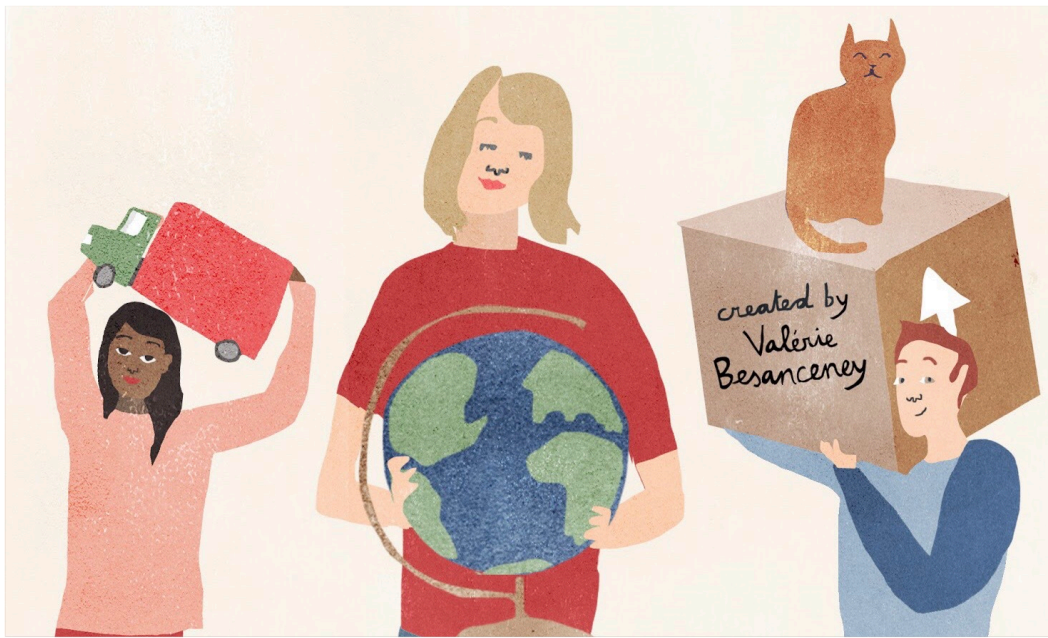


# Support Your Child While You Move

## Top 12 Tips



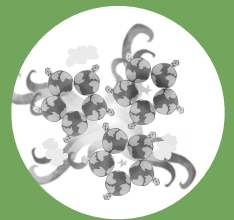
You just found out you are moving. You know that you need to support your child in this transition. These practical tips will help you guide your child through your upcoming move.

1. **Comfort rather than encourage** – Although it may seem tempting to smooth over any upset feelings, encouragement can actually trigger shame and frustration rather than true comfort. Instead of telling them it will all be okay, ask them how they really feel and then truly listen. In our attempt to protect our children from any possible pain caused by moving, we are quick to ‘help’ them look at the bright side of things. By allowing them to accept and work through their own emotions, whatever they may be, we are actually avoid unresolved grief that can manifest itself much later. Your children do not necessarily need you to cheer them up about the move, but they do need to feel heard, especially by you.
2. **Give them time** – Children need time to adjust. Although you may need to consider a variety of factors before you inform the children of your upcoming move, it is incredibly important that the children learn about their move from you first. Ideally, let them know at least two to three months in advance so that they will be able to say meaningful goodbyes while preparing to start a new chapter in their lives. Choose the moment to tell them carefully so that you know you can be there for them.



### Consulting for Families

For a more personalized consultation, contact Valérie [here](#) for a 20 minute no obligation conversation.



### Workshops for Schools and Companies

For more information on presentations or workshops, contact Valérie [here](#).



### Books

Valérie Besanceney is the author of two [B at Home: Emma Moves Again](#) and [My Moving Booklet](#).

