Stanislaus County Office of Education
Child/Family Services
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Resource & Referral Handout

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

1. BIRTHDAY PARTY (INSIDE)

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're Invited to a Birthday Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Decorate the party area around any theme you choose.

String Toss Circle Game

The birthday mom starts by saying, I'm Jane's mother." Then she tosses a ball of string to a child, still holding one part of the string. The children continue the string toss and introduce themselves. After all the children are holding part of the string, the birthday mom will say, "We're all joined together in this web of friendship to wish Jane a Happy Birthday. Let's all sing the birthday song.

Concentration Game

Mom starts by saying, "I went to the store and bought an apple." The children will take turns around the circle by repeating all the items mentioned before and then adding an item of their own. The birthday mom can write down the items in order to give hints when necessary. Let other children join in to keep the momentum going if a child forgets.

Matching Pairs

Make or buy cut outs of matching pairs of shapes and simple objects. Pass out an objects from one of the sets to each child. Have the matching pairs hidden in the party area. Ask the children to hunt for the matching object and return to the circle when finished. When the children have all returned to the circle, encourage them to hold up their pairs and tell what they are.

Bean Bag Toss

The adult starts. "I see a girl in a blue dress. Catch the beanbag." Encourage each child in turn to identify another child in the circle until everyone has had a turn.

Musical Chairs

Line up enough chairs back to back so there is one less chair than there are children. Play a record, tape, or the piano while the children walk around the chairs. When the music stops, the children must sit down quickly, on a chair. Play for several minutes: repeat.

Supervised, Non-structured Play

Have the second adult supervise a quiet play period while the birthday mom prepares the treat.

Treat Time

Have the birthday eating spot set with napkins, paper cups, paper plates, and plastic spoons. Bring out the cake. Let the guest of honor make a wish and then blow out the candles. Serve the cake and juice, allowing enough time for all the children to finish eating.

Open the Gifts

Gather in a circle so everyone can see the gifts as they are opened.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

2. BIRTHDAY PARTY (OUTSIDE)

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're Invited to a Birthday Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Pin the Tail on the Donkey Game

An old favorite; the children will delight in being blindfolded, steered to the donkey and putting the tail where they think it should be. Distribute tails marked with each child's name. The donkey shape can be on a tree, a garage door, or even the side of the house. Secure it with duct tape. Present a small prize for the tail closest to the target.

Relay One

Line the children up in two rows. Say the object is to pass the big rubber ball over their heads down the row to the last person. That person runs to the front of the line and starts the procedure again, and so on until each child has had a turn. The first team to finish wins.

Relay Two

This is the same as the first relay, but the ball is passed between the legs until everyone has had a turn and the children are all back in their original spots again.

Relay Three

This time, each "team" runs to some marked point and rolls the ball to the next child in line. The first person then goes to the back of the line. Again, each child has a turn and the first team to finish wins.

Ball Tag

Have the birthday child be "It." The child holds the ball in front of the guests and says, "Go". The children scatter so as not to be caught, but if they are, "It" tags them and they become "It". Allow them to continue for about ten minutes and then call out "Stop".

Treasure Hunt

Before the party, familiarize yourself with the party spot so you can plant clues. Read each clue to the children until they find the treasure. For example, the first clue might read, "Go to the swing set and find a square blue note. Go with the children to make sure they know where they are going. The treasure can be a grocery bag containing a small prize for each guest.

Open the Gifts

After the physical activity, the children will be able to sit quietly and watch the opening of the gifts.

Treat Time

Use a picnic table, card tables or a sheet to serve on. Serve cake and juice. Then sing "Happy Birthday" before the guests leave for home.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

3. CHRISTMAS PARTY

Invitations

You're invited to a Christmas Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:
Bring: (a $2.00 gift)

Decoration

Whatever holiday decorations you have will provide a festive party atmosphere.

Decorate a Felt Tree

Attach large felt Christmas tree shape to the wall, a door, an easel or the side of a large box with tape.
Make a paper chain—Pass out strips of colored paper for the children to loop and tape together. Tape the chain on the "tree."
Make felt ornaments—Working on a covered table, a countertop or an old sheet, provide colored felt shapes, glue, sequins, small puffs of cotton and glitter. Let the children design several ornaments to hang on the tree.

"Here We Go Round the Candlestick"

Place a large candle in the middle of the floor. Holding hands to form a circle, have the children walk around the candle singing to the tune of "Here we go Round the Mulberry Bush":

Here we go round the candle stick.
The candlestick, the candlestick,
Here we go round the candlestick
All on a Christmas morning

Hot Potato Game

Sit in a circle and pass a potato around from one child to the next clockwise, saying "potato," each time the potato is passed. When you, the leader, yell "Hot Potato," the person caught holding the potato becomes "it," and starts again.

