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Safety tips for driving with children

SALEM – Being a parent is a full-time job, but so is being a driver. In addition to preparing your car for long travel, you'll want to prepare your passengers.

- **Create car rules.** First, make sure everyone buckles up. It's important that child passengers are using the right safety restraints and are not in an adult belt unless they are old enough and tall enough so that it fits correctly. Second, don't allow rough play or loud voices. Children need to use their 'inside' voices when travelling in the car. For older kids, set the same kind of rules: no yelling and no antagonizing the driver.
- **Have entertainment ready.** Find activities that keep kids occupied and interested. For smaller children, parents should use vehicle-safe soft toys that will not injure anyone if the toy is hurled from the back seat. Car activities for older children can be found online broken down into age, location and skill categories.
- **Don't drive as many miles.** Adults can travel farther in a day but you will have happier children and a safer trip if you cut down on the miles driven each day. Happier children make for happier parents.
- **Stop regularly.** Kids need a chance to stretch their legs and release energy. Rest areas can get boring — and crowded — quickly, so mix it up with stops at local parks with playground equipment or jungle gyms.

And know before you go – visit www.TripCheck.com or call 511.

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