



Listen to your child

Some children are eager to meet new friends and begin exploring their new environment, whilst others need more time to feel comfortable. Listen to your children's needs and concerns and let them set the pace.



Prepare the RAFT.

The late David Pollock, an authority on third culture kids (TCK) and transitions, has designed a helpful acronym to help children prepare for moving.

R Reconciliation

Don't leave unfinished issues with the people left behind. Children tend to pick fights with their best friends or start acting in uncharacteristic ways, once they find out they are leaving. This is how they distance themselves emotionally before moving. Help them deal with this behaviour and try to heal these rifts. Leaving well allows them to arrive well.

A Affirmation

Recognise people, things, and places that have had a positive impact on your children. Take the time to thank them and spend time with them.

F Farewell

Find the best way for your children to say goodbye to those that matter to them. It can be a farewell party or a picture book of their best friends. Right before leaving, make sure to pack their favourite items in their carry-on luggage, so they have something familiar and comforting when they arrive in their new home.

T Think Destination or Transition

Begin integrating aspects of your old life into your new home, but don't sabotage the transition. There needs to be a balance between thinking of the past and integrating the present and future. Social media makes it easy to keep in touch, but don't let that stop your children from connecting with people in your new place.

Founded in 1972, the International School of London (ISL) Group comprises two International Baccalaureate (IB) schools situated in London (UK) and Doha (Qatar) providing education for internationally mobile students.

Although the languages of the school is English, the schools are known for integrating home languages and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) into the internationally recognised curricula.

The schools are culturally diverse communities which foster a passion and enthusiasm for learning, and where students' cultural and linguistic identities are valued and nurtured. ISL Schools develop the attitudes, skills and understanding needed for further education and to become active and responsible contributors to local and global communities.

The ISL Group enrolls over 1800 students from 88 countries, and teaches 25 languages.

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Tips for Relocating Families

Relocating across the country or around the world can be an exciting time for any family, but the ongoing success of that transition frequently depends on the support and welcome from the new community.

International schools need to offer more than an exceptional academic curriculum. They need to nurture the entire family in their new home, school and country.

Here are a few tips to help ease the transition.



Think through the entire process

A good transition will require time and preparation, and your children will need to be involved through a good part of it. You can decide when to tell them, but don't keep it a secret from them. Kids may not understand what is happening, but they will sense that something is happening.



Let your children be a part of the transition

Involve them in decisions, so they can begin their mental transition. If possible, take them to visit their new home and school, so they can see what is waiting for them.



Make sure the transition does not interrupt their favourite activities

Children need to know that their interest can relocate with them. Identify potential paces where they can continue their favourite activity, be it ballet, swimming, or football.



Research potential schools

For children, schools are much more than places to learn. They are the portals into their new life. Their new school will become the centre of their social world and help shape their identity. Your children's school can be instrumental in a successful transition, and identifying one which understands the importance of soft landings can make all the difference.



Transition Assistance

Transition and relocation programmes are essential, and some schools have mastered them, creating a space where parents and children quickly feel integrated within their new community.



Start school on the same day as everyone else

If possible, let your children start school on the same day as everyone else. That's usually when new students enter the school, so your children will feel part of the normal rhythm of the school. If that's not possible, enquire about how the school will help your child adjust with the transition.

Language and Educational Matters

Special Needs

If your child has special educational needs, this should be your first consideration in a move. Your new school may not have the same types and range of services as the current school. Be prepared when you visit a potential school. Bring educational psychologist reports, individualised educational plans (IEP), school records or reports for at least the previous three years. Be open and straightforward with the new school. Form the teamwork from the onset and establish trust from the first contact.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and Mother Tongue Languages

Make sure to think about language transitioning. Supporting mother tongue language literacy goes beyond preserving cultural connections and providing a soft landing. Research demonstrates that continuing language and literacy in the first language alongside the development of the new language is in the child's best interests. The children develop academically and cognitively at an age-appropriate level and are more successful in their academic achievement. They learn the new language faster and have greater breadth and depth in their additional language learning. Continuing the mother tongue language and literacy in the new school ensures family connections are maintained and that the students maintain language flexibility.

The award-winning ISL Transitions Team ensure that no one is left behind in an international move. The goal is to ensure all members of the ISL school community feel welcomed. ISL is dedicated to playing a positive and active role in the transition.

Transition

Seminars and programmes are given to help parents understand and anticipate transition issues.

Community

Each campus has a vibrant and active parent community to welcome new members and help them settle into the school and the local area.

EAP

ISL provide significant support for non-native English speaking students from Early Childhood onwards. All the teachers in the department are trained EAP specialists with a wealth of experience in international schools around the world. The overriding philosophy is to respond to the needs of the varying types of EAP students. This involves flexibility in courses provided by the EAP department in liaison with the other departments.

Participation

ISL is actively involved with the Relocation Community, assisting them in helping their clients adapt to their new communities as well as providing education on the issues of children in transition. We are members of the Association of Relocation Professionals, Canadian Employee Relocation Council, European Relocation Association, Forum for Expatriate Management and the Worldwide ERC.

Mother Tongue Languages

Two of the ISL schools provide an integrated mother tongue languages programme from early childhood through the IB Diploma ensuring successful transitions back home or to further education elsewhere in the world.

Language

Children aren't the only ones learning a new language. ISL also offers English language support for parents. This provides parents an opportunity to socialise while refining their English skills in a relaxed environment.