



# Extension Connection

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The mission of K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families and their communities. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals support essential life skills including Community Development, Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Leadership & Volunteer Development, Relationship Development and Resource Management.

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## **Planning an Inexpensive Vacation**

A family vacation is an annual tradition for many families but for those on a tight budget, it may be an unnecessary expense. Like any big purchase, a vacation requires planning. Many vacationers are shocked when they receive their credit card bill after returning from a vacation; the time to create a spending plan is before you leave, not after you return. Creating a budget creates parameters that guide vacation plans. Knowing how much you can realistically afford to spend and how much you have yet to save creates the timeline for your trip as well.

How do you plan to get there, by train, plane or automobile? While packing the family into the minivan and setting out on a road trip might seem like the most economic choice, the cost of gas and car maintenance must be factored in to the budget. Finding last minute airfare deals can be a great way to save on air travel, but booking well in advance can reap better prices, too. Traveling by train is often the cheapest option. If travel destinations fit within a train route, consider this option, but also consider the added cost of a rental car if one will be required at the final destination.

Food costs eat up a lot of the vacation budget. Staying in a hotel with a kitchen or refrigerator can help cut down on expenses by keeping restaurant costs at a minimum. Hotels that include a free breakfast each morning can also be a great deal. Sharing entrees and cutting back on alcohol are also good tips to reduce the bill.

Thinking about the fun things you'll do on vacation is the best part of vacation planning. Think about who will go on this trip: young children? Teenagers? Elderly relatives? Try

to match activities with what makes the most sense for your group. Finding deals in advance online can be a huge help. Sign up to receive daily emails from coupon sites. Also, consider the “free” activities available in your vacation destination, like public parks, beaches, street fairs, and festivals.

Source: <http://bit.ly/25BaXw9>

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