

# “HOW TO” CHECKLISTS

## How to Have a Successful Sleepover

Sleepovers are certainly a rite of passage for kids. Whether your child wants a sleepover for his or her birthday or just one friend for fun, you can be sure they'll ask! When your child has a sleepover, the following checklist will help to ensure you have a successful event.

- ❑ Invite a limited number of kids to keep the party manageable.
- ❑ Be aware of the social dynamics of the kids. A lot of drama can happen at slumber parties, so keep your eyes and ears open. You may have to problem solve with the kids if there are any difficulties.
- ❑ Mix it up...sleep in a tent or have a theme.
- ❑ Be prepared for any emergencies.
  - Get contact information from the parents in case a child is ill, homesick, or has behavior problems.
  - Have extra pillows, blankets, sleeping bags or toothbrushes in case someone forgets to bring their own.
  - Have some over-the-counter medication available, like Children's Tylenol, Tums, or Pepto Bismal.
  - Be ready for a child wanting to go home in the middle of the night.
  - If a child is afraid to sleepover or not allowed to yet, invite them to have a "late night" so they don't completely miss out. Arrange for their parents to pick them up at a specific time.
- ❑ Set ground rules upfront.
  - No leaving the house.
  - Be clear about what food is allowed.
  - State what areas in your house are appropriate for the kids to play.
  - Institute a "no secrets policy." To help ensure no one is left out, inform the kids that this is a group event and there should be no gossip or secrets about one another.
  - Decide in advance where they will sleep.
  - Decide what time they need to go to bed. It helps to give the kids a countdown of 30 minutes down to 5 minutes until lights out.
  - Be sure to tell parents the time to pick them up in the morning.
- ❑ Provide different activities to keep the kids busy.
  - Dance party
  - Make homemade pizza
  - Skits
  - Encourage outside play, especially for boys who tend to have lots of physical energy.
  - Karaoke
  - Crafts
  - Scavenger hunt
  - Bake a treat
  - Board games
- ❑ Select a movie to help the kids settle down before bedtime.
  - Make sure the movie is age appropriate.
  - Get parents' permission ahead of time to avoid problems.
  - Set a specific time the movie will start and plan for when it will end.



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- ❑ Have plenty of food and snacks on hand.
  - Provide a nutritious meal first.
  - Have some healthy snacks available and some not so healthy ones. A little bit of “junk food” can make the night fun and special.
  - Provide a quick breakfast for the next morning. Usually bagels, cereal, juice and/or fruit will suffice.
- ❑ Encourage your child to be a host to his or her friends.
  - Teach your child how to look out for their friends.
  - Help him/her to have manners and ask if their friends need anything to make them more comfortable in your house.
  - Tell your child part of his or her responsibility is to help clean up.
- ❑ Check on the kids periodically. Don’t be excessively intrusive, but responsible.

