

Pointers For Parents

Making a Possible Parental Nightmare a Dream Come True *How to Host and Survive Your Child's Sleepover*

(NAPSA)—Backpack? Yep. Pillow? Yep. Sleeping bag? Yep. Going camping? Nope.

So where else could one be going with these items? Think back to your childhood. That's right—it's a slumber party.

Mention "sleepover" or "slumber party" to just about anyone and memories of childhood are sure to abound. And now, for grownups with children of our own, it's certain that sleepovers will once again become part of our lives—but in a different way.

Gone are the days of wreaking havoc at a friend's house, raiding the refrigerator or putting make-up on the family dog. Now it's *your* house in danger of becoming a slumber party casualty.

So how do you host your child's overnight adventure, keep your house intact and avoid being a "totally lame" parent all at the same time?

Here are easy tips for planning a party that's fun and stress-free:

- **Set Ground Rules.** Anticipate the biggest two or three potential issues ahead of time and make those your "rules for the night." Be sure to keep the rules to a minimum—too many rules become a challenge to kids to see what they can get away with. The few rules you establish will tell the kids you're watching them, but they'll still have freedom to have fun.

Examples: "No jumping on the furniture, no pillow fights and no using the telephone."

- **Idle Hands.** Despite the term "sleepover," sleep is usually the last thing on kids' minds. To keep them from destroying your house, have some entertainment ready to go. This can include board games, movies, outdoor activities while it's still light, etc. This opportunity allows for creativity, as well. Make up games or tell fun stories—the options are limitless.



Examples: Charades is always a great game that requires no props and can be played just about anywhere. If it's nice outside, get everyone tired out early by heading to the yard for games like hide and seek or tag. Parents can play, too. The exercise is good for everybody!

- **"We're hungry!"** It may only be minutes after your pint-sized guests arrive that you hear this phrase. So why not make snack time part of the evening's entertainment? Help the kids make, decorate and top their own snacks—keeping them busy and fed at the same time.

Examples: Using any type of bread (English muffin, bagel, French bread, etc.), have the kids top their own piece with spaghetti sauce, cheese and Hormel® pepperoni for a mini-pizza party. Other toppings can be used as well. Once the pizzas are topped, have an adult put them on a cookie sheet under the broiler for about five minutes or until the cheese turns golden brown. When they're done, everyone will have a personalized pizza.

Keeping these tips in mind, your child's slumber parties can be as memorable to them as yours were to you—and you won't lose any sleep over it! Well, not much anyway.

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