

The Beach



People enjoying a beach (left, lifeguards watching over the beach (right)).

BEFORE YOU GO

The beach can be a great place to bring the kids and have a fun time. But it can also be worrisome with the ocean, big waves, sand, hot sun and a lot of people! Let's talk about tips and tricks to make it a great, worry free time!

- Know your child well and remember their interests and likes and dislikes.
- Talk about how you will get to the beach:
For example, will you go by car, train, bus, or airplane?
- Talk about when you leave for this vacation and talk about how long you will be away.
- Talk about who will be coming to the beach with you.
- Talk about the vacation and show them pictures and videos of a beach (so they get used to the sound. Search the internet for beach pictures that are suitable for your child.
Show them the place where you are staying (hotel, house, etc.) and what their room will look like.
- Use social stories and picture books to explain the parts that are new to them (especially if this is the child's first time going to the beach)
Make them aware of beach features like sand, water, aquatic life, hot sun, beach umbrellas, other people, etc.

PACKING LIST:

- Umbrella/ Tent
- Sunscreen
- Hat and sunglasses
- Full coverage bathing suits or shorts and shirt that can get wet
- Baby powder (Rubs sand off body)
- Cooler full of lots of water
- Towels
- First Aid kit
- Safety gear
- Any medication
- Regular outfits
- Beach shoes/Flip Flops
- Beach mat or beach chairs
- Easy snacks
- Swim toys
- Sand toys
- Comfort objects (stuffed animal, blanket, anything that will help your child feel comfortable in this new situation)
- Activities (puzzle, coloring books, etc.)
- Napkins/tissues
- SPF Lip Balm
- Swim goggles
- Inflatable pool
- Headphones
- Books
- Earplugs

DURING YOUR TRIP

- Purchase bracelets with your contact information:
- Write it directly on the child's body if needed and the child lets you
- Check that the beach has lifeguards:
- Set up next to the life guard station.
- If you worry about your child "wandering or exploring" you can alert the
- Look into various beaches and see what each beach has to offer.
- If worried about big crashing waves, look for beaches that are usually calmer.



Girl looking out to sea.

The Beach, continued

- See what else there is to do near and around the beach locations to help pick the best one.
- Be aware of when you plan to go. The most popular beach days can mean bigger crowds of people. That may make it more difficult to keep track of your child and noisier and more stressful for the child.
- Think about going on weekdays and other times (like not on holidays) when fewer people go to the beach.
- Tides: rising and falling of ocean water levels on the sandy part of the beach.
- Low Tide: Water goes out and more land is shown.
- Good time for activities like getting in shallow water, looking for shells, walking along the beach and making sandcastles.
- High Tide: Water comes up to higher levels covering more land.
- There will be less sand area on beach and fewer seashells to find.
- Waves become stronger and larger
- Think about attending in later afternoon:
- Less heat
- Fewer people
- Bring someone you trust with you to help you:
- They can help you watch out for your child and play with them to give you a break.
- Your child will enjoy spending time with them.
- Stay flexible and positive. Understand that it may not be a perfect day and that's okay.



A sandcastle on the beach.

PROBLEMS

- Have other options like these if the beach does not seem to be working out:
- Swimming pool
- Ice cream stand
- Aquarium or zoo
- Take a walk or go for a ride