

COLLIN child

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SEPTEMBER 2019

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IS PRINCESS
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19

EVENTS TO
LOVE THIS
MONTH

A FAMILY
GUIDE TO
**SAN
DIEGO**

THE PARTY ISSUE

THE 60 BEST PARTY
PLACES IN DFW



kid culture.



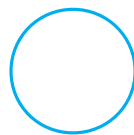
ABOVE //
Throw a winning birthday party at Dave & Buster's with classic and hot new arcade games.



BEST KIDS' PARTIES 2019

your favorite party venues

WORDS MAYA BUTLER &
SYDNEY BLALOCK-RITCHIE



ONCE A YEAR THERE IS A SPECIAL DAY THAT OUR LITTLE ONES get to celebrate—their birthday. It's always a stressful time as you make sure it's the best kids party of the year, but it needs to be even better than last year. We get it; it's a lot to undertake, so our annual DFWChild Best Kids' Parties awards—with winners chosen by you—make it easier to put together a celebration that caters to your kids' interests, whether they're into nature, animals or video games. Read on for the winners and runners-up to find the best spot for your kiddo's big day.

BEST PARTY FOR NATURE AND SCIENCE LOVERS

COLLIN AND DALLAS: PEROT MUSEUM OF NATURE & SCIENCE

The museum offers out-of-this-world birthday parties for kids ages 1–12 with fizzy and foamy experiments, dinosaurs, outer space and superheroes. Party guests have the opportu-



ABOVE // ENJOY A MEAL AND A MOVIE AT **ALAMO DRAFT HOUSE** FOR YOUR KIDDO'S BIG DAY. **BELOW //** YOUR CHILD (AND THEIR DOLL) CAN SPEND THEIR SPECIAL DAY EATING AND LAUGHING AWAY AT **AMERICAN GIRL**.

nity to engage in exclusive sci-fi activities as well as access to the five levels of the museum. This year, there are new themes, including Under the Sea: Beach and Bubbles, a sea theme with bubbles and ocean slime, and Glitz and Glam: Gems and Minerals, a gemology theme with a gem hunt. All parties receive all-day general admission for 30 people to all exhibit halls, a party facilitator, age-appropriate science-based themes and activities and more. Add-ons are available for purchase. Pricing starts at \$285 for members and \$325 for nonmembers. Contact familyadventures@perotmuseum.org or 214/756-5763 to book a birthday party. 2201 N. Field St., Dallas; 214/428-5555 perotmuseum.org

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Heard Natural Science Museum & Wildlife Sanctuary; heardmuseum.org
DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Garden; dallasarboretum.org

BEST MOVIE THEATER FOR A PARTY COLLIN: CINEMARK THEATERS

Here, your kid is sure to feel like a movie star. Guests have options that include a party room for an intimate gathering or a private auditorium for a bigger birthday bash. With your private room, a staff member will do all the work for you from serving snacks to cleaning up. Party prices vary, so be sure to go online for more information at cinemark.com/birthday-parties. Multiple locations cinemark.com

DALLAS: ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE

What kid wouldn't want an entire movie theater to themselves? Alamo Drafthouse offers a full-service kitchen and an all-you-can-eat

cereal buffet for kids with various theater sizes to fit any group. In addition to showing new releases and classics, Alamo Drafthouse can also put together curated video dance parties featuring any of your child's favorite songs with fun props such as glow sticks, inflatable instruments and more. As of this year, Alamo also offers an option to rent an entire theater just to play video games. Feel free to sit back and enjoy the party while Alamo staff handles set-up, cleanup, and food and drink service. Prices vary by number of guests and type of party. For an accurate estimate, email Alamo Drafthouse at events@draftousedfw.com. 100 S. Central Expressway, Suite 14, Richardson; 972/534-2120 // 6770 Abrams Road, Dallas; 214/453-6301 drafthouse.com/dfw

COLLIN AND DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Studio Movie Grill; studiomoviegrill.com

BEST PLACE FOR A FRILLY FETE COLLIN AND DALLAS: AMERICAN GIRL

Bring the guests, and American Girl will do the rest. There are five party packages for age 3 and up, and your child and guests will have plenty of options to have a frilly good time. Each package includes a delicious meal, signature cake and ice cream, digital invitations, and a special gift for the birthday girl. Prices vary depending on age and package. 13464 Dallas Parkway, Dallas; 877/247-5223 americangirl.com



COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Sweet & Sassy; sweetandsassy.com
DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Small Pockets Tea Room; smallpockets.biz/the-tea-room

