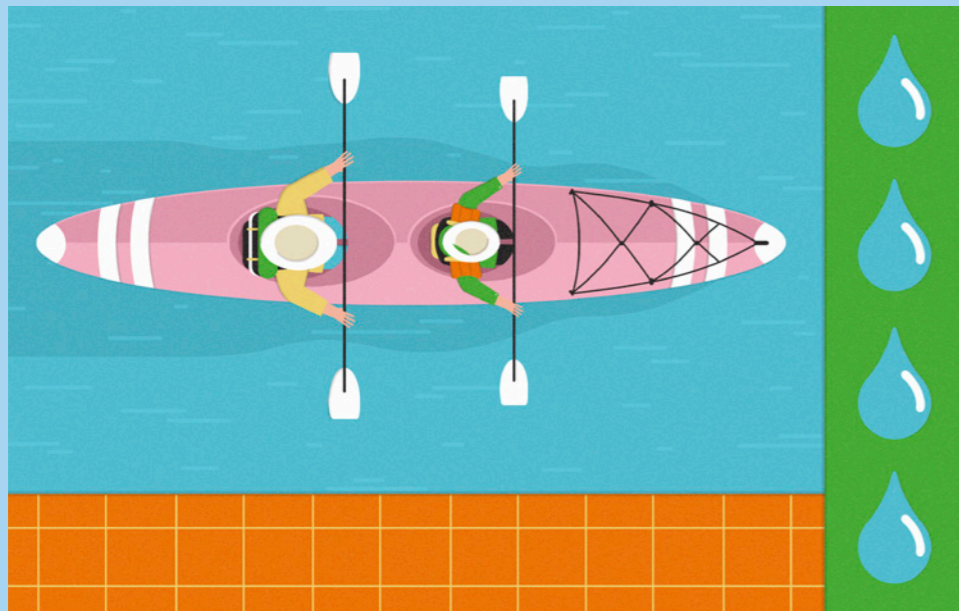


TRAVEL TIPS: 11 TO 13



Middle schoolers strive for independence, to make their own maps of the world. It's an age when parents are often considered impediments to what would otherwise be a free and easy life, full of boundless possibilities. Since traveling necessarily requires a family to work as a unit, doing so with kids in this age range can be trying, to say the least. Not only will they want to go off on their own—something you will have to be vigilant about—but they may well be mortified by the very fact of your existence. But don't let that be a deterrent. Travel provides an opportunity to deepen a connection, or to reconnect, with a child that might be spending more and more time away from you.

Choosing a Destination

With this itinerant age group, a trip based in a single location means you won't have to set so many limits on your kids. If you're camping or posted up at a resort, there are far fewer options for roaming tweens than on a city trip, for example. Children will want to explore the surrounding areas, so choose a destination that has a suitably intriguing landscape—and one with kids' clubs, or activities such as swimming, hiking, kayaking, fishing, or foraging. From your base, plan day trips to sites in the wider region, and have your children participate in this process, as it will provide them with a sense of responsibility and increase their enjoyment.

How to Get There

For the modern family vacation, the road trip is a proven method of traveling from A to B, especially when it comes to the classic camping getaway. A roomy car or truck is

a must, not only for the huge load of camping gear but also for the comfort of everyone on board. If you don't own or have easy access to a large vehicle, consider renting one or using a trailer. Pack your car, truck, or trailer the night before, and leave early the next day to maximize much-needed daylight for setting up camp at the other end—with kids around, this can take longer than you think. And make sure to bring a stock of snacks for the journey to avoid stopping too often along the way.

Checklist (For Camping)

- ◆ Reservations for campsite(s)
- ◆ Tent(s) (including poles and pegs)
- ◆ Canopy tent(s)
- ◆ Tarpaulins
- ◆ Sleeping bags and pillows and sleeping mats or air beds
- ◆ Clothing (including wet-weather gear) and footwear
- ◆ Swimwear and towels
- ◆ Foldable table and chairs
- ◆ Portable stove (with gas and matches or lighter)
- ◆ Frying pans and pots
- ◆ Cutting boards, knives, and cooking spoons
- ◆ Plates, bowls, cups, and mugs, water bottles, cutlery
- ◆ Cooler boxes (with freezable ice packs)
- ◆ Bucket to wash dishes, sponge, detergent, and dish towels
- ◆ Camping shower, soap, and shampoo
- ◆ Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- ◆ Sunscreen, insect repellent, and citronella candles
- ◆ First aid kit and medications
- ◆ Flashlights (with batteries)
- ◆ Trash bags
- ◆ Cameras
- ◆ Multiplayer games (such as beach tennis and volleyball)
- ◆ Bikes
- ◆ Equipment for outdoor activities (fishing, hiking, boogie boarding, etc.)



Where to Sleep

There are tents out there that sleep as many as 20 people. But given the proximity that camping entails, it's better to split