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The Home
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Making Air Travel Safe and Easy: Are Young Children Really Safe While Flying?

With the upcoming travel season, many people will be traveling with young children, especially on airplanes. Traveling has become a more difficult ordeal, especially with children. Delays, cancellations, long security lines and bad weather have made the flying experience with your children very difficult. But if you take some time to plan it out, it will make your trip safer and easier for everyone.

Some recommendations include:

SAFETY ISSUES

1. **Bring Your Own Car Seats** – It is tempting to have a child that is under 2 years of age sit on your lap during your flight. But it is much easier for everyone if the child has their own seat and safer for him or her. It is very difficult, and most likely physically impossible, to hold a child during turbulence. All children less than 40 pounds should be in a car seat and older children in a booster seat. Make certain that yours has the designation “***This restraint is certified for use in motor vehicles and aircraft***” as many car seats do not have this. For best fit in aircraft seats, use a car seat that is less than 16” wide. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions to make certain that the seat is properly installed with the airplane buckles. It is a requirement on many international flights that every child have their own seat.
2. **Consider Using an Aviation Child Safety Device (ACSD) Strap** - This is a restraint device that is allowed on airplanes for children between 22 and 44 pounds. It attaches to the back of the seat works in addition to the lap belt. These are much easier to carry as they are just straps. And they install very easily. You can order these at www.KidsFlySafe.com.
3. **Booster Seats** - Also, be aware that booster seats are not allowed on many airlines.
4. **Don't Use Car Seats From Car Rentals / Family & Friends** - Further, it is a good idea to bring your own car seat as even though you could have arranged for one with your rental car company, they can frequently run out of these during busy travel seasons, and you may not be happy with the condition of the seat once you get there. And don't count on your family or friends to have a proper one for your child either.
5. **Oxygen Masks** – If during your flight the oxygen masks drop from above, put yours on first as you will quickly lose your ability to deal with the emergency. Once yours is properly on, put one on your child. What is not communicated is that if there is a sudden loss of cabin pressure that you will possibly lose consciousness within 15-20 seconds without oxygen. So it is very important that you can get yours on before dealing with your children’s mask. You will not be of any assistance to them if you pass out after putting theirs on before yours.

MAKING TRAVEL EASIER AND LESS STRESSFUL

1. **Take Advantage of Early Boarding** – With more people carrying on bags on to the plane, the earlier you can board, the easier it will be for you to keep the bags you need near your seats. And you won't feel rushed with everyone else boarding the plane.
2. **Fly Non-Stop** - With all of the record delays that have occurred lately, it is best that you try to fly non-stop as much as possible. It is much easier to travel this way and will get to your destination in a less stressful manner.



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3. **Notify The Airline You Are Traveling With Child** – When booking your flight, let the airline know that you will be having your infant or toddler sitting in your lap. Also, some airline companies will give you a discount for flying with a child that will be in a car seat.
4. **Seating Placement** – For the safety of other passengers, car seats are usually placed at window seats or the center of a wide row of seats between two aisles. If traveling with a rear-facing car seat, you may want to consider requesting a bulkhead seat as these typically will have more space in front of the car seat.
5. **Allow For More Time** – Your travels will be a lot less stressful if you give yourself more time to get to your flight. Take breaks along the way. Don't rush as this will most likely only make things worse. Remember, every flight is a new experience for a child. Make it more fun for everyone. Also, remember if you don't have pre-assigned seats, make a point to get to the airport extra early to try to get everyone together.
6. **Bring Extras** – If you plan that there may be delays in your travels, you will make it much easier for everyone. Bring extra clothes, food, diapers, formula, and other goods that will keep your child entertained.

A little up-front preparation can make everyone's travels all the better.

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