

# Variety Kids Xmas Party

## Information and FAQ Sheet



**DATE OF PARTY – Thursday 6 December, 2018**  
**Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre**

The Variety Kids Xmas Party is now in its 32<sup>nd</sup> year and has welcomed over 150,000 sick, disadvantaged or special needs children through its doors. Variety Victoria is proud to announce its 2018 Variety Kids Xmas Party will once again be held in partnership with the Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre.

**We hope to make the 2018 Variety Kids Xmas Party a happy and successful event for everyone involved and we appreciate your assistance.**

- Up to 5000 children attend our Variety Kids Xmas Party every year.
- The first hour of the party is for children with disabilities ONLY. By disability, we mean children with mobility aids (wheelchairs/walkers etc.), sight or hearing loss, sensory issues with crowds and/or noise. By limiting numbers, it assists these children by providing a calmer environment with more room to move, providing them with an opportunity to enjoy the party before it gets busy.
- Children with disabilities can register from 9.00am for entry from 10.00am. The carer and any other children in the same family/group, who collect their wristbands with the child granted early entry, will also be permitted early entry.
- Everyone else will register from 10am and enter the party from 11.00am. Santa will arrive at around 11.15am. Everyone is welcome to stay at the party until it concludes at 1.30pm. Registration and the entry doors will close at 12.30pm.
- There is a chill-out room for any children (or carers) who need a quiet space to have a break from the hustle and bustle of the party.
- Due to the sheer volume of food required on the day, we are unable to cater for any dietary requirements.
- Entry into the party is via invitation only and is FREE. It is the responsibility of those attending the party to pay for any transport and parking costs.
- Photo boards - on request a selection of photos showing the possible activities from past years can be emailed to organisations to help prepare children for the party.
- Please do not advise carers to call Variety to ask for more tickets or information. Due to privacy we will not discuss any lists received with anyone except the registered contact from your organisation. If they do call us, we will refer them back to you.
- Variety run a funding appeal to assist with funding this event. If you would like to help with fundraising or wish to make a donation towards the party, please contact us.

## REGISTRATION

- This is an invitation only event.
- All children are required to be registered for the party through their school or organisation. Variety does not take registrations from individuals.
- Schools/Organisations can nominate a maximum of 100 children.
- If a child's name and number of carers is not on the list they will not be permitted entry to the party.
- It is very important to complete the Bus Parking on your organisation home page should you require parking for your bus/es on the day.

- All children attending as part of a group with a School/Organisation are required to wear a name tag to identify the group they are with and contact number should they end up in the lost children's area.
- Once your nominations are confirmed through the ticketing system you will receive a pdf of your tickets to forward to your nominated families. The families will need to bring their tickets with them to be scanned at registration to redeem their wristbands and lunch vouchers.
- As this is a children's party we cannot cater for whole family groups such as grandparents, aunts, uncles etc.
- Please try to keep the numbers of carers to a minimum eg 1 carer per family We understand that some families will require multiple carers or for larger families or high needs children, but if you can try to keep the numbers to a minimum we would appreciate it.
- Please indicate in advance if you think your organisation will require a translator or if your organisation has a translator who can help out on the day.
- The party is for the children, not the carers. Please do not send carers without children as they will not be allowed to enter the party or collect gifts without children.
- Age groups this year will be from 1 day old to 13 years. This is actual age. Children 14 and over are unable to attend the party even if their intellectual age is less than 13.
- Carers/Parents must be over the age of 18.
- **SECURITY** – Please inform your families that bad behaviour/ violence will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the event.

## ENTRY

### *Via Concourse*

- Volunteers will be manning laptops to register children and carers.
- Adults/Carers will not be given wristbands unless they are with the child/ren. The exception is case workers/teachers/nominated representatives from organisations who have children attending who have contacted Variety prior to the day.
- All children must be sighted to receive their wristband.
- Children must remain orderly while waiting to register.
- We do not require identification when registering.

