



STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

Relocation

Start with a story: Darius just changed schools. He spends most of his first week watching others play. He tells his aunt Jenny that he really misses his old friends. "I don't like this place," he says. Jenny notices that Darius is having trouble sleeping and he's started getting more emotional when things don't go his way.

Talk about it: Ask, "What are some changes you've had to make? What kinds of things helped to make those changes easier for you?"

Strategies for adjusting to a move

Moving can mean big changes and transitions. You can prepare your child by incorporating familiar routines into new situations, letting him know what to expect, and introducing him to some things he can get excited about.

Preparing to move

- If possible, take your child to his new neighborhood or school before you move. Show him some new places and things that you think will excite him.
- In one box, pack your child's special toys and family pictures so that when you get to your new home, he will be able to use these things right away.

Adjusting after a move

- Create new routines at your new home, and point out the things that will stay the same no matter where you are.
- Go on a walk and note some of the places you are excited to explore.

Recipe for Resilience

Making new friends Using dolls or puppets, practice ways to approach a friend. Act out a scenario with your child with language he might use to approach a new friend (“Hi! My name is [his name]. What’s your name?”). Before you do, encourage him to think about the qualities of a good friend. Ask, “What does a good friend act like? What does a good friend say? What does a good friend do?”



A child’s perspective: It’s normal for a move to arouse insecure feelings, new worries, and new fears in a child. It may also cause a child to regress and act out. Maintain familiar routines and be aware of your behaviors and conversations at this time. If your child sees that you are positive and optimistic, he’ll be much more likely to feel that way, too!



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