



Voting Party Kit

Craft, Activities, and Ideas to Celebrate Voting with your Kids!

Voting parties are a great way to introduce kids to the idea of voting and show them it's a fun (and important!) thing to do.

Who should you invite?

This could be something just for your family or you could invite your friends, neighbors, playgroup, or really anyone you want to include. You can decide if it's just for the kids or roll it into an event for the parents, too, and head to a nearby voting location afterwards where your kids can watch as you cast your vote.

Whether it's a small family affair or fun with friends, making voting an event can create powerful memories for your family.

So, what might you do?

There are lots of fun things to do at a Voting Party and you can pick what works best for the ages of the children or young people you invite. You can do crafts, have a voting-related story time, or hold a mock election and let the kids vote. If the kids are older, you can talk over snacks about the issues that matter most to them, ask if they have thoughts on the candidates or issues being discussed in the election debate, and answer any questions they might have.

Where might you have your party?

You can have a party at your home or try to find a park near your voting site. If the kids are older, it might be fun to go to a favorite restaurant and talk over snacks.

In the kit below, there are suggestions for craft, stories, and more. The bottom line is that, no matter what you do, making voting a family-affair makes it more fun for the whole family and makes it more likely that your child will vote when their turn comes.

Thanks for helping build the next generation of voters-one party at a time!

Let the Kids Vote!

Many communities in North Carolina have a Kids Voting program where kids can cast their own ballots for this year's election. Visit <http://www.kidsvotingnc.org> to see if there's a Kids Voting program in your community.



Crafts & Activities for Younger Children

Make Your Own Ballot Box

- Gather enough shoe boxes or other small boxes for each child at your party.
- Explain to the children that a ballot box is where many people put their votes to be counted. Today most votes in this country are counted using a computer, but in the past we used ballot boxes like this where voters would make their votes on a piece of paper and drop them in. In many countries around the world, this is the process still used today.
- Let the children use construction paper or wrapping paper to cover the lid and the base of the box separately.
- Cut a hole in the lid of each box.
- Let the kids practice voting!



Make a Campaign Poster

- Let the children make their own campaign poster or an imaginary election for snack choice, or story time, etc for smaller children or it might be an actual campaign poster if the child has a favorite candidate.
- Give them construction or printer paper, markers, crayons, stickers, and let them get to work!
- You might want to make one ahead of time that they can use as a guide.

Make Voting Stickers

- Get some blank address labels (the bigger, the better), markers, and crayons and give the children a chance to design their own voting stickers.
- This could be a "Future Voter" sticker, an "I Voted" sticker, or a campaign sticker for an imaginary campaign or their favorite candidate.



What would you do?

Ask the kids what they would do if they were the President in charge of our country. What would the rules be? Either let them write them up on a poster board or write them up for them. You may be surprised by what they come up with!

Create a Flag

- There are a lot of ways to create a flag craft, but here are two.
- Using washable paint, paint the flag on the child's hand and using the palm for the blue area and the fingers for the stripes. The child can then stamp it onto printer paper. Decorate the blue with star stickers or chalk when dry. Then secure with tape on a popsicle stick, dowel rod, or straw.
- Use chalk to trace your child's hand onto a piece of red construction paper approximately the same size as their hand. Glue a small piece of blue paper in the corner and decorate with chalk. Secure to a popsicle stick, dowel, or straw with tape.



Hold Your Own Election

- Pick something about the party the children can vote on—the snack choice, book for story time, etc.
- Make ballots for the children and allow them to cast their own vote. For small children, you may want to use pictures for the choices.

Have a parade!

This activity works well if you are at a park or other location within walking distance of the polling location.

- Encourage the children to wear costumes, fun hats, necklaces, etc.
 - Have materials to make signs or voting banners.
 - Bring toy instruments from home or you can make instruments using items from around the house. The children can use buckets or plastic food containers with string to make drums that they can hang around their necks. Spoons work well for drumsticks. Pie plates make great cymbals and maracas can be made with empty plastic bottles filled with beans. Just be sure to check for choking hazards.
 - Once you have your signs and instruments made, you can lead the kids in a marching parade to the voting location with simple chants like “Hi ho, hi ho, it’s off to vote we go!” or “1,2,3 4, tell me what we’re marching for! To Vote! To Vote!”, “V-O-T-E, who will the president be?”, or have the kids make up their own.



Story Time

Kids Voting NC has put together a list of voting-related children's books grouped by age. Check it out on their website and visit your local library or bookstore to find the perfect book for your party. Your local librarian may have other fun suggestions.

<http://www.kidsvotingnc.org/index.php?page=teachers>

Additional books can be found at <http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/elections/tp/elections.htm>

And check out this link for a list put together by the children's librarians at the Durham County Library: https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.momsrising.org/images/Durham_County_Library_voting_books.pdf



Activities to do with Older Kids

Bumper Stickers

Get full page label sheets and cut them long way to create a sticker approximately the size of a bumper sticker. Encourage the kids to come up with an issue that matters to them and a slogan to get people to care about it. Challenge them to design their own bumper sticker to get their message across.



What Would You Do?

Ask the kids what they would do if they were the President in charge of our country. What would the rules be? Either let them write them up on a poster board or write them up for them. You may be surprised by what they come up with!

Fun with Cartoons

Do an internet search for editorial cartoons on voting. Pick out a few to print out and talk about with your older child or teen. Talk about how humor can be part of getting your point across. See if they can come up with a cartoon on why you should vote or on an issue that interests them.

Getting Ready to Register

In North Carolina, you can register and vote in a primary election when you're 17 as long as you will be 18 by the general election. Visit the NC State Board of Elections website at <http://www.ncsbe.gov> and print out a sample voter registration form and sample ballot to go over with your older child or teen so they'll know what to expect.

Take Your Children to Vote with You

- Take a field trip to your voting site and let the children watch you vote.
- You can find your voting location, hours, and more at the NC State Board of Elections website at www.ncsbe.gov
- The children can help put your ballot in the scanning machine and get their own I voted sticker.



Fun links

Here are a few fun election-related websites for kids. You can check them out ahead of time to get some ideas or use them as part of your party.

[PBS Kids Democracy Project](http://pbskids.org/democracy/) <http://pbskids.org/democracy/>

This website of PBS Kids has presidential trading cards, a kid-friendly “meet the candidates” guide, games, activities, and much more.

[Kids Voting North Carolina](http://www.kidsvotingnc.org/) <http://www.kidsvotingnc.org/>

Kids Voting has lots of resources for parents and teachers, plus links to the Kids Voting program in your community.

**Have fun! We'd love to see what you did at
your voting party-**

Can you send us a picture?

**Send photos or party suggestions to
Beth@momsrising.org**

MomsRising.org