

Check with your local fire department – they will often visit birthday parties to show off the fire truck and allow kids to play on it – all for free!!!

Pass The Box

Take a small gift or toy that all kids would enjoy, then gift wrap it, but keep wrapping it with different layers of gift-wrap. Play some music while passing the present around, when the music stops, the guest left holding it unwraps the first layer of wrapping paper, then the music starts again and the box is passed, then every time the music stops, another layer is removed until someone finally unwraps the very last layer,,,,, and that is the winner. It is kind of like Hot Potato, but this is an item that everyone wants to hold on to!

Statues

Played to music, all the players move round while the music is playing, when the music stops the players have to stand like statues, anyone who moves is out, start the music again and repeat as many times as you want.

Tied in Knots

Instruct your guests to stand in a circle facing inward. To begin, everyone extends his or her right-hand into the ring and takes a hold of someone else's hand. Then, they do the same with their left-hands. The object of the game is to see if they can untangle the "knot" by ducking under people, stepping over them or turning around. No matter what happens, they can't let go of hands!

Name That Bug

Pair up your party guests in teams of 2-3 people and put a sticker or a picture of a bug on each child's back. Have the guests try to guess what the bug is by asking questions that can be answered with only "yes" or "no." For example, "Do I have legs?," "Can I fly?" and "Am I Green?" Note: You can use stickers of animals for variety.

And the Wind Blew

Put your hot air to good use with this home made challenge game for 2 or more players. You will need: 2 or more players, Table, Ping Pong ball. Players stand at opposite ends of the table. Place the ball in the center of the table. Begin by blowing the ball to keep it from falling off the table. Older kids can make simple adaptations for air hockey, using masking tape for the center line and goal boxes.

Snowball Pickup

Blindfold the kids, designate a time limit, and have them pick up cotton balls strewn across the floor and put them in a bag. Most snowballs wins.

Balloon Stomp

For this game, all you'll need are rubber bands and balloons. Blow up many balloons and tie a rubber band to each of them. Put a balloon around each player's ankle by stretching the rubber band over their foot (it would be best over their sock so that it won't hurt). Make sure players wear shoes to protect their feet (if you want you can put a balloon on each ankle). Play some music and have everyone stomp around, trying to step on and pop other players' balloons. Whomever has the last balloon left around their ankle is the winner!

Toilet Paper Wrap

This is one of the classic kid party games in which the kids race to wrap each other up from head to toe in toilet paper. Each kid has a partner. One is the "statue" and the other wraps. Set a time clock to count off seconds. When the clock starts the wrapper has to completely wrap up their partner from head to toe. It's harder than you think but also a lot of fun. The first one to wrap up their partner completely with no body parts showing wins!! (One roll of toilet paper per team.)

Marshmallow Snowball Toss

Pair up the kids. Give each pair 10 marshmallows (5 each). Have them stand a few feet from each other. Each kid tries to toss the marshmallows into his teammate's mouth. The team that catches the most wins.

Octopus Tag

The birthday kid begins as the Octopus in the middle of a large playing area. All other kids are Fish who must try to run past the Octopus to the other side of the playing area. If a Fish is tagged, they then hold hands with the Octopus and become a tentacle to help tag more fish. The last Fish alive becomes the next Octopus.

Diving game

Place various sea creatures on the floor. The guests and parents all hold onto the sides of a big blue sheet and make waves (you can put ocean sounds in the background). When you chant each guest's name, they "dive" under the sea and bring back a sea creature (for instance, "John, John, dive under the sea and bring back an octopus").

Shark Tag

Designate the Shark (you can even make a headband with a shark fin to make the kid-shark feel like a real Jaws...) And have the kids play tag. Whomever the Shark eats either is out or also transforms into a Shark.

Jelly Fish Jump

Set 3-4 Hula-hoops on the ground. Explain to the kids that these aren't hoops, but jelly fish, and their task is to jump from one jelly fish to the next. Their feet must land inside the hoops, otherwise they've been stung. At first, lay the hoops at a short distance from one another. After one round of jelly fish jumping, increase the distance between the hoops and have the kids jump again. Continue increasing the distance until the hoops are really far apart. The winner is the kid who makes it through the hoops without ever getting stung. You can also play this kid game as a relay race with two groups.

French Fried Ice Cream

You will need...

- Rice Krispies cereal (do not use generic or store brand).
- Ice Cream
- Zip Lock bag, large size
- Various toppings (ie: Chocolate syrup, whip topping, cherries, nuts, etc)

Put about 2 cups of Rice Krispies into the zip lock bag.

Put 1 scoop of ice cream into the bag.

Zip-close the bag and shake.

Cereal will stick to ice cream.

Take out coated ice cream and place in dish.

Decorate as you like it (whip topping, chocolate syrups, nuts, cherries, etc).

Q: Do you know the name of a lady who teaches hula dancing for little girls? A friend hired her several years back for her daughter's birthday party. She can't remember the name. She said it was the cutest thing, tastefully done, and all the little girls loved it. I want to hire her for my daughter's fourth birthday.

A: You are looking for Carole Stockton of Hawaiian Kona Isle, 512.258.8674. In addition to the hula, she teaches the guests "Happy Birthday" in Hawaiian and demonstrates implements such as the uli uli (island maracas with feathers). Party prices begin at \$75. (article dated May-2006)