of those children. Children's birthday parties are usually more work than fun for parents. Can kid's birthday parties be made fun for everyone? Surely, with a little bit of thought, they can.

Are you trying to do everything and feeling overwhelmed?

Let's admit that many moms feel they have to do everything themselves if they want it to be done correctly. Many have this inner need for things to be perfect and quite often feel they are the only ones who can achieve what they envision, whether for a birthday party for their children or a huge holiday meal. Moms take it upon themselves to do all of the work to ensure that things go smoothly.

Unfortunately, no mom is Superwoman and no mom has clones of herself. No matter how hard she tries, she can't be in more than one place at a time. She can't spend more than 24 hours in a day doing the things she wants to see done. She can't do everything, and she shouldn't even try. It's just not possible for one mom to do everything, be everything, and accomplish everything all by herself. She needs help, even if she doesn't like to admit it.

This is especially the case when it comes to children's birthday parties. Moms the world over attempt to make the birthday cake and decorate it like a professional; they feel they must provide goodie bags for each and every child that attends the party. They spend time deciding upon games and crafts for the children to enjoy while they are in her domain.

All of these activities, while they may seem necessary for the success of their child's party, really don't have to be done by just one person. They can easily be handled by others, if the mom will only relinquish some of the control. **No mom should ever feel like she has to do everything, especially if there are people around that can help out.**

Here's How You Maintain Your Sanity

Here are some suggestions on how to enjoy your child's birthday and the party while maintaining your sanity. Pick and choose the ideas that will work best for you. Most of all, remember that you're only one person. Don't try to do everything. Let others help you!

1. Hire someone

The quickest and easiest way to have a birthday party for your child and not have to deal with the stress is to hire a birthday party planner to put the party together for you.

Take a look in your local telephone **yellow pages** for "Party Services." Larger cities will have at least one, if not more, party planners. A couple of months before the big day, call the planners to check to see what they charge, what services they provide, and if they are available. If they are available, and it meets your budget, this might be the best option for you to be able to relax and enjoy your child's party.

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This option, of course, is not available for everyone either for financial or location reasons. However, if you do happen to live in an area with a party planner accessible, why not take advantage of their services? You will save yourself the stress and a whole lot of work.

If there aren't any party planners in your local area, you can still take advantage of their skills. Contact one in a nearby town or visit the websites of those party planners online. They may be able to plan a party, collect the materials, and then send it to you. At the very least, perhaps they would be able to give you some advice on how to enjoy yourself while you're planning and putting together your child's party.

Maybe your child really loves horses. You may be able to find someone who will bring a pony or a small horse to your party for the kids to ride. If you plan to have a horse or pony at the party, make sure that you let everyone know just in case any of the children have allergies to or are afraid of them.

In years passed, it wasn't uncommon to see a clown at birthday parties. There are still people who will dress up as clowns and visit a birthday party, particularly if the party has a circus theme. They will likely create balloon animals, swords, or hats. Again, if there are going to be toddlers, you might want to avoid this type of party.

One of the main benefits of hiring someone to help with your child's party is that it allows you an opportunity to enjoy yourself. You'll actually have time to spend talking with the other mothers and watching the festivities. In fact, by having someone else responsible for the major part of the party, you might actually have pleasant memories of your child's birthday for the very first time.

You may even **consider hiring someone to take photos during the party** so you'll hopefully be in a few of them when they are developed. Of course, you don't have to hire someone to take photos, **just ask another parent or older child** to do the honors. If you're really adventurous, get a couple of disposable cameras and leave them lying around for the children to take pictures during the party.

2. Make a plan

Having a birthday party that's fun for everyone begins with a plan. If you've decided not to use the services of a party planner, make sure you begin planning the party early.

Begin planning up to two months before your child's birthday. Planning this far ahead will allow you plenty of time to order anything you might need from online sources and to have it delivered on time. It also gives you a chance to find others – family, friends, and your children's friend's parents – to help take some of the workload from you. (If they seem reticent to help, you could offer to do the same for them when their child's birthday rolls around.)

Decide how many children you will invite. Will you expect the parents to stay with their child during the party or will they be allowed to leave the child and then return for them? If you do expect the parent to remain, will you enlist their help or allow them a place to visit with the other parents?

