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# FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

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TRAVEL SAFER'S  
GUIDE TO PREPARING  
YOURSELF AND  
YOUR CHILDREN FOR  
OVERSEAS TRAVEL



Travel SAFER LLC

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# FAMILY TRAVEL GUIDE

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## PREPARE YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN FOR OVERSEAS TRAVEL



PHOTO CREDIT: LIFE OF PIX

## STRESS-FREE FAMILY TRAVEL

Keeping track of yourself while traveling can be overwhelming. What if, on top of it all, you also need to be concerned with the safety of your children? Traveling with children can be a bonding and safe experience; by sitting your kids down, clearing up any ambiguity, and letting them know what to expect and how to react.

Below you will find various discussions to have, and ways to prepare both yourself and your children for overseas travel.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of what to pack or how to prevent altitude adjustments (ear pops) during the flight (Hint: Try a bottle, sucker, or bubble gum).

Stuff them with information and communications options. The more information they have on hand, the more likely they'll connect back with you. Give them the following:

- A cell phone with the following

As you get in an unfamiliar vehicle, lock all the doors and locate the door handles.



PHOTO CREDIT: ED GREGORY

numbers programmed to dial locally, i.e. without international prefixes:

- Your number
- Local emergency numbers
- Local embassy
- Hotel
- Emergency point of contact (POC) back home (programmed to dial internationally)
- Travel insurance international collect number
- Walkie talkies in case of an emergency
- Business cards for the hotel where you're staying
- A watch
- Map of the city with the hotel and landmarks highlighted
- Local currency to take a taxi or public transportation, including coins to use payphones
- ID
- A laminated copy of their passport picture and signature pages. You should always have positive control over their actual passport
- Driver's license.
- A Crib Sheet.

Verify what's outside before exiting any door and letting it close behind you.



## THE CRIB SHEET: KID'S VERSION

Your Crib Sheet (found in *The Travel Safety Handbook: Your Guide to Better, Safer Overseas Travel*) contains emergency numbers, money conversion rates, and flight confirmation codes handy. A similar version can easily be created for your kids. [Download my free kid's emergency numbers template for a fillable PDF](#) that you can easily print off and laminate.

If you decide to create your own, here's some information I would include; feel free to add more based on your particular travel situation:

- Personal details
  - Name, DOB, height, weight, blood type
- Name and cell number of a local POC, i.e., the person who the kid is traveling with (most likely you)
- Name and number of the hotel you're staying in
- Number of the local embassy
- Name and numbers for home POCs (two or more is recommended)
  - Include cell phone, work and home numbers (with international prefix)

### FORMAT

This amount of information could easily be printed on a 3x5 card. If you travel often,

## Crib Sheet:

NAME/NOM:			
HEIGHT/TAILLE:	CM	WEIGHT:	LBS/POID/KG
DOB/DATE DE NAISSANCE:			
BLOOD TYPE: GROUPE SANGUIN:			
ALLERGIES:			
MEDICAL CONDITIONS:			
MEDICATIONS/MEDICAMENTS:			
IS TRAVELING WITH (RESPONSIBLE):			
PHONE:			
HOTEL NAME / NUMBER:			
EMBASSY:			
POLICE:		AMBULANCE:	
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, PLEASE CONTACT:			
EN CAS D'URGENCE, CONTACTEZ:			
NAME/NOM:			
CELL/PORTABLE:			
HOME/DOM:			

this process can be simplified by having two cards: the first with home information and personal details that don't change; the second with destination information.

Also, laminate the card. FedEx offices or UPS stores both have laminating machines that are easy to use and cost about a \$1 per item. Kids always find a way of getting wet; laminating the Crib Sheet is a no-brainer.

### WHERE TO CARRY

Put the Crib Sheet in a concealable, under-the-clothing waist wallet or neck pouch. I have used and recommend PacSafe.

## FAMILIARIZE YOUR CHILD WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION BEFORE YOU GO

Overseas, you will often take some form of public transportation. We, as Americans, are not always exposed to this growing up. Here are some tips on how to get your kids familiar with public transportation:

- Take them on an outing using public transportation: take the metro, bus, trolley, taxi, etc.
- In a taxi, let them interact with the driver and give the destination.
- On the train or metro, focus on how to



PHOTO CREDIT: GRATISOGRAPHY

Familiarizing your child with public transportation before you leave establishes independence and lowers the stress of using foreign metros, buses and taxis.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS: DAVIDE RAGUSA

stay together, how to board, how to buy tickets, how to disembark. If you get separated, teach your kids to get off at the next stop.

- Do as much familiarization as possible so when they experience it overseas, it won't be as overwhelming.

## RALLY POINTS

- If you're planning on being in one general area or theme park, have a meetup/rally point. Show them the rally point on a map, but also point it out in person as you pass by. Let the kids know that this is where you'll be meeting up if you get separated.\*A good rally point
- Remind them that they should NEVER leave an area or theme park or to go look for the car in a parking lot. This places them in a position where a potential abductor has an easy getaway.
- If you're walking around a city, identify landmarks suitable for rally points. Note the landmark and its name to your kids, letting them know that's where you'll look for them first if you're separated.

## ESTABLISH A SEPARATION PROTOCOL

- Report your kids missing as soon as possible. The more people you have looking for your kids, the better your odds of finding them.

Don't rely solely on tech during an emergency. Have a crib sheet on you at all times.



PHOTO CREDIT: MARCUS SPISKE RAUMROT

- If they are not in danger, tell them to they stay where they are. Instinct will tell them to go to where they last saw you - this could get them even more disoriented if you're in a large city or a Middle Eastern medina.
- Give them a time limit to stay put: 30 minutes is usually enough to find them. Instruct them to go to a pre-arranged rally point after the 30 minutes is up.
- Instruct the children to look for police as they head towards the rally point. I have also heard parents tell their children to look for a woman with kids.

## ACCURATE DESCRIPTIONS:

If you get separated and they find a policeman, could they describe you? Could you describe them?

- Jana from [MerlotMommy](#) says, "Take a picture of them before you leave for the day."
- If they have a phone, make sure they photograph you as well."
- If they don't have a phone, make it a fun game before you leave the hotel: "Look at mommy, then turn around and tell me what I'm wearing". Creating a mnemonic or always going head to toe may help.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS: LUKA RADIKOVIC

Prep your kids to avoid giving too many details about your trip. Strangers don't need to know where you're staying or how long you'll be visiting.

## IMPLEMENT THE BUDDY SYSTEM:

Making sure you see the major attractions can be planned out ahead of time. It's the impromptu excursions that you will have to juggle.

- You want to see the Eiffel Tower, they want to see the catacombs: what do you do? If you have an even number of people in your group, you pair up. If not, you stay together; someone will have to compromise on where to go.
- No one wanders off alone. You will almost inevitably have some downtime outside of planned family activities and sightseeing. During these moments, you still want to make sure that everyone is accounted for.
- In the hotel, it's still a good idea to pair up, especially if someone wants to go the pool

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## STRANGER DANGER:

Prep your kids to avoid giving too many details about your trip. Strangers don't need to know where you're staying or how long you'll be visiting.

- Don't let the kids answer the door at the hotel.
- Have a code word that only you and your kids would know. If, while separated, a stranger tells them he was sent by you, your child should know to ask for the code word.

Doing research on your destination will remove some of the stress of the unknown, help you pack, and plan contingencies for potentially dangerous scenarios. Set yourself up for success and prepare for awesome memories that you and your kids will remember forever!

You didn't know traveling with your kids could be so easy, did you?

Well now you do.