

Star for the Day Birthday Party

Hold a costume party! Every guest comes dressed up already, or you can have a variety of costumes and dress-up clothes for them to choose from at your house. The children can be princesses, cowboys, cheerleaders, doctors, firemen, mommies, and more – limited only by their imagination and your resources.

First, you will need to make or buy invitations for your child's birthday party. They are easy to make, and cheaper – if you only need a few. Remember, you aren't going to invite half the neighborhood! Here's one suggestion:



1. Cut paper to size: 5 1/2x 8 1/2



2. fold paper in half



3. buy or cut out people shape



4. make clothes from scraps



5. Glue to front of card, print title or use alphabet stickers



6. Type up information, cut, and tape inside card



Decorate inside with details or stickers.

Decorate your house for the costume party. You may want to have a large mirror somewhere so kids can see how they look. You might have face painting, or set out old make-up and ask one of the moms to help apply it. You will want a digital camera, or disposable camera.

Cut gold stars from sturdy paper, and hang them around the room. Buy or make a blue ribbon for each guest and the birthday child – label them accordingly: Best costume, prettiest costume, funniest costume, etc.

Arrival Activities:

As children arrive, help them get dressed up, or if they came in costume, admire their outfits. If you have someone who can do face painting, now would be the time. Otherwise, you might have some old make-up that the children could use. Be careful – some make up expires, and is not safe to use when it is old – especially mascara.

Invite guests to view themselves in the mirror. Have them pose while you snap several pictures. Get group shots. Encourage silliness, you'll get better pictures!

Extra activity, just in case: print coloring sheets from your computer. Set out with crayons.

Games:

Make Necklaces: beforehand, you will color some tube pasta, like elbow macaroni, penne and wheels. There are directions for coloring it on the website, but briefly, you put some pasta in a zippy bag, add a tablespoon of rubbing alcohol and a squirt of paint or bright food coloring. Mix it around, then spread it out on paper towels to dry. Give each child a length of yarn or string, the end stiffened by either wrapping masking tape around it, or dip it in glue the day before and let it dry. Let children string the macaroni in any way they want, then tie the ends together and let them wear it.

Read a story like “Ant and Honey Bee: What a Pair!” by Megan McDonald, or “Maisie Dresses Up” by Lucy Cousins.

Musical Chairs: For two year olds, do not make the game competitive. Have enough chairs for every child. Play music, then when the music stops, every child finds a chair and sits down. No winners, no losers. You can vary the game, by playing different styles of music. You can have the children skip to the music, or slide to the music, or dance to the music... then they all sit down when the music stops. Just fun, no tears.

Freeze Dance: Pick a lively tune for your music. Give each child a fancy scarf or boa to dance with. While the music plays, they can dance. When the music stops, they must freeze in that position. Have a parent either pause the music for you, or take pictures of the children.

Foods:

Mini Pizzas

Pretzel sticks

Birthday cake

Peach slices

Apple juice or milk

Ice cream

Each child can choose the toppings for his or her individual mini pizza. You can use English muffins for the pizza crust, or small tortillas. You might take a larger tortilla and cut several three-inch circles from it for mini pizza crusts. You could get a tube of biscuit dough and press the biscuits flat for pizza crust. You could get ambitious and make some yeast dough yourself, beforehand. For toppings, have a jar of pizza sauce, a bowl of shredded cheese, sliced olives, browned sausage meat, sliced pepperoni, or whatever toppings your family enjoys. Children put them together, then you bake them while they play the last game, or color pictures.

Presents:

Young children love to play dress-ups! Role playing is an important part of early childhood. It helps the child develop language skills, practice future roles by imitating the adults in his world, and build social skills. For your child's present this year, you can put together a big box of dress-ups. You can start by frequenting garage sales and second hand stores several weeks before the birthday. Look for funny dresses or skirts, a man's suit coat, tie, dress shirt and shoes, nurse's scrubs, military uniforms, cowboy boots, funny hats, prom dresses, fancy shoes, purses, jewelry, shawls, briefcases, gloves, old Halloween costumes, and more. You'll need to have a large storage bin to keep it all in, or mount coat hooks on a wall where your child can reach, and hang the dress-ups on the hooks.

Departure:

After cake and ice cream and presents, it's time to end the party. Gather up each child's projects- the necklaces they made if they aren't wearing them, any pictures they made, and hand them to each parent. If they don't take the hint, let them know it is time for your child to take a nap. After the party, get your pictures developed. Make reprints for the parents, and send them several pictures of the party in your "thank you" note.