BEST PARTY FOR ANIMAL LOVERS

COLLIN AND DALLAS: DALLAS ZOO

Take a walk on the wild side with a birthday at the Dallas Zoo. With endless exhibits and experiences to enjoy, your guests are in for an educational and entertaining treat. Pro tip: Go to the Lacerte Family Children's Zoo where kids can explore, learn, play and interact with animals of all shapes and sizes. General admission prices vary by time of year, age and membership status. The Dallas Zoo also offers group rates for 15 or more. Contact the zoo to make a reservation for your group at 469/554-7470. 650 S. R.L. Thornton Freeway, Dallas; 469/554-7500 dallaszoo.org

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Sharkarosa Wildlife Ranch; sharkarosa.com

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Dallas World Aquarium; dwazoo.com

BEST PARTY FOR HISTORY BUFFS

COLLIN: HERITAGE FARMSTEAD MUSEUM

Looking to be a pioneer heading west or an outlaw looking for treasure? Heritage Farmstead Museum has the birthday celebration for you. With activities such as tractor rides and feeding farm animals, your child and guests are sure to have a one-of-a-kind experience. The museum offers three packages that include the use of the Pole Barn, hands-on activities, one free adult admission per child and a birthday facilitator. Add-ons are available for purchase. Pricing starts at \$200 for up to 10 children. To book a birthday event, call 972/881-0140 or email catherine@heritagefarmstead.org. 1900 W. 15th St., Plano; 972/881-0140 heritagefarmstead.org

DALLAS: FRONTIERS OF FLIGHT MUSEUM

Birthdays are a soaring success at Frontiers of Flight Museum. Kids have the opportunity to become air traffic controllers in the FOFM Airport Control Tower and practice being a jumbo jet pilot. See your child's eyes spark with excitement as they "take off down the runway." All parties include two hours reserved in the Hutchison Family Birthday Party Hangar or the Coca-Cola Café, a taxi down Runway 36R, play time in the Children's Discovery Area, and more. Pricing varies based on party location and membership status. 6911 Lemmon Ave., Dallas; 214/350-3600 flightmuseum.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Medieval Times Dinner & Tournament; medievaltimes.com
DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Dallas Heritage Village; dallasheritagevillage.org

BEST PARTY FOR PERFORMERS

COLLIN: NORTH TEXAS PERFORMING ARTS

Have a blast with your own professional direc-

tor who will lead your guests through theater exercises, activities and games in one of their studios or in your own home. At the end of the party, your guests will perform for friends and family. Some available themes include *Harry Potter*, *Aladdin* and *Shrek*. Each event includes two hours of games and activities, a 10-minute showcase and free tickets to an NTPA show. Pricing ranges from \$300–\$399.

Multiple locations
northtexasperformingarts.org

DALLAS: DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER

For a stage starlet, the theater is their second home, so why not celebrate their day at the Dallas Children's Theater? With upcoming shows such as *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Christmas Show* and *Schoolhouse Rock Live!*, all types of kids will be entertained. Parties receive their own private party room (at an additional cost) and group rates on tickets to a show. Plus, if you sign up on the birthday list at the box office, the cast will sing "Happy Birthday" to your birthday kid before the second act. Don't forget—the cast signs autographs and takes pictures in the lobby following the show too. For groups of 10 or more, rates range from \$17–\$28 per person depending on the production, section, day and time of the performance. For more accurate pricing, contact Dallas Children's Theater by phone or email box.office@dct.org. 5938 Skillman St., Dallas; 214/978-0110
dct.org



LEFT //
 Rock and roll
 for your little's
 birthday at **School
 of Rock**.

DALLAS: DALLAS ACADEMY OF MUSIC AND PERFORMING ARTS

Although they no longer do birthday parties, the academy still has music lessons (piano, guitar, violin, viola, flute, recorder, drums and saxophone), singing and voice lessons (as well as ensembles and bands), musical theatre, acting classes, tap and dance classes, pre-school, music therapy and adult classes. Also find developmental programs: Music, Mommy & Me, First Movement and Primary Piano. 3415 Milton Ave., Dallas;

214/965-8324

dallasacademyofmusic.com

COLLIN AND DALLAS RUNNER-UP: School of Rock; schoolofrock.com

BEST PARTY FOR LITTLE CHEFS

COLLIN: YOUNG CHEFS ACADEMY

For the little chefs in your family, celebrate a birthday with Young Chefs Academy. Each of the party packages all-inclusive, so you can sit back and let the staff take care of everything from invitations to decorations to cleanup. There are five packages to pick from: Classic Pizza, Calzone Creation, Perfect Pasta, Birthday Brunch, and Create, Decorate & Celebrate Cupcake Party. Each party has a suggested minimum age and includes decorations, food, drink, paper goods, aprons and more. Pricing varies by package and number of guests. Add-ons are available for purchase. To reserve, stop in, call or email friscotx@youngchefsacademy.com. 8855 Preston Trace Blvd. Suite 100, Frisco; 972/335-4449
friscotx.youngchefsacademy.com

