



Family and Consumer Sciences

Family Ties

Summer Activities

Making Vacation Plans On Line? Let the Buyer Beware!

Dena Wise, State Extension Specialist- Consumer Economics

If you, like one-third of all Americans, make your summer travel plans on-line, you may be at risk for a whole new set of consumer issues. Although booking hotels and airlines on line can make travel planning a breeze, consumers need to be aware of problems that are unique to Internet reservations and services.

Here's a typical problem: You make your hotel reservation on line, guaranteeing your arrival with a credit card number. When you get to the hotel, you find that the desk clerk cannot find your reservation and the hotel is already booked, so you have to find another place to stay. When you get your next credit card statement, you notice there's a charge both for the hotel where you originally made reservations and the other hotel where you actually stayed.

Who's at fault? The hotel where you originally made reservations will likely say that the Internet company you used to book your reservation made the mistake. But when you go on-line to try to contact the Internet reservation service, you may find no phone number or Internet address for customer problems. You phone your credit card company to see if they will tell you who made the charge to your credit card and find that the company was registered in a foreign country and there is no contact information.

Such scenarios—increasingly familiar as more and more Americans use on-line travel—raise consumer issues that current U.S. laws and regulations are not

designed to deal with. Most of the legislation we've relied on for years for consumer redress was written in the 1960s—long before the Internet age.

Consumer law in the U.S. was designed for direct interaction between the buyer and the seller. Today's electronic market place—where service companies purchase everything from mortgages to hotel and airline reservation and sell them on line—often leaves the gypped consumer with literally no where to turn for help.

This means that it's important that consumers understand how the electronic market differs from the traditional market. When you purchase services such as hotel room, airline or rental car reservations on line, you may not be making that purchase from the actual hotel, airline or rental car agency. You may be purchasing from an entirely different company that has contracted with your hotel or airline to sell a certain number of rooms or seats. When there's miscommunication between the booking service and the actual hotel or airline, it's often the consumer who pays.



Topics In This Issue

- T** Gardening: Summer Family Fun
- T** Importance of Summer Reading
- T** Making Vacation Plans On Line
- T** Picnic Food Safety Tips
- T** Protect Your Child - Beware of the Sun
- T** Prevent Burns on Playground Equipment
- T** Summer Bicycle Safety
- T** Tips to Help Keep Teen Drivers Safe

Vacation

In my head I hear a humming:
 Summer, summer, summer is coming.
 Soon we're going on vacation
 But there is a complication:
 Day by day the problem's growing-
 We don't know yet where we're going!

Mother likes the country best;
 That's so she can read and rest.
 Dad thinks resting is a bore;
 He's for fishing at the shore.
 Sailing is my brother's pick;
 Sailing makes my sister sick;
 She says swimming's much more cool,
 Swimming in a swimming pool.
 As for me, why, I don't care,
 I'd be happy anywhere!

For More Information Contact Your Local
 County Extension Office

My child is 15 and wants to work. Where do I get a work permit?

The state no longer issues work permits. The minor needs to provide the prospective employer with a copy of one of the following documents as proof of age: birth certificate, drivers license, state issued ID or copy of their passport.

What is the age a child can go to work? Are there any restrictions?

In Tennessee, a minor must be 14 years of age before they can work. Some of the restrictions for 14 and 15-year-old minors are:

WHEN SCHOOL IS IN SESSION:

Can work no more than 3 hours per day
 Can work no more than 18 hours a week
 Can work no later than 7:00 p.m.

WHEN SCHOOL IS NOT IN SESSION:

Can work no more than 8 hours a day
 Can work no more than 40 hours per week
 Can work no later than 9:00 p.m.

Breaks for minors under age 18:

Any minor scheduled to work 6 hours must have a thirty (30) minute rest or meal break no exceptions.

Are these restrictions the same for 16 and 17 year olds?

No. There are no limitations on the number of hours that 16 and 17-year-old minors work. They cannot be required to work during school hours; nor can they work past 10:00 p.m. on nights preceding school days (Sunday through Thursday nights), unless their parents or guardians sign a Parental Consent Form. The Parental Consent Form would allow them to work no later than 12:00 midnight three of those nights while school is in session.

The Child Labor Act prohibits minors, whether they are 14 to 15 or 16 to 17 year olds from employment in certain occupations. A copy of the Child Labor Act may be obtained upon request. *Note: State and Federal Laws conflict. Therefore, we have quoted the stricter of the two laws.*

Tips to Help Keep Teen Drivers Safe

By: Judy Cloud Berryhill, Extension Area Specialist-Adolescent Development

"When parents supervise their teens' behind-the-wheel behavior, teens tend to be much more responsible," says Rose McMurray, associate administrator for traffic safety programs at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Here are some tips for parents of teen drivers:

Be a good role model. Always wear your seatbelt, never use your cell phone while driving, and don't be an aggressive driver.



