

## Relocating with Kids

Moving can be overwhelming for children. The way that kids will think about moving may be different from how adults will consider relocation. Identifying the aspects of the move that could be most difficult for your children can help their relocation experience be more positive.

### Relocating with Younger Kids



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Thinking from a child's perspective is half the battle. If you are planning to move to a new location, then you'll need to examine how your child will react to a disruption in their relationships and activities.

Before you decide to move, make sure to connect with your kids about the relocation details. This way, they will feel like part of the decision-making process. You can keep your children involved in the following ways:

- **Take the time to answer questions.** Once you discuss the possibility of moving, your child may have many questions. Make sure you take the time to answer them and explain the reasons why you need to move. You may also want to explain the distance or hours between your current and future locations. Children may assume that they will still be able to visit their old home if they think it is close.
- **Acknowledge relationships.** Make sure that your child is aware that the distance between a new home and their current home may prevent them from seeing their friends as much. You can also discuss plans for a going-away party so your children can say goodbye to friends and family. Have your kids create a guest list and think of decorations for their farewell party. Giving them a bit of decision-making power will make them feel less overwhelmed by the move.
- **Make home-hunting fun.** If you haven't already determined where you will live, make finding a home a fun activity for your kids. Create a "home hunting" calendar and include colorful stickers on the dates that you choose to see homes. Use maps and other colorful illustrations to get them excited about the new location. For each place you visit, be sure to find a local park beforehand where your children can play. If your kids feel comfortable enough to play in a new area, then it can make a possible relocation feel less stressful.
- **Plan the new bedroom.** Tell your children that they will have the opportunity to help decorate their new room. You can give them a floor plan before you move in so that they can decide where they want their belongings to go.

### Relocating with Teenagers

Since teens are more mature than your younger children, you want to make sure to inform them that you will be moving sooner rather than later. Older children tend to be more invested in friendships and their daily routines. They may strongly feel that their lives will be severely impacted by moving, so telling them immediately will be a good approach.



*Photo by pOpsicle, sxc.hu*

Make sure to check out the schools where you're looking to move. If your teen is heavily involved in the drama club, basketball team, or the Russian club, you want to show them that these options will be available at their new school. Focus on the best parts of the move to get them excited about relocating.

Kids and teenagers may have their own ideas about what they want to do before they move. Giving them the freedom to create a to-do list before the move will provide them with closure. Having a farewell party and creating home hunting activities will help your children be more receptive to moving.