



Healthy, Happy Kids

BIRTHDAY PARTY PLANNER



Use this checklist to help you organize your child's next party.

- Talk to your child about what kind of birthday party they would like. Discuss options that fit in your budget. Remember, the simpler, the better!
- Select a date, time and place. It may be a good idea to check with a few of your child's closest friends to make sure the date will work for them.
- Confirm a venue, if the party will be held outside of your home. Be sure to ask about what you will need to supply (such as food, decorations, cake, cutlery, napkins, plates, etc.) If your party will be held outdoors, be prepared with a back-up plan in case of bad weather.
- Recruit your child to help prepare invitations and send them out at least two weeks in advance. Unless the whole class is invited, discourage your child from giving out the invitations in class or talking about the party at school. Talk to your child about possibly asking guests to bring non-perishable food items or pet items instead of a gift. Your child will feel great delivering a donation to those in need.
- Plan the menu. If the venue provides pizza or hot dogs, consider adding in a veggie tray. If pop is included, request for milk, chocolate milk, juice or water to be supplied, if possible.
- Think about the birthday cake and if you will make one or order one.
- Decide on decorations and if you will make them or buy them.
- Make a list of RSVPs and get contact phone numbers in case of a last-minute change of plans.
- Plan activities to keep the kids busy and having fun. Figure out a flexible schedule as to how the party will roll out (will the kids eat first or do activities first?)
- Assemble loot bags. Your child can help with this.
- Prepare what you can ahead of time, such as food, drinks or activity supplies.
- Gather everything you will want to have handy, such as candles, a lighter, a cake lifter, plates, napkins, a camera (with extra batteries, just in case), decorations, drink cups (a marker if you would like to label each one), a garbage bag, paper towel, music, and anything you will need for the activities.
- At the party, go with the flow and try not to fuss over details. Remember to take pictures.
- After the party, consider sending thank you notes to guests.



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Activity Ideas

At home:

- Scavenger hunt
- Traditional games:
 - Musical Chairs
 - Hot Potato
 - Twister
 - Duck, Duck, Goose
 - Relays like a 3-legged race or spoon race
 - Limbo
 - Hula hoops
 - Simon Says
- Dance party
- Crafts (the completed craft can substitute for a party favour)
- Rent an inflatable jumper
- Sleepover (for older children)

*Sign out the **Let's Play Activity Trunk** from the Thunder Bay Public Library for free! It's full of crazy games and activities for kids of all ages!*

Away from home:

- Swimming
- Bowling
- Gymnastics
- Skating
- Rock climbing (call the LU Hanger)
- Community recreation centre for floor hockey, dance party, skating
- Picnic at a nearby playground
- The Boys and Girls Club
- Mini-golf
- Pumpkin patch party
- Sledding/ tubing (remember the helmets)
- Tae Kwon Do or karate
- Horseback riding
- Skiing
- Paintball
- Soccer
- Arts and crafts at a gallery



Menu Ideas

- Pizza with veggies
- Pancakes
- Make-your-own bunwich with lean meats, cheeses and whole wheat buns
- Veggies and dip
- Fruit kabobs or fruit tray
- Chili and whole wheat buns
- Cheese and crackers
- Popcorn
- Pretzels
- Milk
- Juice, fizzed up with soda water
- Fruit smoothies
- Iced blueberry or banana muffins as a substitute for cupcakes

Avoid using disposable dishes, if possible.

Loot Bag Ideas

- Stickers, pencils
- Sugarless gum
- Puzzles
- Bubbles
- Sidewalk chalk
- Mini flashlight
- Hair accessories
- Magnifying glass
- Frisbee or skipping rope
- Homemade CDs
- Single items like a soccer ball, gift card, book, beach towel, t-shirt, picture frame, craft item or potted plant that the child can grow at home
- Instead of loot bags, make a donation to a charity of your child's choice such as the food bank or humane society

Avoid cheap makeup and jewelry items as they may contain harmful chemicals.