Insist your teen wear a seatbelt. Statistics show that 50 percent of all teens who died in car crashes last year were not wearing them.

Remind your teen that a car can be a weapon and driving is a privilege, not a right. A car can kill someone. If it's not being used responsibly, it should be taken away.

Restrict night and weekend driving. It is estimated that teens crash more often after 11 p.m. on weekdays and after midnight on weekends.

Make sure your teen knows that it's okay to call you if she's in trouble and needs a ride home. Tell her that you won't be angry or upset, no matter what.

Drive with your teen occasionally. You'll get a firsthand view of his weaknesses behind the wheel.

Talk to your teen about car insurance. Since most teens don't pay their own car-insurance bills, they don't realize that the bills escalate with each driving infraction.

Restrict the number of passengers in your teen's car. Remember that the more friends your teen is carrying, the greater the risk of an accident.

Be prepared to take away the keys. Not every teen is ready for the responsibility of driving. It's up to a parent to know when to say 'No.'

Limit teens' driving during peak accident season, which begins in June, when your teen gets out of school, and runs through Labor Day weekend.

Picnic Food Safety Tips

When summer is in full swing, a top summer activity is picnicking and entertaining outdoors. The bacteria that cause illness grow on moist, usually protein-based foods that are between 45° F and 140° F, so minimize the time you allow these foods to stay at these temperatures. For better peace of mind that you're serving safe food to your family and friends, keep the following food safety guidelines in mind:

Wash your hands thoroughly before cooking, after touching raw meat, fish, or chicken, and especially after visiting the bathroom. Most food borne illnesses are related to improper hand washing after going to the bathroom. If hand washing facilities are not available, wet napkins or sanitizers will reduce the germs on your hands, but won't eliminate them.



Be mindful of temperature control:

Cook thoroughly. Use a food thermometer to check that meats and poultry are hot enough to kill any harmful bacteria.

Minimum safe internal temperatures are:

- * hamburgers (ground meats and sausages, including pork sausages): 155° F.;
- * steaks and other beef, veal, lamb, fish and shellfish: 140°F;
- * poultry: 165°F;
- * pork (except pork sausage): 150° F.

Keep hot foods hot. After cooking meat or chicken on the grill, keep it at 140° F or warmer until serving. If reheating fully cooked items such as baked beans or hot potato salad, heat to 165°F.

Do not partially cook meat or poultry and finish cooking later.

Keep cold food cold. If you are using a cooler, keep it out of the sun and avoid opening it too often so it stays as cool as possible inside. Keep cold foods at 45° F or colder at all times.

Transport cold foods in a cooler to minimize bacteria growth. Use an insulated cooler with ice packs.

Don't cross-contaminate:

Don't cut vegetables or other ready-to-eat foods on the same cutting board as chicken or meat without thoroughly cleaning the knife and the cutting board first. Our recommendation for picnics, where proper washing facilities are not available, is to bring two separate cutting boards - one for meat, chicken, and fish, and the other for vegetables and other ready-to-eat foods.

Don't put cooked meat or poultry on the same platter that held the raw food.

Be careful with melons

Be sure to wash the melon rind before you cut into it to minimize pushing bacteria that is often associated with melons down into the flesh. Keep cantaloupe and other melons cold 45° F or colder.

Leftovers

Refrigerate food as soon as possible in shallow containers. Discard any food that has been out of the refrigerator for 4 or more hours.

Source: Department of Public Health



SUMMER BICYCLE SAFETY

Matt Devereaux, Extension State Specialist - Early Childhood

Summertime brings back that great American pastime, bicycling. The exhilarating feeling of the wind blowing through your hair as you whiz down the hill - your stomach still at the top - is hard to match.

On a more sobering note, statistics show that more than 350,000 children end up in hospital emergency rooms each year as a result of bicycle-related injuries. According to *Safe Kids Are No Accident*, published by the National Safe KIDS Campaign, children between 6 and 12 years old are at greatest risk for bike accidents. A head injury is the most serious outcome of an accident.

Here are some suggestions to help keep children safe while they ride:

Be sure last year's bike fits this year's child. A boy should be able to straddle the bike with one inch of clearance above the top when feet are flat on the ground. A girl should be able to sit comfortably on the seat with one leg straight and her foot on the ground.

