Ten-year-old Justine describes the day she found out she was moving: "I was 7 years old when my dad told me we were moving out of the city. I was really excited to finally be getting my own room and maybe even a dog. But I was also very scared I wouldn't make any friends or find my way around my new school."

Evan remembers the day he found out he was moving a little differently: "When I had to move at the end of the Year Six it was because my dad was being posted. It stunk. In one summer, I had to go from Queensland to New South Wales and get used to everything being new."

Justine and Evan are only two of the many thousands of kids who move each year. And the way they felt about the moves – scared, excited, angry - are just a few of the feelings kids have about moving. Moving isn't easy for anyone, even for adults. And while making a move can be a time for some great new things - like your own room or a new place to explore - it can also be a time that's sad and stressful, too. Here are some ways to make a move a little easier.

**Talk It Out**

When you find out that you're moving, a million thoughts may race through your head. The next place those thoughts should go is simple: out of your mouth! If you feel afraid you won't make new friends or angry because you weren't asked about the move, talk about it with the adults in your house. If you're nervous about riding the bus with 30 new kids or upset because you have to give up your position as captain of the soccer team, don't keep it to yourself. Whatever you're feeling, talk to your mum or dad about it, and you'll find that they will be understanding. They will probably also have some good ideas and suggestions, so that's one more reason to be open about your feelings.

Often when a family has to move the parents might be under a lot of stress. It always feels bad to see a parent who is upset, so you might think the best thing would be to
keep your feelings to yourself. But the truth is that it's always better to talk about your feelings, even if your parents seem to have a lot of his or her own worries. Your parents will be glad you shared your feelings - and so will you.

**Check Things Out**
Finding out about the new place you'll be living is good for a couple of reasons: first, you'll feel less nervous when you know what to expect; and second, you may find out some exciting things!

If you are going to be moving to a town or city nearby, ask a parent to drive you around so you can check things out. The first thing you'll want to do is see your new house. Depending on if the house is new (or who is living in it), your parents may be able to show you around. This will give you a chance to think about how you want your room to look! There is an internet site that has pictures of Defence houses – ask your parents to show your new house to you.

Next, you and your parents can find your school and visit for a couple of minutes so you can see what it's like. You may even be able to ask a teacher or school aide to give you a tour of the school, - especially if the school has a Defence School Transition Aide - so you'll be better able to find your way around once you've started there. If you're into band, sports, or other clubs, ask which activities take place in your new school - and if there are any deadlines for signing up or trying out.

If you're moving far away to a different part of the country or even the world, you'll need to check things out in a different way. You can go to the library and read about the new place you'll be living; you can do all kinds of searches on the Internet about your new town or city. If you have any relatives or friends living in the new place, ask them if they'll make a video for you to watch or take some photos to send to you. A moving bonus: there may be cool things in the new place that aren't in your present location. Maybe you'll be moving from a warm place where it never snows to a place that's cold, and you'll finally be able to try snow boarding. Or maybe you love the idea of seeing cows on farms, but the only ones you've ever seen have been on TV - now you'll get to hear them moo in person.

**Get That Address Book Out**
One thing about moving that isn't so much fun is saying good-bye to friends and relatives - no one likes this part. But a sure way to make it less sad is to grab an address book (or even a plain notebook) ahead of time and have everyone write down
his or her address, phone number, and e-mail address. Or you can get a big blank book and ask your friends to fill it with messages. If you have a camera or video camera (or can borrow one), take lots of pictures or videos of your friends, your favourite places, and your neighbourhood. You can even put together a scrap book or shoebox full of things that remind you of your old location and all your friends.

**Hitting the Road**

When moving day finally comes, don't forget that it's OK to feel sad when saying good-bye to people. Many people cry when saying good-bye, so that's OK, too. When you get to your new house, unpack your favourite stuff first - this will help you feel more at home. You can even hang up pictures of your friends and favourite places to help remind you of them.

Settling in might take a little while, so try to be patient. Being the "new kid" in school might feel funny, but you won't be the new kid for very long. If you did gymnastics at home, check and see if you can join a club in your new area. If you were working on your green belt in karate at your old karate school, find out if you can get back into the dojo right away in a new karate school. If you loved to go to art classes at the museum at home, find out if you can take some at the museum in your new town or city. The more things you do and the more kids you meet, the better you'll start to feel.

And don't ever forget that you can keep in contact with friends from home! Send a postcard from your new city or town, and mail (or even email!) pictures of your new room. Ask a parent if you can use the phone to call up old friends or send some email greetings to people back home. And be sure to find out if you can make plans to go back and visit your old neighbourhood. Even better - have a friend from back home make plans to come out and visit during the next school holidays. Then you can show off your new city or town!