

Helping Children Transition When Moving

Moving can be an exciting time for your family but it can also be a sad and stressful time as well. Children may have different feelings about your move. They could be scared about going to a new school, excited about a new home, sad about leaving friends behind or just angry with their parents about having to relocate.

There are several avenues you can take to support your child through this transitional time. The checklist below was developed by Jennie L. Moritz, PhD and Ann V. Deaton, PhD to remind parents of the important things to do before and after a move.

Before the Move:

- Tell older, school age children about the move as far in advance as possible.
- Share information about your new home, town and state with your child. Give them brochures and check out websites about your new town.
- Plan a goodbye/moving party for your child. Involve them in the planning. Help them get addresses & phone numbers of friends & family that they will be leaving.
- If possible, take your child to see their new home, town and neighborhood.
- Schedule a time to visit your child's new school, meet the principle & some teachers and future classmates ahead of time.
- During the move, be sure to prepare some special comfort items for your child.

After the Move:

- Listen to your child's feeling about the move and offer extra support.
- Discuss activity options and sign your child up for activities such as sports, clubs and library programs.
- Take some exploratory trips into the community, to nearby parks, restaurants or a skating rink.
- Help your child decorate their room to make it a special place in your new home.
- Encourage them to write or email friends & family to tell them about the new place.
- Get to know some of the other parents and find out about their activities and their children's interests.