



Parents Are Crowd-Funding Their Kids' Birthday Parties

By GENEVIEVE SHAW BROWN

Depending on who you ask, it's either the smartest way to throw a birthday party on a budget or it's the worst possible representation of keeping up with the Joneses.

Either way, it's a real thing: Parents are using crowd funding to pay for kids' birthday parties.

One such fundraiser on GoFundMe reads: "My pumpkins 2nd birthday is coming around faster than i could ever imagine. I managed to throw an amazing 1st birthday for [name omitted] and would like to follow through with an amazing 2nd birthday for my blue eyed princess!! . . due to a series of unfourtunate [sic] events in our lives recently money is tight. . every dollar helps!! thank you in advance for any donations made <3"

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???Crowd funding is in the air and on the news, so moms -- along with everyone else -- are more aware of the idea,??? said Rebecca Michals, director of [BabyCenter](#)???s global community. [BabyCenter](#)'s parenting experts spotted the trend of crowd-funding kids' parties.

The number of birthday-related campaigns within the "Celebrations & Special Events" category on GoFundMe has "skyrocketed," according to a site official. Since the company launch in 2010, nearly \$1 million has been raised for birthday celebrations from more than 20,000 donors. There was a 330 percent increase in donation volume for birthday campaigns between 2013 and 2014.

???Social media has an influence," said Michals. "Some moms see photos of their friends giving their children amazing birthdays and holidays and just want that for their own child. While it???s not a sure thing that donations will come rolling in, moms feel that it can???t hurt to try. There is also some sense of what goes around, comes around. ... If you give to my child???s birthday party, I???ll give back to yours.???"

The idea of crowd-funded birthday parties has it's critics.

"It ridiculous," said Lyss Stern, CEO and founder of [Divamoms.com](#). "There is no reason to put yourself in debt or ask other people to pay for a birthday party."

Children want to be surrounded with their friends and family, smiling and laughing on their birthday,"

said Stern. "They don't care if the party had all the bells and whistles. They will cherish the happy memories not the excessiveness."

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