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Tips for Helping a Child with a Disability Prepare for a Move

Moving with a family is a huge undertaking. When you have a child with a disability, however, you need to take extra steps to ensure your little one is ready for the transition. Read on to learn how to make this process easier on your family:

Do Your Research

Before you start preparing your child for your move, you need to make sure you're fully ready for the process. Do plenty of research into your local housing market, what kind of rent or mortgage you can afford, and what kind of home you'll need upon moving.

If you already own property, remember to [factor in the value](#) of your current home and reach out to a trustworthy real estate agent once you're ready to house hunt in earnest. You may also want to make some updates to boost your home's value. Be sure to [document any upgrades](#) you make by keeping receipts and taking before-and-after photos.

Be Open and Honest

One of the biggest mistakes parents make is withholding information from their children. However, [kids can handle more](#) than we often give them credit for, especially children with disabilities. It's important to be open and honest about the moving process, and keep your kids up to date as you get closer to and eventually secure a home.

Approach the topic in ways that are clear and appropriate for your child's age and ability. For example, it may be easier to explain to younger children if you get a [picture book](#) about moving. You should also give them the chance to ask questions and answer them to the best of your ability. Keeping them in the dark only serves to increase stress and anxiety about the change.

Get Them Involved

No matter how old you are, feeling out of control can be an extremely stressful experience. That's why it's so important to give your child responsibilities when it comes to the moving process. Give them moving-related jobs, such as packing up their room, labeling boxes, or choosing a paint color for [their new room](#).

Getting them involved this way helps ensure that the moving process is something you're all doing as a family, as opposed to something that's happening to your child. It might feel like a fine distinction to you, but it can make all the difference for a child. Kids with disabilities are especially at risk of feeling unheard when it comes to major life choices, so keeping them involved in the process as much as possible will help ease the transition.

Handle Accessibility Concerns

Factor accessibility into your moving plans early. For example, if your child gets overwhelmed by busy or noisy spaces, consider making plans for them to stay with a friend or family member on moving day. If they want to be involved in the move and are old enough to do so safely, brainstorm with them to come up with jobs they can take on for moving day. For example, you can put them in charge of organizing and tidying up their new room. This gives them the chance to contribute and put their own spin on how they want their room to look.

If you work from home, take steps to ensure your home office is a safe space [without hazards](#). If your office has a door, keep it shut or locked when you're not working. If you're working in an open space, tie up loose cords, remove clutter, and add outlet covers.

Make Room for Big Feelings

Moving can be a serious emotional upheaval for anyone. However, kids with disabilities often face more stress and anxiety than their able-bodied or neurotypical peers might. After all, they know their current home is a safe and comfortable place for them to live. Even if you've done

everything right when it comes to accessibility in the new space, they might still have to grapple with the fear of the unknown and stress about managing the [adjustment period](#).

Remind them that these feelings are valid and that they have your support. Encourage them to use healthy coping skills to navigate challenging emotions related to your move, and let them know that the hard part of moving is temporary. With time, they'll be able to feel right at home.

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