

Baby & Toddler Parties

Pre-Schooler Parties

Primary Schooler Parties

Secondary Schooler Parties

Baby & Toddler Parties

It may sound harsh, but up to 2 years old, most party games are pretty pointless for kids. Even present opening is often more enjoyed by the audience than the birthday boy or girl. Inviting a few friends and their babies introduces the idea of a ritual to your children and is more a social event for the adults, so keep it simple. A few age specific toys and finger foods will be all that your children will really be interested in.

The celebration is more about marking your child's special day and presents should be low-key and not too numerous as young children get bored and overwhelmed in equal measures very quickly! Likewise, two-year-olds are too young for most organised games, but usually enjoy dancing and balloons, so have lots of music and toys for them to play with. The party should last no longer than 1 ½ hours. The most important bit for your child will probably be their cake and blowing out their candles.

Pre-Schooler Parties

This is when it starts to get interesting and the party invites can start to come thick and fast. From sending out the invitations to counting the paper plates, the games to the party bags - this is where all your hard work begins. Keep your games short and simple, longwinded sessions of musical chairs don't tend to go down well with two and three year olds. Some three year olds will be happy to stay without their parents, but you should have plenty of adults to help with any party games, serving food and anything else to make the party less onerous for you.

If you are hiring a hall or have a nice size garden, why not hire a small bouncy castle? Kids of all ages love them, but this is always a failsafe activity for pre-schoolers. They tend to be relatively cheap to hire and the smaller ones are less wieldy and can be unpacked and packed by one person. This also ensures that the kids have had a fun and energetic time before you settle them down to eat.

Think carefully about the food that you're preparing or supplying for the children. Always give finger foods of fruit and some raw veg., like carrots cucumber and tomatoes. "Pombear" crisps are great because they're not too salty for your little ones and won't dehydrate them. Go easy on the sweet stuff - overloads of sugar can turn normally energetic pre-schoolers into Tasmanian Devils!

Primary Schooler Parties

At this stage party games can become more imaginative; such as Nelson's Eye, Pin the Tail on the Donkey, Musical Chairs, Pass the Parcel, Musical Statutes and, if you have access to a sizeable outdoor area, Treasure Hunts (these can be done indoors, but be prepared to have kids swarming "all areas" of the house!).

Treasure hunts are especially good as they can be themed to the Season, get the kids out doors and normally take at least half an hour. From this age onwards, kids tend to have loads of energy and will want to burn some of it off - so make sure that you have plenty of room and plan some well-organised activities.

At this age most children have developed enough skills to enjoy painting, gluing and cutting. They will probably want to help you with all the preparations for the party. For good craft ideas one of the best websites we have found is www.activityvillage.co.uk

Secondary Schooler Parties

At this age children generally start to show an interest in doing something specific for their party, such as a swimming party at Beau Sejour, playing ten-bowling, or one of the various other sporting or creative parties now available locally.

Once the kids reach teenage years they might want to follow in time honoured tradition and be packed off for an early evening dinner with their friends to Valentinos or Crabby Jacks.

House parties are always a source of contention and you've got to be pretty clear with your teenager about the boundaries for the afternoon/evening, i.e., how many friends, what kind of food and activities (obviously you'll be wanting reassurance that there's no alcohol, ciggies or other substances being used).