

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

Whether you are moving yourself or an entire family, moving across town or across the country, moving can be a very exciting time. Unfortunately it also can be a very stressful time as well. There is so much to do and so many unknowns, is it any wonder that tension builds, tempers flare and nerves become frazzled? Then can come the restless nights where you just can't get to sleep because your mind keeps worrying about how things are going to turn out and all those things that still need to get done. Research tells us that moving is one of the top ten most stressful life events we go through, but there are some things we can do to diffuse the trauma of moving and make settling into a new area, dare I say it, enjoyable.

First be aware of you needs and those of the other members of your family. Moving can be particularly difficult for children and teenagers. Leaving friends and familiar surroundings often leaves children, and many adults, feeling anxious or even fearful of their new surroundings. It is important to establish a sense of belonging in the new area. The local chamber of commerce is often a great place to get maps, telephone books, and other information about your new community. Take time to take the whole family by so each can have the opportunity to ask about community services that are important to them. You might want to find out about local garbage pickup or a good service center for your car but community recreation centers like pools and basketball courts may be the top priority of your kids. Finding out that the local library checks out videos for free and that they have a great selection of materials for young and old can not only provide a little needed diversion but save you the added expense of movie rentals.

Take time to meet your neighbors. We all live in such a hurried world that many times we just don't take time to get to know each other. Your neighbors have the potential to be some of your greatest allies and a wealth of information or your worst nightmares, so take a little time to invest in your relationship with them. Good neighbors are worth their weight in gold.

After a move it can be very comforting to stay in touch with friends and neighbors from the old neighborhood. Letter writing can provide a very cathartic effect for any age. A familiar voice and a good conversation with someone you trust can help bridge the time it takes to make new friends and confidants.

Pace yourself. Sometimes deadlines have to be met, and clutter can be very distressing, but there is no law that says that every box has to be unpacked within a given time period. When you can, take time to relax and enjoy your family and your new neighborhood - check out restaurants, visit the sights, take a pool or lake day, go to church together or, my personal favorite, find two trees with cool shade and spend some time in a hammock.

Last year we moved our family and our practices to Windsor from Oklahoma City. We experienced the frantic hustle of selling our home, finding a new home, financing, packing, moving, unpacking, establishing cable, setting up trash service, finding office space, opening two businesses, getting professional licensing from the State, etc., etc., etc.. Everyday we would take at least a moment to catch a sunset, enjoy the beauty of the mountains or share a smile with a store clerk. Some of the best professional advice I can offer to you is to take the time to find two smiles everyday. Give one to someone who needs one and always remember to give one to yourself.

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