



The Magic of Entertaining Children

A Practical Planning Guide for Parents, Teachers & Event Planners

Authored by

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WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS BOOK

Having been a single parent of three children from toddler to teen years, I know how busy your day can get, so I'd like to first thank you for taking the time to read this comprehensive planning and hosting guide. It's a compilation of tips, suggestions, answers to frequently asked questions, and so much more; all learned through out of my parenting years and entertaining career, mostly by trial and error. Although the book was written primarily for planning and hosting birthday parties, mainly because that is where about 80% of my business comes from, much of the content can be applied to pretty much any children's event for childcare centers, schools, family gatherings, corporate parties, and even fairs and festivals.

Although much of the information you'll read may be 'plain old commonsense' for most, it's surprising how much of it gets forgotten or overlooked when the stress and frustration of trying to make everything perfect sets in. I tried to cover every possible area, but if there is something I left out that you would like information or advice on; please feel free to contact me by email or phone. It's my hope that this guide will help make your event a huge success.

A PIECE OF CAKE...WELL, MAYBE NOT

Many people think planning a children's party is as easy as sending out invitations, ordering pizza and a cake, blowing up a few balloons...and *presto*, instant party! And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that if it's the kind of party you want, or you're on a really tight budget, but still take a little time to read further. If your party is a couple hours long and you get stuck trying to figure out how to keep all those kids busy when they're not eating and opening gifts, I've got some great game ideas you can try.

Because you don't want to end up smearing makeup on your face, and putting on a rainbow wig to be "Mom or Dad the Clown", you're probably seriously considering a magic show for your next event. Good choice. It's a great way to provide them some fun and safe entertainment, *but* you may have some questions about whom to hire, because as you've probably already figured out, it's not that easy with all those magicians claiming to be the best.

So how do you choose? Can they ALL be the best? Personally, I think anyone making claim to being the 'best' is being a bit narcissistic. I'm satisfied being considered among the best, always striving to improve. Let's face it, none of us are Houdini or David Copperfield; if we were, we probably wouldn't be performing at children's birthday parties, schools or childcare centers.

Finding the right entertainer, the person who will be around your children for an hour or more, is not an easy task and shouldn't be taken lightly. Hopefully, these tips will help make it a lot less difficult.

TIPS FOR HIRING A MAGICIAN

1. **Talk to the magician on the phone before the event.** Communicate your needs and expectations, and afford the magician the opportunity to do the same before the day of the show. A professional will want to personalize the entertainment for your specific needs. Even though we've become an electronic communication society, relying on email, texting and messaging, I stress using the phone so you can ask questions and **hear** the responses. You can tell a lot from a live conversation with someone, most importantly, their personality. Just because someone has a good looking website, or can write a great text message or email, doesn't guarantee they'll be fun and outgoing with your children and guest.
2. **Not all magicians are created equal.** Many magicians are hobbyist or part-timers making a little extra income on the weekends. A full-time magician is your best bet, as they'll have the most experience and more importantly a vested interest in doing the best job they can. Entertaining kids is not easy, and hiring someone who is just starting out in the business can be very risky. Don't take unnecessary chances.
3. **Make sure they have experience entertaining children.** Children have short attention spans, so choose a magician that has a track record of working with kids. Make sure their personality reflects that they're going to create fun for the kids, and will perform age appropriate magic. A David Blaine type might seem fascinating to you, but there's a reason he performs where he does and not on a children's television special.
4. **Buyer beware!** You *do* get what you pay for, so a good magician is well worth a few extra dollars, even in a poor economy. *Of course* a less expensive magician sounds great when you have all those other things to pay for, but if you paid less just to save a little money and they couldn't keep the kids entertained...**you still overpaid!** When it comes to children's entertainment, the words 'good' and 'cheap' usually aren't meant to be used together!

THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE YOU MAKE THAT CALL

Your child's interest: There's nothing worse than hearing, "I hate magicians", after you've already spent the money. You may want to surprise the child, but if it's something they do not want, the "surprise" may be on you!

The age of the children: You want the children to understand what's going on, so it might not be a great idea to hire a magician for a group of two year olds. Of course, you can hire a magician for a two year olds party, if the other children will be old enough to understand what was going on. Sometimes, even worse than trying to entertain two year olds, is trying to entertain kids between nine and twelve. They can create havoc with a magician who does not have experience with those ages. Before hiring a magician, talk to the child, keeping in mind it's that, "Magicians are for little kids" age group, and they **will** let you know it. Unless you can find someone who specializes in magic for 'tweens', you may be better off with a different form of entertainment.

