

NEW SURVEY REVEALS THE STRONG INFLUENCE OF KIDS ON FAMILY TRAVEL PLANS

Findings show what “kidfluencers” -and their parents- really want in a whole vacation: adventure, family bonding and a pool

- 87 percent of parents across five countries give children a say in vacation destination; one in three (34 percent) U.S. millennial parents allow kids to make final vacation decision
- Parents say family time is the top priority for vacation, and they mean it – kids report parents aren’t overusing gadgets
- Kids around the world want new and adventurous experiences; theme parks, international travel and pools reign supreme

EMBARGOED: AUSTIN, TX, May 18, 2015 – [HomeAway](#), the world’s leading online vacation rental marketplace, has found that kids, or “kidfluencers,” wield a growing influence on vacation planning. In partnership with independent market research firm YouGov, HomeAway surveyed more than 2,800 kids (ages six to 18) and parents in the U.S. and Europe and found that when it comes to family vacation planning, children have significant decision-making power and a strong point of view on where to go, what to do and who to bring.

According to the *HomeAway Kidfluencer Survey*, kids are speaking up, and parents are listening – millennial parents even let the kids get the last word:

- The **vast majority of parents (85 percent U.S., 76 percent UK, 86 percent France, 95 percent Germany, 94 percent Spain)** give their children **some say** in deciding where they want to go on vacation.
- **Millennial parents** in the U.S. are most likely to **give kids full control** of where they want to go on vacation (19 percent versus two percent of parents over the age of 55).
- **One in three millennial parents** in the U.S. (**34 percent**) allow children to make the **final decision** on where to go on vacation; this compares with eight percent of parents aged 55 and over in the U.S.
- The **majority (60 percent) of parents in the U.S. view kids’ input as a way to ensure the kids get more out of the vacation.** More than half (53 percent) involve their kids in the planning process to get them excited about the trip, 42 percent say they involve their kids so they can learn about new things and nearly one-quarter (24 percent) use vacation planning as an educational opportunity.

The survey finds that a majority of parents in the U.S. say they let their kids make decisions on the vacation activities (77 percent), the itinerary (53 percent) and even the type of destination itself (49 percent).

“We are surprised the survey shows kids have such an extreme influence on family travel decisions,” said Brian Sharples, HomeAway co-founder and CEO. “The whole family is now invested in the experience, with kids bringing their own travel preferences to the table.”

Who's invited: grandparents, friends, and pets among top picks in the U.S.

- **41 percent** of parents identify the **most important part of a family vacation as spending quality time together** over creating lasting memories (27 percent), exploring new places and cultures (15 percent), relaxing (10 percent) and disconnecting (six percent).
- Togetherness is also important to kids, with **50 percent citing it as a top priority for vacation travel.**
- Parents and kids agree they want extended family and friends on their ideal vacation, with **parents wishing to include relatives like their children's grandparents (38 percent)** and **kids wanting to invite their friends along (55 percent).**
- **30 percent of parents** would choose only to include **immediate family**, pointing to their desire to spend quality time on vacation.
- **Nearly one-third of kids would like to bring their pet (32 percent)** on their ideal vacation while 22 percent say that leaving their family pet at home during vacation has annoyed them.

U.S. kids want adventure and an exciting place to stay

- In identifying what they want most on vacation, kids enjoy experiencing **new adventures (60 percent)** and **doing things they wouldn't be able to do at home (63 percent)** while on vacation.
- Children want to stay in **unique accommodations, with a castle (37 percent) or tree house (29 percent)** rising to the top, among other choices such as an airplane, boat and train.
- The most **important accommodation feature is a pool** (37 percent of kids, 75 percent of parents in the U.S.), and 21 percent of kids want more than just a pool – they want a water slide.

Among younger kids in the U.S., theme parks reign supreme, but older kids are more likely to choose international travel for their next family vacation

- Double the number of children ages six to 12 (54 percent) versus teens ages 13 to 18 (27 percent) would choose a theme park whereas **teens are almost three times as likely to choose another country as their destination preference.**
- After theme parks, a trip to the beach was the second choice among kids, with **nearly one-fifth (19 percent) of kids wanting to head for the coast.**
- Among other destination choices, **twice as many teens** ages 13 to 18 (10 percent) versus children six to 12 (5 percent) **would choose big city travel.**

“Since HomeAway’s inception, Orlando, Florida with easy access to Disney and Universal Studios has been the top market for U.S. bookings, so the popularity of theme park focused trips is not surprising,” says Sharples. “However, we weren’t expecting to see such a high enthusiasm from kids for traveling internationally. Fortunately, due to the strength of the U.S. dollar, now is a great time to pack-up the family for a European vacation that won’t break the bank.”