Peanut Relay Game

Line up two teams of children. The first person in each line carries a peanut on a spoon to a designated spot and then back to the next child in line. The first child then goes to the back of the line and sits. The second child in line then goes until each child has had a turn. If at any time the peanut is dropped, the child must pick it up and put it back on the spoon. The line with all the children seated first wins.

Follow the Leader

Let the host child lead the children in a line. As they walk, the guests must imitate exactly what the leader does. Play some music. Encourage movements such as stooping, putting a hand on a hip, waving, clapping, kneeling on one knee, putting hands behind the neck, and skipping.

Snack Time

Serve Christmas cookies and nuts along with juice or milk.

Santa Claus

Let the hosting child take a "pack" of the exchange gifts around so each child can choose one.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

4. CIRCUS PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're invited to a Circus Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Pictures, cutouts or postcards of clowns, circus tents, circus animals and circus acts can be placed around the party area.

Make Clown Faces

Give each child a paper plate to use as the face. Provide glue, colored yarn for hair, half styrofoam balls for noses, and markers for drawing facial features.

Story

Read a circus story from the library or your bookshelf.

Circus Animals

Ask the children to pretend to be lions, seals, elephants, horses, bears, monkeys and dogs. Have them move around the room as you suggest what they can be. Ask them to make the animals' sounds as they move.

Circus Parade

Assign roles to each child, and lead the children marching around the room or yard in character. The children can be lion tamers, tightrope walkers, horseback riders, trapeze artists, or members of the band.

Tight- Rope Walking

Place an 8 – foot – long 2 x 4 on the floor with the 4 inch side up. Tell the children to walk across one by one without their feet touching the floor.

Circus Game

Ask the children in turn to think of a word that reminds them of the circus. They might name cotton candy, clowns, hot dogs, bareback riders or the circus train. Go around the circle twice; ready to give hints for those who need them.

Belonging Words Game

By now the children will have the circus in mind. Read from a list of circus-related and non-circus-related words, asking the children to clap their hands every time you say a word that reminds them of the circus.

Dress Up

Provide a large box full of used clothing, shoes and hats; Ask the children to dress like clowns. They will look funny wearing over-sized clothing and shoes in wild color combinations. Ask them to hold their clown faces in front of their own for a picture.

Snack Time

Serve animal cookies and juice, along with individual nut cups filled with cheerios, M & M's, cheese chunks, nuts and raisins.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

5. EASTER PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're Invited to an Easter Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Place paper flowers, chickens, and eggs in the windows, around the door and in the designated party area.

Decorate an Easter Egg Tree

Before the party, find a large branch with several smaller branches for an Easter egg tree. Secure it in a tin, can filled with sand or small stones and use melted wax to seal it tight. Cover the can with foil or colored paper. Blow out some eggshells and cut two to three dozen more from colored paper. Tie on strings for hanging. Provide rick rack, ribbon, markers, stickers, glue and scissors. Let the guests decorate several eggs to hang on the tree.

Feed the Bunny Relay

Decorate two large small-mouthed jars like rabbits. Glue ears toward the top and put on some eyes and a mouth. Have the children form two lines behind the rabbit bottles. Have the first child in each line stand and drop- five jelly beans into the bottle, dump them out and give them to the next child in line, then go to the back of the line and sit down. Continue until each child has had a turn.

Name the Animal

Have the children sit in a circle and close their eyes. Tell them you are going to make animal sounds for them to identify. Say "Bark, bark," for a dog, "Moo, moo," for a cow, "Meow, meow," for a cat and "Neigh, neigh," for a horse. The leader (adult) makes the first sound, then the child who guesses the animal makes the next sound and so forth. Give hints if necessary.

Name Signs of Spring

Going clockwise around the circle have each child name spring signs like melting snow, robins, bird nests, worms toads pussy willows, and tulips.

Easter Egg Hunt

Hide plastic eggs filled with jellybeans all around the party area or the yard if you have one and weather permits. Do this before the guests arrive. Tell the guests that they may each find three eggs to keep.

Make Easter Hats

Cut out three-inch bands from grocery bags to fit onto each child's head. Secure the bands with tape. Provide feathers, markers, cotton balls, bows, small buttons and glue. Encourage the children to wear their hats for treat time.

