

PARTY

PLAYBOOK

Saturday, May 31, 2025

Components for a successful kids' birthday party



Children's birthday parties have evolved from a generation or two ago. Modern parties are bigger, more elaborate and often more expensive undertakings than they used to be. Parents now spend, on average, \$314 for a child's birthday party, according to a survey conducted by the parenting site What to Expect. Party expectations may be driven by social media, with parents feeling compelled to "keep up" with peers who throw elaborate parties.

Before families bust budgets establishing over-the-top kids' birthday bashes, these tips can help shed light on which elements may be needed to have a successful party for the birthday boy or girl — helping to save money in the process.

• **Pick a theme.** Children's parties typically revolve around a central theme. Asking the child what he or she wants in a party is

the best way to identify a theme. One kid may want a party that celebrates a popular television show or movie character, while another may be happy with something broader like puppies and kittens.

• **Coordinate the elements.** Once a theme is established, some parents run out and get all of the branded items they can find, from cake plates to napkins to invitations. Instead, choose one branded element and then just mirror the color and style of that theme elsewhere. For example, for a Bluey party, parents can pick Bluey-branded cake plates, but then serve other foods on solid-colored plates in various shades of light blue, tan and orange to match Bandit, Chilli, Uncle Stripe, and Aunt Trixie.

• **Arrange for entertainment.** Plan to have one or two games that are age-appropriate just in case the children start to get antsy.

But keep in mind that kids are adept at finding their own entertainment; just ensure they are safe. Consider board games or active games like kickball in the yard. Bounce house businesses cater to kids' parties and these can be a worthy investment. Kids also may be happy to visit a favorite local ice cream shop or run around a nearby park.

• **Limit the guest list.** It's tempting to invite an entire class or a sports or dance team to the party. But having too many children can make the party more expensive and sometimes unruly. A good rule of thumb is to limit the guest list to "age plus one." That means if the child is turning eight, nine friends are invited (siblings and cousins are not counted in the number).

• **Keep it relatively short.** This is a children's party and not a wedding. The event doesn't have to last three or four hours. Kids generally have short attention

spans, so a party that is an hour and a half to two hours in length is enough time for everyone to have a good time.

• **Keep the menu simple.** Planning the party for between meal times means children won't be overly hungry and snacks will suffice. Serve a mix of healthy options like fruit and party staples like chips. Children can be messy, so avoid anything that can melt or get sticky, like chocolate or candy. Cupcakes always are easier than slicing cake. But donut holes or cookies also may be options.

These components can add up to a fun children's birthday party.



About Beyond The Toybox

Founded by Latoy Fowler, Beyond The Toybox was born from a passion for transforming everyday moments into meaningful, joy-filled celebrations. What started as a love for creative expression has grown into a full-service event styling company and a brick-and-mortar balloon and party supply boutique in Mentor, Ohio.

At the core of Beyond The Toybox is a simple "why" — to help people celebrate life's

milestones with intention, beauty, and joy. We specialize in bold, custom balloon installations, curated event styling, and eco-conscious party supplies that elevate any occasion.

Our shop proudly offers a selection of high-quality, eco-friendly balloons and décor essentials, supporting both DIY enthusiasts and fellow event pros. We are also committed to our community, regularly partnering with local organizations and collaborating with Northeast Ohio's top event vendors to bring unforgettable experiences to life.

Beyond The Toybox isn't just about parties — it's about creating moments that matter with purpose and style. Contact us at 440-202-9104 or visit www.beyondthetoyboxevents.com to start planning your special occasion.



WELCOME TO ELEVATED CELEBRATIONS



Beyond
THE TOYBOX
EVENT STYLING | BALLOONS | SUPPLIES

Event Designing | Balloons | Customized Experience

DISCOVER IN-STORE

Premium Balloons & Helium
DecoPop
DecoShine
Balloon Glow
Mylar
Custom Add-ons
Aerial Fringe
Balloon Cafe

BESPOKE SERVICES

Full Service Event Planning & Coordination
Sophisticated Event Design
Custom Backdrops & Welcome Signage
Statement Balloon Structures
Venders for any occasion

**7537 Mentor Ave., Ste 20
Mentor, Ohio 44060
440-202-9104**



@beyondthetoybox



@beyondthetoybox



@beyondthetoyboxdecor



www.beyondthetoyboxevents.com

FROM INTIMATE MOMENTS TO GRAND OCCASIONS

**Showers • Birthdays • Proms • Graduations
Corporate Events • Community Events • Private Events
Children's Celebrations & More**



The benefits to choosing a local wedding venue

Wedding planning requires coordinating a laundry list of details that ultimately come together to make for a memorable ceremony and reception. Couples tying the knot have their work cut out for them, and one of the biggest decisions they will have to make involves choosing where to hold the ceremony and reception. Religious couples often opt for ceremonies at their churches, synagogues and mosques. Secular weddings can occur just about anywhere, with couples sometimes utilizing ceremony spaces adjacent to their reception rooms.