Make sure that the bike is working properly. Check brakes, pedals, handlebars, reflectors. Tighten the frames nuts and bolts. Inflate the tires to the proper pressure. Replace parts that are missing, broken, or worn out.



Be sure children always wear a bike helmet when cycling. Wearing helmets can save children from serious head injuries. Helmets must be readjusted each year to be sure they fit comfortably and do not move around on the child's head.

Younger children should be restricted to riding on sidewalks, paths, and driveways until parents are sure they ride well and observe basic rules of the road. This usually occurs around age 9.

Older children should be taught to follow the basic rules of the road. Tell them to stop before riding out into traffic from a driveway, sidewalk, alley, or parking lot. Remind them to look to the left and the right, and then look left again. When there's no traffic, they can enter the roadway. Tell them to ride on the right side of the road with the flow of traffic. They must obey all stop signs and red lights and walk the bicycle through busy intersections. When making a left turn, they should look back and yield to traffic coming from behind. They should never assume that other drivers can see them even though they can see the other drivers.

There are many ways that you can use this information in your programming for school-age children. For example, you could include a short article on bike safety in your newsletter to parents. Or you might take a field trip to a bicycle repair shop to learn how to get bikes ready for the new season. If children ride their bikes to the after-school program, set up a bicycle safety clinic. Have the children check their helmet and their bike for safety factors. (Many police and sheriffs departments will conduct bicycle clinics when safety is the primary objective.) Or you might encourage the children to prepare a skit about the importance of wearing helmets when riding their bikes or the rules of the road.

Bicycles are an important part of most children's lives during the elementary school years. Including bike safety in your program provides a meaningful activity and helps children stay safe at the same time!

Gardening: Summer Family Fun

By Denise J. Brandon - Extension State
Specialist - Family Life

What is an activity that families can do together that can educate children about nature, provide opportunities for children to learn responsibility and how to nurture living things, allow them to be creative, give them license to get dirty, and feed their bodies and their souls? The answer is gardening. Working in the family garden can provide these benefits and more as children and parents work together to grow flowers, fruits, and vegetables.

According to Randy White of White Hutchinson Leisure & Learning Group, Kansas City, MO, children's regular exposure to natural environments has been linked to a number of benefits:

- Better concentration after time outdoors for children with ADHD,
- Higher scores on tests of concentration and self-discipline,
- Advanced motor fitness including coordination, balance, and agility,
- Fewer illnesses,
- More diverse and imaginative play,
- Improved awareness, reasoning, and observational skills,
- Development of independence and autonomy, and
- Development of a love of nature and respect for the environment.

Children who garden learn scientific principles—what things are necessary to sustain life. They learn about natural consequences when they neglect to care for their plants or when things like drought or disease harm their gardens. They learn about decomposition and that nature is a natural recycler. They learn about where food comes from. This may give them a healthier respect for the food that you put on the table.

Working in the garden as a family can build a sense of purpose and unity in the group. Time spent together in the garden or preparing fruits and vegetables for canning can be a good time to talk with your children without distractions or interruptions.

In addition, children who garden can improve their self-esteem as they see their plants grow and produce fruit and flowers. If your children enjoy competition, entering their produce in the county fair may give them a chance to receive a ribbon for their efforts. For children who are not competitive, they may gain a sense of pride in giving their produce to others or selling it at the farmer's market or flea market.



Gardening does not require a lot of space. If you do not have space in your yard, try growing tomatoes or peppers in large pots on the deck or patio. You can plant flowers in window boxes.

Give children some choices about what to plant. Allow them to make mistakes without being critical of them. They will learn as much or more from the plant that dies as they will from the one that thrives. Provide them with tools that are the correct size for them so that they will not be frustrated by the awkward adult-sized tools. Be a role model by gardening with them. Show them that you enjoy working in the soil. Explain what you are doing and why. Gardening is a learning experience, but it can become a loving experience as well.

* * * * *

If you haven't got the time to do it right, when will you find the time to do it over?

~Jeffery J. Mayer

Many people will walk in and out of your life,
But only true friends will leave footprints in your heart.
~Eleanor Roosevelt

Protect Your Child Beware of the Sun

By: Matt Devereaux, Extension State Specialist - Early Childhood

Would you send a child out in the rain without a raincoat or an umbrella? Would you send a child to play in the snow without gloves or boots? Would you send a child out in the sun without sunscreen and a hat? If you said no to each question, you are well aware of the importance of protecting children from the outdoor elements. If you said yes to the last question about the sun, think again.