The child's disposition: If a child has behavioral problems, any entertainer may not be the best choice unless someone will closely monitor the child. It's really not fair to the other children when the entertainer has to devote so much time and energy on one misbehaving child. If the child just likes to show off, an experienced magician will recognize the child's need to "ham it up" and invite them to participate in a trick.

The environment: Some magic works well in small areas and some does not. Magicians who use big props need a lot of space and will be cramped in small rooms, and the ones who pack small will not show up well on a big stage. Tell your entertainer what size performing area you have so they can adapt their act accordingly. If they can't; hire someone who can.

The cost: After all my years in the entertainment business I'm still astounded by some of the objections and malevolent comments I get when I give a quote for my services. I know for a fact that my prices have always been among the lowest nationally, yet I'm still barraged by remarks with an obvious common denominator...a lack of facts. As for those shouting the malevolent comments, I think most people have already figured that one out.

Any reasonable person will have to agree that an average of **\$200.00**, for three to four hours work, is not a lot of money by today's standards for a professional service; especially when, without hesitation, most people will pay an organist **\$300.00 to play 4-5 songs at a wedding** (usually less than an hour), a **DJ \$2,500.00 or more for 4 hours**, and a **hair stylist \$30.00 or more for a 15 minute haircut**. What makes a professional magician, being responsible for the happiness and safety of a group of children for an hour or more so different?

The conclusions I've drawn, based on several conversations with potential clients and fellow entertainers, are...

1. Magicians in general are stereotyped as nerds or geeks, and we know neither get a lot of respect unless they turn out to be the next Bill Gates.
2. Children's entertainers, even amongst close up performers and stage illusionist, are looked down upon because of the stigma cast upon us by those who use the guise of entertaining children just to be around them, which of course is not helped by those who call themselves "Mr. Diddles" and dress up in ridiculous costumes.
3. There are way too many inexperienced entertainers undercutting professional fees and giving the rest of us a bad name.
4. There are those who truly think that the price of a magic show hasn't changed since 1975.
5. The love of haggling. Some will spend 30 minutes haggling over \$10.00, and when you show up at their home...well let's just say Windsor Castle looks comparatively minuscule. It's like the person who talks you down to \$5.00 for a \$25.00 item at a garage sale because they "don't have a lot of money"...and then asks if you can break a \$100.00 bill. Now I know haggling is cultural for some people, and I do respect that, but I guarantee if someone asked them to take a cut in pay at their job, their response would not be something I could put into print.
6. Some people really can't afford it, and unfortunately get angry when they realize they have to disappoint their child. Blaming the entertainer for charging too much becomes their tactic, because it's always a whole lot easier to make someone else out to be the bad guy.

I'll be the first to acknowledge that you can find less expensive performers out there, some charging as little as \$75.00 for an hour show, but before you hire them, please take a minute to **think about why they're so inexpensive**. Settling, just to save money, could end up costing you a lot more than you bargained for. The magician you choose can make or break your event, and a bad magician **will** leave their mark on easily impressionable children. Keep in mind that some magicians think it's cool to pretend to cut off someone's hand or use lots of fire in their act, which are tricks some children try to emulate after the entertainer is gone. Are you willing to take **that** risk? If money truly is a problem, you're better off with no entertainer than with someone you will always regret hiring.

COMMON EMAILS, MISCONCEPTIONS & THE REAL FACTS

Now I'm not going to beat around the bush here; some people are frugal, and some do live to haggle, but I also realize that a lot of potential clients really don't know how expensive, time consuming, and laborious putting on a magic show is, so let's take a look at a few common emails and misconceptions.

Email: You got to be kidding! It's just a *BLEEP* kid's party; I'm not looking for a huge stage production! Are you out of your *BLEEP* mind?

Whether it's a kid's party or a huge stage production, there are huge cost involved in preparing and performing the show. And like any other professional service providers, we deserve to be paid accordingly for our services. Please consider too that magic is a very unique form of entertainment requiring many years of study and very expensive equipment. And as for it being "Just a kid's party", believe it or not, a kid's party is much more work than the stage show. Have you ever tried holding the attention of a large group of restless kids for an hour or more?