As brides and grooms narrow down their venue options, they may want to give strong consideration to the benefits that sticking close to home can offer. Certainly there are advantages to be had hosting a wedding at venues many miles away or even in international locations, but there are unique perks to keeping festivities local. The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study indicated six in 10 couples chose to get married in a place where they currently live; 23 percent opted for a hometown venue; and 18 percent decided on a destination wedding. Here's a look at some of the perks of staying local.

- **Convenience:** One of the biggest benefits of a local venue is convenience for both the couple and their guests. Local venues

tend to be easily accessible for those who live nearby, minimizing travel time and reducing any barriers brought on by a lack of familiarity with distant locales.

- **Familiarity:** Couples who love their hometowns and close environs may want to get married in a familiar and comfortable atmosphere. Plus, they may already be familiar with venues in the area and what they offer.
- **Expertise:** Venue staff likely live in the area or are familiar with other services close by. They can offer valuable recommendations and insights on other vendors, including what has worked before and what to avoid.
- **Familiarity with clergy:** Couples who get married in a local house of worship likely know the religious leaders there and any support staff. This can add a particularly personal component to the ceremony.
- **Easy payments:** Many venues require some sort of payment plan that consists of a deposit at the time of booking and a series of payments culminating with the last installment upon learning the final head count. Choosing a local

venue makes it easy to stop at the reception site in person and provide such payments with ease, while getting confirmation and receipts in real time.

- **Reduce delivery fees:** If florists and other vendors have to drop off items, they may not charge the same delivery fees if the reception site is close by.
- **Ease returning home:** Chances are the couple will arrive at the ceremony and reception by hired car. Once the wedding is over, they'll have to find transportation back home, especially if there is a gap in time before departing on a honeymoon. Utilizing a local venue can make it easier to get home.
- **Support of local businesses:** Choosing a local venue keeps dollars in couples' own communities, which is a great way to support businesses in the town and the people that work for them.

There are notable advantages to getting married close to home. When planning to tie the knot, couples can give ample consideration to local venues.



LaVera Party Center Built on Tradition

In 1952, Larry and Vera Gaudio, our Grandparents and the founders of La-Vera Party Center, started a catering business. With that came the traditions of homemade Italian cooking. They used only the finest ingredients to prepare each item off their menu. Three generations later, we still follow those same recipes.

La-Vera Party Center is a spacious and newly remodeled two-room banquet and conference facility that customizes each event to the needs of our guests. Our facility can accommodate events ranging from 100-720 guests. Functions we regularly host include weddings, proms, bar and bat mitzvahs, anniversary parties, luncheons, holiday company parties, sales rallies, seminars,

auction and fund raisers.

We are blessed to have such a great community that will always support local small businesses. As such, La-Vera is trying to make life a little easier. We are now offering a new curbside family meal pickup program. We will offer this service every Monday, Wednesday & Friday and our menus will change accordingly. Our daily meal option will include a protein, starch and vegetable and will be good for 4-6 people and will cost somewhere in the neighborhood of \$36-\$40. We are also offering curbside takeout Thanksgiving dinner options!

Please visit our website at www.la-vera.com or call 440-943-0087 for more information or questions!

LA VERA

THREE GENERATIONS OF
CATERING, MEMORIES LASTING
A LIFETIME

(440) 943.0087
www.la-vera.com

Tips to throw a memorable graduation party

Each year, newly minted graduates proudly don their caps and gowns and walk across countless stages to receive their diplomas or degrees. Graduation is a proud moment for students, and that pride is shared by family and close friends who have supported students throughout their academic careers.

Graduation is a milestone worth celebrating. Planning a graduation party takes some effort to ensure an event worthy of this significant moment in a student's life.

Begin with a theme

Host can select a theme that aligns with the graduate's interests. Consider themes that align with what a new high school graduate plans to study in college, or make the theme all about the career path a recent college grad plans to pursue. Additional potential themes include the grad's favorite movies, his or her musical interests, cherished hobbies, or travel.

Set a budget

Establish a clear budget to manage expenses and prioritize key aspects of the graduation celebration. Hosting a party away from home may seem like it would be the more

expensive option, but when party hosts factor in rentals of tents, tables, chairs, catering, and other needs, booking a venue may be more affordable. Only by pricing out all expenses and comparing options can graduation party hosts identify their options and determine how much a party will cost and how to budget for the celebration.

Make the venue interesting

If possible, tailor the venue to the theme. For example, if the graduate is a fan of the ocean and beach, then a beach bonfire party can be a memorable celebration. Graduates who are fans of attending concerts might appreciate a party that recreates the feeling of a performance. Hire a professional musician, set up stadium seating and create a stage where the performer can have all eyes on him or her. Afterwards, hire a DJ to play music or stream a playlist created by the guest of honor.

Create a grand entrance

Figure out a way that the graduate can make his or her big entrance to the party to add some drama to the event. Perhaps the lights can be dimmed before placing a

spotlight on the graduate?