DALLAS: SUR LA TABLE

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ABOVE // IT'S FREE TO RESERVE A PARTY—AND ENJOY THE PLAYScape—AT HAT CREEK BURGER COMPANY.

personalized for an experience that's perfect for you. From start to finish, Sur la Table takes care of everything from ingredients to recipes and even the dishes. Your event is customizable—you pick the instructor, and you set the menu. Each guest even receives a 10% discount at the store. Book your event by phone. 4525 Cole Ave., Suite 190, Dallas; 214/219-4404 6025 Royal Lane, Suite 150, Dallas; 469/232-9409 surlatable.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Taste Buds Kitchen; tastebudskitchen.com

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Young Chefs Academy; youngchefscademy.com

BEST EATERY FOR KIDS PARTY

COLLIN: HAT CREEK BURGER COMPANY

Your child and guests are in for some down-right good burgers and never-want-to-end playtime. All locations have a playscape for children with kids' menus that include a variety of bites, from gluten-free chicken "flashers" to milkshakes. Decorations and your dessert of choice are welcome. Go online to submit a reservation request as there's no cost to reserve a party. Multiple locations hatcreekburgers.com

DALLAS: RAINFOREST CAFÉ

Let your king (or queen) of the jungle roar with the animatronic animals at Rainforest Café. Kids of all ages enjoy learning about jungle animals such as the red-eyed tree frog, the macaw and the jaguar. In addition to an incredible feast, birthday packages include a wild safari hat, Wild Bunch collectible kid's plate, invitations and more. Oh, and don't miss the simulated "thun-

derstorms" every 20 minutes that make all the animals raise their voices. Contact Rainforest Café to book your event. 3000 Grapevine Mills Parkway, Grapevine; 972/539-5001 rainforestcafe.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Rainforest Café; rainforestcafe.com

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Magic Time Machine; magictimemachine.com

BEST BIG WATER PARK FOR A BIRTHDAY (DALLAS ONLY)

GREAT WOLF LODGE

It's time to get wet and wild as you spend your day splashing and sliding in Great Wolf Lodge's indoor water park. They have it all, from slides to forts to activity pools. The birthday package includes an hour and a half of decorated party space, cake or cupcakes, pizza, drinks and water park passes. To book a birthday party package, there must be a minimum of 10 guests. All guests must have a wristband to enter the water park. The package is \$55 per adult or child, and kids under 2 are free. 100 Great Wolf Drive, Grapevine; 800/693-9653 greatwolf.com

RUNNER-UP: Hawaiian Falls; hfalls.com

BEST PARTY THAT COMES TO YOU COLLIN: GAMETRUCK

Virtual reality comes to your little gamer and company in the form of a high-end mobile game theater, which offers an impressive collection of multiplayer video games and a range of consoles. Want to expend some energy? Use your backyard, front yard or a nearby park as the main arena for a modern LaserTag party, or play an entertaining match of BubbleSoccer.

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kid culture / BEST KIDS' PARTIES 2019

Whichever party you choose, a certified GameCoach will be there to emcee and guide your child through an exciting day of social gaming and fun. Visit their website for pricing and availability.
Dallas-Fort Worth; 888/602-4263
gametruckparty.com

DALLAS: MAD SCIENCE OF DALLAS AND FORT WORTH

Your child between the ages of 5 and 12 will experiment with all sorts of scientific madness when the Mad Scientist stops by. For 40–45 minutes, the birthday girl or boy will assist the Mad Scientist in incredible scientific demonstrations, such as fitting a hard-boiled egg into an extremely small space or racing a levitating ring. Kids will make slime to take home for the final 10-or-so minutes of the party. Bubbling potions, cotton candy and rocket launches are special add-ons that extend the scientific mayhem. Book at least three weeks in advance by phone or online. Packages start at \$209 for up to 15 guests. 2309 Springlake Road, Suite 620, Farmers Branch; 972/241-0475
dfw.madscience.org

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Jessica's Princess & Character Parties; jessicasprincessparties.com
DALLAS RUNNER-UP: GameTruck; gametruckparty.com

