



Tips For Planning a Stress Free Birthday Party

# **BIRTHDAY BLUEPRINTS**



**MAGIC**  
**BIRTHDAY**  
**ZONE**

**[WWW.BRIANPENNYMAGIC.COM](http://WWW.BRIANPENNYMAGIC.COM)**

## Full Disclosure:

*I am going to recommend to you the services of a professional magician because I truly believe it is the quickest, easiest and most cost effective way for you to put on the most stress free, talked about party. That said, you will get so much useful information here. Of course I would like you to book a magician but the truth is I am just as happy if you take the knowledge you get here, use it to remove stress from your own life as this will ultimately make you a better person and create a more enjoyable experience for you and your child.*

With over ten years of performing experience as a full-time, children's entertainer specializing in at home birthday parties, I have literally seen it all. From intimate affairs to extravagant events complete with entertainers, ponies and moonwalks. Birthday parties can be loads of fun for everyone. But if you've never planned one before, where should you start?

Funny you should ask. Here are some great ideas to help make your party extra special with out going into the **red**. If you follow a few basic guidelines it will be a piece of cake!

## **DATE & TIME**

The first thing that you need to decide on is a date and time. You won't find the perfect date & time to suit everyone, so don't try. Finding a party time to fit with everyone's football games or gymnastics meet is a stressful task.



It's only a party. Get a feel for what might work for people, set the time that suits **YOU** and maybe your child's best friend, and then move on. The cost is to **YOUR** health and well being. Most people want to plan their birthday party on a weekend afternoon. Although this is a good time for a party, many times it usually interferes with other activities such as other parties, soccer games, family outings etc.

Since the best children's entertainers usually get "booked up" on the weekends first, you may want to plan far in advance especially if you're interested in scheduling a Saturday or Sunday afternoon party.

Saturday mornings tend to interfere with fewer activities and when the party is over, the rest of the day is free. Weekdays, however, are becoming even more popular party days due to the fact that it frees up the weekends for other activities and because a weekday party is a great way to break up the week. Since a full-time performer works most every day of the week, a week day birthday should be no problem.



It is important to plan at least two dates that you would like to have the party. First check your child's activity schedule than check with your child's friends to see if they can make it to the party. Also, call the entertainer that you want at the party and check their schedule and decide on a date and time. (See *the entertainment section*)





## **PARTY LENGTH**

The average birthday party lasts about two hours. Always plan on fifteen minutes at the beginning of the party for late arrivals and 40-45 minutes for cake, ice cream and gift opening, which leaves a full hour to fill with other activities and entertainment. If you prefer a three hour long party, you will need to fill two hours.

## **DECIDE ON A THEME**

You don't need a theme but it often helps to make planning easier. If your daughter's favorite thing at the moment is Hello Kitty, try to theme the party around that. If your son's obsession is Star Wars, then that should be your theme.

I've seen others use dinosaurs, Cinderella, soccer, football, baseball, tea party, even a mid-evil them.

Some people will even theme the party around the entertainment. Such as a magician performing would prompt the theme to be **MAGIC**, while a Pirate would possibly be a **TREASURE** or **ISLAND** theme.

In a nutshell, don't worry that everything at the party must fit the theme. A few decorations are fine, a cake is great, but don't get stressed out because you can't find a Yoda to fit your Star Wars theme. More importantly, a party should be fun for everyone, including the planner!



## **INVITATIONS**

This is a great place to start your theme.

MAGIC invitations will let everyone know the theme before they even get to the party. It's also a subtle suggestion of gift ideas for those who don't have any idea what to get. Be sure to get the invitations out at least two weeks before the party to give parents time to plan and include a R.S.V.P. phone number for parents to call to help aid in your planning. You can also download a free PDF file birthday invitation from my website.

[www.brianpennymagic.com](http://www.brianpennymagic.com)

Just open the file and print as many as you need and fill in the party information.

