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Jordan Wilbur
Buffalo County Extension
For Immediate Release

Taking the Children with You!

I was just speaking with another Extension Professional about her vacation she took with her family this summer and something she said stuck to me. She said, “the vacation went way better than I thought it would and it made me think I just need to take my kids to things like vacations.” I am not a mother myself, but I was thinking how it is important to expose our children to different places, things, and opportunities. It can seem daunting and challenging even thinking about packing up your family for a vacation in another state or even just a couple of towns over, but the challenges, memories, and exposure you are giving your children by doing this can help their development. By exposing your families to places and people outside of their normal, you are setting them up to thrive in a unique environment, helping them better their problem-solving skills, and help them improve their interpersonal and communication skills all while making memories that will last a lifetime.

Picture this, you are taking your family to Montana, and you have decided to road trip with your three kids and a dog all in your Suburban packed with sunscreen, snacks, games, and clothes to last three days! Two hours into your road trip, your tire blows and you find yourself putting on a spare tire on the side of the interstate instead of heading to your vacation spot. There are multiple ways to handle this situation, but as you work through the challenge, your children are watching, and although they may be annoyed, tired, or hungry, they see their parent(s) working through a problem that arose. After a while, they will start learning and taking the lead on solving problems of their own because they have learned that situations will not always go as planned, even on vacation!

While on the same road trip to Montana, there will be many stops along the way! Some may be restaurants, gas stations, tourist spots, and more. Along all these stops, there will be times to communicate with employees, local citizens, and other tourists passing through. Your children will get to

see their parent(s) make conversation with strangers about different topics. This is a great time to discuss with your children as they get older about the appropriate times to talk to strangers. Communicating with people is how humans form connections, and teaching our children the importance of this will set them up for success later in life.

Although Montana is a great destination, this applies to any vacation or weekend getaway. It can be scary, stressful, and exhausting taking your children with you to different places but providing them with opportunities to learn from experience is very important for their development. Taking them to unique places will help them problem solve and learn new skills along the way. For different activities, family fun, or adventure, contact the Buffalo County Extension Office!

Jordan Wilbur

4-H Asst Educator

Nebraska Ext in Buffalo County

1400 East 34th St Kearney, NE 68847 308-236-1235