Phone call: This is ridiculous, it can't be that expensive to put together a magic show, just buy a magic kit and put on a suit and you're all set.

Yes you can buy a cheap magic kit at a department store or online and *hope the kids don't own one just like it*. If that's the type of entertainment you want, I'd suggest buying the kit and giving it a go. If you want a **professional** show, the magic props are extremely expensive. What you see as a box sitting on a table is actually a **\$500.00 custom built prop** sitting on a **\$300.00** specially designed stand. The amount of money invested in props and tricks for any one of my shows is anywhere from **\$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00**, and that doesn't include the expensive sound equipment for bigger shows.

Email: Your prices are a *BLEEP* rip off; it's only a one hour show! The kids aren't worth THAT much! (Yes, this was a real email).

Wow, what does one say to that? I'm just sorry they felt that way about the kids.

So there you have it, a few of the many crass phone calls and emails I get...and they wonder **WHY** we charge what we do. **Now let's look at some common unknown facts...**

#1. You're not paying for just an hour. The reason for this misconception is 'tunnel vision'; the client seeing only the performance time. A professional magic show actually takes **an average of 4 hours** from start to finish. **WHAT?!** Yes, you read that right...4 hours! So why so much time? What's really involved? Besides the clerical work, e.g., time involved in sending you information, being on the phone or computer booking the show, and preparing and sending a

confirmation letter, there are several behind the scenes tasks on the day of the show. They include packing up and loading everything into the vehicle, travel to the show, setup time, breaking down and repacking everything, reloading the vehicle, travel time home, unloading the vehicle and putting everything away. *PHEW!* I got tired just thinking about it. Now imagine having to put all your energy into performing for 45-60 minutes in the middle of all that.

#2. It takes more than 5-10 minutes to get things set up once I arrive.

Another common oversight is the setup time and labor involved. It would be very nice if every show were at a single-family home with easy access, whereas I could be set up in 10 minutes or less. The truth is, only about 5% are. Most of the time I'm making at least two trips from my vehicle carrying heavy equipment, sometimes a block or two away because the party guests took all the close parking spaces. Then up 2-3 flights of stairs, or down very narrow stairs leading to basements. After that, and needing 5-10 minutes to catch my breath, I can be set up in about 10-15 minutes. I typically arrive 20-30 minutes early to allow for time obstacles.

#3. You are not putting my kids through college by paying for a show.

LOL...I wish! Business cards, website cost, and online ads with Google aren't free. Did you know that if you click a Google Ad to find me...**it cost me \$2.00 to \$5.00 whether you book a show or not?** I get about 50 clicks a week, mostly 'curiosity clicks'...that's anywhere from **\$100.00 to \$250.00 a month for that one ad!** Then there's office supplies, travel and vehicle expenses like gas, tolls and the wear on my tires and the rest of my car, and I don't get the balloons and other gifts I give away for free. **After cost, I'm lucky if I make \$40.00 to \$60.00 a show (\$10.00 to \$15.00 an hour).** *I had to pay babysitters more than that to watch my children for 4 hours so I could do a show!*

THE BOTTOM LINE - IT IS WHAT IT IS

Hiring a professional entertainer should, and more than likely will cost more than hiring an amateur or part time magician. I know there'll always be inexperienced magicians out there bidding for your business, and some of you may be tempted to hire them just to save money, but I have to believe that most of you already know the risk involved. I also have to believe that most of you would not trust your car repairs, dental work, or any other important work to a nonprofessional; so why would you put the safety and happiness of your children in the hands of one? Before you do that, please keep in mind:

- Some magicians will claim to be a 'children's entertainer' and the only child they ever performed for was their little brother or sister.
- Some club and bar performers will “make an exception” and perform their act for children. How nice of them.
- There are performers who entertain children when they're not working as a stripper. Imagine the embarrassment of having a guest recognize them from a bachelor or bachelorette party?
- Many will show up late...or not at all, ruining your child's special day...and when you try to get a refund...your money is the only thing they made disappear.
- Last, but certainly not least, there are countless stories about entertainers smelling of alcohol, telling off color jokes, or being too 'touchy feely' with the kids. Please note; I DO NOT judge what a person consumes or their ideas of humor, but there is a time and place for everything and **your child's party is not it.**

So what happens if you can't afford a professional, but still want a fun and safe show for your children? Some magicians, myself included, can customize shows and will try to work within your budget. The bigger concern should be what happens when you hire an inexperienced magician and they're confronted with a situation that even seasoned magicians struggle with...like behavioral issues. Do you really want run the risk of a disaster?

