



Business Travel

Planning for Your Absence From Home

Business travel is inevitable for many working parents. But there are many ways to make job-related absences less traumatic for your family.

Prepare Your Children

- ✓ Help your children prepare for your absence well in advance.
- ✓ Explain why you're leaving and emphasize when you will return.
- ✓ Look at a calendar together and write down where you'll be on each day.
- ✓ Tell your children when you will call and mark it down on their calendar and yours.
- ✓ Describe the new experiences your children may have during your leave, and emphasize the fun aspect of these experiences.
- ✓ Ask your children to keep a journal or draw pictures about what they do each day while you're gone.

Prepare the Household

- ✓ Keep a supply of favorite convenience foods on hand so your family can prepare easy meals in your absence.
- ✓ If they're old enough, show your children how to use the dishwasher and other appliances.
- ✓ Make sure your children understand what their chores are while you're away.



Communicate With Your Caregiver

- ✓ Leave all phone numbers where you can be reached.
- ✓ Make sure your child's daily routine is clear, including snack time, nap time, chores and household rules.
- ✓ Be specific about any medications your child may need.
- ✓ Highlight your child's favorite foods and how they might fit into a meal.
- ✓ Make an audio tape or video of yourself telling or reading a story so your caregiver can play it for your children at bedtime.
- ✓ List your child's favorite games, books, activities and outings, such as the zoo, library or park. Familiar activities will be comforting to your child when you're away.
- ✓ Leave a notebook so your caregiver can record your child's activities and meals or any problems and concerns that arise.
- ✓ If you're divorced, explain any visitation arrangements.

When You Return

- ✓ Review the notebook with your caregiver and ask for any suggestions about how to make things smoother.
- ✓ Ask your children about any anxieties and feelings that came up while you were gone.
- ✓ Assess the trip yourself and make mental notes on how you'll plan for your family the next time you take a business trip away from home.