

Moving With Children

Whether moving your family to a new state or a new neighborhood, the process can be hectic—especially with young children in tow. Preparing kids for what to expect, listening to their concerns, and adding a sense of adventure are all essential steps to suppressing kids' moving fears and keeping your stress levels at bay.

Hoosier Mover experts share these five tips for a family-friendly move:

1. **Time your move.** Although circumstances often dictate the date of a move, try to time the process so that it occurs at a calm period in kids' lives. While school schedules make the most obvious difference, milestones in kids' lives like sleeping transitions or potty training should also be taken into account.
2. **Keep the lines of communication open.** Even toddlers understand family circumstances more than parents realize. Acknowledge that a move will inevitably induce fear in kids. Involve them in the conversation; that way, you're more quickly able to answer questions and avoid mood swings or temper tantrums.
3. **Keep enthusiasm levels high and make it an adventure.** Show kids pictures of their new house, school and neighborhood ahead of time. By describing room décor and key points like a bigger backyard and the activities offered by the new community, an unfamiliar environment becomes a place to look forward to rather than fear.

Anyone who moved as a child remembers the extra trips to fast food restaurants, getting to swim in a hotel pool, or sleeping in forts. To keep kids' spirits high through the upheaval of a move, capitalize on these unexpected thrills.

4. **Label boxes clearly.** In addition to staying as organized as possible with room-by-room labeled boxes, always set aside one toy that your child has to play with "right now" and do your best to know where to find things after the big move. By including specific details about the contents of a box while labeling, necessities are easy to find and at the forefront of the unpacking list.
5. **When in doubt, call in the troops.** Turning to outside help to provide alternate entertainment is oftentimes essential. If family or friends are available and willing, use them—you're likely to accomplish much more if you can find a few kid-free hours or add a few helpers to the mix.