

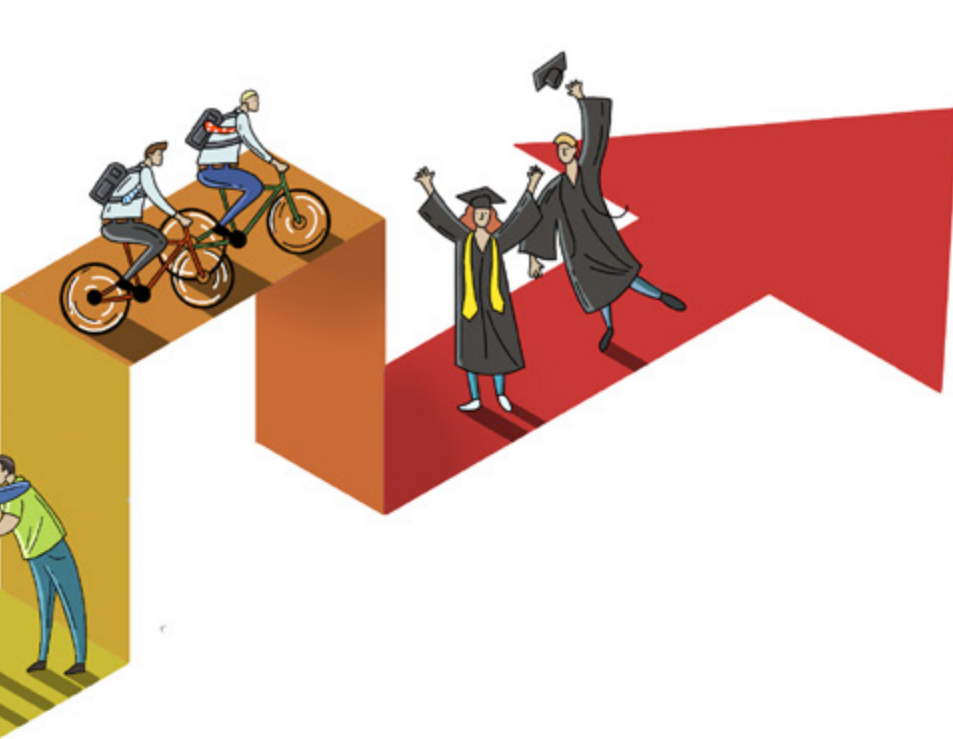
Navigating through Transitions

Starting school. Leaving Primary. Going to the temple. Getting a new job. Graduating from high school. Serving a mission.

These are just some of the milestones your children might encounter in life, and they all require special preparation. Changes can be intimidating, but a few tools can help us navigate them successfully. Here are some tips to help you guide your children through life's transitions.

- **Listen to their feelings** about the transition. Ask them what they are excited about and what they are nervous about. Be encouraging but understanding of their worries. Sometimes a sympathetic ear is all they need to feel at ease with the coming change.
- **Give them as much information as possible** about what they can expect with something new. For example, if your child is going to do temple baptisms for the first time, give them a step-by-step overview of what will happen once they are inside the temple. If you are moving to a new city, find out what you can about their new school, ward, and neighborhood. When you minimize the unknowns, you take away sources of anxiety. Their new knowledge can help them understand the new experience they will have.





- **Create a plan** to handle new situations. Anticipate potential problems and brainstorm ways to deal with them. Help children think of solutions to their “what if” questions: “What if I get on the wrong bus?” “What if I get lonely at camp?” “What if I don’t like my new teacher?” Come up with an emergency backup plan so they feel more comfortable: “If you get stressed out, call me.” “If a class is too hard, we can talk to your teacher.”
- **Empower them** by reminding them of the milestones they have passed before and the tools they have now to help them succeed. Use positive, encouraging language: “You made it through that; you can make it through this!” “You can do hard things.” “You have what you need. You are ready.” “I believe in you.”
- **Reassure them** that things will be OK. Many people have overcome similar struggles; chances are they will too! Remind them that they can pray to their Heavenly Father for help anytime, anywhere, about anything.
- **Create a support system** so your children don’t feel alone in their struggle. If you have experienced something similar, tell them about it. How did you feel? How did you adjust? Try to find someone to be your child’s “transition buddy.” Can they find a friend to stick with in their new Primary class? Is there someone you know who could mentor them through their job or class? Who will their college roommates be?
- **Go at their pace.** Your child might need a nudge forward or even a caution to slow down, but try not to change their natural pace too much. Follow their lead. If they want to jump in feet first, make sure they have everything they need to do so. If they don’t feel ready to move on yet, don’t force them into the deep end. Gently encourage them to venture outside their comfort zone, but take it slow. Adapt for your child’s needs, and seek guidance from the Spirit to know how best to help. ■

FOR TEENS

In the *New Era*:

- “Will Relief Society Be Boring?”
June 2018, 6.
- “My First Day in Elders Quorum,”
June 2018, 8.

In the *Ensign*:

- “Teens and Temple Covenants,”
Oct. 2013, 18.

For other resources, visit youth.ChurchofJesusChrist.org.