



— Vacation Time with Special Needs Children —

It's summertime and many of us may be planning for a much-needed family vacation. For families with special needs children this may not be an easy task. Planning and preparation can be daunting and overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. There are plenty of resources and tips readily available to help ease vacation anxiety and make your trip and unforgettable and successful one.

Below are some general travelling and planning tips to help with vacation anxiety:

- 1) Don't be scared and look into your options.
 - The thought of travelling with your special needs child may be too overwhelming and scary to even consider. Unless your child's Dr. has officially ruled out travel, don't let your fears stop you from at least looking into your options.
- 2) Plan, Plan, Plan
 - Map out your destination and select places that can accommodate your child's needs. i.e. If travelling by car, check out accessibility not only in your final destination but also in all your stops in between.
 - Make a list of all items you may need for your child (i.e. mealtime, bath time, bedtime, etc.) Call ahead and find out if you your destination already has some of those items available. Also, make sure to take extras just in case. Better safe than sorry!
 - List of emergency contacts: Home, cell phone, doctors, hospitals, health insurance
- 3) Consult with your child's doctors and ask if they have any suggestions on a travel pack or any items you may need in case of emergency. i.e. list of your child's medications, copy of prescriptions, doctor's note specifying your

child's condition and needs. Also ask for a list of recommendations for doctors and hospitals in the area you will be visiting.

- 4) Look into transportation that meets your child's needs. Make sure to ask about guidelines and procedures for passengers with special needs.
 - Figure out what type of travel works best for your child – train, car, airplane, etc.
 - 5) Don't be afraid to ask for accommodations. Find out what special accommodations are offered.
 - 6) Practice and role play before the trip. Ask if your airport offers "practice events" that allow families to go through security, board a plane and go through procedures so your child knows what to expect. Check out "Wings for Autism" – an organization that helps coordinate airport rehearsals.
 - 7) Make sure to plan for a day to wind down upon arrival to your destination as well as when you return from vacation.
 - 8) Make sure to make plans for your entire family so no one feels left out. Find time to offer them quality time as well.
 - 9) If everything doesn't go down as planned, don't get down on yourself! Use this as a learning experience and think about how you can make your next trip even better!
 - 10) Click on the link below for a listing of some great special needs family vacation spots and resources: <http://specialneedstravelmom.com/special-needs-vacation-destinations/>
- Taking a family vacation with a child with special needs can be challenging, but it doesn't have to be that way! Safe Travels!
- Mey-ling Cortinas

News & Events

• **Happy Father's Day!** We wish all of the wonderful dads out there an amazing day! Thank you for all that you do!

• **Frank Kent's Dream Park - Ft. Worth - Open as of April 2019**

A playground for children of all abilities. Over 57,000 square feet of green and play space.
www.dmacentral.com
2001 University Dr, Fort Worth

• **JumpStreet Special Needs Hours**
First Saturday of every month from 9:00 a.m. -11:00 a.m. The first hour (9:00am-10:00am) is exclusive to children with special needs and their families only, the second hour is open to the public. To find a location near you click link below:
www.gotjump.com/

• **Rays of Light Night Lights**
Giving parents of special needs children 4 parent night out hours. 1st, 2nd and 3rd Friday of every month - 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Lovers Lane United Methodist Church, at White Rock United Methodist on the 1st Friday, and at Christ Foundry United Methodist Mission on the 3rd Friday for Spanish - speaking families.
www.raysflightdallas.org/programs

• **AMC Sensory Friendly Nights**
Sensory Friendly Film program is available on the second and fourth Saturday (family-friendly) and Tuesday evenings (mature audiences) of every month. Please check your local theatre listings for specific show-times. www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films

Resources

• **VIVA Pediatrics Resources**

In an effort to help our families, we constantly strive to provide them with relevant and helpful resources and information. Visit our resources page online at: www.vivaped.com/resources

For current events visit us on Facebook. www.facebook.com/VIVAPeds

• **Care Starter App**

The Connections App is a complete resource guide for families of kids, teens and adults with special needs. Their goal is to help you find providers, organizations and other resources in your community to help you along your path of care. Download the CareStarter App now! www.carestarter.co/connectionsapp



• **The Parker Lee Project**

The Parker Lee Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping families of children with medical needs obtain the necessary supplies & equipment, education, and support they need. While most supplies are covered by insurance, some are not, or not enough supplies are provided. If you have a need for medical supplies or have supplies to donate, please visit their website at www.theparkerleeproject.org

• **Texas Star Kids**

The Texas' Star Kids mandate threatens the lives of our weakest and most vulnerable little citizens. Join us in standing up for those who have no voice. Click this link to sign up: www.facebook.com/ProtectTXFragileKids
For more info visit: www.protecttxfragilekids.org

• **Thrive Magazine**

Need Resources for your child with special needs? Thrive Magazine shares resources and stories of other families in the DFW area who are living and thriving with special needs. www.dfwchild.com/thrive/directory

• **Recognize a VIVA Star**

Viva Pediatrics has an Employee Rewards and Recognition Program to thank and recognize employees that go "above and beyond". Both employees and patient families are welcome to recognize a VIVA employee! Call one of our offices and let us know if a VIVA employee has gone above and beyond!



Get Healthy with Giggles

Summer Time Safety Tips

Summertime is here. That means fun in the sun! It also means being sun safe. When you think about sun safety, what do you think about? Most people say sunscreen. Sunscreen is definitely a summer necessity, even on cloudy days. Make sure to reapply if you are in and out of the water and when you are enjoying the sun for several hours at a time.

Another thing that can help us stay safe in the Texas is to stay hydrated. Water, fruit, popsicles are a great way to stay hydrated and give us a variety of flavors. Who doesn't love a good snow cone? It's also fun to make your own popsicles and get kids involved. Frozen grapes are a great snack too.

Skin care is thought of and brought up often, but we also have to remember our eyes. Sunglasses, or sunnies, as many call them are vital to eye health. So don't forget your shades on your way out the door

Giggles hopes you and yours have a fabulous and safe summer.

Food for Thought



Fast Lemon Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 (18.25 ounce) package lemon cake mix
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar for decoration

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
- Pour cake mix into a large bowl. Stir in eggs, oil, and lemon extract until well blended. Drop teaspoonfuls of dough into a bowl of confectioners' sugar. Roll them around until they're lightly covered. Once sugared, put them on an ungreased cookie sheet.
- Bake for 6 to 9 minutes in the preheated oven. The bottoms will be light brown, and the insides chewy.

Serve and enjoy!

What is a tornado's favorite game to play?



Twister!



Just for Giggles!