



NOW WE'RE TAWKING!

Travelling Australia With Kids
with **MANDY FARABEGOLI**

TURN YOUR DREAM TO TRAVEL AUSTRALIA WITH KIDS INTO A PLAN



Transform your family's dream of exploring Australia into a reality. Embrace the adventure of travelling with your children – it's entirely possible with determination and planning. Our two-year journey around Australia in a caravan, with three kids in tow, proved that long road trips can be incredibly rewarding and bring families closer.

To tackle the challenge of keeping kids engaged during lengthy drives, we mixed education with entertainment. The car became a classroom for short bursts of learning — spelling, maths, and even language lessons — punctuated by family fun time with music, drawing, and unscheduled stops at parks and local sights. These experiences not only filled the hours but also enriched our children's education and family bonds.

First though, in this issue, let's look at one of the age-old complaints — the time in the car. Let's face it, with Australia being sooooo huge, there is a lot of time spent in the car.

So, let's unravel the secret to prevent kids from complaining about the long hours on the road — It's pretty basic really ... keep the journey interesting!

We used to break up the travelling hours into different segments. Some school time, some general family fun time, free time and food time! And somehow, it seemed to make the trip not only go smoothly but go quicker!

Let's learn

Obviously, being cooped up in a car for hours may seem like a challenge, but by turning it into a mobile classroom it can kill two birds with one stone. It takes up some time and gets some schoolwork out of the way at the same time.

In fact, you could also make it a learning opportunity. With so many different places and environments to explore in Australia, stopping at visitor centres along the route, and getting the older kids involved in what they might like to do at the next stop cannot only be beneficial reading-wise for them, but it gives them investment into their trip with them being part of the decision-making process. The route you travel



can supplement your children's learning journey as they look through any brochures and work out together what there is to do at the next stop and what they might like to do also.

The joy of planning and anticipation doubles the trip. So, involve the kids in planning the journey. Let them pick and choose some destinations.

We also used to do 10-minute spurts of spelling and mental maths and 15 minutes of learning a language online! By breaking up the school time into smaller segments, it can really help. They would all also repeat their age-appropriate timestables and by the end of our travels my six-year-old knew all of them because he'd listened to the older kids repeat theirs.

Get creative

Then comes family fun time, where you can encourage their creative side during the long drives. Pack some drawing and colouring materials, a travel tray each and who knows, and you might end up with a series of beautiful landscape art based on their interpretations from the backseat,

the twists and turns of the road adding to their artistic licence! Another 30 minutes of time gone before they realise it.

Music was also a big part of our fun time, with each member of the family choosing a song for us all to endure I mean enjoy! Haha, but it does expand everyone's musical knowledge.

Take a break

Of course, next up — a break is something that is not only good for the driver but also the kids. It's generally recommended a break every two hours, so trying to time that with an unusual sight or a local play park is a great strategy. Sometimes stopping at places that you had no intention of stopping at, can be a real surprise and whilst not on the 'travel must-see list' often there will be something to see or do. Remember, the journey itself is part of the adventure, not just the destination.

Sharing and remembering moments of the previous place you visit, will help store it in their long-term memories and will be the moments your kids will remember the most in the future.





Snack time

Food. The universal pacifier. Our three children had a lunch box each packed with some lunch and snacks. Pack more snacks than you think you need, with a mix of crunchy vegetables, carrot and celery sticks, fruit, nuts and chips. A nice mix and again and before you know it, another 30 minutes gone.

Laugh it off

It's also important to remain realistic. Not every day will run as smoothly as you hope. Patience will be tested, tantrums will be thrown, try in the most part to think it all as part of the adventure. These

hiccups will later turn into family tales to laugh about round the campfire.

The bonding that occurs whilst you travel Australia with your kids is priceless. As I say, my three are young adults now and share such a strong bond that I put down to being on the road and living in such close quarters for two years. Every now and then they get out the diaries that they wrote and drew in (or attempted to as young kids) all those years ago and remember together their trip. I love that!

By embarking on such an adventure, you'd be setting an example for your kids. You'd teach them to be brave, to step out of their comfort zones, to adapt to whatever you are presented with in the moment you are in, and you will come back home knowing that you explicitly chose to introduce your kids to travelling young, to the love of Australia. It really was the best decision we ever made.

I hope I have encouraged you to turn your dream into a plan and start that today.

It's not luck, it's a decision.

