



## MOVING HOUSE WITH CHILDREN

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### *What can I expect when announcing the big move?*

Facing a household shift can feel overwhelming but when kids and teens are involved, planning the details of your move is especially vital!

When making arrangements for your big shift, remember it's most important to communicate consistently with your children and include and consider the whole family in your planning.

Pre-schoolers live in very short timeframes – they typically think of 'now' or 'shortly'. By the time they're 4-5, close same gender friendships have formed and many children begin establishing their own identity with academic, social, sports or club activities, achievements and relationships.

There's evidence that shows primary school-aged children who've moved house before are generally more adaptable to change, compared with children who've never shifted. Either way, however, it pays to expect some resistance to a move.

Typically, teens also find shifting to be tough and isolating – often upset by the disruption to their social, sports, cultural or academic interests.

Remember, kids of any age will go through an adjustment period. Be accepting of this; be patient and best of all – be prepared.

### *When do I tell them?*

The earlier the better! This gives your kids time to adjust to the idea. Once you've announced the big move, the process has only just begun. It's not unusual for young children to regress in times of loss or great change – perhaps wetting the bed, throwing tantrums or finding ways to push your buttons.

### *How can I make the upcoming change easier for them?*

It's important that children feel a sense of stability and purpose in their new home. Be prepared for the most common questions asked - why are we moving and how will this move benefit me? Be open and honest with your children and encourage them to share their true feelings – good and bad – about the upcoming big change.



Keep your kids actively involved – this will encourage support and reduce their anxiety and resistance. Take them house hunting, let them choose their rooms, colour schemes, what to throw away and pre-pack for the big day. Teach your kids how to mark special boxes for their bedrooms and about the change of address cards they can give to their friends. Take lots of pictures of your new home - inside and out - for decorating, remodeling and other pre-move planning ideas. Many children will love the chance to share these round and get more excited about the new adventure.

Research your future neighbourhood and community as much as possible. Find out about sports, academic, religious and community related activities – whatever your kids are or would like to be involved in - so you're able to answer their questions. Visit the area's council and grab some leaflets, maps and community information. All this helps your kids to view the move as more of a transition, rather than a daunting, unfamiliar and completely new start.

It's also helpful to explain what will take place on moving day – the packing, loading and shifting. Be sure to let your kids know that even though they're leaving their friends behind, there's plenty of ways they can stay in touch and always opportunities for visits.

Consider hosting a farewell party - one for you and one for the children. If there's a birthday nearing, remember there may not be many new friends to invite while the kids are still getting settled, so a party now may prove useful.

#### *When is the best time of year to move?*

Consider everyone in your family when making your decision. While many people find it convenient to utilise the school holidays and move during summer, there's also benefits to shifting during the school year. Pre-teens and teenagers can start school straight away and may quickly make new friends they can enjoy the summer holidays with.

#### *How can I better prepare for a change of schools?*

Be ultra-organised and check out the schools in your area early on so you can make the best choices. Consider a preliminary visit or have a chat to any nearby friends and relatives, or do a thorough google search.

You could attend 'meet the teacher' events at your current school and let the staff know what's happening and request school reports, in time for completion and transfer, before your children start the next.

Remember to talk with your family doctor about referral to a new GP in the area, including the transfer of the family's medical records. Availability of your children's records is particularly important for new

***The best move you'll ever make!***



school entry policies. To be extra organised, you could take copies of all your medical records with you in a well-marked pack or file.

### *Moving Day*

On moving day, during the loading process, you can feel confident in leaving us to get the job done. We've moved hundreds of households so if you'd rather take the kids out and do something fun, go for it!

While the family's more than welcome to stick around, it's ultimately better that young children and pets are kept a short distance away so there's less likelihood a mover may trip in a doorway while carrying your precious belongings. If you choose to leave us to it, make sure you stay long enough to see the truck arrive – it's often a nice way to mark the event.

A carefully planned move may include some homesickness for everyone in the family but it need not be a spiral of stress but rather a necessary step toward an exciting new adventure!



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