

Young Families

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A family-focused newsletter with young children in mind

Safe Summer Fun

Families are on the go, and especially in summer. Though your destination may be across the country or just across town, there is one fact that remains constant—children, and adults, too, will get hungry. Plan ahead and pack the snacks you would like your family to eat. You'll benefit from carrying your own snacks along. Here's how:

- Save money—Shop ahead for snacks, and avoid high-cost convenience-store purchases when your options are limited, and everyone is “starving.”
- Save time—Add to the harmony of a family trip by eliminating unscheduled food stops. You can count on packed snacks making a hit with driver and passengers alike.
- Keep your cool—Select the items and serving sizes you want to provide and avoid being controlled by what is available at the time.
- Healthy hits—Increase your family's good nutrition by including some tasty choices that just happen to offer “body benefits.”

Cheese cubes, baby carrots and other veggies, dried fruit, whole grain crackers and 100 percent juice in single-serve boxes are appetizing as well as nutritious. Small coolers fit nicely in the car and keep foods and beverages safe and appetizing.

- Think to drink—Don't forget water! Sometimes all that is really needed or wanted is a cool drink of water. Pack water for everyone. You'll be glad you planned ahead.

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The Car Store Offers a Fun Travel Activity for Children

Try this car activity on a long trip when you have children from about four to eight years old who have a difficult time getting along. The car store activity is a final effort to bring about peace when everyone is in a small space for a long period.

- Purchase several small items that you think each of your children would like to have, possibly things that you would not ordinarily buy them. Avoid candy that can make a mess in the car. Label each toy with a value from one to ten. The “value” of each toy should approximate the value a child might have for the item.
- Obtain a small change purse for each child and attach it to a heavy string that you can tie safely in the interior of the car. Collect about thirty poker chips of the same color. Also, obtain a noisemaker (a small bell, clicker, or harmonica).
- Divide the items equally into bags, one for each day you will be gone and place them in the trunk of your car.
- On the first day of travel, bring out one of the bags. Tell the children that you are opening the car store and show them the items in the bag. Tell them that when the car store bell goes off, you will give them one chip if they have behaved since the previous bell. A child who has not behaved will not get a chip. Children should keep their chips in their change purses. After you ring the bell, the car store will open, and a child can use his or her chips to buy an item.
- A child who misbehaved during the previous pay period does not receive a chip. Misbehavior includes any action intended to provoke another child's misbehavior.
- Ring the car store bell after about 15 minutes. After doing this a couple of times, increase the length to 30 minutes, then to an hour (at the most).
- Consider the little economy you create. Count the number of possible payments and make sure you have more items than

what you need. Add items that remain at the end of the day to the next day's store.

- Make sure you have a good range of attractive items for each child.
- When you arrive, place all items a child received in a bag labeled with his or her name and place it in the trunk until the trip home. You might allow a child to choose one item to have during the stay.

*Chuck Smith
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“In summer I am very glad

We children are so small



*For we can see a
 thousand things*

*That men can't see
 at all.”*

Lawrence Alma-Todema

Have “Fun in the Sun”

The American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://www.aap.org/>) supports the following “sun in the summer” guidelines:

Babies under 6 months:

- Avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats are still the top recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn. However, when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen to small areas, such as the infant’s face and back of the hands.

For Young Children:

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF (sun protection factor) should be at least 15.

Take a Stream or Lake Hike

There are lots of things to see in a stream or by the lake. Bring along a towel to dry wet hands and feet.

Supplies:

- kitchen strainer (makes a handy dip net)
- plastic egg carton
- plastic or paper cups
- dishpan

Find a calm, shallow spot in the stream to do your exploring. If the bed of the stream is rocky, then wear old sneakers that you don’t mind getting wet. Using the strainer and cups, see what animals you can find in the water. If you are lucky, you may find crayfish, water bugs, and all sorts of creatures, even fish or frogs. Try lifting up rocks to see what creatures live under them. You can use the trays and egg cartons to take a closer look at your finds, but be sure to return them to where you found them at the end of your hike. Remember to supervise children closely around water.

James Van Horn

<http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/Freepubs/pdfs/ua218.pdf>

For Older Children:

- The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and avoid sun exposure during the peak intensity hours—between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen—about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.

Kids and Money on the Road

When it’s summer vacation time, children may want to overspend on everything from souvenirs to junk food. In her book, “Raising Money Smart Kids” (Kaplan, 2005) Janet Bodnar suggests three ways to keep the peace without busting the budget:

1 Lay out your game plan in advance. Create a list of what you’re willing to buy (e.g., a T-shirt for each child) and what you won’t buy (e.g., expensive gifts) on the trip.

2 Give the kids their regular allowance ahead of time (something that’s easy to forget in the rush of preparations) or provide a special vacation allowance. They should use their own money for any items not on your list. To avoid wasting or losing money, talk with your kids about what would be a reasonable amount of money to bring.

3 Give each child a roll of coins at the start of the trip. Each time one of the children gets out of hand, collect a coin. (Use the accumulated kitty to buy an occasional family treat.) At the end of the trip, kids get to keep any remaining coins from their roll.

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Tips for Traveling with Children

- *Activity Box/Bag*—Inside the bag/box is a great place to stash activity books, toy cars or dolls, crayons, and markers from home. A book bag or a plastic container with a lid will hold a lot of entertainment.
- *Small Travel Gifts*—Do a little shopping before the trip (without the kids) for some interactive quiet games or books that can be stashed in your carry-on. Give one at the beginning of the trip once everyone is settled and the trip is underway. Reserve a second for later in the trip, so when the child(ren) become bored there is something new to play with. Great items to include are books with magnetic pieces, sticker books, small video games, or travel versions of board games.
- *Make a List*—Start with a list of car games that you played as a child. Games like 20 Questions, I Spy, The Alphabet Game, and even License Plate ID can help entertain the kids. Also make a list of fun silly songs that the whole family can sing in the car.
- *Travel at night*—If a long trip and young children are involved, consider traveling at night. This way the kids will sleep through the trip, just make sure that the driver isn’t tired and has company to keep him or her awake.

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