

# How To Put On A Better Birthday Party

Your child spends a whole year in anticipation of this one very special day. Their birthday is their day to shine, when he or she is the star of the show and their friends join them to celebrate another year.

As parents, we do everything to make this day special because we know that it's more than just a year that is being celebrated – we have the perspective to know that our child is experiencing a **personal milestone** that only happens once in a lifetime.

While some parents seem to be able to plan and execute a perfect party with minimal effort, for many of us hosting the “perfect party” is a challenge, to say the least.

We consult our friends, we contact our social media networks and we read every magazine article we can get our hands on.

Before long, we discover one interesting fact: Everyone's advice is slightly different. So we're left with the dilemma -- whose advice do you listen to?

Or, if you're the kind of parents who is continually adding to that bulging file folder of birthday cake ideas, goodie bags and game suggestions, you sometimes run into this problem: Life happens. You run out of time, you lose the folder or nothing seems to be just right enough to suit your child's interests or disposition.

These are the times that many parents turn to the **real experts, those of us who specialize in holding birthday parties**. We are best positioned to offer some real-world guidance based on experiences and observations from literally hundreds of parties.

Our facility, a popular and well-respected martial arts academy, hosts parties for boys and girls of all ages all the way up to teens — so the advice we are sharing with you today is based upon a wealth of experience with kids of all ages.

Keep reading for the practical kind of advice every parent needs in order to stop worrying — and bring on the fun.

## Party planning issues

By having a solid game plan, you have a good foundation to build upon. That's why taking the time to determine some basics in advance is crucial to party success. Here are some answers to some of **the most commonly asked questions that we hear from parents**.

**Q:** What's the best time of day for a child's party?

**A:** Generally speaking, birthday parties are held around midday. But it's up to you to determine whether this means late morning, noon, early afternoon or mid-afternoon. As you make that decision, be sure to base it upon your child's peak hours of the day - you want him or her to enjoy every minute.

Also note that, if you're having a party outside your home, call the facility well in advance to reserve a to schedule the party around their availability. Keep in mind that different party providers set aside different times to host parties.

**Q:** How do I select a place to hold the party?

**A:** You'll want to base it upon on your **child's interests** — after all, the party is for your child, and he or she should enjoy the setting —particularly by feeling comfortable with the people who will be facilitating the party. Also consider the guests; your child's friends should also be comfortable in the chosen environment.

**Q:** What's a good length for a party?

**A: One and a half to two hours** is standard — you'll want to build in enough time for a fun activity, time for food and cake and the gift-opening. Try to avoid micromanaging the children's activities. If they are having fun with a particular activity, let them be. While you want to keep things moving at a fun and active pace, a skilled party facilitator knows how to “read” the children to best determine the flow of the party.

**Q:** What is a good number of kids to invite?

**A:** You should have that discussion with the birthday party provider; there needs to be adequate supervision, so ask about the ratio of kids to activity leaders. Good supervision is crucial.

**Q:** What questions should I ask a party provider?

**A:** Think of all possible outcomes to the situation. It might help to think like an outside parent: If your child was invited to this type of party, what questions/problems would you have?

One of the most important questions is -- will the party be led by someone who **knows how to work with kids of your child's age** to make sure there is no downtime and everyone attending the party has a great time. Your role should be to greet the kids and then step back and take a lot of pictures. You don't want to have to step in to entertain a group of kids that are bored or running around wild.

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## **Birthday Party basics**

Once you've spoken with your birthday party provider and settled upon a date and time, much of the rest should fall into place.

**Q:** How soon should I send out invites?

**A:** Once you confirm the date and time of the party, you should send out the invitations. Make sure the other parents understand that, if they have any questions or concerns, they should contact either you or the party facility.

**Q:** What if I don't hear back from parents?

**A:** Make it as easy as possible for parents to contact you; provide your email, your home telephone number and cell phone number. That will allow other parents multiple options for contacting you with their RSVP.

**Q:** How should I advise parents to dress their children?

**A:** These days, birthday parties are more active than ever. The days of dressing up your 5-year-old in his or her “Sunday Finest” for a friend’s birthday party is thankfully gone. Today kids attend birthday parties with the expectation that they will be active, and maybe also a little bit messy.

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## **On the big day**

**Q:** Are there certain types of games that are popular with everyone — and are there some types of activities that I should know to avoid?

**A:** We tell parents that the more active and focused the children are, the more fun they will have. First of all, the kids at the party will be very excited to be together in a new place. Sometimes all the kids will know one another, sometimes they don’t. Regardless, emotions are high and they need a positive outlet. A good birthday party provider will be able to **channel the children’s enthusiasm** through games and high-energy activities.

**Q:** What kinds of things should a birthday party provider do to make the birthday child feel special?

**A:** The birthday child deserves particular recognition, but we never lose sight of the fact that at our school, our mission is to make every child who walks through our doors feel welcome and special. We provide encouragement and praise for everyone in all of the birthday activities.

**Q:** What about the “goodie bags?”

**A:** A goodie bag is a thank-you gesture that is a thoughtful parting gift. Most people keep it simple — a few small pieces of candy and a pencil or other small trinket — and in some cases the birthday party provider will also include a small token such as a coupon or pass that encourages them to revisit the facility.

**Q:** Once the party is over at a party provider, am I expected to do cleanup?

**A:** Absolutely not! This is your child's special day, and you should sit back, enjoy and snap plenty of photos to preserve the memories.

## Why a martial arts party?

In our experience, **kids of all ages love martial arts and consider it cool and fun** -- so that's reason one. If you hold a party with us, we guarantee your child will be bragging about it for months.

The second reason is that our birthday parties are **supervised by professional martial arts instructors** from beginning to end. We don't allow kids to be bored or to run around wild. Instead, we structure each party **with non-stop activities** — which always includes the kids learning some cool martial arts moves.

The third reason is that all the kids attending the party will leave with some new life skills, including a boost in self-confidence and better self-discipline. **You will notice the difference.**

We hope this report provided some valuable tips for putting on a great birthday party. If you would like to learn more about having a party at our martial arts school, please **contact us** and we'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.