Treats

Serve juice with cupcakes your child and you have frosted and decorated the day before the party.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

6. FOURTH OF JULY PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're Invited to a Fourth of July Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Decorate the party area with red, white, and blue balloons. The treat table, plates, napkins and nut cups can carry out the same tri-color scheme, in keeping with the colors of the flag.

"If You're Happy and You Know it"

If you're happy and you know it,
Clap you hands,
If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands
If you're happy and you know it,
Then your face will surely show it,
If you're happy and you know it,
Clap your hands.
Have each child suggest a verse like "Stamp your feet", "Pull your ear", "Touch your nose", "Wave goodbye"

Fishing

Make 2 or 3 dozen small construction paper fish, all colored red, white and blue (you may wish to have the children do the coloring). Attach a paper clip to each. Provide a yardstick with a string and a magnet attached to the end of the string. Let each child catch a fish from the pond and pass the fishing pole to the next child. Continue until all the fish are caught.

Feltboard Picture

Put a large box with one side covered with felt where everyone can see it. Provide cutouts of felt trees, flowers, birds, a sun and some people having a picnic at a park. Spread the cutouts in the middle of the circle and let each child in turn put an object on the feltboard to complete a picture.

Parade

Give each child a small flag to hold and encourage the children to march around the play area after you. Ask the children to stay in step and chant "Right, left, right, left, right." March for several minutes before reforming a circle.

Make Flags

Explain to the children that the Fourth of July is America's birthday, in honor of the day over 200 years ago when we became a free country. Say "We are going to make American flags to celebrate our country's birthday." Pass out a sheet of white paper to each child. Have a flag pinned up for a model. Pass out red strips of paper for the stripes, glue, a blue rectangle for the upper left-hand corner, and stick-on stars.

Treats

Serve cookies and yogurt push-ups, since they resemble little rockets.

"Happy Birthday U.S.A"

Sing it to the tune of "Happy Birthday".

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

7. HALLOWEEN PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're invited to a Halloween Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:
Wear a costume or a mask.

Decorations

Make a ghost or two to hang in a tree or somewhere near the door. Using a section of an old sheet, fill the center with crushed newspaper and tie a white string around the outside to make a head. Put on eyes and a mouth with black marker, Have a few masks for any guest who comes out of costume.

Name the Spook

Have the children sit in a circle. Play a guessing game to identify all the little spooks. The hostess can start by saying, "I see someone wearing a tall black hat. She has a black cape too. Who is it?" The children identified will stand, say their names and then describe another guest.

Witch's Brew

Put a large box in the center of the circle. Insert a yardstick for stirring. Lay out a number of Halloween shapes on the floor. (Spider, bat, pumpkin, different-colored tree leaves, etc.) Be sure there is at least one shape for each guest. Have the children take turns choosing an item to put in the brew and then stir the mixture.

Pin the Nose on the Witch

While the children are still sitting in a circle, give them each a felt witch's nose. Point out a felt witch head taped to a nearby surface. Blindfold and guide the children in turn to attach a nose where they think it should be. The game will produce much laughter as the noses are placed in odd locations.

Simon Says

Explain that the children are supposed to follow your directions only if you say "Simon Says" first. If you say, "Simon says say "Boo", all the children should obey. But if you just say "Stand up", the children should remain seated. Other orders might be to touch an ear, to pat their tummies, to close their eyes, to open their mouths, to put hands on hips, to clap their hands, to touch their heads and so on.

Snack Time

Make jack-o-lantern pizzas. To do so, pass English muffin halves to each child after spreading each with a tablespoon of pizza sauce. Let the children put a slice of mozzarella cheese on the muffin and then make the facial features with sliced olives for eyes and green pepper or pepperoni strips for mouths. Cook the pizzas in the microwave oven, the conventional oven, in a toaster oven or a greased electric frying pan until the cheese melts. Serve with cider or fresh fruit juice.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

8. MAY DAY PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're invited to a May Day Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Have paper flowers, bees, birds, and butterfly cutouts placed around the party area. Weather permitting, tape crepe paper streamers from an outdoor tree, or a basketball hoop or a clothesline pole.

Flower Match

Have the guests sit in a circle. Give each child a paper flower. In turn, have each child find a matching flower from the middle of the circle and hold them both up before sitting down.

Guess the Food

Tape a picture of a common food on each child's back. Ask the children not to tell others what pictures they have on their backs. Each child stands up and turns around so everyone else can see the food picture. The guests will give clues until all the children guess their foods. Example: for a banana, clues might be long and yellow, monkeys eat them, they have peels.