For a sports-themed graduation party, the graduate can run through a breakaway banner like a football team does when taking the field before the opening kickoff. Embrace your creative side to ensure the celebration is one to remember.

Include fun activities

Dancing, photo booth sessions, scavenger hunts, or even some special demonstration that pertains to the theme can be entertaining activities to keep guests busy.

Keep the food simple

Keep the graduate's culinary preferences in mind and offer fare that is familiar and tasty. There's no need to offer exotic foods; guests will remember tasty items, particularly if they're well fed. A signature cocktail (or mocktail) also can be a special touch for the party.

If the idea of planning a graduation party on one's own seems daunting,



particularly during a time of year when there is a lot of competition for dates and venues, a professional party planner can be an invaluable resource. Then everyone can celebrate the graduate in a way that is fitting and memorable.



Bounceland

Ever dreamt of transforming your backyard into a wonderland of fun? Guess what? You totally can! With Bounceland, your wildest inflatable fantasies come alive. Picture this: majestic castles, heart-pounding slides, and bounce houses that'll have your kiddos—and let's face it, you too—hopping with glee. It's like bringing a festival right to your doorstep!

But hold onto your hats—our inflatables are so popular, they're disappearing faster than you can shout "boing!" If you want your party to be the talk of the town, you have to

act fast. No one wants to be the one who waits too long only to find out the bouncy castle of their dreams was snagged by the Joneses next door.

So, why not dive in? Treat your kids (and yourself) to a day of unforgettable fun with Bounceland's top-notch inflatable rentals. We promise it will be a blast—literally! Visit our website or give us a call to hop on the fun train. Let's bounce, everyone!

www.bouncelandrentals.com
440-742-3750




Planning a big bash can be challenging especially when you have a large group with different interests.

We are your one stop destination for epic events at RollHouse Entertainment

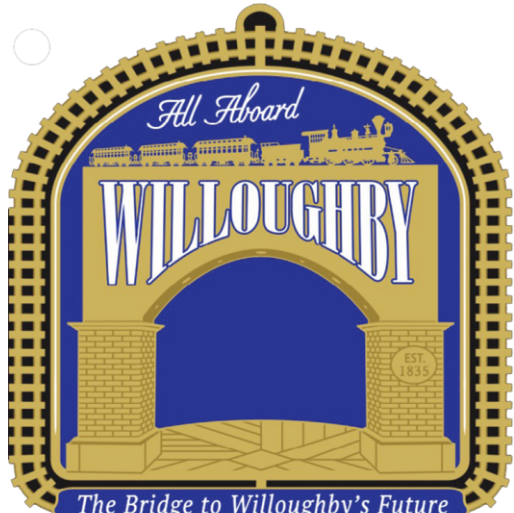
A Few Insider Tips - Think about your guests...

1. Do you have a competitive crew? Book our Escape Rooms for a thrilling team challenge. We have Escape Rooms at our RollHouse, Mentor, North Olmsted and Solon locations
2. For some high energy action, think about our Gel Blaster Area at RollHouse Solon - More intense than Laser Tag and better than Paintball
3. Any competitive singers in the group - Consider our Karaoke room at RollHouse Solon
4. Want to keep the whole group together - our giant game rooms, bowling and private party room offer fun for all ages. We also have a custom catering menu with multiple options
5. Consider Booking your event during off-peak hours or week-days for better rates and more room to roam.

Our passion is making people happy! Visit our website www.therollhouse.com or reach out to one of our Event Coordinators to book your next epic event.



WILLOUGHBY LIONS CLUB



\$20⁰⁰ each

Call **440-223-6138** now to order your medallion

Proceeds go toward projects in the City of Willoughby.



STOREWIDE FLOORING SALE!

Decorate Your Home for Spring!





MOHAWK FLOORING

Large Selection of USA Made Products! • 0% Interest (1 Year) See store for Details

• We have ALL the Newest Waterproof Flooring

Plenty of Tariff Free Products Available!

Walker Floors & Window Fashions

3325 N. Ridge Road, Perry • **440-259-1086** • www.walkerfloors.com



Summer's Here!

Reserve Your Inflatable Today!

Whether it's a sizzling BBQ, a heartwarming family reunion, or a birthday bash under the sun, our rentals guarantee non-stop fun

Book now and let the summer celebrations begin!

www.bouncelandrentals.com (440) 742-3750



ROLLHOUSE

ENTERTAINMENT

Big Food. Big Fun.

LOOKING FOR THE ULTIMATE
ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATION?

BOWLING • ARCADE GAMES • GEL BLASTER
LASER TAG • ESCAPE ROOMS • BILLIARDS
KARAOKE EVENTS • GREAT FOOD • EVENTS



USE THIS COUPON FOR 20%
OFF A ROUND OF GEL BLASTER

GAMING JUST
GOT REAL



COLUMBUS • DAYTON • FAIRFIELD • MENTOR • NORTH OLMSTED • PARMA • SOLON

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.THEROLLHOUSE.COM