

Family Living Focus
by
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This summer there are many reasons that families are choosing to make vacation plans closer to their home: the increasing cost of gasoline and air travel, school days that were extended to make up snow days, the uncertain economic situation, and health concerns about travel.

Even the very wet, rainy spring weather has delayed or cancelled travel plans. Let's hope that we soon have sunshine that will brighten our feelings as we plan relaxing vacation time with our families.

Start by setting a time to talk with your family members, including the children, about what sort of vacation they would enjoy. Keep in mind that spending time together is the key.

Talk about how much money some vacation ideas might cost and discuss ways to save money when traveling. Since this is going to be your "Close To Home" vacation year, discuss if that means 10, 20, 50, 100 or more miles away.

The ages of your children also can help determine what you do for vacation. Young children are often most comfortable sleeping in their own beds, and following a regular nighttime routine.

Spending less travel time in the car can keep them (and their parents) more relaxed.

Older children can do things like visiting libraries, Chamber of Commerce or visitors' bureaus offices with you to pick up tourist attraction information. They can

also plot directions on maps or on computers.

The Pennsylvania tourism website is www.experiencepa.com or call 1-800-VISITPA for more information.

Make a schedule of the one-day trips with one in each direction (north, south, east, and west) from your house. Set definite dates for your travel and stick to it.

Have a back-up rain plan, but avoid postponing or canceling the day, because that disappoints everyone.

Plan some "mystery" car rides as a vacation. One parent and one child know the destination and everyone else tries to guess.

You can drive to an airport and watch the planes land and takeoff. You can visit a park for a hike or to play frisbee. You can go for a train ride, to a carnival or festival. You can visit a favorite relative.

To help save money, take along picnic foods. Having some extra snack items for the drive will help prevent stopping at every fast food restaurant you pass.

But don't forget that this is a vacation day and that means the fun of eating some different foods, including ice cream, somewhere in your travels.

Don't plan too many miles to cover or things to do in one day. It's better to feel refreshed the morning after a vacation day than to feel too tired to move.

If you did have a disappointing one-day vacation, because it was brief you can still look forward to your next one-day adventure.

If your "Close To Home" vacation, means really staying at home for some vacation time, here are a few hints. Water fun in the backyard with sprinklers is great for most children.

Or go as a family to a community pool. Plan your meals picnic-style for your vacation days. Give everyone

a chance to pick his or her favorite foods.

Sleep outdoors in a tent or stay up late and do star gazing. Host a backyard track meet with simple contests for all ages. Help your children make certificates of participation for all that come.

Finally, help your children make a collection of all the things

that are important to them from their "Close To Home" vacations. Maybe they picked up a bird feather at the park, or have a ticket from a local attraction.

Preserving them in a scrapbook with a photo and the date will make looking back on summer 2003 a special memory for everyone.

Centre/Clinton County Holstein Breeders Meet



MILL HALL (Clinton Co.) – The Centre/Clinton County Holstein Breeders conducted their Barbecue and Twilight Meeting on Wednesday, June 11 at the Paul Dotterer and Sons Dairy Farm in Mill Hall. Special guests included Dennis Wolff, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture pictured here with Ashley Bird, 2003-2004 Centre County Dairy Princess and Amy Hartle, Alternate Dairy Princess. Everyone enjoyed a chicken dinner served by the Centre Hall Lions Club. Other activities included dairy judging and an auction to help support the both counties dairy princess programs.

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