

Moving in Day

This is a pivotal day in the life of the child, the birth family and the foster family. The birth family and the child are experiencing a big loss and a range of strong emotions. (commonly a jumble of fear, anger, shame, hope, relief, loneliness, guilt, shock, grief and others) Your family is also experiencing a major change, and may experience emotions such as apprehension, doubt, worry, and anticipation. Stress levels will be high. Your job as a professional parent on moving in day is to respect those feelings. Let each one involved know it is OK to express those feelings and talk things over. Helping the child feel comfortable is one way to ease some of the pressure they are feeling. Knowledge about the child can help ease some pressure for your family and give you a basis for moving forward. This checklist is intended to help you have a successful moving in day. Don't forget to refer to PRIDE book or other references to refresh your memory; also, customize the list to your situation/preferences.

What you need to know/ask for/do	
Child's name	
Age/birthday	
Special needs (medical, emotional, physical, social, dietary, allergies, behavioral, etc.)	
Why the child is in foster care	
Circumstances of the move / relationship with parents	
Child's reactions to the move (as noted by case workers or others involved)	
The special items the child would like to have from home (toy, blanket, teddy bear, storybook, textbooks, etc.	
The school / daycare the child attends; teacher's name	
Picture of the family to be kept with the child	
Case Worker name and contact information	
Contact information for child's doctor, dentist, pharmacy, and other medical personnel / make initial placement appointments	
Child's social security number and Medicaid number	
Contact information for previous custodian (if other than birth family)	

Placement agreement, initial clothing allowance, car seats, cribs, donated blanket-quilt, donated personal journey bag, etc.	
Ask the child about their favorites (food, color, show, game, animal, etc.)	
Determine the last time the child had a full meal.	
Individuals whose contact with the child is restricted or forbidden	
Contact information for siblings (case worker, foster family, etc.)	
Take pictures of some relatively happy part of this first day / week. (interaction with foster family, other children or pets, during play) and begin collecting Lifebook-type materials/information.	
Start and maintain the foster care log for the placement. Include visitation plan and goals. Record observations of the child on this first day. Record what seemed to make them feel more secure / comfortable. Share with case worker and bio parents throughout the placement.	
When the next "visit" is expected (with family, case worker, others) Address transportation issues.	
Court Hearing / Family Engagement dates	
Have on hand for any child in your age range: toothbrush, hairbrush/comb/ to suit any hair, mattress protection, night light, oversized T-shirt for sleeping, some toys, simple house rules/routine, contact info for friends who will help, plan for day care / sick child care	
Apply at Health Department for WIC if eligible: age five or under, Medicaid card and placement agreement.	

What the child needs to know

Bedroom / Bed assignment	
Rooms that are off limits	
Rules for going outside to play / where they can play outside	
Rules for closed doors and bathroom occupancy	
A few Things the family does for fun that she/he can participate in	
Toys, books, games, other entertainment that are available to them	
Usual routines for meals (where and when), snacks, bedtime, getting ready for school,	
Safe ways to express feelings, how to give and receive feedback	
Which shelves, drawers, bins, etc. are to be used for their possessions	
When they might have a visit with their family	
How chores are assigned / scheduled	
Rules for use of phones, computers, game systems, etc.	
The amount of the allowance (as provided in the maintenance payment) and any rules on using it	