

ENSURE YOUR CHILDREN HAVE A SEAMLESS MOVE

In the chaos of the big move, there may have been little time to consider how this will affect your children. For kids, moving into a new house can be a time of great uncertainty. Most likely they are leaving the security of the only life they've known – bedrooms, friends, favourite haunts in the neighbourhood, maybe even school – for a life a lot less certain, often with very little say in the matter. Here is some helpful advice to help smooth the transition for your little angels.

TAKE THEM TO THE NEW HOUSE BEFORE THE BIG DAY

If you are building your home now, take them to the lot and let them see its progress. This is an exciting experience and makes the whole ordeal more tangible. If you are permitted to enter the property, try to point out the floor plan – in particular where their room will be. Take them to a nearby park to play and drive around the neighbourhood so they start to imagine themselves living there. If the new home is too far away – photos and the internet are useful.

HAVE A MINI FAREWELL PARTY

Invite some of their close friends and neighbours over for a party so they can say goodbye. Use a Polaroid camera to take photos of each friend and record their address and phone numbers on the back so they can keep in touch. Make a jumbo card using bristol board and have them all sign it with best wishes.

SAY GOODBYE TO THE OLD HOUSE

When everything is packed up, take your kids around the house room by room to say goodbye. Talk about your memories in each room and make a point to say how empty the house now feels. Your children will come to realize that it is a family and personal things that make a home feel like a home.

LET THEM HAVE A SAY

When moving in, let your children make some decisions when it comes to their bedrooms. Maybe you give them two choices where the bed can be positioned or a choice of paint colour for the walls. Often parents simply announce to their children that they are moving house so this might be the child's only sense of control. Remember, furniture can always be moved and walls can be repainted.

RESTORE FAMILY ROUTINES IMMEDIATELY

Once unpacked, it is best to re-establish routines like bedtimes right away. Homework, bath time, and chores around the house still need to be done and the familiarity will help your children adjust better to the move. This is especially important for younger children who rely on consistency.

Leaving the comfort of your home, especially for a first time mover, can be a traumatic experience. But following some of these guidelines can ensure that your children settle quickly, always fondly remembering the times shared in the old house - favourite hiding spots, the time they burned a hole on the kitchen counter with those molten lead soldiers, etc – while focusing on the great times ahead.