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## The International Move: TEN TO-DO'S FOR THE KIDS

**By Kathy Chrisovergis, Managing Director of Celebrity International Movers**

If there's one community that understands moving it's the Expat community in Greece. Moving can be a stressful process for anyone especially when it comes to children. Make the transition easier by getting them involved and excited about the big move.

- 1) Inform Them: Tell your children about the upcoming move as soon as the decision has been made.
- 2) Be Positive: Even if you have doubts showing positive behavior is especially important for children who feel scared. Kids pick up on negative feelings.
- 3) Creating Excitement: Make learning about your new destination a fun project. Have computer savvy kids find information on the web and have them list places they want to visit, things to do and food to eat.
- 4) Familiarize Home: If you have a new home waiting, ask for pictures to be emailed.
- 5) New Classmates: If you know about schooling in advance, contact the school and ask to have a pen pal assigned so your child will know someone when they arrive. Also ask about any foreign customs to prepare your kids.
- 6) Keeping Old Friends: Assure your kids they can keep in touch with friends. Smaller children can put together a picture address book.
- 7) Special Day: Plan a party or outing for your child and his/her friends before the move. Encourage friends to bring pre-made notes or pictures to open at a later date for times when encouragement will be needed.
- 8) Favorite Places: Plan a few final visits to favorite venues.
- 9) Careful Sorting: Don't throw our old toys which can help ease the transition by providing a sense of continuity.
- 10) Garage Sale: Let the children help and earn money they can exchange for their new country's currency.

The kids that tend to have it the hardest are those that are going through big changes already like puberty or school changes, especially middle-school age kids. The best thing for parents to do is support each other and work hard to make the move as positive as possible.

We pay attention to the little details that can make a difference. For example, we offer colourful children's boxes so they can pack their own special belongings. When they get to their new home they know *exactly* which box is their own.

In the end, mutual support, flexibility and a little fun can help both parents and kids make their next move their best move!

*- Greek-American mom and Expat Kathy Chrisovergis started Celebrity International Movers in Athens 27 years ago. Celebrity is a proud NCBTS sponsor.*

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