

# Tips for moving abroad with kids!

## TIPS TO FOLLOW BEFORE RELOCATING OVERSEAS:

1. Get your kids involved right from the start. I believe this is the most important advice I can give you. Lotte and Pepijn were 12 and 10 when we moved. When we told them we would most likely move to Taiwan, Lotte was very enthusiastic, and Pepijn immediately said he didn't want to go. By the time we left for Taiwan, it was exactly the opposite. These changing emotions are part of moving abroad and will undoubtedly be something that you will also experience. Try to be honest and open and accept these fluctuating emotions. Just be there for your kids.
2. Ask them regularly about their feelings. I always tried this when I was alone with them. The rides back in the car from school or the sports clubs were a perfect moment to start these conversations. The day trips were also when I had the best conversations with them and when they were willing to talk about their feelings.
3. Let them talk, you listen. Let them know that you cannot feel what they are feeling but that you understand that what they are going through is hard. It's a new experience for the whole family and it makes sense that you won't be able to answer many of their questions.
4. Let your child walk around in their new country via Google Earth. These virtual tours are a lovely way to get an idea of the new country.
5. Often your child will go to an international school close to where you will live, but if you do have a choice in schools, it might be an idea to involve them in this.
6. Check out the school's website. Often, many photos or videos give them an idea of where they will spend a lot of time.
7. Make a notebook in which you compile lists of all great places to visit in your new country. Think of amusement parks, national parks, unique buildings, beaches, etc. Have them look it all up themselves on the internet.
8. For children who like to write, it might be an idea to keep a diary. I know that there are also books available to keep track of their move through fill-in pages. These books are a lovely memory for later.  
Check out this website [www.meandmybigmove.com](http://www.meandmybigmove.com) for an excellent workbook in different languages.
9. Organize a farewell party for friends and family and don't forget the friends from their class and the sports clubs. Saying goodbye is something that comes with expat life. It may not always be easy, but it is also part of this life.

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10. Let your child decorate their new bedroom. They can find great ideas on Pinterest. Then look together what is and isn't possible concerning the rules of the landlord. But you can often come a long way to create your child's unique place.
11. Technology will keep it more accessible to stay close to friends. There are video calls, chats, social media, and so on. They will be afraid that friends will soon forget them, but the reality is that most friends consider it an honor if they contact them again. Encourage your child to take that first step. Someone has to do it. During the first months, we also had regular contact with the class via skype calls. But to be honest, it's not easy to skype with a whole class.
12. An easy way to make new friends is a place where you can share similar interests. Think of sports clubs or hobby clubs. Also, by following the after-school clubs at school, they quickly make contact with others.
13. Plan trips to places you want to visit together with your child. Start with your living environment and expand it later. Also, don't forget the lists you have made with all the places to go in your new country. My daughter also really enjoyed looking for restaurants via google maps. Involve them as much as possible in discovering your new country.
14. Let them know well in advance when you have a return trip. The children can prepare themselves for this trip and already arrange things with their friends. Also, leave enough time for them to hang out with their friends. These catch-ups with friends are especially important during the first years you are traveling back.