



This Month's **ADVICE**

JULY 2023



**Military Family
Resource Centre**
Montreal Region

WELCOME • SUPPORT • UNITE

POSTING AND RELOCATION

"My wife is in the CAF, so we have to move for the first time. She will have a new position in Kingston. For my part, apart from the stress of finding myself in a new city, a new province and having to build a new social circle, I'm feeling pretty good. I'm lucky enough to be working for a company that will take care of my transfer. However, I'm worried about my children. We have 2 sons; ages 5 and 11. How do we make this move work for them?"

A little perspective:

Moving is part of the military lifestyle. These transitions can be enriching seeing new places, learning a new language, making new friends.... However, the stress associated with uprooting is not insignificant for children. According to psychologist Béatrice Vandeveld, moving becomes more difficult when it comes on top of other events requiring adjustment, such as a separation, a change of country, city, language, or culture.

What to do before your relocation?

- It's important to give children as much advance notice as possible. This will give them more time to prepare for the changes to come.
- If possible, take the children on a tour of their new home and town before the move. Let them affix a sticker or leave an object in the house to "leave its mark". It's as good a way as any to remind them that they've already been there when they officially arrive.
- Show them virtually their new school and the route they'll take to get there.
- If they're old enough, help them design their new room, choosing colors, furniture, sheets, and carpets to help make the space their own.
- Get them involved in sorting out what they can and can't take with them. Go with them to donate toys to an organization or have a garage sale.
- Prepare the boxes with them, to help them get into the transition process.
- Give children the opportunity to express their feelings and try to be honest about your own feelings.
- Most children feel angry, sad, or worried about the move. Reassure them they're not alone, and it's normal to have these feelings.

And during the relocation?

- Rule number 1: Letting go. Accept that things will be chaotic for a while.
- Keep calm during the move to maintain a positive atmosphere. Take turns taking breaks outside.
- Let an adult watch the kids. "It was my sister who kept an eye on our boy while we took care of the move. I didn't want him running around to ensure his safety, but he was on site to see what was going on." Sophie Bardeau (Naître et Grandir).
- Keep essential personal items close at hand at all times (diapers, meals, toiletries, quiet games).
- Explain clearly to the children what's going on and try to give them some quiet time.
- Try to maintain their habits after the move. Maintain routines as much as possible: bedtime, bath time, TV viewing, etc.



**DID
YOU
KNOW?**

That there is now a virtual youth app: YOUTH CONNECT. This bilingual application is aimed at young people from military families. It's a safe, supervised place for kids to share, have fun and learn. It's also a place where they can keep in touch with friends from the military community across Canada. To get the app, first register on the MFRC portal and then download it to a smart-phone, tablet, or computer. Age: 9-17



Bibliography

- *Maude Goyer – Naître et grandir*. Moving and children: tips to ease the transition.
<https://naitreetgrandir.com/fr/nouvelles/2021/04/29/demenagement-enfants-trucs-parents-transition/>
- Games and company. Moving with baby and toddler: tips and how to make it fun?
<https://www.jeuxetcompagnie.fr/un-demenagement-amusant-pour-les-enfants/>

Do you need help?

If you have any questions, concerns or in need of support, do not hesitate to contact the psychosocial counsellor at the Montreal Military Family Resource Centre by telephone: 450-358-7099 ext. 2917 (Saint-Jean), 450 462-8777 ext. 6821 (Saint-Hubert) or by e-mail: SvcPersCRFMSoutienPsySt-Jean@forces.gc.ca