

collin child

THE MAGAZINE PARENTS LIVE BY IN COLLIN COUNTY

september 2017

**which
celebrity
mom are
you?**

**SMALL-
TOWN
FAMILY
FUN**

+

**MEET OUR
MOM NEXT DOOR
DR. LINDA
ABRAHAM-
SILVER**

PARTY TIME!

**BEST FOR FAMILIES:
KIDS' PARTIES
WINNERS**

**how to
graciously
host a
birthday
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REASONS TO LOVE
SEPTEMBER

**YOUR MOM-
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special advertising section:

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BEST FOR FAMILIES: KIDS' 2017 PARTIES

WORDS
COLLINCHILD EDITORS

YOUR KIDDO'S HOBBIES CHANGE WITH THE TIDE and that means last year's arcade-themed birthday might not jive with her newly discovered artist within. To help you plan a party around her latest fancy, we compiled our annual list of Best For Families: Kids' Parties awards. This year's winners, chosen by you, include venues that cater to Broadway-bound babes and little gymnasts; indoor playgrounds perfect for middle-of-summer or winter birthdays; and parties that come to you because we can't think of anything better than front-row seats in the comfort of your living room (or backyard). Find the package best suited to your kid's growing personality and watch the memories unfold.

FOR HISTORY LOVERS

HERITAGE FARMSTEAD MUSEUM

Turn the dial to the late 1800s for a birthday party at Heritage Farmstead Museum. For the littlest farmhands — ages 3 and younger — parties begin with story time then games like gathering apples and feeding the chickens. Those older than 3 also get to dress up and play with era cooking utensils, sewing machines and more in the History House, as well as participate in sack races and lasso pretend steer. And kids 5 and older follow a map to find buried treasure on the property too. All parties include a party facilitator who sets up and leads the activities. Add tractor rides for an additional charge. \$200 for 10 guests.

Plano, 972/881-0140; heritagefarmstead.org

FOR BIG BOWLERS

PINSTACK

Pinstack is a haven for bowlers, video game lovers and adrenaline junkies of all ages. In addition to one hour of bowling, the Spiller birthday package includes two hours of unlimited video games and access to the two-story laser tag arena, LED-lit rock climbing wall, ropes course and bumper cars. Your party host serves unlimited soft drinks, pizza and fried mozzarella sticks or chicken tenders and french fries; bring a cake or purchase individual cake pops from the Bowl Bar. Packages from \$24.99 per person.

6205 Dallas Parkway, Plano, 972/781-2695; pinstackbowl.com

FOR A PARTY ON WHEELS

GRISHAM FARMS

From furry to slimy to spiky, the animals of Grisham Farms come to your child's party for a 45-minute hands-on meet and greet. Kids ages 2 and older hold and pet 10 animals including the chinchilla, hedgehog, rabbit, bearded dragon and ball python. The zoo crew teaches age-tailored lessons — 3-year-olds learn what animals eat and do while older kids might learn how an animal's exterior helps it survive in nature. For more fun, add a 30-minute Mother Goose Live song and story time. Call at least one month in advance to book for up to 50 guests. Packages from \$250.

Dallas-Fort Worth Area, 214/544-7255; grishamfarms.com

FOR INDOOR PLAY

PLAY STREET MUSEUM

You have options when it comes to throwing a jam-boree at one of Play Street Museum's many themed locations. Does your kid love all modes of transport? Book an On-The-Go party in Allen. Take animal lovers to McKinney and outdoorsy kiddos "camping" in Plano. DIY packages at all locations let you customize a private party for up to 20 kids; the Sit Back and Relax option enlists a party specialist who provides invitations, cupcakes, food, drinks, party favors and paper goods. Visit the website to choose from over a dozen themes. New this year: Let guests deposit money electronically into the Birthday Bank, a fund used for

toys in the museum's shop. Packages from \$365 for 20 kids.