While both U.S. kids and parents want to be together, they also want their space

- **72 percent** of parents reported the **size of the room/home** on vacation was an important feature when deciding where to stay.
- **59 percent** of parents say an important factor is **having plenty of beds**, so the family doesn't have to share.
- Popular **accommodation choices for kids seemed to rank in order of space** for the family, with a vacation rental as first choice (36 percent) among kids, followed by a hotel (29 percent) and a cruise ship (23 percent).
- Kids say the best part of staying in a whole house is **getting their own room or their own bed (39 percent)**.
- Maybe this desire for space has emerged because kids frequently find themselves **sleeping in uncomfortable situations when on vacation**:
 - 44 percent spent the night on a couch; 43 percent have slept on an air mattress and 22 percent have slept on the floor during their stay.
 - 19 percent of parents report that their child(ren) have slept crowded in a hotel room with too many people.
 - No surface is off limits: four percent of parents have reported that their children have slept in a bathtub, and three percent have reported that their kids have slept in a closet.

U.S. kids notice their parents seem happier on vacation and aren't spending too much time on their devices, but everyone wants the option to stay connected

- **54 percent** of kids report that their **parents seem happier** on family vacations.
- **70 percent** of kids say their **parents don't spend too much time on their gadgets** while on vacation.

The state of the treasured summer family vacation continues to bring families together. Fortunately, 66 percent of kids report that their parents don't wear any embarrassing things on vacation. But some parents need to leave the swimsuit at home. Parents' bathing suits rank tops as the clothing item kids are most embarrassed by, as 12 percent of U.S. kids over age 12 report, followed by fanny packs (nine percent) and T-shirts from where they are visiting, like "I LOVE NEW YORK" (nine percent).

Win a \$5,000 Stay with HomeAway Kidfluencers Contest

This summer, HomeAway is empowering kidfluencers by giving them even more control over their family's travel plans with a chance to win a \$5,000 vacation rental stay to anywhere in the United States in 2015. To enter, travelers just need to create a 15 to 60-second video of their kids describing why their family should win a vacation from HomeAway. Upload the video to Instagram, YouTube or Vimeo, using the hashtag #HomeAwayVacation and complete the entry form at <http://a.pgtb.me/TxF29N>, before May 29, 2015. HomeAway will select 10 finalists that will be voted on by the public from June 8 to 12 to determine the winner. For more details on the contest, visit <http://a.pgtb.me/TxF29N>.

Survey Methodology

YouGov, on behalf of HomeAway, conducted an online survey of 2,813 kids (ages six to 18) and parents based in the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, and Spain. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Fieldwork was undertaken between April 20-30, 2015.

All figures refer to results from the U.S., unless otherwise stated.

About HomeAway

HomeAway, Inc. based in Austin, Texas, is the world's leading online marketplace for the vacation rental industry, with sites representing over one million paid listings of vacation rental homes in 190 countries. Through HomeAway, owners and property managers offer an extensive selection of vacation homes that provide travelers with memorable experiences and benefits, including more room to relax and added privacy, for less than the cost of traditional hotel accommodations. The company also makes it easy for vacation rental owners and property managers to advertise their properties and manage bookings online. The HomeAway portfolio includes the leading vacation rental websites HomeAway.com, VRBO.com and VacationRentals.com in the United States; HomeAway.co.uk and OwnersDirect.co.uk in the United Kingdom; HomeAway.de in Germany; Abritel.fr and Homelidays.com in France; HomeAway.es and Toprural.es in Spain; AlugueTemporada.com.br in Brazil; HomeAway.com.au and Stayz.com.au in Australia; and Bookabach.co.nz in New Zealand. Asia Pacific short-term rental site, travelmob.com, is also owned by HomeAway.

HomeAway also operates BedandBreakfast.com, the most comprehensive global site for finding bed-and-breakfast properties, providing travelers with another source for unique lodging alternatives to chain hotels.

* * *