

Back-to-school party ideas

Back-to-school season is on the horizon, and many students and parents are either loving or loathing the idea of starting a new school year. For some, a party to commemorate the new school year and the end of summer is customary. Hosting a fun event for the soon-to-be students is one way to make the most of vacation time.

* Go with a theme. Maybe the theme is rulers and text books, ABCs, or science, and it can run through the decorations used, the games played, the food served, and many other aspects of the event. Consider a science experiment inspired volcano cake that is oozing strawberry jam.

* Include some educational games. Some students experience educational backsliding during summer vacation. That is why many schools have summer reading lists that educators feel promote lesson reinforcement for the coming school year. With this in mind, plan activities around concepts children learned in school. Think about math problem relay races, art projects, reading a story and reenacting it in a play form, or science experiments using solar energy.

* Host a campout reading marathon. Encourage guests to bring sleeping bags and

favorite books to a campout under the stars. Most of the time can be spent reading while breaks can be devoted to exercising, making campout snacks or telling campfire stories.

* Rent out a fun bus or truck. Since many students will be spending a good deal of time on a school bus once the new school year commences, tie into those jaunts to school by renting the services of a game bus or truck. Some vendors will park their vehicles in front of the house for an hour or more, allowing children to climb inside and enjoy themselves on play equipment or compete in video game competitions inside specialized gaming trucks.

* Plan a group event at the beach.

Spending time seaside can be educational and enjoyable at the same time. Enlist the help of a few chaperones and set up an area on the beach where kids can play and explore the wonders of nature around them. Pack picnic-type snacks or ask attendees to bring items themselves.

* Plan a trip to the school. First-time students may be anxious about what to expect during their first days of school. Having friends who are slightly older accompany younger kids to school to

give a tour and show them the ropes make the experience less frightening. Afterward, meet at a pizzeria to enjoy some slices and soda.

* Host a classic pool party. Of course, some kids want to commemorate the end of summer

vacation by enjoying the pool one last time. Have a classic pool party and barbecue in the yard for everyone to enjoy.



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