I've been entertaining children and adults for many years and have probably heard every horror story out there. Do you want to have your guest making comments like, “The guy was telling dirty jokes right in front of the kids”, “You could smell alcohol on his breath all the way across the room”, “Look how ‘overly friendly’ he is with the kids” or “He stood outside smoking a cigarette while the kids watched him through the living room window”? Unfortunately, most inexperienced magicians don't consider that:

1. Many kids "get" a lot more than they used to when it comes to jokes.
2. The smell from, “It was just one drink to calm my nerves”, can be as bad as if they had several and **you** shouldn't be expected to tell the difference. Plus, even one drink can sometimes alter a person's ability to perform.

3. There's a line that must be drawn between friendly and overly friendly. Most kids are naturally trusting, especially when in their own home where they feel the safest, and some will want to give the entertainer a thank you hug. You shouldn't jump to conclusions if an entertainer allows this, or simply pats a child on the shoulder or head, or even if a clown gives a child a friendly hug. Certainly pay attention though if the entertainer seems to be carrying it a bit too far. Unfortunately, any business that puts children and adults together attracts predators, and they're certainly not going to advertise their intent. Your best defense is making sure the children are never left alone with *any* person you are not familiar with.
4. If the children are expecting an entertainer, they're sometimes waiting at the window watching for them several minutes before their arrival time. That one last drag off a cigarette before the show starts can leave a bad impression on the children.

If an entertainer has never done a show before, or doesn't have a significant amount of experience, the children will immediately sense the lack of confidence and nervousness and may take over the show very quickly. What you end up with is a group of children running around doing everything but watching the performance you paid money for. **You** may even end up being the entertainment if the performer is extremely late or never shows. Quite often, an amateur won't even give you the courtesy of a call to inform you of a problem that's caused them to have to cancel or run late. Many who are late, expect you'll rearrange your entire schedule to accommodate them, and don't understand why you're so upset. Come on; it was them who had the car problem or sat in traffic for hours. What right do you have to be angry?

You, as any good parent would, want your children to be safe and influenced in a positive way, so please take time to consider your choices. When the average person wants to gamble, it's at a casino or on a lottery ticket, not on the person who will be in their home and around their children for an hour or more. When you consider the risk, isn't a little extra money worth it?

Obviously, if money is an issue, you need to stay within your means. The big challenge is finding someone affordable without compromising your child's safety or running the risk of a terrible performance. As much as I hate to say this, if you can't afford a professional, even after they try to work within your budget...and you're still determined to have entertainment, an inexperienced entertainer may be your only option. I can only *strongly* suggest that you research them as much as possible. If you can, get references, even if it's only one or two. Just because a person hasn't done a lot of shows doesn't *always* mean they're a bad performer...we all had to start somewhere.

DAY OF THE SHOW TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

Okay, you decided a magic show is a great idea; so how do you prepare your home (or hall) for the show? More importantly, how do you prepare the kids for the show? Many people overlook these things because there's so much to do when hosting a party. I hope this helps.

Tip #1 - Tie some balloons on your mailbox, or in front of your house. It makes it easier for anyone who's never been to your home to find you.

Tip #2 - VERY IMPORTANT! If you're having an outdoor event, have a backup plan in case of bad weather.

Tip #3 - Take control before the show starts by preparing the children. Discuss acceptable behavior for the show and the rest of the event. There's a line between being energetic and disruptive. A disruptive child can easily ruin the entire your event.

Tip #4 - Have the children ready to watch the performance at the time you agreed on. The performer may be doing more than one show that day and need to stay on schedule.

Tip #5 - Have children sit on the floor or ground instead of chairs. They get fidgety and chairs become toys to rock back and forth on causing disruptions, or worse, injuries.

Tips #6 - Never leave the children alone with the magician. At least one adult should remain with the children to handle disruptions and for liability reasons.

Tips #7 - If the adults are more interested in talking, drinking, or smoking, please have them move to another room. Loud talking, drinks being spilled, and clouds of smoke are very distracting and disrespectful.

