



Plan ahead for a safe & healthy family road trip

Whether you plan to drive across the country or just a few hours away, family road trips can be enriching and exciting adventures. Taking the time to plan ahead and to think about health and safety is key. Following are some important items to consider before you hit the road:

- 1. Do a car safety check.** Take your car in for service, if needed. Be sure your tires and spare are properly inflated and in good shape. Check fluid levels and make sure everything is in good working order. No one wants to have a car break down, especially when traveling with kids.
- 2. Review passenger safety.** Every 24 seconds in the United States, a crash is caused by distracted driving. Teach your kids how to be good passengers, to sit still and avoid wild behavior. Children should always wear a seatbelt and be in the proper seat based upon their age and weight. All children under the age of 13 should ride in the back seat on every trip, no matter how short.
- 3. Check your car seat.** Did you know that 73 percent of car seats are not used or installed correctly? Make sure your seat is properly installed and the correct fit for your child. Children's Hospital of Wisconsin offers free car-seat checks if you have questions or are unsure. Visit chw.org/carseats for more information.
- 4. Pack plenty of activities.** Have a bag or backpack for each child filled with books, travel-sized games, coloring and activity books. Consider including a travel journal for your child to document the trip, and have a few road games in mind to keep them occupied.
- 5. Pack plenty of healthy snacks and drinks.** Planning ahead can reduce the number of fast-food stops along the way – and save money. Water, granola bars, yogurt, fruit, cheese and crackers all are good options that contain limited sugar (you don't want kids to have too much energy). Pack a small cooler with ice to keep food safe.
- 6. Remember the first-aid kit.** You can purchase one from the American Red Cross, your local drug store or you can make your own. Basics should include: Band-Aids, gauze, tape, non-latex gloves, burn cream, an instant cold pack, antibiotic ointment and alcohol wipes. Add in scissors, tweezers, sunblock, bug spray, Benadryl, ibuprofen, Dramamine, anti-itch medication (hydrocortisone), a flashlight and a clean towel.
- 7. Make sure everything in your car is secured.** Unsecured items can become dangerous missiles in a crash.
- 8. Plan your route with scheduled stops every few hours.** Working in something fun for kids to look forward to will help break up the drive. Use travel apps to find restaurants and interesting sights along the way. Highway rest stops can be crowded (and boring). Instead, consider stopping at local parks or points of interest to keep it more fun for everyone.
- 9. Have fun and relax.** Your planning will pay off. Enjoy every minute of family time as you explore new places together and teach your children new things. Family vacations create memories that last a lifetime.

Unintentional or accidental injury remains the leading cause of death in ages 18 and younger in the United States. Research shows that, through education and awareness, many of these injuries are preventable. The Kohl's Cares Grow Safe & Healthy Program, a partnership between Kohl's Cares and Children's Hospital of Wisconsin, provides valuable safety information for children, parents and caregivers. For more information, visit KohlsSafeandHealthy.com.