

news release

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194-06

MAKING YOUR FAMILY'S HOLIDAY MOVE MERRY

United Van Lines offers tips for moving with children during the holiday season

Moving with children is never easy, and moving during the holidays can really add stress to the situation...and the season. Because the home is a special source of security and comfort for children – particularly during the hustle and bustle of the holiday season -- United Van Lines offers these tips to keep everything “calm and bright:”

- **Consider scheduling a “pre-holiday” celebration** – If you know you’ll be moving right around the time of your regular holiday celebration and unable to maintain some of your family’s special traditions, then try to schedule festivities earlier in the month. Be sure to do some of the things that make your family celebration special. If you always hang stockings and fill them, do it on the “pre-holiday.” If you always have a special breakfast, do that, as well. Children find comfort in traditions, even if they’re celebrated early.
- **Involve the children** – Let the children be a part of informing friends and family of your move and your new address. Turn your holiday cards into a change of address card, and let the children draw pictures of themselves at their new home to include in the correspondence. It will help the children feel excited about their soon-to-be new residence, and it can keep them busy while you’re addressing cards and envelopes.
- **Make new friends but keep the old** – Before the move, give your children an opportunity to spend time with their friends to say goodbye. Since it’s the season of giving, consider buying some inexpensive stationary sets for them to give to treasured friends, and include some self-addressed stamped envelopes to encourage these people to stay in touch. Those letters from familiar playmates will be invaluable during the first few weeks at your new location.
- **Reassure children and alleviate fears** – Sometimes children worry that their holiday presents won’t find them if they live somewhere else. Remind them that holidays will be celebrated at their new home just as they have been celebrated in their current home. Try to compile as much information about their new neighborhood as you can, such as proximity to favorite restaurants, the number of children living nearby and access to family-friendly attractions. The Internet can offer a wealth of resources. Also, try to get a couple of photographs of your new home and surroundings (ask your real estate agent to help), and share all of the information with your children.
- **Something shiny, something new!** – If you exchange presents ahead of the move, let your children pack some of their favorite new toys in a box that will travel in the car with you rather than having everything loaded onto the moving

truck. That way they'll have some fun new things to play with when they arrive in the new home, and they won't worry about being separated from a new, prized possession.

- **Enjoy the winter vacation** – Once you've arrived at your new location, if the children still have time off before school resumes, make sure you set aside some time for fun. It's tempting to spend every minute unpacking and getting settled in, but a few outings to explore your new surroundings can go a long way toward making the transition easier for them. Better yet, invite a few of the new neighbors over for a play date, giving your children a jump on making friends and possibly providing them with a familiar face when they start at the new school after the first of the year.
- **Parents are role models** – Maintaining a positive attitude will help to project optimism and excitement, not anxiety and fear, about the move and new experiences that lie ahead. Kids are likely to follow suit.

About United Van Lines

United Van Lines, with headquarters in suburban St. Louis, maintains a network of 1,000 affiliated agencies throughout the world. As the nation's largest mover, United holds more than 30 percent of the market, which is nearly double the market share of the second largest carrier. More information about United and its services is available at www.unitedvanlines.com.