



Recession-Proof Parties!

Party Planning Expert Shares Tips and Advice on Throwing Sensational Kids' Parties on a Shoestring Budget

Los Angeles, CA (January 2008) - The "R" word. It's been on the lips of talk show hosts, financial analysts, news reporters and anchors since November. And while America is not *technically* in a recession, consumers are worried their dollar won't go as far as they'd like and are holding onto their purse strings tightly.

But, that doesn't change the fact that birthday parties are still a big business. Kids don't care that the economy is taking a downturn, so how is mom and dad supposed to throw a bash on a shoestring budget? Party-planning expert **Lisa Kothari**, author of "**Dear Peppers and Pollywogs...What Parents Want to Know About Planning Their Kids' Parties**" has gathered her tricks and tips for a three-part series on recession-proof children's parties.

PART ONE: THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

"Parents can easily throw a fun and impressive kid's party on a budget if they just get a little creative with the theme," says Kothari. "Think about what your kids really like to do, what activities really make them happy. Then, build-out a few other themed ideas and before you know it, you'll have yourself a successful party."

A Messy Party!



What's a perfectly easy, fun, budget-friendly toddler to four-year-old party theme? Throw a Messy Party. Kids love to make a mess, so why not give in and make a whole party out of the theme! If it appeals, let's get down to the nitty gritty ideas that will bring the mess alive:

Send off invitations that are hand-stamped with little hand prints inviting kids to get ready to "Make a Mess!" Add all of the details.

Definitely buy balloons and streamers, but make a mess out of them; hang them all over the place in no set pattern.

For the activities, this would be a very good party to hold outdoors where clean-up will not be a problem. Set up 3-4 mini-tables where the kids can enjoy making a mess.

Have the kids paint pictures with chocolate. Yummy!

Place bowls of frosting, sprinkles, and candy decorations on another table with pre-made sugar cookies and let the kids decorate them on their own.

On another table set out paint, roller brushes, and butcher paper for the kids to make fantastic creations.

Play Dough and modeling clay placed on another table could be another opportunity to make messy creations to take home.

Have a bunch of stamps and water-soluble ink out and have the kids stamp their arms and legs all over and stamp one another!

Place a pile of dirt in one area of the yard and have the kids make dirt creations using twigs, rocks, and other natural elements.

Make a traditional round cake, ice with vanilla frosting and then drizzle different colors of icing into your own messy masterpiece. Add candy toppings as an added bonus.

Send them home stamped-up with their messy creations, their chocolate picture, Play Dough creations, and a cellophane bag of frosted cookies (ones that you made before the party that look pretty and yummy).

Make-Your-Own *Outrageous* Cookie Concoctions!

"Outrageous" is the key word here! A fabulous budget-friendly party idea that is super simple to put together with little time is to invite your kid's party guests to be "Silly Cookie Bakers" for an afternoon. Before the party begins, make up a simple batch of cookie dough -- these days, you can even buy the ready-made dough if you prefer to save even more time. Provide each kid with their own bowl of cookie dough, and this is where it gets interesting! Simply open your refrigerator door and cupboards and start pulling out the condiments.

Here's a good starter list:

1. Ketchup
2. Mustard
3. Ranch Dressing
4. Steak Sauce
5. Cheese
6. Balsamic Vinegar
7. Jam
8. Pesto Sauce
9. Tomato Sauce
10. Relish

Whatever condiments you have sitting around your kitchen, pull them out and have them on the table with the kids and their bowls of cookie dough. Now the kids can go to town making up their very own cookie concoctions. They will have a blast choosing what they want to add and how much. ***They can be as yummy or gross as they want to be!*** When they are done, place on trays and bake 'em up... Yummm?



When they come out and have cooled, the kids can frost and place candy sprinkles on them. Wrap each of the kid's cookies up in colored cellophane for their take home goody.

One note: you may want to warn the kids' parents that these cookies are strictly for their kids' enjoyment!!

For more of Lisa Kothari's party etiquette advice, check out her recently-released ***Dear Peppers and Pollywogs...What Parents Want to Know About Planning Their Kids' Parties***, available at www.Amazon.com for \$9.95. Also be sure to visit Lisa's website at www.PeppersPollywogs.com before you plan your next celebration!

Lisa is also available for interview regarding any sort of party-planning subject! **To set up an interview or to find out more about Lisa Kothari and her etiquette expertise, contact Kelly Anderson, Kelly@CloverPR.com, or Lauren Glassberg, Lauren@CloverPR.com, at Clover PR or call Clover PR at (818) 484-8664.**