## **DECORATIONS**

When it comes to decorations, you may choose to keep it low keyed and simple or go all out, depending on your preference. If your theme is a Dalmatians party, once again you don't need to have everything "Dalmatians". A couple major items are fine; but the rest of the decorations can be black and white to match the Dalmatians colors.

There are several party stores around that carry many different themes, such as The Half Off Card Shop or K-D Sales. Call and ask if they have items to fit your theme. A few strategically placed balloons are often better than every square inch covered in color.



## FOOD

If the party is scheduled during or close to lunch or dinnertime, serving food will probably be expected, however a "full size" meal is not only unnecessary, it may interfere with the children's fun. Since the kids are going to be eager to get back to the parties activities as soon as possible, I suggest pizza, hotdogs or sandwiches with chips are usually perfect for a birthday party.

## CAKE

Here's where you can let your creativity and imagination run wild. You can have the cake decorated to go with your theme or a regular cake using the theme colors is great. You can have cake and ice cream or an ice cream cake. I have been to countless birthday parties and I have seen some pretty impressive cakes.

I once seen a cake sculpted to resemble a Barbie doll, as well as a "Magic" cake shaped like a big top hat with a rabbit coming out.

A great idea gaining much popularity is to have the cake at the party for the birthday child to blow out the candles on, and then serve the children cup cakes. Kids love them, they are easier to serve and you will still have a great cake for an intimate family celebration later.

## GOODIE BAGS

I can remember when the birthday child was the only one at the party who received gifts, but I guess those days are long gone. Now a days

goodie bags are almost expected, and sometimes it may be the most difficult part of putting together the party, You may choose to some how include the theme into the give-aways in the bags, but it's not necessary. Goodie bags are something extra the children get to take home to remind them how much fun they had at the party, it's also your way of saying "thanks for coming".

You don't need to overdo it either; a few inexpensive items such as pencils, balloons, rings and maybe some candy is great. Remember that the party is really for the birthday child, not the guests.

## GAMES & ACTIVITIES

You will almost need to plan at least one game or other activity for the party, even if you have entertainment coming. The activities can range from simply coloring with crayons to a pony rides in the back yard. Don't overwhelm the kids with activities, just keep it easy for you and make sure there is enough for them to do so they aren't just running around the house.

## AVOID THESE COSTLY MISTAKES ABOUT BIRTHDAY PARTIES

**Most parents spend more money on their kid's party simply because they spend it on all the wrong things. So that you don't waste your time and money making the same mistakes let's cover a few:**

**A longer party is a better party.**



No, it's not! If you are in the small minority who love a lingering all-day type affair then skip this. The other 99% of you keep reading.

A longer party is not about the kids. Kids can not differentiate between a shorter dynamic party and a longer slower one. It's all just a blur for the excited kids. Parents can though. And I can tell you from thousands of conversations that two hours is the accepted and comfortable length for a kids party.

Parents know that if they drop and run, there is time to run a few errands in those two hours.

Inviting the whole class is SO MUCH EASIER than inviting a select few.

Having the party outside in the yard is NOT always the most attractive location. Here are a few why:

- Stings and bites cause tears.
- Sitting in the sun too long can be dangerous.
- If it rains, you have a lot of rearranging to do.
- Wind is nobody's friend at a party.
- Bugs & food+ kids= complaining.

To make locating the house easier for guests as well as the entertainer, try hanging a few balloons on the mail box or front door.

To avoid distractions throughout the party, especially during the entertainment, gift opening and goodie bag distribution should be saved for last.

Always remember when planning that children tend to eat much faster, especially in a party situation.

Let siblings invite a special friend over for the day so they don't feel left out. They can either play apart from the party or they can be helpers.

