

Travel Tips

There are many occasions that call for traveling with the baby – holidays, summer vacation, family visits – many families start to wonder what is the best way to maintain the baby's sleep during travel. These tips have been thoroughly researched and successfully implemented for numerous years by Angelique Millette, founder of The Millette Method,™ an evidence-based sleep approach that utilizes “thinking outside of the box” style for solving sleep issues in infants and young children. This method considers family schedule, infant/toddler/child development, temperament, attachment, and parenting philosophy, all while keeping an eye on sleep deprivation, parental overwhelm, depression, and anxiety. The Millette Method™ uses multiple sleep methods and sleep arrangements. Meggan Hartman is the only person trained in this method on the East Coast.

TRAVEL TIPS

- If your baby will be sleeping in a pack'n'play, a week or two before your trip place your baby in the pack'n'play for sleeping (AM nap or bedtime) so she gets used to the new sleep space.
- Bring your baby or toddler's lovey, sleep sack (light and heavy weight depending upon the weather in the region you are visiting), unwashed crib sheet (familiar scent), and sound machine. Bring your toddler's blankies, stuffed animals, favorite bedtime books and PJs. This will help your little one to feel more secure in a new place and have reminders of home.
- Talk to your young child about traveling. If flying for the first time, talk to your child ahead of travel day and tell her about flying in an airplane. Bring along her favorite books, one or two new toys, and favorite snacks/sippy cup.
- Try to schedule a flight or car trip during nap time or around your child's bedtime if possible.
- If flying, for takeoff and landing, plan to help your child drink some liquid. Offer breast or bottle feed to your baby and a sippy cup with water or juice for older children. This will help to equalize the pressure in the middle ear.
- Some toddlers may not do well with new surroundings and may resist going to sleep or may be scared by unfamiliar environments and faces. Try to help your toddler get used to a new sleep space by spending time together in the new room before bedtime.
- Try spending an additional 10-15 minutes with your child at bedtime the first few nights. This will mean that you want to start bedtime a little earlier than you normally would at home.

- If taking a long driving trip, pack a travel potty for your newly potty-trained toddler. That way you won't ever be too far away from a toilet.
- If you need a crib, pack'n'play, exersaucer, highchair, or bouncy chair, think about renting from www.babysaway.com. They will deliver and set up in most major cities as well as the Hawaiian Islands. Bring crib sheets from home!
- If your infant or child sleeps better in a dark room or tends to wake up early with the morning light, bring plastic garbage bags or dark fabric and tape over windows.
- If possible, schedule a few relaxing and restful vacation days in between busy, activity-packed vacation days. This is especially helpful after a busy travel day and right before a busy travel day.
- If traveling west to east and staying for five days or less, keep your infant/child on the same time zone. This is called "vacation time" and looks a little like this: For a trip to New York, put your child to bed at 10pm (7pm PST) and child will sleep later in the morning 9am (6am PST). You may need to darken the room since the morning light may wake up your baby or child early.
- If traveling west to east, and staying more than five days, move your infant/child to the new time zone. Your child's body (their circadian rhythms) will naturally adjust on its own from the sunlight and you don't have to make this adjustment before the trip.
- If traveling east to west, it may be more difficult since your infant/child will naturally want to wake up earlier. The first full day in your new destination, try your best to stretch out your child's naps and push out bedtime. Do this each day that you are there, and after a few days, your child will be adjusted.
- When you return from your trip, follow your same bedtime routine on your first night home and try to help your infant/child adjust back to regular bedtime. Remember that the time that it takes for your baby or child to adjust back to their natural clock and schedule depends upon the length of your trip and the total number of time zones travelled.
- While on vacation, if you room-shared or co-slept with your infant/child and you plan to move your infant/child back to sleeping in their own room, be sure to spend a little more time with your child the first few nights at home. Your first night home, move your child back to their crib or bed and your first few nights at home help your infant/child get back to the sleep routine by following their typical bedtime routine.

Enjoy your travels!