Multiple locations; playstreetmuseum.com

FOR NATURAL PERFORMERS PLANO CHILDREN'S THEATRE

Your child takes the stage at Plano Children's Theatre, moving this month to The Shops at Willow Bend. The party begins with theater costumes and improv games led by a professional theater director and a short skit performed by the guest of honor and his 10 castmates before watching a one-hour musical. Guests enjoy a VIP experience that includes a birthday serenade during the show and an introduction to the creative team. Bring cake, food and presents to enjoy post-performance. Packages from \$250 for \$10 tickets (discounted rates available for parents). 1301 Custer Road, Suite 706, Plano, 972/422-2575; northtexasperformingarts.org

FOR GOLD-MEDALIST SWIMMERS

EMLER SWIM SCHOOL

For two hours, your party of up to 30 guests enjoys free time in the indoor, heated saltwater pool at Emler Swim School (add a swim buddy to lead the kids in games for an additional charge). Then head to the party room, where the food, cake, paper goods and decorations that you provide await. Packages from \$210 for members; \$300 for nonmembers.

Multiple locations; emlerswimschool.com

FOR THE ARTISTICALLY INCLINED

COLOR ME MINE

Your child and at least eight of her friends each choose a ceramic teacup, salt and pepper shakers, seahorse or anything that ranges from \$16–\$19 to decorate with nontoxic, food-grade paints during a two-hour party at Color Me Mine. Upgrades include balloons and a souvenir signature plate or paper goods and pizza, cake and drinks. Book online at least two weeks in advance. Packages from \$20 per guest.

3401 Preston Road, Suite 10, Frisco, 972/668-6201; colormemine.com

FOR SCIENCE LOVERS PEROT MUSEUM OF NATURE AND SCIENCE

Reluctant to turn your living room into a laboratory? Let the Perot Museum of Nature and Science handle the goop and glob — or fossils, or rocket fuel, or dinosaur toothpaste. Birthdays at the museum include 90 minutes of party time with the theme of your choice, from Dinosaur Tamer to Professor Mix-a-Lot, plus all-day general admission, so guests can wander the exhibit halls before and after the celebration. Up-

grade for extra activities, an additional party host and kid-friendly music. \$260 for members; \$300 for nonmembers.

2201 N. Field St., Dallas, 214/428-5555; perotmuseum.org

FOR FUN & GAMES MAIN EVENT

Laser tag, bowling, arcade — if your kid wants to do it all on their birthday, book a party at Main Event. All of Main Event's new party packages come with arcade cards for the guests, 1–4 activities (including gravity ropes or mini golf at the Frisco location), a kid-friendly entree and a dedicated party host, meaning parents can bring the cake then focus on having fun. Invitations are a breeze too, with premade invites you can send when you book or print out to mail the old-fashioned way. An extra perk for Mom and Dad: Your child's birthday package includes a certificate for an hour of free bowling just for you — hello, date night. Packages start at \$15.95 per person for 10–15 guests; book online.

9375 Dallas Parkway, Frisco, 469/362-7227
3941 Central Expressway, Plano, 972/881-8181
mainevent.com

FOR SPORTS FANS FRISCO ROUGHRIDERS

Even when the Frisco RoughRiders are on the road, your little slugger can celebrate at the Dr Pepper Ballpark. Tour the dugout, romp on the playground and eat pizza and cake; upgrades include field access and a visit from the mascot. When the RoughRiders are in town, the ballgame takes center stage, but your kiddo and their friends also get access to the playground, unlimited food and a tour of the field depending on the party package you choose. Want to knock this party out of the park? Go for the Choctaw Lazy River package to root for the Riders from the comfort of inner tubes behind right field. Packages start at \$699 on game days and \$600 on other days.

7300 RoughRiders Trail, Frisco, 972/731-9200
ridersbaseball.com

FOR CINEPHILES STUDIO MOVIE GRILL

Treat your mini movie buff and her friends to dinner (or brunch or lunch) and a show at Studio Movie Grill. Choose from one of the current kid-friendly flicks (and sit in a reserved section in the theater) or rent the entire auditorium and bring your own favorite film to watch while feasting on popcorn, pizza, burgers, chicken bites, desserts or sausage links dipped in pancake batter. Prices from \$6 per partygoer, plus the cost of movie tickets. Email kwalden@studiomoviegrill.com to book.

