



Brandi and Nathan Smith opened Hero's to provide stress-free parties for area parents seeking a memorable birthday experience for their children.



Cailin Speer, 6, slides to the finish of an inflatable obstacle course during a party at Hero's. The party center offers inflatable play sets, carnival games and more.



Party hero Tara Langenderfer (right) shares Elise Sanford's joy as Elise opens gifts during her birthday party at Hero's in Rossford. PHOTOS COURTESY OF HERO'S

Hero's Party Center Offers Children, Parents A Place For Birthday Fun

BY NANCY GAGNET
MIRROR REPORTER

It's Hero's to the rescue for parents who want to relax and enjoy their child's birthday party while avoiding the excessive labor and toil that often accompanies the process.

By paying close attention to detail, owners Nathan and Brandi Smith have made the new establishment a top choice for those searching for the perfect spot to hold any special occasion.

A few days before the party, a staff member, or "party hero," calls the birthday child to become acquainted and find out his or her interests, putting the wheels into motion for what will be an event that is "100 percent tailored to the birthday child."

"Our goal is to truly make them feel special," explained Nathan Smith. "Calling them before the party gives us a chance to talk to the birthday child and build a relationship with them. It's that little detail that makes a huge difference."

From the moment party guests walk through the door, the staff takes over with a party hero specifically assigned to each party.

Initially, guests gather in

the greeting area to sign a T-shirt, which the birthday child keeps and wears during the party.

When entering the main area, owners went for the "wow" factor.

Huge inflatable play sets, a sandlot area for open play and a purple carnival tent provide the non-stop entertainment and fun.

"I like the thing you climb up and slide down the most, but I liked playing soccer too," said 9-year-old Cody Kinor, of Eastwood, who nodded his head enthusiastically when asked if he was having fun.

During an organized party, the party hero moves the group into each area as the event progresses.

After bouncing and sliding on the inflatables, kids head to the sandlot to play games geared toward the age and gender of the birthday child.

Smith explained the party is completely geared toward the child's interests. If it's a SpongeBob SquarePants theme, kids play a game called "Squidward, Squidward," after one of the cartoon's characters.

If a child likes soccer, the



Led by party hero Lauren Kowalik, guests parade from the sandlot game area to the carnival tent, the next stop in their birthday party at Hero's. PHOTO COURTESY OF HERO'S

child prefers pretty princesses, they play games with that theme.

"The hero gets in and plays games that the birthday child wants to do," Smith said.

Next, the party moves to a purple tent with small white lights to play carnival games.

"No one walks out without a trinket," Smith said.

Michelle Garee, of

Perrysburg, said she appreciated the attention given to her son Alex, who celebrated his fifth birthday there.

"It was really wonderful to see the party really focus on him and his ideas of what is fun," she said.

Smith's effort to hire an enthusiastic staff that enjoys working with children won over Garee.

"I had a diverse group of kids, and the party heroes were so energetic and happy and they played wonderfully with all of the kids," she said.

Jennifer Kinor and Stephanie Hahn, PTO volunteers from Eastwood School, were at Hero's to research the inflatable play sets.

They plan to rent one for a school fund-raiser, but after making a visit with their children, have decided to pursue renting the facility for an end-of-the-year event as well.

"I'm very impressed," Kinor said. "It's very organized and the staff is very enthusiastic."

Her friend agreed. "The kids are having a lot of fun," Hahn said.

Three kitchen areas designed with décor from the

and heading out.

Garee said the experience was so positive, she's already scheduled her daughter's birthday there.

"When you find the perfect spot, you know it," she said.

The Smiths researched the business for two years before opening the franchise location, one of only five in the United States.

With party packages beginning at \$249, they hope to expand business as it grows.

Hero's is located at 9851 Meridian Ct. off Route 20 in Rossford behind Meijer.

In addition to hosting parties, Hero's also rents inflatable sets, which it sets up and maintains for home birthday parties, corporate events, church events, block parties and other special occasions.

For further information regarding costs and services, visit www.HerosToledo.com or call (419) 873-9400.

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