

Family Vacation Fun and Safety

Planning a family vacation? Making the trip fun and enjoyable for everyone is key; that's what it's all about. But just as important to the success of your trip will be steps you take to make it a safe one.

Before you leave

Preventing crime during family travel starts with making sure your home is protected while you're away. The key is to make it look like you never left:

- Keep shades and blinds in their normal position.
- Don't stop mail and newspapers, ask a neighbor to pick them up every day.
- Put timers on several household lights so they turn on and off at appropriate times.
- Activate your home alarm (if you have one).

Ask a neighbor to park in your driveway overnight - anything that might suggest someone's home. And don't forget to lock all doors and windows when you leave.



Packing for prevention

Preparing for a family trip requires a lot of planning. You need to decide where you're going, where you'll stay and how you'll get from one place to another. You also need to decide what to take with you.

Planning can decrease the chances of crime joining you on your journey. Some tips on what to take:

- Clean out your wallet or purse before you go; take only essential credit cards. Plan to use credit cards or traveler's checks instead of cash wherever possible.
- Carry your purse close to your body, or your wallet in an inside front pocket.
- Pack as lightly as possible. Lots of heavy, cumbersome bags will slow you down and make you more vulnerable to getting robbed.
- Keep a separate record of the contents of checked luggage. And keep anything of value such as medicine and jewelry in a carry-on that stays with you.

Out and about

While you and your family are traveling, it's important to remember that tourists make tempting targets for thieves. The best advice for you and your family is to do all you can to blend in with the crowd.

- Don't display expensive jewelry, cameras, bags, and other items that might draw attention.
- Check maps before you go out so you can tour confidently.
- Stick to well-lighted, well-traveled streets at all times - no shortcuts.
- Always lock your car when it's parked, even if the stop is brief. Keep valuables out of sight, preferably locked in the trunk.

Traveling safely with your family also means sticking together and keeping an eye on your children at all times. Make sure they know where you are staying (name and address), and teach them what to do if they get lost or separated. You might want to agree on a meeting place, just in case. And by all means, make sure your kids know not to accept rides or favors from strangers.



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