

HAVE FUN

# REAL NEW JERSEY BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Need some birthday party inspiration?  
We asked local event planners for insider  
advice on how their best bashes come  
together. Steal these ideas!

By JAMIE WISNIEWSKI



# FAIRY PARTY

None can resist the allure of wings and a tutu. Give her the fairy party of her dreams with these fun ideas from planner Laura Himmelein of Party Cake Party Cake, Maplewood.

(1) A backyard lawn makes the perfect setting for a fairy table. Purple tablecloths, a burlap runner and mason jars for "fairy water" (2) keep the theme going. Spray paint plastic stool tops red, then add white dots to create toadstools (Himmelein got white kid's stools at IKEA for \$8 each).

(3) Give each girl a tutu and a pair of wings—they double as favors. Start everyone in on a game of "fairy tag" while the rest of the guests assemble.

(4) Top red-frosted cupcakes with white hard shell chocolate candies to make delicious toadstools.

(5) Give guests little "fairy" houses to decorate with stickers, pens and paints. (They're actually bird houses, available at most craft stores.) Display them on a moss-covered terracotta tray.



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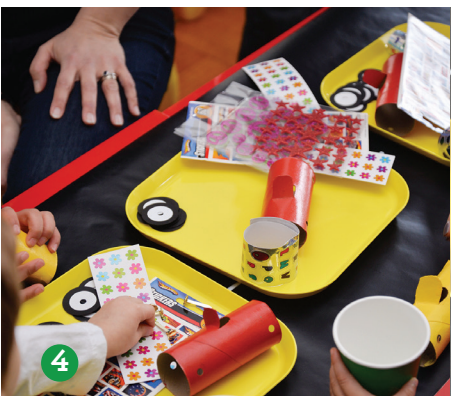
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# HOT ROD PARTY



Little guys will love making their own craft cars, which double as party favors, too!

**(1)** Use a color scheme inspired by red, yellow and green traffic signals. Re-purpose toys as snack containers—At this party, Himmelein filled the birthday boy's trucks with goldfish. Wrap juice boxes with black card stock and use round color-coding labels as stop lights.

**(2)** Roll out black Kraft paper (buy in 12-foot rolls at the craft store) to create your own racetrack—secure to floor with removable mounting squares. Make lines with 12-inch strips of white duct tape.

**(3)** Let kids decorate their own racecars by combining toilet paper rolls (paint them ahead of time), cardstock, paper fasteners and stickers. Cut a hole in the top of rolls to make a seat opening, punch four small holes to attach wheels (use precut black and white circles) and secure with paper fasteners. You'll want to have everything precut and ready to go **(4)** so kids just need to assemble.

**(5)** Send little racers home with easy-to-make DIY shirts. Download circle or car clipart (or use ours at [njfamily.com/carparty](http://njfamily.com/carparty)) and print on iron-on T-shirt transfers.



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PHOTOS COURTESY OF DANA BENZ PHOTOGRAPHY

# CAMPING PARTY

Boy or girl, indoor or outdoor—as long as they love camping and nature this party theme from Juli Smigelsky and Dana Benz of Tabletop Treats, Holmdel is sure to be a hit. Set up in the yard or head to a local park when the weather's nice—pitch tents in the living room when it's not.

(1) Every camp needs a welcome sign! Buy a big piece of wood and use white paint to announce whose camp it is.

(2) Make something unexpected into a camping-themed cooler: If you have a canoe or an inflatable

raft around, fill it with ice and add in the drinks.

(3) These acorns are edible! Heat a few chocolate candy melts in the microwave in 30-second increments until melted and smooth. Dip the base of a Hershey Kiss in the melted chocolate and use it to glue the kiss to the top of a Mini Nilla Wafer. Allow chocolate to harden and repeat with peanut butter chips for the stem.

(4) Offer long sticks to roast s'mores (Smigelsky and Benz found theirs at Christmas Tree Shops) or have kids gather sticks outside first. Marshmallows (in fun flavors,

like chocolate and strawberry) get roasted over Sternos with the help of an adult—and when they're good and melty, kids can accessorize their s'more with miniature candy, like Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, Hershey's Bars, Kit-Kat's, Snickers and other toppings, like Nutella and Fluff.

(5) Transform a cupcake tower into a campfire: Add a few logs around the base of the cupcake stand and make the cupcake icing look like fire by frosting with yellow icing and then embellishing with an orange spray-on food color like Wilton's Color Mist.