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Travel for Military Children of Divorced Parents



Military and Divorce: Travel Discounts Offered for Kids of Military Personnel

By STEPHANIE BAKER

A flight attendant will hold any travel documents for your child throughout the flight, but policies prohibit airline employees from administering any medications. If your child has to take any type of medication, someone should fly with him or he should know how much to take and when. The only person who will be allowed to pick up the child is the responsible party listed on the unaccompanied minor form. If a flight is delayed, the airline will make every effort to contact the adult that will be picking the child up.

If an international flight is delayed, the airline will try to contact adults on both ends. "When picking up a little one, you can go to the counter and get a gate pass so you can be at the gate when the plane arrives. Most airlines will accommodate - you may have to be a bit insistent with some, but they will issue the pass," McKinney said, based on his experience with his own two daughters.

Children between the ages of five and seven can travel as unaccompanied minors on non-stop and direct flights but are not allowed to travel without a responsible adult if they will have to take a connecting flight. Children ages eight to 14 can travel on Delta or American Airlines as unaccompanied minors on non-stop, direct or connecting flights. In many cities Delta has a room called Dusty's Den to keep children entertained during layovers.

American Airlines and Delta both consider passengers between 15 and 17 young adults, but offers the same unaccompanied minor assistance to them upon request. Here are a few tips for transporting your kids:

1. Book through airlines.

When planning a flight for a child, book directly through the airline. It is much less complicated than booking through a travel agent or a discount travel Web site, and most airlines require it anyway.

2. Gather travel documents.

Keep all your child's travel documents including tickets for connecting flights and documentation of age in one envelope so you have it ready to hand over to the flight attendant and everything makes it to your child's destination.

3. Pack medication.

If your child is taking medication make sure they know when and how much to take. Also be sure he has it in his carry on luggage.

4. Get the discount.

Remember to mention that the child is a military dependent so you can get a discount.

5. Shop around to get the best deal.

Depending on how many children will be traveling, one airline may be cheaper than another. For example, Delta charges

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\$50 per unaccompanied minor in addition to the ticket price where American Airlines charges an additional \$75 regardless of the number of children, so if you only have one child Delta is cheaper, but for two or more you will get a better deal through American Airlines.

Stephanie Baker is a writer of fashion, travel and lifestyles writer for McClatchy newspapers and magazines in Georgia.

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Page: [First](#) 1 2

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