



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

TRAVELING AND ON THE GO

With spring time approaching, families might be thinking of taking trips to see family, get out of the house for the day and planning adventures. Sometimes this can cause anxiety and stress for parents if you are driving or flying a long distance and even short distances can cause some anxiety as well. There are several things you can do to help you get through that flight or drive. First, just breathe. Second, know the limits for your child, you as parents know your child the best. If you know your child can only handle an hour drive, maybe stop each hour to stretch, sightsee or grab something to eat and work this into your travel time.



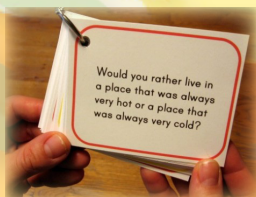
PACKING

1. Books that your child likes to look at
2. Small toys that your child has not played with recently
3. Crayons, paper, coloring books or a magnadoodle that you can place in zipper bags or small Tupperware containers
4. Music such as Wheels on the Bus or silly kids songs
5. Snacks, travel cups, wipes and hand sanitizer
6. Special items like special blankets, stuffed animals or calming items



ACTIVITIES

1. Create an I Spy bottle with rice and small items in a jar, this works as a calming/ sensory jar and a game for kids
2. Dollar store games
3. Scavenger hunt
4. Conversational cards: write down questions you can talk to your child about such as would you rather questions or do you like ___ to be able to talk to your child about their



Emotions for children when seeing new things and people can be overwhelming. Some children take a little while to warm up to others and although it might be easy for adults to give hugs it might cause some anxiety for children to do so. For children that have a harder time with hugs, explain to family that it might take a little while for them to warm up and instead of a hug your child could give a high five, use their words to say hello or just give a smile. When in a new place your child might need more soothing than usual. It may take longer for your child to calm or behaviors might be a little more heightened. Talking with your child as to what you are doing for the day and giving them transition times will help with this. Talk to your child about the people they are going to be around, what they might see and where you are going. Be excited when you talk about these things to your child.

Also, just because time zones change doesn't mean your child will change with them. Their routines will be based on their home time zone. Be prepared for potty accidents, different sleep routines (less sleep) and a change in behaviors which is natural. Before your trip you can practice these tips when you're going to the grocery store, to a friend's house or running errands. Enjoy your traveling with your child, take in the moments of new experiences and making memories!

Sources:

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2123-survival-strategies-for-traveling-with-your-baby-or-toddler>

<https://www.themeasuredmom.com/road-trip-activities-kids-ages-2-8/>

<https://hative.com/storage-organization-ideas-for-your-car/>

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



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Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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