



OHS Birthday Party Information Package

2023

Your Party at a Glance

Location

OHS birthday parties are held in the Education Centre at 245 West Hunt Club Road, Ottawa, ON. Please enter from the door labelled “Education Centre” located to the right of the main entrance.

Time

Our attendants work hard to set up your party! For this reason, access to the room will be granted only 15 minutes before the party start time.

Shelter Access

The shelter is open from 11a.m. to 5p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

- If your party starts before 11a.m., we ask that you do not enter the building more than 15 minutes before your start time as the Education Centre doors will be locked.
- For parties starting at 3:30p.m., please note the shelter will be closed when your party ends. We ask that you arrive early if you’re wanting to visit the shelter animals on your own time.

Schedule

OHS birthday parties are 2 hours in length. Participants can expect OHS attendant-led programming for the first 75 minutes. The remaining 45 minutes are typically used by parents and guardians to serve food, open gifts and hand out loot bags.

A typical schedule is as follows:

- 25 Minutes: Animal-themed craft or game;
- 25 minutes: Tour of the shelter;
- 25 minutes: Animal interaction (subject to availability); and,
- 45 minutes: Parent or guardian-led activities (food, cake, gifts, etc.).

Ages

OHS birthday parties are suitable for children ages 6 to 12. Children who are turning 6 during the current calendar year may participate.



Host & Guests Responsibilities

1. Parent Assistance

- A minimum of one adult must be present to assist with supervision for the duration of the birthday party. You may be asked to assist with monitoring children during animal interactions, keeping the group together during tours, or ensuring the group follows instructions.
- The party organizer is responsible for having emergency contact information for each child attending the party. The party organizer is also responsible for contacting parents for pick-up in the case of an emergency.
- A parent or guardian for each attending child must sign an “Outreach Waiver & Model Release” form, which can be found through the link provided on your original booking confirmation.

2. Animal Interactions

- Please use the hand sanitizing stations between all animal interactions.
- Keep your voices low and your movements slow in the animal rooms.
- Do not open any cages. If an animal room is unlocked, you may enter but be sure to close the door immediately upon entering.
- Keep fingers out of cages to prevent accidental bites and scratches.

3. General Conduct & Policies

- All guests must respect each other, staff facilitators, and the animals involved in the party. Engaging in conduct that disrupts the program or undermines the safety and security of animals or any of the participants will not be tolerated.
- Do not leave children unattended.
- All guests must wear closed-toe shoes.



OHS Birthday Parties FAQs

My child is under 6 years old, can they still attend? We have a guardian who can supervise them.

To ensure the safety of all participants, attendees must be at least 5 years old turning 6 this calendar year, even if there are guardians present.

Can my child request a specific animal?

Upon booking, you will be asked to rank your preferred choice of animals for your party. Please note that we do not use shelter dogs in our kids programming, so dog availability is dependent on our volunteers' schedule and is more limited than cat or rabbit interactions.

Are the animals safe?

Program animals are behaviourally assessed for suitability with children and health checked by our Animal Care team. Additionally, we check in on the animals the morning of the birthdays to ensure they are in good spirits and are ready to welcome the guests into their pods.

Why are animals "subject to availability" at a shelter?

There are a few factors that limit the number of animals we have available for child and youth programming.

- To ensure the safety of all participants, we only use temperament assessed and medically cleared cats and small animals in our programming.
- These animals are also typically the most social and affectionate pets, making them popular among visitors and quick to get adopted!
- The OHS Outreach team makes a commitment to ensure our animals are comfortable in the interactions, so if an animal is feeling stressed during our morning check-in we will not use them in programming that day.

These factors mean we have rare occasions where no suitable animals are available. For cases like these, we have a list of back-up activities that allow guests to help care for and enrich our shelter animals in a way that does not involve direct interaction.



OHS Birthday Parties FAQs

What will the room look like?

Your room booking includes tables, chairs, tablecloths, birthday banners, and centerpieces. There will be one long table in the centre of the room for guests to sit at, and two other tables with which you can display gifts, loot bags, food and beverages. You will also have access to a kitchenette, which includes a fridge, freezer and microwave.

Do you supply food?

Our packages do not include any food. We do offer a cupcake add-on that can be purchased, and you are more than welcome to bring your own food or have it delivered. Please note, many food delivery services do not deliver to our address. We ask that you confirm with your supplier in advance and plan accordingly. If you have already booked your party and would like to add on cupcakes, please email programs@ottawahumane.ca.

I may need to cancel. Can I get a full refund?

Refund requests received 7 days in advance of the scheduled birthday party are eligible for a refund (a non-refundable \$50 deposit fee applies). Refund requests received within 7 days of the scheduled birthday party are not eligible for a refund. A party can be rescheduled if the request is received 7 days in advance of the scheduled birthday and the desired date has availability.

My child would like to donate to the OHS, how can we do so?

We appreciate any and all donations! If your child would like to fundraise, they can set up a fundraising link at ottawahumane.ca/mybirthday. If they would prefer to donate items, you can take a peek at our OHS Wish List to see which items we need most. The list can be found at ottawahumane.ca/wish-list.

Who can I contact if I have more questions?

For more information, please contact our supervisor: programs by email at programs@ottawahumane.ca or by phone at 613-725-3166, ext. 298.



Thank you for supporting the OHS!

All proceeds above and beyond the costs to run the party go toward the care of the animals at the Ottawa Humane Society.



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