BEST PARTY FOR FUN & GAMES

COLLIN: PINSTACK

It might get its name from its popular bowling lanes, but avid gamers and adrenaline seekers will also have no trouble finding entertainment here. Plan a fun night out for the gamer in your family with Pinstack's Ultimate Games package, which includes two hours of unlimited play on games, such as *Tomb Raider*, *Jurassic Park* and *The Walking Dead*, high ropes courses, LED-lit rock climbing, bumper cars and a two-story laser tag arena. Birthday party managers are present for every tween or teen party for all the party needs. Parties start at \$19.99 per child. 635 Central Expressway North, Allen; 972/869-2695; 6205 Dallas Parkway, Plano; 972/781-2695
pinstackbowl.com

DALLAS: DAVE & BUSTER'S

Never-ending fun and mouthwatering food meet at Dave & Buster's. Your kid's birth-

day party isn't complete without a stop at the arcade area, Million Dollar Midway, which provides classic games, such as Pac-Man, and the hottest new titles. Parents can also join in the fun with tasty cocktails and craveable appetizers. The newly improved online booking system makes it easy to choose between several affordable packages for food and gameplay. Parties start at \$19.99 per person including food and games. Private party rooms are available at an additional cost. 2601 Preston Road, Suite 1200, Frisco; 214/387-0915
daveandbusters.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Main Event; mainevent.com

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Pinstack; pinstackbowl.com

BEST PARTY FOR CREATIVES

COLLIN: CRAYOLA EXPERIENCE

Plan the most colorful party for your child at Crayola Experience, where creativity and fun blend into one. The venue boasts more than 25 vibrant, hands-on attractions, including Color Playground, Stomp and Play, Rainbow Rain, and Modeling Madness. Birthday packages offer free admission for the birthday child, a party room for one hour, unlimited access to 22 of the attractions and much more. (Annual passholders get 10% off birthday party packages.) Packages begin at \$289 for up to 15 guests. Book at least two weeks in advance by phone or online.

6121 W. Park Blvd., Suite A100, Plano, 469/642-2901
crayolaexperience.com

DALLAS: PLAY STREET MUSEUM

Host a private birthday party to make your child feel extra special while they go off exploring Play Street Museum's interactive buildings and exhibits. Adorable, creative birthday themes such as Little Dreamer, Calling All Superheroes and Rocket Science will spark imagination and fun for your child and guests. For kiddos age 5 and up, Play Street Museum hosts Slime & Paint Your Own Pottery parties. Planning is made easy-peasy on the party host with set-up assistance, clean-up and more. Various packages are available for up to 20 kids on the

website's party page.

Multiple locations
playstreetmuseum.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Board and Brush; boardandbrush.com



BELOW //
Pinstack has laser tag, bowling and LED-lit rock climbing."



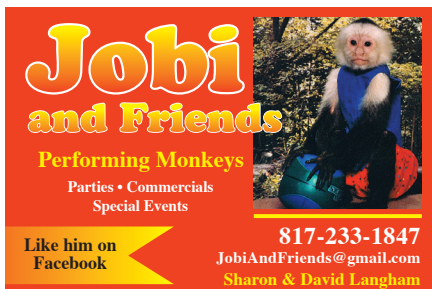
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dentoncounty.com/CHOS
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DENTON, TX 76201

Denton County History and Culture

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DALLAS RUNNER-UP: SPARK!;
sparkdallas.org

BEST PLACE FOR A JUMP PARTY
COLLIN AND DALLAS: URBAN AIR

There are more than just awesome trampolines here—a climbing wall, warrior course, tubes playground and more make up the indoor adventure park that will inspire the jumper in any kid, tween or teen. Classic party packages include two hours of exploring the most exciting attractions for your kid and guests. Parents can relax as staff take care of prepping for the party. For tweens and teens, all lights are off as guests play glow-in-the-dark dodgeball and enjoy strobes and lasers as part of the Glow Party packages. Pricing depends on location. Multiple locations
urbanairtrampolinepark.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Jumpstreet;
gotjump.com

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Pump It Up;
pumpitupparty.com

BEST PARTY FOR TUMBLERS
COLLIN: THE LITTLE GYM

With a name like the Awesome Birthday Bash, your kid's party will ensure no less than an awesome time for an hour and a half at The Little Gym, a place dedicated to physical development and personal growth. Twelve birthday guests ages 1–12 can burn some energy with The Little Gym's instructor-led games and Lego Juniors or Lego



ABOVE // NO GOLF EXPERIENCE NEEDED TO HAVE FUN AT A TOP GOLF PARTY.

LEFT //
Tumble and play on your kid's big day at ASI Gymnastics.

