

Moving can be very frustrating. No one likes having change sprung on them. Prepare your *hearts* and *minds* for change, and tell your kids as soon as possible.

Emotions

Moving brings up BIG emotions. It hurts to leave friends and familiar things behind. It is important to allow your kids time to adjust and work through their feelings. They need you to listen to their fears and worries, and you may need to give them the right words for those feelings. Develop the *adventurous* spirit in your kids, but don't gloss over their big emotions.¹

Start *researching* the new area as soon as possible! Take a trip if you can, or if not, create an *adventure* book by Googling things to check out when you arrive.

Prepare Your Home

Moves are messy and chaotic. These are a few suggestions to help you get organized:

- Prepare your home for the move by **creating a move checklist** or download an app on your phone.
- **Keep track of moving tasks** such as: obtaining medical or school records, scheduling movers, setting up mail-forwarding, and creating an inventory of valuable items.
- **Make a move calendar** to record important dates to remember.
- **Create a binder** to hold all important documents such as: ID cards, Social Security cards, important financial information, legal documents, insurance cards, etc. This binder will travel with you.
- **Stay flexible.** Nothing ever goes according to plan so, be prepared to make adjustments. With some preparation and planning, your move will help everyone feel less stressed.

Arriving

It's easy to get overwhelmed with everything that needs to be done and then become exhausted from doing them. Don't let all of that unpacking consume you. It is important that you take some time for fun. Get on Yelp, Trip Advisor, or Google Maps and find a fun attraction or outing to explore together, then go do it!²

Your kids may feel a little insecure at first in their new home. They will likely need extra hugs and love, and the security from those all-too-familiar routines to make it feel like home. Things you can do to help make everyone feel more involved and comfortable are:

- Set up your home like the old one.
- Let children decide how to arrange their own room.¹
- Give every family member an age-appropriate job.
- Avoid adding new changes such as, toilet training or transitioning to a toddler bed if you can.³
- Return quickly to other routines that are meaningful to your family.³

Knowing what to expect helps everyone feel secure.

Connecting

We all need connection and friendships. Making new friends is important and sometimes hard. Be aware that it will take some time for your child to settle into their new *school*. Give them lots of time and patience to adjust. Find out if their new school has a buddy program so they won't feel so alone on the first day.²

Moving is a part of life, and it's tough. You leave the familiar behind, but you also gain new great experiences and meet new friends. Take plenty of time to prepare your family for the move by:

- Listening to their feelings and fears¹
- Giving them as much time as possible to adjust
- Sharing positive things about the new home
- Discovering all of the exciting possibilities about the new area
- Preparing physically by being as organized as possible to alleviate some of the stress moves can bring

When you arrive to your new area, help your children to:

- Adjust and make new friends
- Get acquainted and used to their new school
- Explore their home as a family

Finally, treat this new move as a new great adventure, and a perfect opportunity to teach your children the valuable life lesson of managing and accepting change.

Resources include:

1. "Family Dynamics – Helping Children Adjust to a Move." HealthyChildren.org, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2019, www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/family-dynamics/Pages/Helping-Children-Adjust-to-a-Move.aspx. accessed 1/9/2019.
2. "Helping Kids Cope with a Military Pcs Move • Military Onesource." Military OneSource, Department of Defense, 25 Feb. 2022, www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-housing/moving/planning-your-move/nine-ways-to-help-your-kids-cope-with-moving/. accessed 1/9/2019
3. "Preparing Your Child for a Move (for Parents) - Nemours Kidshealth." Edited by J. Schroff Pendley, KidsHealth, The Nemours Foundation, June 2019, kidshealth.org/en/parents/move.html. accessed 1/9/2019.