Tip #8 - Pets in the party area can be dangerous. If someone is bitten or hurt from tripping over an excited animal...it's going to ruin the event! Also, toddlers walking around without supervision tend to wander into the performance area, running the risk of being knocked down, tripped over or having something dropped on them. **PLEASE supervise very young children at all times.**

Tip #9 - If a child appears frightened; please don't force them to approach the magician so you can get a picture. Pushing the issue can turn your event into a nightmare, or possibly give the child a few.

Tip #10 - When paying the entertainer; please **do not** do so in front of the children. Pay in advance or walk out with them at the end of the show.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. How much does your show cost?** Because there are variables such as your location, and the length and type of show that is best suited to the age of your children, I will need to find out more about your event to provide you with an **accurate price**.
- 2. Do you require a deposit?** With the exception of outdoor shows, no deposit is required, unless you prefer to prepay. A 50% non-refundable deposit is required for outdoor shows unless a binding contract is signed guaranteeing the show will go on even under inclement conditions (indoor location must be available).
- 3. When should we serve cake & ice cream and open gifts?** All should be saved for the end of the party. Besides the fact that some kids get hyper after eating sugar, sticky hands and magic props don't go well together. As for the gifts, if a child opens the gifts first, it's going to be tough tearing them away from that new toy long enough to watch the show; the least amount of distractions the better.
- 4. Can we feed the kids snacks during your show?** Snacks are best served **before or after the show**; and if served before, please have them wash their hands before sitting down.
- 5. Is my child too young or too old for a magic show?** That depends on your child, whom you know better than anyone else. I have shows for preschool age children and for older children, but the best age range for magic tends to be between 4 and 8.
- 6. Is your show age appropriate?** I only do tricks that are appropriate for the age of the children. I take your child's safety seriously, and that includes not leaving them traumatized! NO fire. NO knives or swords. NO dangerous looking tricks...and NO inappropriate humor.
- 7. How far do you travel?** Generally up to 25 miles from my home, especially during peak holiday show months (October - December), but for additional compensation (including airfare & hotel accommodations) I will consider traveling virtually anywhere in the USA.
- 8. Why do you charge a travel fee for shows out of your area?** To cover the cost of fuel, wear and tear on my vehicle, and any tolls, hotel costs or airfare if applicable. Please keep in mind that my time is worth something even while traveling. If I'm traveling long distance for your show, I have to turn down other shows, which is a substantial loss of income.

- 9. How much space do you need?** For equipment and props I need about a 5' by 5' area. Other than that all I need is an area in front of my performing area for the children to sit, which is usually on the floor.
- 10. Do you need a table?** I bring my own tables.
- 11. What if it snows and I have to cancel the party?** If due to inclement weather you have to cancel, you may reschedule the show, without any fees or penalties.
- 12. Can you do the magic show outside?** Unpredictable weather, extreme heat, bugs and other distractions make it much harder to keep the children's attention and much harder for them to hear me. And most importantly live animals do not do well in the heat. If the show must be outside, PLEASE have an alternate indoor area or appropriate cover available and if at all possible have the children sitting in a shaded area. **I am a strong advocate for the prevention of cruelty to animals. I reserve and will exercise the right to not use live animals if the weather or area poses any danger to them.**
- 13. I've heard stories about entertainers who were late or never showed up. What assurances do I have that this won't happen to me?**
Unexpected problems do happen. The most common and hardest to foresee is a traffic jam **which I have no control over**. If I'm running late I'll communicate this to you immediately so you're aware of the situation, and I'll update you along the way of any progress I'm making. I have NEVER been a no show. My promise is that I will do my best to be at your event regardless of health issues or personal problems, but one must be realistic and accept that there's always the possibility of automobile accidents or breakdowns, severe illnesses, and family tragedies that would certainly excuse ANYONE from fulfilling their work obligations.
- 14. There are cheaper magicians, why should I hire you?** At the risk of sounding a bit harsh...**you do get what you pay for**. Many magicians who are just starting out lie about their experience and undercut professional's prices. You're taking the chance that you may be their first client, risking your children's safety or possibly exposing them to undesirable behavior. My prices aren't the cheapest, but they're very reasonable for what I provide. I'm not Boo-Boo the clown whose makeup and costume would scare Freddy Kruger, the 17 year old just starting out, or the neighbor down the street who decided to turn his new hobby into some extra cash. I reiterate...you do get what you pay for.
- 15. Should I tip the entertainer?** Tipping is a common practice of measuring appreciation and assessing the quality of a service, but I can't decide for

anyone what's appropriate, that's between you and the entertainer. The short answer is...it's not necessary, but it's always much appreciated.