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What theme you will use? Do you even want a theme or does your child want something else? Where you will have the party? Will it be an indoors or outdoors party? Will you have it at some other location than your home? What types of games or activities will you have for the children? Will you give goodie bags or just allow the children to take home a craft? These are all questions to consider when planning a birthday party.

3. Other locations

One option to cutting down on the work you are required to do is to have the party at a location other than your home.

Research the options in your area. **Bowling alleys, roller skating rinks, and public pools may rent space for birthday parties.** Perhaps there's a **park** nearby that will rent a pavilion near a lake. The benefit of having a party at one of these places is that you don't have to worry about decorating. The children will also have an activity to keep them busy until it's time for the birthday cake.

Pizza parlors and fast food restaurants often have space available for parties. You'll need to check in advance to ensure you get a date close to your child's birthday. Quite often with birthday packages at these types of businesses is that they provide everything you need – cake, silver wear and plates, some decorations, and possibly even a gift for the child. They may even provide a meal for your guests. All you have to do is show up and enjoy yourselves.

If your child is a movie buff, and a movie they're just dying to see is premiering around their birthday, you may be able to **rent a private screening room.** Many movie theaters have a party room that you can use for cake and then relocate to the screening room when it's time for the movie to begin. This type of party would be great for teenagers who have just a few really close friends.

4. Limit the guests

You don't have to invite everyone you know. It may sound rude, but invite as few guests as possible.

To help your child from being overwhelmed with the activity and number of people at their birthday party, **consider limiting the number of children invited to your child's age plus one more.** Not only will your child be able to enjoy spending time with each guest, they won't be overwhelmed by having too many gifts and not being able to acknowledge each one before opening the next.

Another benefit to having fewer guests, your child will have fewer thank you notes to write. Try to keep the cards and gifts together to make writing the notes easier, as well. Writing thank you notes has become a dying art. Those who give a gift will appreciate the note and the sentiment of thanks conveyed in it.

If you're afraid that you will offend Aunt Sue by not inviting her to the party, explain that this party is just for your child and their friends. Then plan to have a small cake at another time for adult family members to give their gifts. You don't have to make the cake from scratch; pick one up from a local bakery and you're done.

5. Choose a theme

Pay attention to things your child likes. The important thing here to remember is that the theme should be something the child will enjoy, so enlist their help in choosing the theme.

There are so many themes to choose from without having to depend on a name brand toy or movie. Pirates are always popular, as are dinosaurs, knights and dragons, princesses, circuses with clowns, animal safari, astronauts and space, as well as racing cars, dress up, and costume parties. The possibilities are only limited by your child's imagination and the time and effort you want to put forth.

Choosing a theme helps you organize your thoughts, plan which items need to be bought for decorations, what games you will play, or what crafts you can do. If at all possible, try to make decorations for the party to cut down on some of the expense. Cardboard boxes of all sizes can usually be obtained from stores for free. Use them to create a castle or shields and swords for a medieval party. You can also use large boxes to make a throne for a princess, with a little work and a log of imagination.

6. Set the time

Unless you're planning on having your party at a fast food or other restaurant, don't plan on having a birthday party at meal times. This will keep you from having to plan a meal as well as the party.

If your child is under six, have the party from 10:00-11:30 a.m. which would allow them time to settle down before their nap, if they still take them. If the children are older, you could have the party either from 1:00-3:00 p.m. or from 2:00-4:00 p.m. If you're having a pool party, you might want to keep the activity toward the end of the day to avoid the possibility of sunburn.

If the party is outdoors, plan the party to make sure there is still sunlight, unless your yard is adequately lit. Plan on having plenty of bug spray and sun screen on hand, as well, particularly if the children will be outdoors during the summer.

7. Make the invitations

Who says you have to go out and spend a lot of money on [birthday party invitations](#)?

If you have already chosen a theme, allow the birthday child to help make the invitations. Use stickers and papers that will coincide with your theme. If you plan on a princess party, use pink paper and glued-on jewels. For a Cowboys and Indians party, try finding scrapbooking paper that looks like blue jeans and then put leather-like trim on the outside. Plans for a movie party can include invitations made to look like a movie ticket.

