

## Play dates

Play dates have been invented so that children can escape their mom's intense scrutiny. It is supposed to give the kids some breathing space, away from the pressure of home. Well, if that's what you think, then you have never been on a play date.

Play dates are so stressful! You have to be really prepared to cope with the extra nagging.

**Do not** plan a play date in advance. Never. If I tell my mom I would like to go on a play date at one of my friends' house tomorrow, I have to sit through an entire lecture. Will I behave properly? Will I play outside instead of doing video games the whole time? Will I make sure to say please and thank you (Hello, mom, I have got news for you: even the most impolite kids in the world know how to say please and thank you at my age so LAY OFF). Will I please not eat too much junk? Will I take my shoes off? And another million instructions. Plus, once I am in bed, my mom gets in touch with my friend's mom and the two of them plot some annoying stuff. Like, "Should I make them do their homework before they play?", "Maybe Isaac and John can review their math test together?", "Don't worry, I'll make sure I don't give them any sugary treat, only fruits for snack!" So now the play date has turned into a longer than normal homework session with kiwis and bananas, in someone's house where I cannot possibly roll my eyes at the other mom – even I know that.