16. What's the best time to begin your show? A good time is about an hour after the party begins to prevent distractions from late arriving guests.

17. Can you entertain the children in one room while the adults hang out in another room? For liability reasons, I do require that the children be supervised at all times by at least one responsible adult other than me. Sorry, but I can't and won't be held responsible for supervising them. This is to protect you, the children and myself.

18. Is it okay to have infants at the party? You may not have a lot of say in this matter. People may show up with infants since it's cheaper than finding a babysitter! I don't mind infants, they're pretty harmless, but I don't recommend having **unsupervised toddlers** running around because they often are a huge distraction to everyone who is trying to enjoy the show. This goes for pets as well. Many shows have been ruined by an overly excited dog jumping all over everyone and breaking props...not to mention the trauma caused to my animals. **Please keep your pets in a separate area.**

FUN PARTY GAMES

Please read the following before choosing and using any of the games listed.

All games are to be played at your-own-risk. Anthony Marconi dba Amazing Magic Productions & LOL Magic Shows is not responsible, nor has any control over, the use or misuse of any of the games and activities suggested on these pages. If you feel any game or activity is unsafe or inappropriate then do not use it. Thank you.

An event can occasionally run longer than expected, or your entertainer could be experiencing travel related problems and is running late. Maybe you decided not to have entertainment and need some ideas to keep all those children busy so they don't start using the family cat as a Piñata!

No matter what the reason, it's always good to have some kind of backup plan; so I've put together a few game ideas you may like to utilize.

Please Note: Children can get very competitive and some will act out if they don't win. ALWAYS have runner up and consolation prizes to give out so no one feels left out.

Enjoy!

Fishing Game: Good for 2-5 years of age. Tack a large blue sheet in a doorway or between two chairs. Tape cut-outs of fish all over the sheet. Make a fishing pole out of a small stick, clothes hanger etc., and attach 2-3 feet of string to the pole. At the end you attach a clothes pin (spring type works best). An adult sits behind the sheet with a bowl of goodies or small prizes. Each child gets a chance to 'fish'. They throw in their line over the sheet and the adult behind the sheets attaches a goody or prize to the clothespin. The adult tugs on the line to let the child know that they have a bite. Great game, lots of fun.

Bucket of Coins Contest: Divide the children into 2-3 groups. Have a decorated empty coffee can at the opposite end of the room for each group. Have a cup full of pennies for each group. The groups now race against each other to see which one can get the most coins in their can. Only one child from each group goes at a time. Sound easy? Here's the catch...they have to place the coin between their knees and walk all the way to the can to drop it in. Set a time limit and use a kitchen timer.

No Reading Treasure Hunt: Treasure hunts are great party games! This works with all age groups, even the pre-readers. On ten small cards draw pictures of ten things from around your house and yard. Hide the clues before the party and when it's time to play gather the group around you. Hand out the first clue and away they go. (Example - if the first card has a picture of the fridge on it, they will race off to the fridge where they'll find the clue with a picture of the welcome mat

on it. They will race off to the welcome mat where they will find another clue with whatever drawn on it, etc.) The last clue has a picture of you on it. When the group finally makes its way back to you its cake time! Idea - if you can't draw try cutting out pictures from magazines.

Pass the Package: Wrap a bar of chocolate (or some other gift), in a layer of gift paper and ribbon. Now wrap it in another layer and repeat until you have about 10 layers. Sit everyone in a circle and play a short clip of music. When the music stops, the person holding the present removes ONE layer of wrapping. Repeat until the last layer of wrapping has been removed. The winner keeps the present.

Memory Game: On a tray, place about 10 to 15 small items (e.g. pencil, watch, comb, shoe lace, spoon, toy car, etc.) and cover with a cloth. Sit everyone in a circle. Place the tray in the middle of the circle and remove the cloth for 60 seconds. Everyone has to remember the objects. When the time is up, replace the cloth. In turn, each person has to name an object on the tray. The first person to fail to name an object repeats an object or names something not on the tray is out. The tray is then removed and some or all of the objects replaced, and the game re-started with the person following the one who is out. If the game is too easy for the group, add more objects or reduce the time.

