Keeping routines after the move

Moving can be very stressful. Children like and need routines. Knowing what to expect helps them feel safer and more secure. Here are a few ideas to help you and your children maintain routines after the move.

- Keep family routines as normal as possible (bedtime stories, Friday night pizza, Saturday trips to the park).
- Continue family rituals and celebrations (Easter egg hunts, tooth fairy visits, Mother’s Day breakfast).
- Let your children help decide how to arrange and decorate their new rooms.
- Allow your children to purchase a small “moving in” gift.
- Give your children time to adjust at their own rate and in their own way.
- Allow your children to resolve problems that are related to the move.
  - They will need to find ways to make new friends.
  - They will need to learn the rules of their school or daycare.
  - They will need to adjust to new teachers or day care providers.
  - Offer support, love, and encouragement as your children make adjustments and solve problems.
- Wait until you are settled in your new home before making big changes, such as taking away a bottle or starting toilet training.
- Watch for changes in your children’s behavior during this time (wetting the bed, withdrawing, throwing tantrums, etc.).
  - These behaviors are usually temporary and tend to go away once everyone is settled.
  - If they continue, talk to your pediatrician and visit the Family Center in your installation for information and support.

Family Rituals

Rituals are activities that create a sense of family and feeling of bonding among family members. For example, rituals or routines provide a feeling of togetherness (We belong together), consistency (We go to Grandpa’s house every Father’s Day), identity (We’re a swimming family), and a way to teach values (We go with our parents to vote). 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.