



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO YOUR CHILD'S WORLD AND SEEING THINGS FROM HIS OR HER POINT OF VIEW.

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# Keeping routines during the move

Children like and need routines, but during a move it is common for familiar activities to change. Keeping routines as normal as possible helps children feel safer and more secure. Here are some ideas to help you and your children maintain routines during this stressful time.

Comfort your children during the move.

- Allow your children to hold onto comfort items as you move.
- Make moving a “team effort” and allow your children to play a role.
- Plan to set up the children’s rooms first in the new house, if possible.
- Take a “family break” for some fun activities during the move (ride go-carts or play a game together).
- Keep family routines (bedtime stories, walking pets, mealtime chores) as normal as possible.
- Keep family rituals and celebrations. If you celebrate a child’s birthday in the midst of moving, make it special!
- Order your child’s favorite meal at a restaurant.
- Stop early and take a family swim at the motel.
- Rent a video and watch it together in the motel room.
- Celebrate your safe arrival!
  - Have a lemonade toast.
  - Find the local ice cream store and share a banana split.
  - Give everyone a big family hug.

Things to remember.

- Your attitudes greatly influence how your children adjust to a move.
- All children are different and will adjust to change at different rates and in different ways. Give each child time to adjust!

## Family Rituals

Rituals are activities that create a sense of family and feeling of bonding among family members. For example, family rituals or routines can provide a feeling of togetherness (*We belong together*), consistency (*We make pancakes together on Sunday*), identity (*We’re a bicycling family*), and a way to teach values (*Each child in our family takes a turn in choosing the video to watch*). When children take an active part in creating and practicing rituals, they feel connected and a part of something larger in their lives. In times of uncertainty and change, rituals can be the glue that holds a family together.