Plan to deliver as many invitations by hand and then mail the remaining invitations at least two weeks prior to the party. Make sure you include a telephone number where guests can RSVP. If you haven't heard from a potential guest by two days before the party, you might want to call so you know how many to plan for.

8. Welcome the guests

Make sure there's someone available to welcome your guests as they arrive.

Since not all the children will arrive at the same time, it might be a good idea to **have a small game or activity that the children can be involved in until the rest of the guests arrive**. Never leave children to their own devices; **always have a chaperone** with them to keep them from mishaps.

An activity that might be good for a princess party is to allow the children to make their own crown with their name on them. You should be able to find patterns for a crown online and make them out of poster board covered in aluminum foil. Allow the children to decorate their crowns with sequins or jewels. They'll have something to take home with them, and you'll be able to remember each child's name.

Pirates carry swords, so you could have the guests make their own swords out of paper towel rolls or cardboard cut out into the shape of a sword. Again, you can wrap them in aluminum to help them look like metal. You can also have them create their own eye patch with string and poster board.

9. Keep them engaged

Every parent's worst fear when having a party is the lull when there's not a planned activity.

Plan to have **crafts and activities** associated with your theme for the children to do. Check online to find games that will match their party theme. Keep them engaged rather than having them sitting around staring at the floor. If you need ideas, click here for [kids birthday party games](#) according to age.

If the theme is a circus, have them make a picture with stickers or animal crackers. Have games with balloons, but be aware if any parent must bring toddlers to the party. If there will be toddlers, forgo the balloons for safety reasons. Use small balls instead and see if the children can learn to juggle like a clown.

Does your child love Bob the Builder? Have a game where children have to build a wall with blocks. If there are enough children, split the children into teams and then have a relay race across the yard. Create an obstacle course for the children using caution tape, cones, and dirt.

Cat-in-the-Hat enthusiasts might like to try a balancing game. Have the children balance a book, pillow, or small box on their head and race to a specified area a short distance away. If they lose the item on their head, they may pick it up once. If they lose it more than once, they have to start from the beginning. Not only will this occupy the children, it will help them become better coordinated.

10. Stay outdoors

If at all possible, plan on having the party outside.

There are many reasons for having an outdoors. Not only will this **limit the amount of mess** you'll have to clean up in the house, the children will have **more space to run and play**. What's

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even better is that you'll be able to **avoid a headache from all the noise**, which is always a good thing.

Accidents will happen whenever children are playing, so having the party outdoors lessens the chance for those accidents to happen with Grandma Smith's tea cups. Make sure that you do have bathroom facilities available, however, so you can avoid that type of accident.

Kids of all ages love **piñatas**. Plan on having a piñata hung in a tree for the children to take a whack at during the party. Put healthy snacks such as fruit roll ups and granola bars in it rather than candy and trinkets that will be thrown away when they get home. This will expend some energy and keep them occupied for a little while.

Treasure hunts are another great outdoors activity. This does take a little bit of forethought and planning, however. You can do it as an actual treasure hunt where the children have to follow a map, or you can do a scavenger hunt where the children have to find a list of things. Either way, the children will be occupied and will have a great deal of fun. It would be good for an adult or teen to go with the children as they search for their treasure.

11. Delegate jobs

Don't think that you have to do everything by yourself.

Even though the party is your child's, there's no reason not to ask for help. If you can **enlist the help of other parents or teens**, have a plan of what you would like them to do ahead of time. Then, make sure to let them know what is expected of them before the day of the party.

Can someone meet the guests at the door or chaperone the children that are outside? What about allowing a teen to do face painting? Children love to have their faces painted as evidenced by the long lines at carnivals and fairs. Face painting may take a little bit of time if there are several children, so consider asking two people to do this activity.

Would having someone serve the cake and drinks take a load of work from you? Ask one of the moms if they can help. Surely they won't turn you down, especially if it means they can help determine just how much cake their child gets.

Don't forget to ask parents to help you clean up after the party, as well. Or, if you can make a game out of it, get the kids involved in helping to pick up. This will go a long way in helping you to enjoy the party!

12. Don't have a cake

The old saying is "Let them eat cake," but why not let them have cupcakes instead.