## ENTRY

### *Via Loading Dock – Organisations requiring bus parking*

- Entry via the loading dock is for buses that are parking for the duration of the event. If your bus will be dropping you off and returning later you will need to utilize the service lane at the front of MCEC. This is for OH&S compliance.
- We ask that you keep all the children on the bus when you arrive. Two volunteers will enter the bus and mark all the children off. Please ensure that the children have their wristbands on. Please hand back any wristbands not required.
- Once the volunteers have marked everyone off they will assist you to move inside the party at the appropriate time.
- Please display the name of your school/organisation at the top of the windscreen on the bus. Would you please ask your drivers to leave a mobile number at the loading dock in case of an emergency or in case your organisation needs to leave early
- Please note that entry time prior to 10am is for special schools only. Please note if you turn up early you will need to wait on the bus until 11am.

## WRISTBANDS

- Schools/Organisations requiring bus parking in the loading dock will have wristbands mailed out 1 week prior to the party.
- Children and carers arriving independently will receive their wristbands once their invitations have been scanned at the registration desk on the concourse.
- No wristband = no entry.
- All wrist bands are color coded to identify age groups, not gender, and must be worn to gain entry to the party. For children with sensory issues the wristband can be attached to wheelchairs or clothing or worn by a carer.
- Each child's wristband will be removed in exchange for a gift at the end of the party.

## PARTY

- The food provided is largely donated and varies from year to year. It is typical party food and drink. The types of things to expect - Sausage rolls, party pies, wraps/sandwiches, fairy floss, water, juice, soft drink, chips etc.
- Both children and carers are catered for, everyone will receive a voucher in order to receive a lunch pack.
- For those with dietary requirements please bring your own food and drink.
- There are carnival rides, interactive activities like wheelchair basketball, handball, fencing, craft activities etc. There is stage entertainment with dancing, singing, magic acts, etc.
- The present area will be set up at one end of the building for children to collect their presents on leaving the party. **MOST IMPORTANT: ONCE A CHILD HAS RECEIVED THEIR PRESENT THEY CANNOT RE-ENTER THE PARTY.**
- Please note there are no pass outs from the party.
- Over 400 volunteers donate their time to assist with this party.
- Roving entertainment - there are a large number of volunteers who come dressed up in costume. In the past we have been lucky enough to have Disney Princesses, Transformers and Star Wars friends and foes attend the Variety Kids Xmas Party.
- Children must be in attendance to receive gifts. Unborn children cannot receive gifts.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Passing on information to families.** Please ensure that all families receive the same information that you, the organisers, receive. Each year the Variety office receives calls from parents asking about transport, parking, time of the party – all of that information is in the ticket that will be sent to the person co-coordinating for your organisation.
- **Transport –**  
Public transport – enter via Clarendon Street (opposite Crown) [ptv.vic.gov.au](http://ptv.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 800 007  
Car Park – There are multiple options, please check rates as some charge by the hour (\$8 -\$10 per hour) and some charge a flat daily rate. For further information visit [www.mcec.com.au/where-is-mcec/](http://www.mcec.com.au/where-is-mcec/) Crown Casino is also across the road and has a flat rate car park [www.crownmelbourne.com.au/general/parking](http://www.crownmelbourne.com.au/general/parking)  
You can get directions from [www.whereis.com.au](http://www.whereis.com.au)
- **Variety's Charter** is to support children who are either disabled (physically or intellectually) or disadvantaged (financially or socially) and we do this in many ways including our Grants Program and through Variety@Work which hosts our Kids Xmas party.

- If you know of another school or organisation that may be interested please contact the Variety office.
  - When asked questions by parents/guardians do not ask them to call Variety. Please email any queries, for urgent enquires please call.
  - If you have filled all your spaces and have additional children you would like to nominated:-
    - a) Are they involved with another support organisation? If yes, ask them to contact that group.
    - b) If they are not or that group has advised they have nominated the maximum, then email me explaining the situation.
- \*\* Do NOT instruct the parent/individual contact Variety. All nominations must come from an organisation.**
- RSVP Nomination forms need to be returned as soon as possible to secure places. Last day for any nominations or amendments is Wednesday 28 November unless we reach capacity sooner. There have been some years where places were all filled weeks before the cut off.

**Thank you for your cooperation and we will see you on 6 December.**



**Variety – the Children’s Charity Victoria** ABN 14 020 124 537

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