## ***PARTY SUPPLIES***

***K-D SALES***

**269-344-7006**

2034 S. Burdick St. Kalamazoo, MI

*Party supplies & Decorations*

**THE TIMID RABBIT**

269-343-7777

2011 W. Main St. Kalamazoo, MI

*Magic supplies & Costumes*

**PARTY CITY**

269-329-2440

Portage Crossings

6749 South Westnedge Ave. Portage, MI

*Party supplies & decorations*

**RHODE ISLAND NOVELTY**

1-800-528-5599

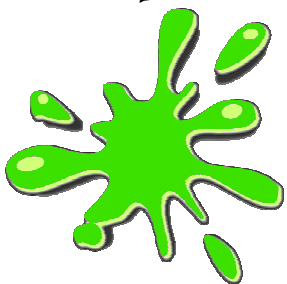
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# ***BRIAN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY FAQS...***

## ***How much space do you need?***

Not much at all. For my equipment and props I need a minimum of 4' by 4' area however 8'x10' is preferred. Usually your living room or family room is a perfect place for this. Other than that, an area in a corner or in front of a wall with the kids sitting in front of my performance area on the floor is ideal. Since I move around a lot, I would hate to accidentally step on any toes or fingers so the larger the area the better.

## ***Do you need a table?***

Nope, I bring my own case that folds up into a table as well as all my own required equipment,

## ***Can you perform the show outside?***

Yes, I can providing the weather is descent. If the wind is blowing, as some of my props are very light weight and will blow away. **It's always safer** to have it indoors plus there will be fewer distractions.

## ***Is the show clean and appropriate?***

Yes! I take pride in the fact that my show is specifically geared towards children ages 5-teens. Many entertainers don't have an age specific show. I specialize in entertaining children with clean visual magic.

## ***When's a good time to have you start your show?***

A good rule of thumb is to have my show begin 15-30 minutes after the party starts. This will prevent distractions from late arriving guests. After my show and the balloon giveaways, I recommend the kids should be lead into the cake and gift opening part of the party.

## ***Can we serve the kids food, snacks and beverages during your show?***

Well, it's your home so you can do whatever you like... however, I do recommend serving any food or drinks *before or after* the show. It is a HUGE distraction for kids and at this age, they need the least amount of distractions as possible. So I would HIGHLY recommend not serving snacks during the performance (also because my show is based on audience interaction and participation... and I need their hand free... besides it could turn messy).

## ***I'm celebrating more than one child's birthday, can you still entertain two for one party?***

Absolutely! I then have both b-day children be the "Stars of the Show." Everything else is the same except there would be an additional charge for an extra magic kit gift for the second birthday child.

## ***Can we invite young infants and babies to the party?***

Since it's your party, you may do whatever you'd like. However, I do not recommend having children under the age of 3 included in the show. The reason is because they are easily distracted and they could also be a distraction for the kids and adults who are enjoying the show. Very young children will not comprehend the performance and would probably not enjoy the magic. Same thing goes for pets. Please try to keep your pets in a separate area during the show (sorry fluffy.)

### *Can we give balloon animals and the magic souvenir to children under 3?*

Of course, I cannot control what happens after I leave but please don't give these items to anyone under 3 years old. There are small parts involved as well as the balloons ending up in their mouths and being a choking hazard. I'd rather be safe than sorry. Also please read above question.

#### *On a side note:*

**As latex balloons are being used in the balloon sculpting, please inform me if anyone at the party has a latex allergy.** If so, special precautions can be taken or that segment may be substituted all-together.

### **\*Important:** *Can we hire you to entertain the children in one room while the adults hang out in another room?*

Due to liability issues, I do require that all of the children be supervised at all times by at least one responsible adult (besides me.) I simply cannot be held responsible for supervising them.

*That pretty much covers it! If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to call or email!*

269-327-5111

Or

[info@brianpennymagic.com](mailto:info@brianpennymagic.com)

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## **BIRTHDAY BLUEPRINT**

<i>Birthday star</i>	
<i>Party Date</i>	
<i>Time</i>	





Party Theme		
Theme Colors		
Cake		
Food		
Entertainment		
Games		

## **GUEST LIST**

Guests		Parent/ guardian	Address / phone
1.			
2.			
3.			
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