

FAMILY FUN

A Luau To Remember: Party-Planning Tips For Parents

(NAPSA)—If planning your child's birthday party leaves you too exhausted to even say the word *balloon*, try this: Throw a backyard summer luau—with some help from the Web.

With parents increasingly strapped for time and feeling pressured to come up with unusual themes that all the other kids haven't used before, sites like PartyCity.com can be a lifesaver. That may be especially true in the summer months when—try as you might to think of exciting outdoor activities to take advantage of the warm weather—all you really want to do when you get home is soak in a cool bath for hours.

Luau's definitely aren't the only idea you'll find. With its focus on providing innovative party themes and fun activities for kids ages 2 to 10, Party City also offers such tips as:

- Offer plenty of options to keep kids entertained. Fun activities for small and large groups include limbo, badminton, Wiffle ball, or even catch with Velcro Stik-Ums. Squirt guns are always a big hit, and a giant Sprinkler Ball is sure to make a splash.

- It's easy to forget about the summer heat when you're having fun. But it can take its toll, so keep kids hydrated with plenty of water in fun and colorful sports bottles, silly sippy cups or even summery plastic cups with crazy straws and drink umbrellas.



SAY ALOHA to an unforgettable birthday party—a backyard luau with all the tropical trimmings.

- In the warm weather, it's hard to keep food and drinks cold. Invest in fun summer coolers that can be left out at the party area. This will reduce indoor traffic and still keep the goodies on ice.

As for those luaus, consider setting up kiddie pools and sandboxes in the backyard for some beach atmosphere, and serving tropical fruit smoothies with mini paper parasols to keep things cool.

For activities, let guests make their own Hawaiian shirts out of plain white tee shirts and fabric paint—and don't forget to greet guests with a lei, a traditional island welcome. (You can find inexpensive plastic leis at party stores.)

The Web site is updated constantly to provide timely ideas. To plan a birthday party, visit www.partycity.com/birthdayclub.