



Parents and Travel Agents Get Real About Raising Global Citizens

Features & Advice [Janeen Christoff](#)

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PHOTO: Raising children to be aware of the environment is a family travel trend. (Photo courtesy Thinkstock)

When children are young, their minds are like sponges. They soak up all the details and it's important to enhance those details to raise culturally aware global citizens that will work to make this world a better one in the future. This is a big focus for parents raising young children in this day and age and the travel industry is listening as demonstrated in a new report on [The Street](#), which showcases travel agents and travel companies working to enhance children's world views through travel.

"Here's a fascinating idea to consider – the things a child learns between the ages of five and 15 will have a direct impact on the characteristics and decision-making skills he will possess as an adult," writes Mia Taylor.

This is main focus of Big Five Tours & Expeditions, a Florida travel company run by Ashish Sanghrajka. The company aims to provide family travel with a purpose.

"It's not just about where do you want to go," Sanghrajka said at a family travel conference in Arizona. "It's about why do you want to go. Do you want to see an animal? Great, then just go to a zoo. Are you explaining why poaching is happening? And why poachers become poachers?"

This led Sanghrajka to develop special itineraries focused on youth.

"It was with such ideas in mind, or perhaps because of them, that that Big Five last year launched a new kind of trip called "Precious Journeys." Created with the influence of a child psychologist, Precious Journeys are designed for the youngest travelers, those ages five to 11, with the goal of inspiring kids to discover the world's grandeur and also its challenges," writes Mia Taylor.

Leslie Overton, of New York-based Absolute Travel also offers "purpose-driven travel."

"Absolute Travel seeks to offer deeper family travel experiences, and does so by working to offer opportunities that are more cohesive and part of a greater whole, such as engaging in community-based projects throughout the destinations the company covers," writes Taylor.

"Travel should be inspirational, not aspirational," Overton tells The Street.

Both Overton and Sanghrajka, as well as others, work to dispel the myth that tours are a bad thing that provide only a generic experience.

"It's about having it all organized ahead of time, having a guide and driver," explains Overton tells The Street. "You don't want to be standing at an airport figuring out how you will get to your hotel, and worrying about whether you can find a cab that's big enough to take all of your family's luggage."