Let's Pretend

You name things or activities associated with springtime, and ask the children to act out what you say. For example, "Be a plant shooting through the ground. Fly, like a bird. Wiggle, like a worm. Crawl, like an ant. Buzz, like a bee. Sway, like a tree blowing in the wind. Open, like an umbrella.

Feltboard Garden

Glue a large piece of felt to the side of a large box and put the box in the middle of the circle. Provide plant roots, stems, leaves and flowers made from felt. Each child in turn puts a plant part in the "garden" until several flowers are "grown".

Make May Baskets

Give the children each a piece of colored construction paper and show them how to roll it into a cone shape. Staple the cone shut. Next staple a pipe cleaner handle on the baskets and label them. Have the children fill their baskets with a variety of paper flowers and spring cutouts to take home. Drop a few pieces of wrapped candy into each basket to be enjoyed later. Ask the children to give the May Baskets to their parents.

Treat

Serve ice cream and let the children choose a topping of chocolate, butterscotch, berries or syrup. Sprinkle the top with coconut flakes or nuts.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

9. ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're invited to a St. Patrick's Day Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:

Decorations

Make green shamrock cutouts to tape all around the party area. Hang up green balloons for all to take home.

Name Something Green

Have the children sit in a circle. Tell them that St. Patrick was a good person who lived in Ireland; a country known for its green hills and green plants. Ask the children in turn to name something green. They might name peas, tree leaves, frogs, other guest's clothing, or objects around the house.

Hokey Pokey

Stand in a circle. The party mom starts the singing and demonstrates the motions. "You put your right foot in, you put your right foot out, you put your right foot in and you shake it all about, you do the hokey pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what its all about". Continue with left foot, right arm, left arm, head and whole self.

Animal Charades

Sit down in the circle. Ask a child to stand up and mimic what a certain animal does. The children then must guess the animal and the next child clockwise imitates another animal. Continue until each child has had a turn. Whisper an animal to any child who can't think of one.

Musical Drawing

Give each child a large sheet of paper and a marking pen or crayon. While you play some music, tell the children to draw in rhythm, then to show their pictures to the others.

"The Farmer in the Dell"

Ask the children to act out the song. First the farmer chooses a wife and takes her by the hand. Then the wife chooses a child and the three join hands. Any children left will be the cheese, so all the children are included in the end.

Search for the Pot of Gold

Before the party, make a path of paper footsteps to follow all around the house or yard. The children will follow the path in a line until they reach the pot of gold. Have a large pot or box filled with small prizes and let each child choose one. (When shopping for treats, you may be lucky enough to find covered candy in the shape of coins).

Treat Time

Serve cream cheese crackers, cookies and juice. Mix green food coloring with softened cream cheese to spread on the crackers. Top each with a slice of olive.

HOME PARTIES FOR TOTS

10. VALENTINE PARTY

We recommend a minimum of two adults be available to supervise.

Invitations

You're invited to a Valentine Party!
When:
Where:
Given by:
Bring: (10 valentines to share)

Decorations

Tape cutouts of valentine hearts, old valentine cards, cupids and bows around the party area.

Make Valentine Placemats

Provide glue, glossy pictures, old valentine cards, doilies, red, pink, and white ribbon, sequins, and scraps of cloth material to cut into heart shapes. Help the children to cut hearts and ask them to decorate a sheet of construction paper any way they wish. Write the children's names on their place mats to use later for the treat.

Valentine March

Have the children sit in a circle. Provide several different valentine cards cut in half. Arrange the card halves in two different piles. Each child in turn takes half a card from one pile and matches it with the other half from the second pile. Tape the two halves together and let each child show that completed card to the others.

Dancing Snowflakes or Raindrops

Depending on which is most appropriate for the weather, play some lively music and ask the children to move like snowflakes or raindrops.

Spinner Point Game

Have the children sit in a circle. Spin an arrow attached to cardboard and when it points to a child, that child stands up and describes a familiar object for the others to guess. The first child to guess the object then spins the arrow to point at another child. (Example: to describe a tree, the child might say, branches and leaves." For a dog a child might say, "This is an animal that barks".

"Row, Row, Row Your Boat"

Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream,
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream.

Treat Time

Serve valentine-shaped cake and juice or milk. Bake one round and one square cake. Cut the round one in half and place the two halves next to two adjacent square sides to form a heart shape. Frost as you desire.

Valentine Exchange

Give the children small bags or a large envelope to keep their valentines in. Let each child in turn distribute an exchange card to the other children just before leaving for home. Make sure that all children receive their valentines. Let the children keep their placemats.