

The Credit Union Reporter

Family Road Trip Survival Guide presented by



If life has you and your family pulled in a million and one directions, a nice road trip might be in order. While road trips are a great opportunity to bond with your family, they can also be stressful. Kids in cramped quarters can lead to fights, arguments and the dreaded question, "Are we there yet?" You can avoid turning an idyllic getaway into a family mutiny by following these essential tips.

•**Get your car in shape:** Car trouble is a sure-fire way of spoiling your road trip adventure. Reduce the chance of any vehicle mishaps by checking that all major items in and on your vehicle are in working order. You should either perform the inspection yourself or take your car to a mechanic to ensure your vehicle's tire pressure, engine oil, transmission fluid, coolant levels, headlights and taillights are all operational. Don't forget to also check the tire pressure on your spare.

•**Safety First:** Being away from home, it's important to think of safety first. You never know when you will get a flat tire, have a medical emergency or simply get lost in an unfamiliar location. As such, packing an emergency car kit and first aid kit should be a must. Don't forget to also include enough bottled water, a change of clothes and any prescription medications.

•**Map out destinations before hand:** Part of the appeal of taking a road trip is the spontaneity. However, you may be missing out on wonderful sights and attractions by not doing a little research in advance. Internet travel sites or companies like AAA offer up a wealth of information. And don't forget to bring along detailed maps or a GPS unit to guide you if you lose your way.

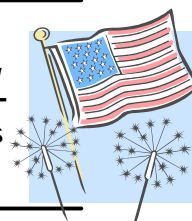
•**Entertainment:** Head off boredom by bringing along age-appropriate entertainment for your children or play fun games that involve the whole family. Having a few toys, paper, and color pencils will also go a long way in keeping the peace during a long road trip. If not, a portable DVD player and your child's favorite movies should do the trick.

•**Snacks:** Save money by stocking up on non-perishable snacks and pack a cooler with ice to hold pre-made sandwiches, soda, fresh fruit, bottled water, juice boxes and more. For infants, it's also a good idea to pack plenty of water and powdered formula for making bottles on the go. And while you're at it, don't forget to pack a few zip lock bags, baby wipes - great for cleaning sticky hands, and trash bags.

•**Comforts of home:** Lengthy road trips could have your children yearning for the familiarity of home. When traveling with little ones, it's especially important to bring some of their favorite items with you, such as a beloved blankie or a stuffed animal. Having these items on hand could mean the difference between a happy child and a cranky one. Don't leave home without them.

Follow these tips and your next road trip will hopefully be one you and your family won't soon forget.

McClatchy Employees Credit Union will be closed on Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day and Friday, July 4 to celebrate Independence Day. Please contact us in advance if you will need any services around these holidays.



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