

WWG recognizes that one of the toughest issues parents on the job face is being away from their children when traveling. With the collaboration of multiple parents, WWG gathered a list of activities and items that can help the children and the parents find comfort and a little joy in staying connected when they are away from each other. WWG's goal is to constantly grow this list as parents continue to share ideas. Please email the 1811 WWG router if you would like to share additional ideas.

Below are ideas shared by traveling parents and their spouses:

- 1) Daddy/Mommy Dolls- This doll can come in many different forms pending where you purchase one. They can be a stuffed bear of the parent's clothes, a picture of the parent, etc. The point of the doll is for it to look like the parent and for kids to find comfort in it when the parent is gone. Many companies also allow you to record your voice with it so that when the child hugs the doll they hear your custom message. There are many websites that sell the doll to include Etsy. Hugahero.com is a very popular one that also allows you to add a voice recording.



Hug-A-Hero® Doll
\$27.95



Hug-A-Hero® First
Responder Doll
From \$27.95



SALE



Hug-A-Hero® Doll - Retired
Prints
From \$25.00



2-Sided Photo Doll
From \$32.95

2) Time Zone Clocks & World Map- Get two clocks and set one to your time zone and adjust the second one to the traveling parent's time zone. Have a world map on the wall and pin the location of where the traveling parent is. Your children can keep track of the time zone and where their parent is in the world to help them feel more connected.



3) Recordable Storybooks- There are many websites that sell recordable storybooks that the traveling parent can use to pre-record themselves reading the book page by page. Alternatively, we've had parents video record themselves reading the book and have the at home parent play it on an iPad or TV.

Hallmark.com sells a recordable books for traveling parents.

4) Countdown System- Fill a bowl with candies based on the number of days you will be gone. Each day let your child have one treat. Once the bowl is empty, their sweetest treat will have arrived!

5) Activity Envelope- Put 1 activity in an envelope for each day the traveling parent is gone. Example – if the traveling parent is gone 10 days you will have 10 days' worth of envelopes with 1 activity inside. Each day you will open an envelope and do the activity with your child. Activities can be anything they love; go to the park, ice cream date, trip to the mall, zoo, aquarium, etc. Photograph your memories on your adventure!



6) Tip the Scale in Your Favor- Get a scale and place beads or pebbles for the amount of days your traveling spouse will be gone. Eventually the scale will start tipping in your favor!



7) Paper Chains- The traveling parent can write out messages for their child/children on a precut piece of colored construction paper



for every day they would be gone (and a few extra that could be added just in case their time was extended). Then, hang the paper chains in the most visited part of your home (i.e kitchen, bedroom, living room) and make it a morning or night routine to read a message from the traveling parent before the child starts or ends their day.

8) Memory Jar- Each time something memorable happens, write it on a piece of paper with the date and put it in a jar (mason jar works well). Kids often have exciting news to share with the parent who is traveling and they aren't always available to contact them when they want to share these special moments. In an effort not to forget these memories, a memory jar is a great collector and a fun family activity. Do it for the year and review the moments to remember during the holidays or special family gathering.

9) Traveling Teddy Bear- You can take one of your child's favorite toys on your trip. For fun, you can take pictures of their teddy bear of the places you visit and send them to your child. Your child will not only have fun seeing the adventures that their toy is taking, but also feel connected to you until you return. "Flat Stanley" is another great one and travels easily.