

# TERRIFIC TRAVEL TIPS

Adapted from [www.GroupWorkcamps.com](http://www.GroupWorkcamps.com)

## 1. GET DIRECTIONS WELL IN ADVANCE.

Double-check online directions with other web sites and with road atlases.

## 2. FIGURE YOUR TRAVEL TIME CAREFULLY.

The more kids you have, and the younger the group is, the more time it takes to unload and load at each stop.

Also figure you'll need to stop every couple hours or so for bathroom breaks. Add time for a spontaneous stop.

## 3. MAKE SURE YOUR DRIVERS ARE WELL-RESTED.

This is hard when you have to stay up late the last night of camp to pack and spend time with your kids, but getting them home safely is your number one concern. And please, please, please...don't ever plan to drive all night.

## 4. PRINT A DETAILED ITINERARY FOR YOUR DRIVERS AND FOR PARENTS.

Distribute your itinerary far in advance. The more details you provide parents and the sooner you provide them, the more you build trust with them. The details you need in the itinerary: what times you leave and arrive at each stop, contact name, address, and phone number for each overnight stop, and the mobile phone numbers of you and/or adult leaders going on the trip (for emergencies).

## 5. SET A SPECIFIC TIME FOR LOADING THE VEHICLES AT THE CHURCH AND THE DEPARTURE TIME.

Allow an hour or so for loading. One family that arrives with a ton of luggage just as you're leaving can put your group way behind and start your trip on a bad note.

## 6. GATHER TOGETHER FOR PRAYER BEFORE YOU LEAVE.

Invite your pastor to bless everyone and give you a send off with prayer. It also doesn't hurt to remind them of the basic behaviour expectations and what will happen if these are violated. Follow through on any consequences you set.

## 7. HAVE EVERYONE PACK AN OVERNIGHT BAG.

They can access easily if you're stopping. That way you don't have to unload everything along the way. (Mention this in the itinerary.)

## TRIP IDEAS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH (Day Trips or Multiple Days)

### MISSION

Trip to a neighbouring parish to assist with a child/youth ministry event

### SERVICE

Trip to local food bank or other community benefit to volunteer for the day

### RETREAT

To a camp, conference centre (or neighbouring parish) for a time of faith and friendship-building

### EDUCATION

To a church, museum or exhibit with historic and spiritual significance.

### ECUMENICAL

To a church in another denomination (see how many different ones you can experience on a Sunday) to learn more about Christianity. Let them know you are coming so they can recruit people to act as your hosts.

### ENTERTAINMENT

Always a favourite!  
Go to a concert or a sporting event together.

**Make sure your drivers are properly screened and trained. Guidelines for Driving young people to and from events, as well as sample permission forms, can be found at [www.dioceseofalgoma.com](http://www.dioceseofalgoma.com)**

**8. SPEND YOUR TRAVEL TIME BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR KIDS.**

Don't have an adult ride shotgun, get a kid up there—rotate different kids as you drive. When you're not driving get in the back to meet with your kids. When you stop for meals, sit with your kids. Encourage other adult leaders to do the same.

**9. ALLOW TIME ON THE WAY FOR SPIRITUAL PREPARATION.**

Before you get to your destination, make sure your entire group has time to get into the right frame of mind. This could be as simple as letting everyone share how they're feeling before they get there, or it could be as elaborate as specific devotion activities.

**10. REMEMBER: SAFETY FIRST!**

That means seat belts, observing speed limits, and driving defensively. It also means the driver controls the music volume.

**11. HAVE A FIRST AID KIT AND A FILE FOLDER WITH EACH KID'S HEALTH INFORMATION AND PERMISSION SLIPS IN EVERY VEHICLE.**

If a vehicle gets lost or breaks down, that driver will have everyone's important information for emergencies.

**12. ALLOW TIME ON THE WAY HOME FOR RE-ENTRY.**

It can be a bit of culture shock to take kids directly from the trip experience and plopping them right back into their home lives. They need a bit of time to process what happened and transition to home. Help them think about what happened and what that means for their home lives. Celebrate the trip. Talk about upcoming ministry events in your youth group.

**13. RECRUIT SOME PARENTS TO PLAN A WELCOME HOME CELEBRATION.**

Get balloons, signs, a brass band...whatever it takes to welcome your group home like the heroes they are. You'd be surprised how good this feels.

**14. GATHER PARENTS AND YOUTH IN A BIG CIRCLE IN THE PARKING LOT.**

Hold hands (after the vehicles are unloaded and before everyone leaves). Tell the parents how great their kids were and how proud they should be of them. Sing a worship song and lead a closing prayer. This puts that nice finishing touch on the whole experience.