

# Don't kid around

Jeremy Clark considers a 'kids only' airline. Email your comments to: [clarkjeremy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clarkjeremy@hotmail.co.uk)



My wife, is a lovely lady to whom we all owe a great deal as she vets these articles before I send them, thus sparing you having to read even more

drivel than usual. She is also someone who does nothing by halves. This includes childbearing and so when having kids we had not one, but two.

So with two-year old twins, we upped sticks and moved 5000 miles away to Asia and for years travelled back and forth to Europe and around the world with them. And this brings me to this month's subject which, whilst generally contentious and unspoken, nonetheless provokes passionate opinions by travellers. I am talking, of course, about Kids on Planes.

Nothing horrifies the businessman settling into his seat after a long and exhausting few days, more than the sight of the family or lone parent struggling aboard with a small package of humankind which has no sense of volume control at one end, and no sense of social responsibility at the other.

You have paid, possibly thousands of dollars, for the privilege of some peace and quiet only to be screamed at, and possibly vomited over, by someone you don't know and can't possibly reason with.

When we travelled with our kids, they were not permitted to treat the aircraft as a racetrack, nor to kick or dribble on passengers. They were 99% of the time asleep, or at least quiet, thanks to adequate stuff to keep them occupied and the occasional shot of something in their milk. We managed this without boarding with piles of stuff.

Recently I watched incredulously as some upwardly-mobile parents boarded a plane carting enough equipment to sustain a polar expedition including, for heavens sake, a car seat. All this for one small person no larger than my carry-on bag. What they thought the car seat was for I don't know unless they believed little Johnny might be spared should the 777 slam into a mountainside at 680mph. Kiddies today have to be cocooned



and mollycoddled in pushchairs which are like armoured personnel vehicles, more toys than Hamleys, bottles and 'special food' regular stuff is going to kill them, wipes, 'blanky' . . . stuff!

I have nothing against kids, we have to have some to keep things going, and mine are especially useful now as they can carry the bags; but for the love of mike why can't parents control them on aircraft? Try and suggest the "D" word to parents and you're instantly cast as a pariah.

I thought maybe that someone might come up with a "Toddlair" Kids Only Airline, a bit like the one for pets, but that might have one or two logistical drawbacks.

But then I had an idea. Looking out of the terminal window I watched the cargo pods

being loaded. Now what if one were to cushion the walls and floor, fill it with bright coloured bouncy soft balls, have video screens with non-stop Mickey Mouse, toys, and a dispenser issuing healthy shakes and hamburgers.

Then, any small person showing any signs of disruption can be simply dropped down a small chute into it for the rest of the flight. You can retrieve your child in the baggage hall.

I can't think of a better solution unless maybe we get the caterers to sprinkle some light sedative onto the Child Meals, or better still, give some to me. Then I can sleep through the whole thing.

\* D = Discipline!

If you have ideas for keeping the kids quiet, please don't write to me, just tell the parents!