

Pointers For Parents

On The Road Again—Making Family Travel Fun

(NAPSA)—With more and more families traveling to their vacation destination by car, parents are looking for ways to keep young children engaged and entertained while en route.

Here are some kid-tested, road-warrior strategies for making your trip more fun.

- **Make it Easy to Understand**—When preschoolers ask “Are we there yet?”, keep it simple and respond with a frame of reference they’ll understand.

For example, “It’ll take us about the same amount of time as your soccer practice lasts” or “We’ll get there right after the sun sets.”

- **Keep it Cozy**—Let your child wear slippers or socks in the car. Bring a stuffed animal, blanket, and small pillow—kids find it easier to doze if they have something soft to lean against. Try putting a large pillow between two siblings to help avoid squabbling over space. Add sunshades to rear side windows and encourage your child to wear sunglasses to avoid glare.

- **Pull Over to Stretch**—Stop at a park or rest stop and toss your child a frisbee or a ball, or simply hand him or her a jump rope or bubbles. A 10-minute stop to let off steam can pay dividends down the road.

- **Music, Fun and Games**—Bring music for the kids, music for the parents and songs the whole family can enjoy together. Stash a portable CD or tape player with headphones for when your child wants to listen to the same CD for the fifth time in a row.

Have your child follow your route on a map and measure your progress by looking for road signs.



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Play car games with the kids and bring music the whole family can enjoy together.

And don't forget to play some car games, such as spotting license plates from different states. “Parents lead such overscheduled lives that they are often looking for where to fit quality family time,” said Kyra Reppen of NickJr.com, the leading Web site for parents of young children. “Car travel is a perfect way to make the most of time together.”

- **Drive Right**—Don't let one person do all the driving or parenting. Swapping duties with your partner not only kicks grown-up monotony, it can also perk up your little ones.

Try driving at night, too. Many parents savor the quiet of kids' snoozing in the darkened backseat. However, some may find this tactic exhausting for the driver, who can arrive at the destination wiped out with the children ready to go.

For more travel tips, car games, and family-friendly destinations, log on to www.nickjr.com.