3. **Meaningful goodbyes** – Moving means saying goodbye and saying goodbye means that there will be grief. Acknowledge the grief and use it as an opportunity to discuss the meaningful relationships your child has built. Encourage children to reflect on their friendships and relationships with family members. Perhaps they need to resolve any difficult feelings that could later cause grief. They should also consider who they want to reach out to and how to express their love and/or friendship for them. Allow time to organize last play dates, possibly a going away party, and favorite outings ‘one more last time’.
4. **Develop portable traditions** – You may be able to take the child out of (insert place), but you cannot take (insert place) out of the child. Some cultural traditions may be celebrated wherever you go, but some smaller family traditions and routines can also be taken with you. When everything around the child is changing, it may come as a welcome relief to establish a routine that has some sense of familiarity. If you sing to your children every night, then make sure to keep it up. If you have pizza night on Fridays in one place, then see if you can keep this up in the next place. Some family traditions can also be the perfect opportunity to invite new friends along wherever you land.
5. **Prepare linguistically** – Help your child prepare to function, even at the most basic level (*hello, how are you? Please and thank you. Where is the toilet?*) in the language of your destination. Meanwhile, try to ensure they keep up their mother tongue, as well as their main academic language. It is important that your child feels strong enough in one of these two languages to feel and think in it so they feel they own a heart language.
6. **Give them the cross cultural language** – Explain to your children that there is a whole community of other children who grow up cross culturally. They will quickly identify with others who have a similar upbringing growing up in various cultures, speaking different language, and not feeling a sense of belonging to one particular place. Knowing, and understanding the cross cultural language will give them life-long skills to navigate a cross cultural life.
7. **Ownership** – Allow children to take ownership of some decisions. Depending on their age, they may not be able to influence the ‘big’ decisions such as where you will live, which school they will attend, and what academic curriculum they end up following. However, they can have a say in the smaller decisions, such as how to decorate their room, which activities they want to

### Change is Sudden - Transition is a Process

Supporting your child through transitions is not a simple one-off conversation. It requires constant guidance as they navigate through the challenges that transition brings along. They may feel like they have very little control over the change that is happening, yet you can help them feel empowered in the way they learn to manage this transition. In the [Roots with Boots Toolkit for Parents](#), you will find numerous more tips, strategies, tools, and links to helpful resources as you guide your child to feel grounded in their roots as they move.



pursue, what kind of agreements you put in place for letting them touch base with their friends 'back home'.

8. **Record stories** – Storytelling and photo albums are incredibly meaningful ways for children to remember their experiences from the past as they construct their sense of identity. To help develop their emotional vocabulary and to help build resilience, create family emotion stories as a form of personal narrative. It is important for children to know where they are from in order to grow into who they are.
9. **Identify with stories** – To help children express their own emotions, they sometimes find it easier to speak about fictional characters who they relate to. When we read or listen or even watch stories about others, we often feel triggered by their experiences and recognize our own emotions. Reading with your child (or discussing what they are reading with them) is a useful way for you to gain some insight on how they may feel when they are not comfortable expressing it directly.
10. **Keepsakes** – When we move we cannot always take everything with us. However, it can really help a child to always have their 'sacred object' come with them wherever they go. It can also help them to collect keepsakes from each place that they feel strongly connected to, as the keepsakes will remind them of the experiences, places, and people that help shape their own identity.
11. **Stay in touch** – Moving does not mean strong ties with family and friends cannot be maintained. Think of practical and creative ways to stay in touch. A portable tradition can also be translated into weekly Sunday Skype calls with the Grandparents. If possible, consider returning to one place (whether it's a place you own, family or friends own, or a place you simply love to return to) every year, so that your child will create memories of one 'home' in one place every single year of their childhood.
12. **Be intentional** – If you, as a parent, are not committed to going through this transition in a positive manner, you cannot expect your children to do so. By communicating about the transition in an open and positive way, your children will be more likely to do so as well. This does not mean you negate the challenges that come with a move. However, by managing the challenges and by helping them to do so, you will all be able to reap the benefits of this new experience in a much more meaningful way.

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD  
FEEL A SENSE OF  
BELONGING?

Learn more in

The Roots with Boots Toolkit  
for Parents

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD  
FEEL GROUNDED WHILE  
MOVING?

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HOW CAN MY CHILD  
LEARN TO COPE WITH ANY  
TRANSITION?

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