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Stress-Free Kids Party Planning

By Patricia B. Jensen

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Another birthday's on the horizon, and you're stressing over every little detail. Throwing a party can be nerve-wracking and kids parties come with added pressures.

The prospect of keeping a group of young children occupied and entertained can be a daunting one. In addition, you may feel that celebrating a milestone in your child's life means the day must be a perfect one.

Take a step back and realize your child's party doesn't have to turn you into a stress knot! You can beat the pre-party anxiety with a little creativity and common sense. Turn your party fears into party cheers with these simple stress busters...

Forget the Fantasy

Sometimes we parents get caught up in the fairytale fantasy we are trying to create for our child... or for ourselves! Realize that your child's party doesn't have to be perfect from start to finish. It WILL be fun and memorable, even if some of the memories aren't quite what you expected! Remind yourself that you're celebrating the birth of your child (or other special event) and choose to make it a happy day.

Prioritize & Plan Ahead

Think about what elements of the party are the most important to you and the party child. Is a fancy party cake a priority? Fun and unusual games? A cute costume for the party child? Impressive decorations?

Make a list and prioritize it. Then work through each element and decide how you will make it a reality. You may decide some things just aren't worth the time or trouble, while others jump to the top of your

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list. Focus on two or three key party elements and make them special.

Limit Guests

This is a tough one for many parents. The pressure to invite every child in your child's class at school, as well as relatives and friends is great. Don't give in to it! The rule of thumb is to invite as many party guests as your child's age. That means a 5 year old can invite 5 friends.

If you have an obligation to reciprocate to certain friends or family members, plan an alternate get-together after the birthday party to avoid any hurt feelings.

Beat the Time Crunch

Start planning your party well in advance of the actual event. Six weeks is a good time to start

brainstorming ideas for a party theme, where the party will be held, and which guests to invite. Make a simple timeline of party tasks and when each should be accomplished. Avoiding last-minute arrangements will cut down on party planning headaches.

Limit Spending

Remember this is a child's party, not the Queen's ball. Make a party budget and stick to it. Shop early for discounts on party favors, craft items, and small game prizes. Collect costume materials throughout the year at resale stores and yard sales. The effort to be thrifty will make you extra proud of the great party you put on without breaking the bank.

Stop and Smell the Birthday Cake!

Don't let the party planning process become an all-consuming task. Stop and take time for yourself. Spend time with friends, enjoy your favorite hobby, read a good book – whatever makes you happy. Try to enjoy the process as much as the party day itself.

Keep Your Perspective and Keep Smiling

Above all, keep your perspective and your sense of humor. This is one party in a long line of parties you'll be hosting, so relax, keep it light and laugh a lot. Chances are, if you keep smiling, you and your guests will have a much better time!

Patricia B. Jensen is a mother of three and kids party enthusiast. She is the webmaster and owner of – a comprehensive resource for kids party ideas and complete party plans for

many popular themes, including invitations, cakes, decorations, games, costumes, favors, and food.

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Party Planning For Dummies

By Patty Illomia

Planning for a party is no small stuff. It can be really hard to plan for any kind of party and the more important your party is the more stress you are bound to be under. It is a good thing for you that I am here to write this spectacular party planning article to help you to plan the perfect party for any occasion.

Party planning needs to start with a budget. You cannot just go out and start purchasing things willy-nilly without a budget and a plan. SO begin your party planning with making up a good budget. How much money do you have to spend on your party? Decide on a reasonable amount and then break this party planning budget down into sections.

Your party planning sections should look something like this, food, decorations, party favors, and plates, cups and napkins. Once you have this stage of your party planning finished you can then start filling in the columns. How many dishes will you need? Is this the kind of party that requires party favors? This is one of the most important aspects of party planning and it is what will make your shopping for your party much, much easier. Once you have a defined list you can go out and start your shopping. Party planning can be stressful, sure, but it should also be fun. After all you are planning for a party, so enjoy it!

The food that you choose for your party is important to the entire event. You will have to take into consideration what kind of party it is that you are having in the party planning stage. For example, is your party planning being done for a birthday, or an anniversary? Is your party planning being done for a theme party? These types of things matter when you are trying to choose the foods that will suit your party to perfection. IF you are having a themed party then have foods that suit it. If you are having a luau themed party have Hawaiian foods and drinks or if you are having a Christmas party then have Christmas themed foods. This is just smart party planning and it will make your party all the more fun for everyone.

Patty Illomia owns and operates Instan Party Planning Ideas at

. You'll find many options and Ideas for Party Planning that

are right for you.

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