Musical Animal Acts: Everyone gets into the act with this fun variation of musical chairs. Set up one fewer chair than the number of guests at your party. Start the music and have the children walk in a circle around the chairs, until you stop the music. When the music stops, the children try to sit in one of the chairs. The player left standing must pull the name of an animal, written on a piece of paper, out of a hat and act it out while the other guests try to guess what the animal is. Start the music again and repeat the game until all the animals in the hat have been acted out.

EVENT CHECKLIST

One to two months before the party:

- Set the date of the party
- Decide on the location and make reservations (if applicable)
- Create guest list
- Set the party theme
- Plan your activities
- Plan your menu
- Make a list of your party supply needs

Two to three weeks before the party:

- Send out your invitations (include directions)
- Order cake
- Order flowers or balloon bouquets (if applicable)
- Purchase the goody bag items and game prizes
- Finalize your menu

One week before the party:

- Make sure you have enough chairs, tables, dishes, utensils, etc...
- Make a final guest count.
- Plan for additional adult chaperones, (if applicable)
- Place orders for food if needed
- Confirm reservations (if applicable)
- Confirm your rented hall is adequately prepared (if applicable)
- Buy and wrap your gift for the birthday child

The day before the party:

- Review the games/activities
- Begin decorating
- Pick up the cake and candles
- Purchase beverages/ice
- Prepare goody bags
- Make sure camera is charged

On the day:

- Have camera ready
- Have paper and pen handy to record who gave what gift
- Have a big rubbish bag handy for torn wrapping paper

Secure your pets

- Have fun

100% CUSTOMER SATISFACTION GUARANTEE

"Your children's happiness and safety are my #1 priority and should be your bottom line...after all, that's what you're really paying for. Rest assured, you'll be provided with a professional, safe, and fun magic show that generates amazement and laughter from your children and guest. If my performance does not provide all of that...*you don't pay!*"

Okay that said, here are some reasons why performances go bad...even for seasoned professionals.

My guarantee doesn't apply if...

There's **little or no adult supervision** and unruly children are **being allowed** to disrupt the show. I'm there to entertain, **not to discipline.**

There's food being served **during the show...**this is a **huge** distraction and greatly diminishes interest in the show.

There's alcohol being served and there are drunk and rowdy guests...**it's a kids party!** Need I say more?

Loud music or a television is being played during the show...**not much worse than trying to compete with the super bowl being watched in the same or next room.**

Late arriving guests are being greeted during the show...**another huge distraction.** Try not to schedule the show for the exact time the party starts because people do show up late. **And if there are adults in the back of the room who would rather talk than watch the show, send them in another room...please!**

BOO-BOO the clown shows up to do face painting right in the middle of my show...yep, pretty hard to compete with that bright wig and red nose!

The Show is outside and...

A surprise storm hits or it's extremely windy and you don't have an alternative performance area. **PLEASE BE PREPARED!**

The performance is in the direct sun on a 80+ degree day...pretty brutal on the kids and me. Please note: If originally part of the show, live animals will not be used under these conditions!

You have me set up next to the swimming pool and the older kids and adults are jumping in, purposely getting me and my props wet. Yep! This has happened a

couple times and **I'm actually a little lost for words with this one.** I'm wearing expensive clothing and have well over \$2,000.00 worth of magic and sound equipment set up...what ever happened to **common decency?**

Your neighbor decides to use his lawn mower, making it too difficult for the kids to hear me...**maybe you should have invited him after all!**

There are **any other distractions (BOUNCE HOUSE, PONY RIDES, ETC.)** beyond my control.

"Common sense is not so common." - François-Marie Arouet

Yes, these are things I've encountered, and I could go on forever with this list, but I'm sure you get the point. The bottom line is, I care about my show, and I'm sure we both want your event to be a successful one. If any of the above things don't seem reasonable, or **haggling over a few dollars just for the sake of 'winning' the negotiation** is more important than getting a professional, safe, and fun magic show, then I strongly suggest going with the cheaper, less experienced or inexperienced performer. I can assure you there are plenty of them out there.

I Thank you again for your interest and I hope I'll be your choice of entertainer.

Best Regards,

Anthony Marconi