Duplo building activities. Pricing varies by location.
1941 Preston Road, Suite 1020, Plano;
972/985-4545
7151 Preston Road, Suite 123A, Frisco; 972/704-1819
thelittlegym.com

DALLAS: ASI GYMNASTICS

Toddlers, teens and every gymnast in between can challenge their athletic abilities while also jumping and tumbling their way to fun at ASI Gymnastics. Playtime for up to 24 gym enthusiasts is included in party packages, in addition to two party coordinators, food and gift bags. Capture all the fun-filled moments with a venture inside the photo booth. Packages start at \$269. 6464 E. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas; 972/671-5510
4051 Rosemeade Parkway, Dallas; 972/960-1108
asigymnastics.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: World Olympic Gymnastics Academy (WOGA); *woga.net*
DALLAS RUNNER-UP: The Little Gym;
thelittlegym.com

BEST SPORTS PARTY
COLLIN: ROUGHRIDERS AT DR PEPPER BALLPARK

Young fans of the Frisco RoughRiders can root for their favorite baseball team at the Dr Pepper Ballpark. Game day parties include access to a sales representative for all ticket and game day needs, a food service attendant for your all-inclusive food and beverage needs (when applicable), and a cleanup crew after the game. To knock your kid's birthday party out of the park, float down the ever-popular lazy river right next to the field. Even when the team isn't playing, both baseball and non-baseball fans can enjoy a private playground or other ballpark activities. Group outings with 10 or more start guests at \$120. Private party packages start at \$699, with the ability to customize. 7300 RoughRiders Trail, Frisco, 972/731-9200
milb.com/frisco

DALLAS: TOPGOLF

Let the birthday boy or girl practice their swing with as many friends as they want at Topgolf. Kid-friendly menu items lend a helping hand while your child enjoys two hours of game play. Complimentary kids' club, digital e-vites and a dedicated staff are all ensure a successful tee-woff (teen party packages are also available). Elevate your child's golfing experience with upgrades such as customizable goodie bags and swing tips from a private Topgolf coach. Packages start at \$300 for 12 guests.

8787 Park Lane, Dallas; 214/341-9600
topgolf.com/us

COLLIN RUNNER-UP: Topgolf; topgolf.com/us

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Dallas Cowboys at AT&T Stadium; attstadium.com

BEST SWIM PARTY

COLLIN AND DALLAS: EMLER SWIM SCHOOL

Make a splash at a swim lover's birthday at one of Emler Swim School's numerous locations. No matter the season, up to 30 guests can swim in heated, indoor pools. Safety is Emler Swim School's top priority during the two-hour pool party, with a certified lifeguard required and a designated water watcher overseeing all the fun. Customized digital invitations are included as well as a private party room for when pool time ends. For an additional \$35, hire a Swim Buddy as an in-water party host that keeps guests entertained with games. The cost for the birthday party is \$300, and active members receive a 30% discount. Call in advance to book a time and date. Multiple locations emlerswimschool.com

COLLIN RUNNER-UP:

Frisco Athletic Center; friscofun.org

DALLAS RUNNER-UP: Bahama Beach; bahamabeachdallas.com



BELOW //
 Play marco polo and other categories during your kid's party at Emler Swim School.

BEST PARTY FOR INDOOR PLAY (COLLIN ONLY)

PLAY STREET MUSEUM

Host a privately-held birthday party to make your child feel extra special while they go off exploring Play Street Museum's interactive buildings and exhibits. Adorable, creative birthday themes such as Little Dreamer, Calling All Superheroes and Rocket Science will spark imagination and fun for your child and guests. For kiddos age 5 and up, Play Street Museum hosts Slime & Paint Your Own Pottery parties. Planning is made easy peasy on the party host with set-up assistance, clean up and more. Various packages are available for up to 20 kids on the website's party page. Multiple locations playstreetmuseum.com

RUNNER-UP: KidMania; kidmania.com

BEST PARTY FOR GAMERS (COLLIN ONLY)

DAVE & BUSTER'S

From food to fun and games, there's never-ending laughter at Dave & Buster's. The perfect gamer's birthday party isn't complete without a stop at the arcade area, Million Dollar Midway, which provides classic games, such as Pac-Man, as well as the hottest new titles. Parents can also join in the festivities with tasty cocktails and craveable appetizers. The newly improved online booking system makes it easy to choose between several affordable packages. Parties start from \$19.99 per person including food and games. Private party rooms are available at an additional cost. 2601 Preston Road, Suite 1200, Frisco; 214/387-0915 daveandbusters.com

RUNNER-UP: Free Play Arcade; freeplayrichardson.com

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