4721 W. Park Blvd., Plano, 972/596-4627

4800 State Highway 121, The Colony, 972/987-1899
studiomoviegrill.com

FOR ANIMAL LOVERS DALLAS ZOO

Spend the day at the Dallas Zoo with your party animal and her pack. Choose the Zoo-It-Your-Way Birthday option — and bring at least 20 people — for discounted all-day admission (\$7 per kid ages 3–11; \$10 per adult) and a bring-your-own party (food and decor) to enjoy in a first-come, first-served picnic area. Or opt for the Zoofari Package if you prefer to be a little more hands-off. It includes all-day zoo admission for 20 guests, plus 90 minutes in an air-conditioned party room and a private zookeeper-led animal encounter. \$475 for up to 20 guests. 650 S. R.L. Thornton Freeway, Dallas, 469/554-7470; dallaszoo.com

FOR NATURE LOVERS DALLAS ARBORETUM & BOTANICAL GARDEN

At the Dallas Arboretum, outdoorsy kiddos can explore the 66 acres of gardens, get wet in one of two splash pads (depending on time of year) and learn about plants and bugs in the interactive Rory Meyers Children's Adventure Garden (for an additional charge). Bring at least 15 kiddos to receive discounted admission (\$9 for kids ages 3–12). Add a child-centric educational tour for \$7 more per kid. Then bring your own picnic or grab prepared lunches from the Children's Garden Café.

8525 Garland Road, Dallas, 214/515-6500;
dallasarboretum.org

FOR THRILL-SEEKERS IFLY

Give little daredevils a rise with a party that mimics the free-fall portion of skydiving without the risk — kids simply float on a cushion of air. Parties at iFly begin with private training from an International Bodyflight Association-certified instructor and include the rental of the helmets and flight suits that let kiddos as young as 3 soar like superheroes, plus, everyone gets an HD flight video too. Bring the kids and cake; iFly supplies the food, drinks, decor and paper goods. Packages vary by group size and flight time.

8380 State Highway 121, Frisco, 214/785-1243;
iflyworld.com

FOR HIGH ENERGY URBAN AIR ADVENTURE PARK

Treat jumpers to a two-hour party at one of Urban Air Adventure Park's many locations (McKinney is set to open next spring). Kids love the variety: hopping around, swimming through the foam pit or playing a game of dodgeball or basketball; you'll love the laissez-faire

approach you can take to party planning. Even the basic party package includes paper goods and balloons. Add on pizza, treats and favors for a truly stress-free event, or upgrade to a glow-in-the-dark party. Packages start at \$199 for 10 jumpers.

10570 John W. Elliott Drive, Suite 900, Frisco, 469/458-6721; urbanairtrampolinepark.com

FOR A FRILLY FÊTE AMERICAN GIRL

Get all dolled up and take her favorite little ladies to lunch (with their dolls) at American Girl Bistro at Galleria Dallas. Dolls sit in their own seats with paper tiaras and tiny china. Actual living and breathing guests choose from kid favorites like pizza, mac and cheese and chicken tenders, while the grown-ups order fare such as chicken salad and salmon before the staff presents its signature pink-and-white cake and ice cream. Basic parties for ages 3 and older include goody bags; a deluxe party adds a craft to make and take. Packages start at \$31 per child; \$21 per adult.

13464 Dallas Parkway, Dallas, 877/247-5223;
americangirl.com

FOR TUMBLEWEEDS OBSTACLE WARRIOR KIDS

If *American Ninja Warrior* inspires your tyke to DIY her own indoor obstacle course, plan a party for her and 14 of her friends, age 5 and older, at Obstacle Warrior Kids. The two-hour parties include 90 minutes of unstructured gym play time, allowing tiny athletes to crawl, run, jump, swing and hang at their own pace and comfort level. Or hire a personal coach (for \$100 per hour) to guide novice ninjas through the course. Parties include paper goods, balloons and drinks. Party favors and pizza can be purchased for an additional cost. \$375 for up to 15 kids.

448 N. Custer Road, Suite A, McKinney, 214/856-5001; obstaclewarriorkids.com

FOR TINY DANCERS THE DANCE MOVEMENT

Right from the start, the Pop Star party at The Dance Movement gets kids of all ages on their feet. Disco balls, glow accessories and music greet kids as they enter. After 15 minutes of freestyleing, instructors teach a choreographed routine (set to the birthday girl or boy's favorite tune) and lead games and other activities before the 90-minute celebration ends with food, cake and presents. The studio hosts ballet, princess and hip-hop parties too; besides dancing, all packages include a photo shoot, decorated party room, setup and take-down. Packages from \$250 for 15 dancers.

10301 Custer Road, Plano, 214/509-9000;
thedancemovement.com