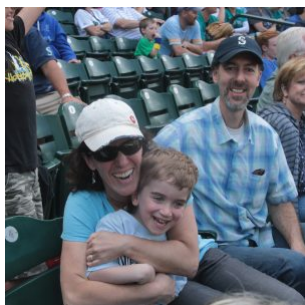


# PORTLAND

*lifestyle & family*

OUT AND ABOUT / TRAVEL / JUNE 15, 2016

## Take Kids Out to the Ballgame



My son just finished his first season of T-Ball. His dad and I are slowly pulling him into a life of baseball fandom. Although we root for different teams (he's a Red Sox fan and I love my A's no matter how terrible they are) our shared life in the Pacific Northwest brought us to see the Seattle Mariner's one fine June Sunday. The Mariner's have one of the largest geographic fan bases in all of Major League Baseball and we were happy to trek up I-5 to cheer on our new family home team.

<http://www.portlandfamily.com/posts/take-kids-out-to-the-ballgame/>

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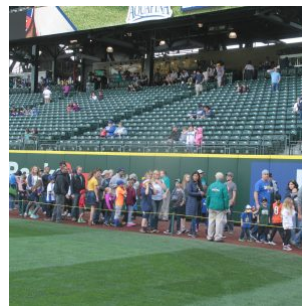
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By lucky happenstance, our afternoon game was also a "Little League" day at Safeco Field. We arrived at the stadium early enough to queue up with the throngs of other families to parade our Little League players around the warning track, down on the field. I might have been more excited than my son to get to check out the big league view from home plate.

We met dear friends, two Seattle families, at our seats and settled in for the game. In total there were four kids 11 years old and younger and not one of them paid any attention to the game itself. The older boys had their noses buried in books. They looked up when the food arrived and then back to the books since neither one of them continued with baseball as athletes after a couple of seasons. Baseball gave way to competitive soccer and Ultimate Frisbee and the intricacies of the game were uninteresting to them. My son and our other friend's daughter loved telling jokes to surrounding spectators, tickling each other and playing in the Mariner's Kids Club, a climbing gym area that is a great way to expend some energy that has been cooped up in the stands for too long. Watching the game itself is kind of boring when you are 3 and 4 years old.



I learned as so many Major League parents have learned before me, going out to the ballgame isn't so much about the game. It's all about the food. Our son clamored for hot dogs and popcorn and a plate of French fries were devoured quickly. By the time the 7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch rolled around, he was ready for his ice cream cone. After much searching no ice cream could be found to help steady the tide of tears that rolled in when his nap was skipped and replaced by the excitement of good friends and a baseball game. Our little guy was tired and ready to rest. So we promised ice cream for another day, hugged our Seattle friends goodbye and made the long trip home. We'll catch another Mariner's game soon and work on hardwiring our kid as a baseball fan.

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Ariel Frager

Ariel Frager is a school counselor and has a private therapy practice that specializes in treating children, adolescents and families. She lives in Portland with her husband, son, dog and kitty cat.



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