Playing in the sun is a fun outdoor activity for children. But is it safe and healthy? The sun can be dangerous. Even though a suntan may look nice and make one feel good, there is no medical evidence to suggest that a suntan improves health.

Recent medical research shows it is important to protect children and teenagers from overexposure to the sun. Skin damage is cumulative and starts with that first sun exposure. Young people get about 80 percent of their total lifetime sun exposure in the first 18 years of life. Sun protection and prevention are important to preventing skin damage later in life. Some studies suggest there is a link between early exposure to the sun and skin cancer as an adult.

The two types of ultraviolet sunlight that can damage the skin are Ultraviolet A and Ultraviolet B rays. UVA rays are the slow-tanning rays that penetrate deep into the skin and age the skin prematurely. UVB rays cause burning of the skin and are considered the major cause of skin cancer.

Many young children spend their early years at a day-care center. They are dependent upon the primary care giver to take the appropriate precautions in providing sun protection. As a parent of young children or a person who cares for children in a day-care center, there are several precautions you can take to help protect the children around you from future health problems related to the sun.

Follow these simple guidelines to help minimize the risks of excessive sun exposure.

Keep children out of the sun from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is the time when the sun's rays are the strongest. If outside activities are held between these times, check to see how much shade there is in play areas. It is better to sit or play in the shade.

Use a sunscreen. Apply a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 to block the most harmful sun rays. This needs to be done before the child goes outside. Don't forget the lips, backs of hands and feet.

Reapply sunscreen every two hours. Teach children to use sunscreen regularly, like they use a toothbrush and toothpaste.

Children under six months should never have sunscreen applied to their skin. Keep infants out of direct sun and covered up.

Wear a hat. A wide-brimmed hat offers protection for the eyes, ears, face and back of the neck.

Wear sunglasses. Protect children's eyes from ultraviolet radiation. Sunglasses that provide 95+ percent protection greatly reduce sun exposure.

Wear protective clothing. Loose-fitting clothes that are tightly woven are a good choice.

Be aware of ground surfaces. Ground surfaces such as sand, cement and white painted surfaces reflect the sun's rays. In the water, ultraviolet light penetrates three feet deep. Summertime is not the only time of the year children need to be protected from the sun. Snow reflects from 80 to 90 percent of the sun's rays.

Practice the "shadow rule." Look for shade when your shadow is shorter than you are tall. Teach children the ABC'S for Fun in the Sun.

A is for away. Let children know about staying away from the sun in the middle of the day.

B is for block. Encourage children to use a sun protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher sunscreen.

C is for cover up. Wear a shirt and a hat.

S is for speak out. Have children talk to family and friends about sun protection.

Prevent Burns on Hot Metal Playground Equipment

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) advises parents to check for hot surfaces on metal playground equipment before allowing young children to play on it. Solid steel decks, slides, or steps in direct sunlight may reach temperatures high enough to cause serious contact burn injuries in a matter of seconds.

CPSC knows incidents in which children suffered second and third degree burns to their hands, legs, and buttocks when they sat on metal stairs, decks, or slides. *Young children are most at risk because, unlike older children who react quickly by pulling away their hands or by getting off a hot surface, very young children may remain in place when they contact a hot surface.*



Parents should check for hot surfaces on metal playground equipment before allowing young children to play on it.

"Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take but by the moments that take our breath away."

"To the world you might be one person, but to one person you just might be the world."

The Importance of Summer Reading



Educators consider summer reading very important in developing life-long reading habits, in maintaining literacy skills and in promoting reading for pleasure. Studies have repeatedly shown that children who continue to read during the summer months perform better when school resumes in the fall. But, when summer vacation starts, many children want to put away their books. They want to be outside, riding bikes, playing softball, or cooling-off in the neighbourhood pool. Committing them to reading, even just a little each day, is a struggle especially when outdoor activities and the modern distractions of television, video games, and the Internet may seem more exciting.

Research has also shown that when parents are actively involved in learning at home, their children become more successful in and out of school. When it comes to helping with homework, most parents can hold their own. But, when it comes to reading, they need help. Parents want to know how to select books that interest children and how to create an atmosphere that encourages reading. Today, that help takes many forms:

- * Reading lists provided by teachers, summer reading programs sponsored by school and local libraries and educational organizations.
- * Web sites that explain the reading process and provide tips on selecting books and advice on how to organize reading activities both parents and children will enjoy. This feature focuses on what the Internet can provide to assist parents in promoting reading at home over the summer.