



VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.
MANAGING IN TOUGH TIMES INITIATIVE

FAMILY FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

Getting Away On What You Can Afford

As the end of the school year approaches, many people are looking forward to a family vacation. They offer a time to rest, rejuvenate, and spend quality time together. However, increasing prices for gasoline, airfare, lodging, and entertainment may make this year's summer getaway more difficult. Instead of cancelling, there are several ways to trim the travel budget. *Reduce the number days of your trip.* Depending on your destination, reducing the trip from seven to five days could save several hundred dollars in lodging, food, and entertainment expenses. If you have not yet selected your destination, *consider off-peak locations.* For example, ski lodges tend to offer great summer deals. You won't be able to hit the ski slopes, but you can still enjoy the outdoor atmosphere, restaurants, and tourist attractions. If your plans are flexible, *look for last minute deals or specials.* Airlines and hotels offer discounts to fill vacant seats and rooms. However, if you are searching the Internet for deals, be certain you are dealing with a reputable travel company.



Finally, instead of planning a big family vacation, *consider becoming a tourist in your own city.* Call your local visitor's bureau and inquire about special summer events which may be happening locally, such as county fairs or summer festivals. Involve your children in planning family events, such as a trip to the zoo that includes a picnic lunch.

Regardless of your vacation destination or activities, don't forget the importance of staying within your budget. Set a daily spending limit for meals, entertainment, and souvenirs. Make certain that everyone in the family is aware of the limit and then allow family members to help set the day's agenda based on the budget. As a family, decide if you want to purchase tickets to the aquarium or theme park or if everyone would rather spend the day sight-seeing and followed by a nice dinner out.

Written by: Jennifer Hunter, PhD, Assistant Extension Professor, Family Financial Management



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Environmentally friendly Traveling Tips

This summer, whether you're planning a day trip, a weekend get-a-way, or a week-long vacation, go green and save green by following these simple environmentally friendly traveling tips:

Before you go:

- Unplug any unnecessary appliances, such as TVs, DVD players, coffee pots, and microwaves. These items can still use energy in their off mode. Also adjust thermostat and water heater settings to conserve energy.
- Investigate environmentally friendly hotels in the area you will be visiting. Look for hotels that have an environmentally friendly certification, such as LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), or a membership in a green industry association, such as Green Seal. Before making reservations, ask about recycling and energy- and water-saving programs the hotel participates in.

While traveling:

- Pack your own reusable water bottle.
- Take only maps and brochures you plan to use. If you are traveling in a large group, share brochures to reduce waste.
- Walk or use public transportation to reduce vehicle emissions.
- Always turn off lights when you leave your hotel room.
- Avoid using disposable bags while shopping. Instead, pack a canvas bag.
- While eating out, grab only the condiments, napkins, and utensils you need.

Written by: Ashley Osborne, Extension Associate for Environmental and Natural Resource Issues.

Planning a "Staycation"

With summer on the horizon, many families are beginning to plan their annual vacations. However, with price increases for gasoline and airfare, travel can be costly. To save money, consider planning a staycation instead of a vacation by taking advantage of the unique opportunities for family fun that Kentucky has to offer. Be sure to enlist the help of your adolescent or teenager in the planning process! Using the Internet or resources available at your local library, challenge your teen to search for interesting things to do in your community, nearby towns, or across the state. Kentuckytourism.com is a helpful starting point. From state parks and caves, to historic homes and birth places, to museums and battlefields, to zoos and horse tracks, the possibilities are endless! Also, encourage your teen to consider working a college visit into the family's vacation plans. State universities and private colleges offer free, scheduled daily tours to interested future students. Not only will planning a staycation save your family money, it will help your teen understand that exciting and educational opportunities are sometimes just outside of your backdoor!

Written by: Nichole Huff, Doctoral Student, Family Sciences

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