

the birthday party project™

Bringing Joy to Homeless Children through the Magic of Birthdays

Some of you know Theresa Lamb for her stellar work as a Sage 500 and Sage Intacct consultant. When not helping clients, though, she can be found volunteering for The Birthday Party Project (TBPP).

What is The Birthday Party Project?

TBPP throws a monthly themed party at each of the sponsoring agencies. Volunteers lead the celebration to make sure all the children (ages 1 to 22) receiving services at the location with birthdays that month have a special day.

Some of the families are homeless or otherwise lack the financial means to provide a birthday present, much less a birthday party. Others are away from home due to a child's

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long-term illness, often with health restrictions that limit activities.

The parties also give the parents and siblings the chance to have fun! Everyone gets a break from worrying about bigger concerns, even if only for an hour.

“Our parties are so much more than a celebration – they are a loud exclamation point that kids matter!”

~The Birthday Party Project

As a professional event planner, Paige Chenault had the right skills to start TBPP! She held the very first party in January 2012 at Family Gateway, an agency that serves homeless families. In nearly six years, the project has grown to celebrate birthdays for children at 33 social service agencies in 12 cities across the United States. **Remarkably, that translates to 4,500 birthdays at parties attended by a total of 30,000 kids!**

“15 Seconds of Joy” (Video, 0:15)

Theresa's Volunteer Story:

Why did you choose to devote your time to this organization?

Theresa says, “I stumbled upon The Birthday Party Project on a friend’s Facebook post. It fit everything I love—parties and kids!”

“My first party was at Safe Haven, a transitional housing

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shelter for survivors of domestic violence. I cried the entire drive home because I knew why those kids were there. During that hour of the party, though, there was so much laughter and love. I realized that organization truly gives the kids and their families a chance to set that hurt aside.

“At the next month’s party, a little girl came running up to me said, ‘I remember you! You helped me celebrate my birthday last month.’ My heart broke because that meant she was living there for a second month. Still, I know in my heart that we made a small impact on her life and helped spread a little joy!”

Volunteer Roles

New volunteers are considered “birthday enthusiasts,” and are assigned to help wherever needed. After a year, though, Theresa Lamb wanted to increase her involvement. She was then vetted to become a “party coordinator” at [Ronald McDonald House of Dallas \(RMHD\)](#). *If you’re not familiar with this organization, provides a comfortable home for families with a seriously ill or injured child receiving treatment at a nearby hospital, with locations throughout the world.*

As party coordinator, Theresa transports party bins and cakes to the event and helps with set-up and clean-up. “We make the volunteers feel comfortable and involved and make sure the party goes as smoothly as possible. Also, we encourage the kids to get involved and have fun! Essentially, we rock the party!” Theresa says.

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Theresa Lamb and other volunteers with their children

How awesome are the celebrations?

All of the families using the agency's services are encouraged to attend the month party to help celebrate the birthday kids. Party coordinators and party enthusiasts bring crafts, games, party favors, and of course—cupcakes. Each birthday child also receives a personal cake and birthday present.

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Pictured: Children celebrating birthdays at Ronald McDonald House Dallas  (Photos used with consent.)

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MicroAccounting team to celebrate birthdays at Ronald McDonald House Dallas

Our team has been so impressed by Theresa's work with The Birthday Party Project that we decided to volunteer with TBPP as a group. We look forward to attending a party on January 15 at RMHD.

"I can't even begin to tell you all how excited I am to share this with (my co-workers). I know we all know how to have fun, so let's spread some joy to these kiddos and families!"

Theresa says.



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How can others join the party?

- ♦ **[Volunteer.](#)** Bring the joy to a party as an individual or group. Note, all participants must pass a background check. Kids are invited to help, too, with restrictions detailed on the website.
- ♦ **[Donate.](#)** Make a cash contribution. Participate in a corporate matching program, start a Share Your Birthday fund. Shop at sponsor retailers. Donate items.
- ♦ Learn more about partner agencies, special events, and contact information here:
www.thebirthdaypartyproject.org. [@bdayenthusiast](https://twitter.com/bdayenthusiast)

The Birthday Party Project Mantra

EAT. SLEEP. PARTY. REPEAT.

#joychangeslives #givingisgood

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 About the author

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MicroAccounting Julie writes articles for our blogs, gathers relevant material from practice leaders, and edits contributors' stories. She brings her experience as an adjunct media arts professor and long-time teaching artist to our content

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