

**Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress
Out of Traveling With Kids**

**PARENTHOOD
PREP**

with

Devon Clement



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Devon Clement

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

Do you have summer travel planned and you're nervous about what that's going to be like with a baby or kid or kiddos? Stay tuned, because I'm going to give you lots of great tips for making summer travel smooth and easy.

Welcome to *Parenthood Prep*, the only show that helps sleep-deprived parents and overwhelmed parents-to-be successfully navigate those all-important early years with their baby, toddler, and child. If you are ready to provide the best care for your newborn, manage those toddler tantrums, and grow with your child, you're in the right place. Now here's your host, baby and parenting expert, Devon Clement.

Welcome back to *Parenthood Prep*, the podcast that prepares you for parenthood. It is a beautiful day today. As I mentioned, I have recently been traveling. Of course, it's the summertime and everybody loves to get away, get out of the house. There's lots of stuff going on, lots of things to travel to, weddings and graduations and birthdays and vacation houses, and all that great stuff.

But the thought of traveling with a baby or a toddler, or a baby and a toddler, can be pretty intimidating. So, we are going to talk today all about some tips and tricks. Also, if you have any questions about this topic, or you want a lot more information, and to see my face, we are doing a webinar on it, a free webinar, on Wednesday, June 26th. We would love to see you there.

You can go to HappyFamilyAfter.com/webinars to sign up. And while you're there, you get access to our whole webinar archive where I talk about tons of topics just in case you're not sick of hearing from me.

So, I'm just going to quickly go through a couple of my favorite tips for traveling; bite-sized, make it really simple. The first is, we want both familiarity and novelty. What does that mean? We want to keep things as familiar as possible for our kids and babies. Which means try to recreate their home's sleeping environment as much as you can.

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

If they're wearing a sleep sack, bring that sleep sack. If you have a portable sound machine, which I recommend... sound machines can be very portable... have a portable sound machine, bring that with you.

Make sure wherever they're staying, you're able to darken the room. If that means putting up curtains, or just hanging towels or blankets over the curtain rod, obviously not in reach of the crib where the baby could grab them and pull them down onto themselves, but safely blocking out that light. You can tape newspapers or black construction paper over the window.

If you're staying with a relative and they don't have blackout shades, run to Home Depot, and get paper shades, they're so cheap, and you just stick them up. They do a good job of blocking out the light.

So, you want to recreate that home environment as well as you can. If your baby is sleeping in a crib that's similar to their crib at home, bring the sheet that they've been sleeping on... yes, the dirty crib sheet that they've been sleeping on... because it will smell familiar. It'll feel like they're right back in their crib at home. They will feel so much more comfortable, and they will have an easier time sleeping.

Any lovies or stuffed animals, or things that your kids really need. I mean, two-year-olds love to sleep with a bed full of critters. You can't bring them all, but maybe you have them pick a couple who are really important and bring those with you. Be very careful, don't lose them. When you get to your destination, put them in the bed and then they stay there. But have that familiarity. Have that feeling of home.

Now, you also want novelty. If you're flying on a plane, or you're going to be in a car for a long time, or on a train, get them some new little toys. Don't give them all at once, conserve them.

If you listened to our previous episode on treating your kid like a video game character, blasting out a new toy is a great opportunity for when they start getting into that yellow or that red zone. You can even wrap it up. Wrap it in

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

wrapping paper. Have them open it like a present; “Here's a new thing for you to play with.” That'll last 30 minutes and then they'll get bored.

But at least, in the meantime, we've gotten them out of that crankiness and into, “This is exciting. This is new. This is something different.” So, you don't want to use all the tools in your toolbox right away when it comes to introducing that new stuff. But you do want to incorporate in some novelty. Especially during the actual travel process, which can be pretty arduous.

Another favorite tip is if you have a baby carrier, if you use a baby carrier, when you are going through the airport, if you're traveling by plane, put the baby in the baby carrier and use the stroller for all of your carry-on, your diaper bag, your purse, your backpack, whatever. I mean, I guess you could put the backpack on your back and the baby on the front. But use that to transport all of your gear. Because it is going to be easier on you than having the baby in the stroller and having to carry all these bags over your shoulders and things like that.

That has been my number one travel tip forever. I've traveled with tons of babies, and it just makes the airport processes so much smoother and easier. If you have an older kiddo that maybe isn't normally in a stroller, consider getting a stroller just for the airport, even if it's just a lightweight umbrella stroller.

Because you don't want to be worried about making sure they're holding your hand and they're not running off, or this or that. Strap them into the stroller, just push them through, and make it simple. Borrow a stroller from somebody or rent a stroller.

I went to Disney World a few years ago with some friends and their older kids; they were four, and two that were six or seven, which is old for a stroller. But they were Disney experts, and they brought strollers. And it was so great. Even the six-year-olds, they would get tired, or we would want to walk faster than them. Or we'd have to move through a crowd, and just being able to put the kids in and know that they were safe and know that we were going to move quickly.

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

At the end of the day, when they started to get really tired, it was great to just have that stroller that they could sit in and hang out and sleep if they wanted to, or whatever. So, do not hesitate to have lots of ways to transport your kids.

Another great tip is to not be married to the schedule that you maintain at home. Yes, if your kids are on a great schedule, that's awesome. But you might find, especially if you're dealing with a time difference, or wherever you're going there's a different schedule of events or different lifestyle, that you want to put them on a different schedule. That's okay, and that's manageable. Especially if you have kids that are on a great schedule, and kids that are sleep trained and easy to put down.