Some people love to bake birthday cakes. If that's not your favorite thing to do, you have some options. You could purchase an already-made cake from a bakery or the bakery section of the local discount store. Another option would be to order an ice cream cake from your favorite frozen treats place. The last option is to use cupcakes as opposed to a full-size, heavily decorated cake.

The benefit to having cupcakes as opposed to a multiple layered cake is that you can allow each child the opportunity to decorate their own. Have the frosting, sprinkles, and candies available. If possible, find sprinkles that go along with your theme.

The last thing about having cake is in knowing when to serve it. **Wait until the children are nearly ready to go home before allowing them to eat cake and ice cream.** This will keep the children from being hyped up on too much sugar during the party and will give them something to look forward to. Of course, if they happen to eat too much cake and ice cream, the parents might not be too happy with you.

13. No goodie bags

It's not necessary to go out and buy a lot goodie bags and fill them up.

Save the money you would have used on goodie bags and use it for crafts or activities. The children will remember crafts and things that they do at the party more than they will remember where they got a little trinket or piece of candy.

Many parents prefer that their children don't receive goodie bags filled with small, cheap toys like tops or whistles. Not only do they get easily broken, if the child has smaller siblings, they may pose a health hazard. If you must give out goodies, make thing things that are large enough not to be dangerous or possibly give items that are educational in nature such as flash cards or other educational games.

14. Thank you notes

While most people don't really expect them anymore, **thank you notes are appreciated.**

Have your children send a thank you note to everyone that gave them a gift. If possible, keep gift tags or card with the gift so you know who it came from. When the child uses the gift, take a picture to send with the thank you note. Anyone would be impressed that you child would think enough to send a card, but sending the picture will really impress them.

If you know who is going to attend the party, you can **pre-address thank you notes** to make things a little bit easier for your child. Have your child address the envelopes, as well, to make it really personal. Try to get the thank you cards **mailed out no later than two weeks after the birthday party.**

Some parents make their children wait until they have written the thank you notes before they are allowed to actually play with a new toy. By having the children wait until they have written the thank you note, you are ensuring that the notes will be written quickly and can be mailed before they are forgotten.

15. Saying good-bye

When it's time for everyone to say good-bye, make sure your child is available.

Not only should they say "thank you for coming to my party" and "thank you for the gift," but they should **take time to see their guests out as opposed to concentrating on the gifts** that they received. There will be plenty of time for their new things, so they should control their enthusiasm until their guests leave.

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Be prepared to have at least one child who has to stick around for a little while because their parents haven't arrived on time to pick them up. If this is the case, your child may want to break open their gifts and begin playing with them. Make them wait so you can keep track of which gift was given by whom. There are always older toys that the children can play with until the wayward parents arrive.

16. Clean-up

The worst part of a party is the clean-up that follows. Whether it's a child's birthday party or an adult dinner party, there is still a lot of mess.

Clean up any accidents with food and drink as soon as they happen. This will keep drinks from staining furniture or carpeting if the party is being held indoors. If you are outside and have animals, it's likely they will beat you to cleaning up any food that is dropped. Just be careful about allowing the animals to eat chocolate as it's not good for them.

It would be a good idea to ask the children to help pick up the big items such as wrapping paper and boxes. Make sure that all wrapping paper is put into a large plastic bag and that it is held to the side, just in case something ends up missing you have a place to start looking.

Don't be afraid to ask the parents to help you clean up the table. In fact it would be nice if they could help with more than just the table, which would even be better. Offer to give them the same type of help if your child is ever invited to a party at their house. Be sure to thank them for their help and for sharing your child's birthday.

Enjoy The Day

Enjoying your child's birthday party isn't an impossibility; it might take a little more planning and effort prior to the actual party day. You can get help from others which will give you more time to enjoy the day or you can plan and work over a longer time period. In either case, you will have the chance to watch your child's delight as they see their special day unfold before them.

Take the time to join in the fun of the games. Spend time talking with other parents and don't forget to ask for help if you need it. You don't have to be Supermom and do everything on your own. If you try, you might as well give up any thought of enjoying the birthday party. Ask for and accept the help of others and you'll be sure to have pleasant memories, not only of the time you spent with other parents, but also of the smiles and laughter of your child's special day.

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