

Moving Children



A move to a new home can be an exciting experience for children, if you employ careful planning from start to finish. Planning begins with informing them of the upcoming move and includes organizing the details of relocating, as well as getting acquainted with your new community.

The Positive Approach

When your family is planning to relocate, your reaction to the upcoming changes is most important. Children normally reflect their parents' attitudes. Accentuate the positive. A positive parental attitude will go a long way toward soothing fears and creating an atmosphere of anticipation for the children.

- Prepare them in advance for the move. Tell them immediately about the move. Give them time to adjust to the idea.
- Answer all questions. Explain the reasons for the move as explicitly as necessary, depending on the child's age. An honest question-and-answer session will give you an idea of the specific concerns your children have about the move. This will give you the chance to resolve their fears and let them know you are interested in their opinions and feelings.
- Permit children to participate. This will give them a sense of responsibility and self-worth.

With these steps, you can ease the insecure feelings some children experience when removed from familiar surroundings. It is difficult to break strong ties to the old home, neighborhood, school and close friends. But remember, moving can be a great personal growth opportunity for all family members, including children. Take advantage of the situation and make it a truly exciting experience for everyone.

Take-Along Suggestions

Here's a checklist of things to take in the car with you:

Baby

- Suitable clothing
- Diaper or utility bag
- Blankets
- Disposable diapers
- Nursers with plastic throwaway liners, nipples and pacifiers
- Baby food, formula, fruit juice, water and a cap opener
- Favorite cuddle toy

- Baby toiletries such as powder, lotion, oil and cotton balls
- Safety-approved infant car seat
- First-aid kit (Discuss with your pediatrician any medications you should have on hand. Include a thermometer, baby pain reliever and a small hot water bottle, which also can be used as an ice bag.)

Toddler

- Collapsible stroller
- Child's portable car toilet
- Safety-approved car seat
- Favorite small toy

Elementary to Preteen

- Children in their elementary and preteen years are easier to keep content during a long trip. Provide them with a few travel games, coloring books and comic books. Let them visit the local variety store for ideas.

Teenager

- Teenagers probably will have their own ideas of travel entertainment, but might enjoy favorite books or travel games. Many just enjoy watching the scenery.