A friend of mine from the East Coast moved out to California; her kids were born out there. And whenever she would come back to visit her parents, she would keep the kids on California time. So, what did that mean, three hours behind? It meant that in California, if they were sleeping from 7pm to 7am, then in New Jersey, when she was with her parents, they were sleeping from 10pm to 10am.

That was great because A- there was no adjustment to the time difference for their bodies. Because as far as they knew, they were sleeping the exact same 12 hours that they were used to sleeping. And then on the other side of it, if you're going out in the evening and you're doing different stuff, or you guys are on vacation too so maybe you don't want to get up at seven in the morning, everybody has a later schedule.

When I have clients here in New York that are traveling to Europe, I recommend the same thing. Especially since in a lot of European countries you stay up later, or you have dinner later. Again, you're on vacation, you want to stay out later. You want the kids to stay up, so put them on that new schedule.

Now, that doesn't mean that you have to do that. If you bring your nanny with you, or a sitter or grandparents or whatever, and you want them going down early, that's totally fine too. But don't be afraid to change things up while you are away, based on what is going to work best for you in the new place.

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

Speaking of having help; having help is helpful. It just is. So, if you have someone that you can bring, think about that. Talk to them about what that would look like to travel with your babysitter or your nanny. If you have someone in your life who just loves playing with your kids, like your niece or your cousin or your child-free sister, or your sibling whose kids are older or whatever, see if they want to come along on the trip and hang out and help you with the kids.

They don't necessarily need to be babysitting all the time. But it's just nice to have those extra hands. Like I said, we went on vacation with our friends with kids all the time, and it was just nice to have the teamwork of other adults either handling the kids or handling other things, so that it was easier for you to handle the kids.

Like, one of the couples loves to cook. They had their van down there with them in Florida, and they would go to the grocery store and buy all the groceries and cook everything and make all these meals for us to bring with us to the park and all that, and it was fantastic. We would play with our kids while they were doing all of this. So, think about how you can teamwork it.

Another option, if you don't want to bring someone with you, is to think about lining that up in advance. So, say you're flying to another state, or driving to another state, to visit your sibling and their spouse and maybe their kids; maybe they don't have kids. Ask them if there's somebody that you can hire as a babysitter when you're there.

I used to, when I was teaching, in the summer, and sometimes on the weekends, I would babysit for all these grandmas that had beach houses. Their grandkids would come visit and they would call me and say, "Okay, the grandkids are in town this weekend." This couple, that couple, "We're going to have these kids," those kids, "Can you come babysit? We're having a big family party... Somebody's getting married, and we need you and a bunch of other people to babysit."

I would arrange that, and it was great for me. It was good summer work to have this extra income, and I was perfectly happy to do that. I'm trying to think... Oh,

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

it was one of my co-workers, who was one of these grandmas, who connected me to this whole network. All her friends were like, “Oh my gosh, you have a babysitter for when your grandkids come to town? I want that babysitter. I want to talk to her.” I also would dog, and cat sit for them. So, don't be afraid to think outside the box.

If you're visiting somebody who doesn't have kids, or your parents are older, have them reach out to people who do have kids. Ask around in their local networks, or in their neighborhoods, is there someone who babysits? Who can help with your kids while you're in town? And line that up beforehand. Don't try to be juggling that while you're they're also trying to deal with the trip and have a good time and have that experience.

And the last thing I want to tell you is something that you're going to love hearing but you're not going to believe me. It is going to go better than you think. Everyone is paranoid about traveling with their baby for the first time, with their kids. Everyone is worried that it's going to be a total nightmare, and just a shit show from start to finish.

Things are going to go wrong. You're going to go with the flow. All of the things that you can imagine going wrong are not going to go wrong. Every single family that I have given advice to about traveling with their baby has come back from the trip, or texted me during the trip, and said, “You were right. This was actually a lot easier than we thought. We are not nearly as stressed as we thought we were going to be.”

Sometimes bad stuff happens. The baby cries the whole time on the airplane. You get over it. Lower your expectations. Schedules are going to be thrown off. Luggage might get lost. You might realize you don't have something that is important, and you can't get it. The more you can go with the flow, the better and easier it's going to be for everyone, including your kids. And then when you get home, you just get back on track. You get back on your routines, and you look forward to the next trip.

Ep #11: Simple Tips To Take the Stress Out of Traveling With Kids

So, those are my quick tips for traveling with a baby. Have familiarity. Have new stuff. Bring lots of ways to carry things. Make your travel schedule work for you, you don't have to be stuck to your schedule at home. Get help, line up help, bring help with you, find help when you're there. And be positive. Expect that things are not going to be as terrible as you're afraid they're going to be. Because they won't be. Have a great trip.

Alright, listen up, folks. We love to joke around, but it's time to get real. And that real talk, it's all about giving your babies the roasting they deserve. Yep, you heard it right. We're calling for an epic baby roast. We want you to drop a voice note on our website and call out your little ones for their adorable crimes.

Did your baby spit up on your brand-new dress the second you put it on? Or maybe they decided to scream through your sister's wedding vows. We want to hear all the juicy details.

Head over to HappyFamilyAfter.com or hit the link in the show notes. Every page on the site has a button on the side for you to record straight from your phone. Your story might just make it onto an episode of the *Parenthood Prep* podcast. We can't wait to hear.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Parenthood Prep*. If you want to learn more about the services Devon offers, as well as access her free monthly newborn care webinars, head on over to www.HappyFamilyAfter.com.