

MOVING GUIDE

BEST STRATEGY TO PREP AND INITIATE
MOVING YOUR LITTLE ONE TO A NEW HOME!

Congratulations! Moving into a new home can feel like such a fresh start-- and it might be for your little one as well!

And as we know with our kiddos, any time we CHANGE something in their world, we may experience a little pushback: Which is **COMPLETELY NORMAL**. In general, I find most people (kids included) do not LOVE change, but with a few easy strategies, we can look forward to a smooth transition for your entire family! Check out the run down below of steps you can put into place **AHEAD OF TIME** to set the stage for a successful move.

1) EXPOSURE TO THE NEW HOME:

- It is vitally important that you offer your child as much **EXPOSURE** to their new space, especially their sleep space, as you possibly can.
- IF you are able to go over to your new home before actually moving in, be sure to bring the kiddos!
- IF you are not able to do so, make sure to spend the first day in your child's sleep space as much as possible. I **KNOW** it can be hard when you want to get cracking on putting things away and settling in. **BUT** I promise, you will be sooooo much more well rested with a kiddo who feels safe and secure in their new environment. So, dinner on the bedroom floor anyone? **YES, PLEASE!**

2) HAVE YOUR ROUTINE ON POINT:

- With so many things changing, it is important to ensure that your bedtime strategy and routine are solidified.
- This will allow your child to find comfort in the routine itself, not necessarily in the space in which it is done (just like you do when you travel!)
- So prep your kiddo by getting that routine picture perfect!

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3) COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS:

- For our older children, I recommend communicating the move thoroughly with them ahead of time:
 - Be specific: "We are going to live and sleep at our new home. Your bedroom will look different. Here is what sleep will look like in your new room..."
- Allow your child to share the control
 - Although your kiddo may not have a say in which home you choose, you can let them share in the control with things like picking out new bedding for their new bedroom. Or allowing them to pick the colors of the wall!
 - Providing your children with options and incorporating their opinion will help them know that they are PART of the family-- not just being pushed or pulled around in different directions.

4) GRACE AND PATIENCE FOR ALL OF YOU:

- This can be a huge change, especially for our toddlers and older age group who are far more aware of their surroundings and protective of their things. They can be extremely particular about the ownership of their sleep space.
 - So be prepared for pushback.
 - AND be prepared to HOLD BOUNDARIES when needed.
- Big changes can elicit big emotions: recognize, empathize and be present to your child's feelings.
 - **Remember that none of these emotions are too big for you to hold.**
- Allow yourself to also feel the frustration, exhaustion or excitement that moving brings. Be mindful if your child does not feel the same way.

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5) CONNECTION:

- Children can view bedtime as a time of separation from their parents (hello, protest when "It is time for bedtime" is said). Moving to a new home can exacerbate these feelings.
 - I recommend having A LOT of connection time between Parent and Child both before and during the move. When their "wells are filled" with connection, it is easier to have a break.
 - Consider offering a new lovie or security object for them to transfer their positive associations to!
 - Allow your child to fully express their feelings about the move
 - They may not be happy about it, and that's ok. Validate those feelings.
- You may consider sitting in their room with them for the first few nights, BUT make sure you have a plan and communicate the plan with your child AHEAD of time, so you don't get stuck in there (if that is NOT where you want to be!)

6) ENVIRONMENT:

- Make sure to prepare the sleep environment to support healthy sleep!
 - Remember: DARK, COOL... and BORING.
 - Consider keeping your child's new room free from boxes/clutter that might be too exciting OR distracting at bedtime during the move.
 - DO NOT WASH THE SHEETS!!!
 - For the love of all that is holy, keep your crib sheets DIRTY and smelling familiar! And pat yourself on the back for saving time and effort.
 - Double check there aren't any strange LIGHTS/NOISES/SHADOWS that might scare or unsettle your child.
 - IF there are, fix them if possible.
 - OR walk through them with your kiddo:
 - EXAMPLE: "There is a new light outside your window. It makes a shadow here. Shadows may feel scary until we know what they are!"

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Now, A LOT of families ask if making a **change in your child's sleep** is a good idea DURING A MOVE. Essentially the thought behind this is that moving to a new environment would give everyone the "fresh start" feeling. I will be *REALLY HONEST*, and say this is NOT my favorite plan. Here are the reasons I DO NOT LOVE the sleep change up in the middle of a move:

1) YOU ARE TIRED. Moving is exhausting. Are you going to be ready to hold to your new routine or boundary around sleep after moving boxes and couches all day? Are you going to be able focus on something NEW? My guess is probably not. And above all things when we make any changes around sleep, we are looking for consistency. So if you can't be consistent, then don't start it. Wait until you know you can.

2) Remember all the notes above about Connection and Exposure? IF you are in the thick of moving homes-- my bet is those can be running a little thin. Take as much time as you need to invest in your ultimate success. Taking the time to set the stage ahead of time can be incredibly helpful in the long run.

NOW, if you can tell me that you are:

- 1) UP FOR BEING MORE TIRED
- 2) BECAUSE YOU WILL BE CONSISTENT ABOVE ALL ELSE
- 3) BECAUSE YOU SET THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS AHEAD OF TIME....

I *MIGHT* tell you to go for it. Be prepared for the challenge.

May the odds be ever in your favor.

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