



Frequently Asked Questions

Food and Beverage

Can we bring in our own food?

MCM does not allow any outside food to be brought in for birthday parties, except for cake and beverages. We have an excellent birthday party caterer that you may order food through at an additional cost to your party. The only exception to this rule is for allergy-related alternatives. Please email the facility rental coordinator at Rent@madisonchildrensmuseum.org for more information on these limited exceptions.

I ordered want food for my party from your catering partner. What do I do?

Attached to your confirmation email was the menu from our catering partner. To order your food, please visit the link provided in that email and use the password that was provided. Once your order is submitted, please contact the facility rental coordinator at rent@madisonchildrensmuseum.org if you have questions or concerns. **Food orders must be submitted online by the Sunday before your party.** Orders must be finalized the Wednesday before your party, so all changes must be submitted by then.

What about the cake I ordered?

The cake that you ordered at the time of making your reservations will be ordered and coordinated by our Facility Rental Coordinator. Once you've made the reservation, we will take care of it. Any changes to your cake need to be submitted 7 days prior to your party.

We ordered food from your catering partner? When do I pay that bill?

Our catering partner will invoice you electronically via an email. You are to pay that invoice in the manner they describe by the date they set.

Your Guest List

I don't know yet what kids are going to be there? When do I have to tell you by? How many can I invite?

You do not have to know what children are coming at the time of booking. Attached to your confirmation email is a fillable guest list form. **This form, or an email containing the same information, must be submitted to the facility rental coordinator at rent@madisonchildrensmuseum.org by 4pm the Wednesday before your party.**

Your guest list should include **all children you have invited**. We will mark off which children actually show up for the party and only those children will count for your total. Children under 1 years of age are free, but should be listed on the guest list. **Due to the size of the room, we recommend not inviting any more than 25 children.**



Some of my guests are members at the museum; can they get in for free?

All children attending the party will count towards your final guest count, whether or not they are museum members. The cost of your guests includes multiple things to be accounted for. For example, if your party has 15 children; you will be billed for two extra children, regardless of if they are members. Make sure to clear with parents ahead of time how you would like to handle siblings.

Party Set Up

What time may I arrive to set up my party?

You may arrive to the celebrations room 15 mins prior to the start of your time slot. Your party host will either be done or in the processes of setting up the tables and chairs for your party. They will also be able to assist you (but are not responsible for) with other set up items such as presents and decorations.

What decorations am I allowed to bring?

You're more than welcome to bring in streamers, balloons, and all sorts of other decoration. We do prohibit glass decorations of any kind for the safety of the children. We also discourage the use of pinatas as the room doesn't safely allow for the activity and there is no place to hang.

What equipment will you provide?

We will provide tables and chairs based on the guest list that you provide. For those that have booked an *Earl's Exciting Party* or *Waffle's Wonderful Party*, we will also provide cups, plates, napkins and silverware – enough for all your guests.

Do you provide tableware for parties?

Tableware is provided with *Earl's EXCELLENT Party* and *Waffle's WONDERFUL Party* (but not with *Gertrude's GREAT Party*). We provide cups, plates, napkins and silverware – enough for all your guests.

How many children will my side of the Celebrations room hold?

We strongly recommend not inviting any more than 25 children to your party. A diagram of the celebrations room will be attached to your confirmation email showing potential configurations.

May we have more space? Can we have more time?

More space can be rented and more time can be rented. Due to the nature of our birthday party program and attempting to accommodate many celebrating children, you can't get one without the other. Please contact the facility rental coordinator at rent@madisonchildrensmuseum.org to inquire about the availability of more space and time for your party.



Arrival

What happens if my guests arrive before I do?

All parties must provide a guest list before your party. This way, if your guests arrive before you do, our front desk will be able to check them off the list for free admission and direct them to where the party will be held. We will also **attempt** to direct them to the party room.

Can we store things prior to the party?

Yes. We will be more than glad to store a few items down at the front desk for you prior to your event. Please keep in mind however that the front desk does get busy, and can't necessarily retrieve items on a moment's notice, so please plan accordingly.

Can we play in the museum prior to the party?

Yes. We encourage it. Just make sure to be at the Celebrations Room on the second Floor 15 mins prior to the start of your time slot so you can set up just the way you want!

During the Party

What happens during the party? Do you lead any special activities?

The party held in our *Celebrations Room*, is a time for your group to celebrate however you would like – with cake, food, presents, etc. The museum does not lead any activities but will provide a host to assist in any area that is needed. You are also welcome to bring in your own activities as you desire. We typically find that the kids just want to play!

Will your staff members play with our kids in the exhibits?

MCM staff members are not responsible for leading exhibit play or for watching over children while they are playing in the museum. Please make sure you have a sufficient number of chaperones at your party to aide in supervising.

What does the party attendant do?

The party attendant is there to help with setting up the chairs and tables, as well as other items that you might have ordered (favor bags, balloons, cake, etc). They will assist you with your set up after they have completed their initial responsibilities. They will also **assist** (but not be responsible for) with checking arriving guests off on the guest list, cake cutting and serving, garbage removal, etc.



After the Party

What are we responsible for when shutting down the party?

You are responsible for making sure to clean up major spills, collecting presents and other keepsakes, and cleaning up your decorations. We do ask that you then assist the party attendant with the collection of garbage, disposing of left overs, etc. If the party attendant is in a position to assist you with anything, they will be more than glad to try.

Can we play in the museum after the party is done?

Admission for your guests is valid for the whole day, so everyone is welcome to arrive early or stay later and play in the exhibits. You are only restricted to the use of our *Celebrations Room* for the 60 minutes of your party.

We don't want to leave just yet, we want to play! Can I store presents and other items till I'm ready to go?

Yes, you may store items at the Front Desk for you to pick up when you're ready to leave for the day. Please speak with your party attendant. All items left past 5pm on the day of the party will be disposed of. No items may be left in the Celebrations room due to other birthday parties coming in the room after you.

When do we pay the final bill?

Your final balance including any additional children (at \$5 per child) will be available at the Front Desk when you're ready to leave for the day. This is when and where you should pay the final bill!