

Moving With Children

Making The Move Easier

Moving to a new location affects each child differently. Your move can be a positive adventure for all if you make it a true family affair. Talk with your children about your move as soon as the decision is made. Be upbeat, share your thoughts, and enlist their help and ideas — incorporating as many as possible so they know they are important members of the family moving "team." Every child two years of age or older, depending on the child's abilities and development, should take part in family discussions and help plan for the move.

Be sympathetic to your children's particular needs and fears, but take heart. Children adjust quickly, even those who may have reacted negatively or been overly concerned.

Here are some tips for moving with children:

Looking Forward To Your New Home

- If your children don't accompany you on a preliminary visit, take pictures of your new home and community
- Research your new community so you can talk about the neighborhood, the house, the schools, local areas of interest, and the benefits your family will enjoy in your new home
- Involve your children in plans to decorate their new bedrooms or play areas, including color choices, decoration, and arrangement of furniture
- Make new friends and become involved and active in your new community immediately. Your children will follow your example during this period of transition
- Encourage your children to keep in touch with old friends while they also enjoy making new friends

Leaving Your Old Home

- Let your kids tell the neighborhood that you're moving
- Let them help plan for the care of plants and/or pets during the move
- Help them collect addresses of their friends and neighbors (don't forget e-mail addresses)
- Involve them in organizing a tag sale or charity donation of toys, clothing, books, etc.
- Have a "good-bye old friends" party

Coping With Moving Day

- While packing and unpacking are in progress, consider having a sitter or friend watch your infants or younger children
- Don't let children run in and about the mover's van and equipment, distracting the crew from their work and professional services
- Let younger kids color or put stickers on their boxes, or make box labels, so they will be immediately recognizable coming off the moving van
- Prepare a "ready box" that can be first off the van; stock it with things you will need immediately upon arrival, such as snacks, kitchen items, bathroom toiletries, hand tools, etc.
- Put a set of sheets, towels, and personal items (blankets, toys, stuffed animals for smaller children) in each child's dresser drawer to speed bed-making and settling-in on the first night in your new home.