

Bring the Birthday Party Back Home; Sixty-Four Percent of Americans Say They Would Like to Host More Birthday Parties at Home ... If Only They Weren't So Messy!

With booming birthday party businesses across the country, parents often seek the trendiest, most popular setting to host their children's birthdays - including upscale restaurants, amusement parks and sports complexes. However, a recent survey by Kelton Research revealed that a resounding 64 percent of Americans would host more children's birthday parties at home, if only the parties were not so messy. Forty-five percent of Americans viewed the possibility of a mess as the number one disadvantage to hosting birthday parties at home.

On the flip side, parents across the country saw major benefits to at-home parties. Nearly half of all Americans (49 percent) agree that a key advantage to having a child's birthday party at home is the low cost. The cost factor is particularly important for parents of children age 11 and under; more than 60 percent of those parents viewed cost as the number one advantage to an at-home party. A close second is the benefit of having the event in a familiar environment (41 percent), followed by the ability to personalize the party (37 percent).

"With a little creativity and imagination, parents can develop one-of-a-kind birthday experiences in the comfort of their own home," said Francesca Abbraciamento, one of New York's hippest party planners. "And you can lessen the mess by following a few simple tips."

Abbraciamento suggests:

- Consider your child's unique passions and develop an individualized party theme. If your child likes space, host an astronomy party and gaze at the stars from the backyard.
- Take your time planning decorations. A few special items can transform your living room into a spaceship, an undersea wonderland or a disco.
- Ward off stains from food, drink and craft materials before the party starts. Consider furniture slipcovers, fabric sprays and stain-resistant clothing. Then, you won't have to worry when the wee masters of disaster dash through your home.

In the spirit of bringing the birthday party back home, Scotchgard protector is sponsoring the "Search for America's Messiest Birthday Party" contest for a chance to win a kid-friendly room facelift. Participants can submit an entry form with a photo of a child, age 12 or under, at a messy birthday party and an essay of 20-100 words explaining the photo and why the experience was memorable. Entries should be submitted to: Scotchgard Protector's Search for America's Messiest Birthday Party; c/o Cohn & Wolfe; 292 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017. Entries must be received between April 10 and July 10, 2006. For official rules or to download an entry form, visit www.scotchgard.com.

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