

QUOTE

*"We cannot direct the wind,
but we can adjust the sails."*

— Dolly Parton



FAMILIES NAVIGATING CHANGE

Change is a natural part of family life—new jobs, moving homes, children growing, or unexpected challenges. Even small changes like adjusting to a new routine, can be overwhelming, and even positive changes can bring stress and uncertainty. As home visitors, we often meet families in the midst of transitions, big or small. Your role is to walk alongside families as they navigate change.

Parents may feel overwhelmed by shifting routines, worried about how children will adjust, or unsure of their next steps. By listening without judgment, acknowledging the stress of change, and highlighting their strengths, you help families see that they already have tools for resilience. Children, too, take their cues from how adults handle transitions—when parents approach change with calm confidence, children learn flexibility and trust.

Navigating change isn't about avoiding discomfort, but about building the confidence to adapt. Each supportive conversation, each reminder of past successes, and each small step forward reinforces a family's ability to weather change together. By being a steady presence, you help families transform change into growth.

REFLECTION

1. How do you manage change in your life? What is your philosophy and approach?
2. How do you encourage yourself when change feels difficult?
3. Who do you know that handles change well? What do you admire about how they manage change in their life?

TIPS

Here are **4 strategies** to help parents navigate change in their lives:

1. **Build understanding and emotional safety.** Listen deeply by offering parents space to talk through their feelings without judgement. Help parents and children identify and put words to their feeling, ex. "it sounds like you're worried about...". Validate struggles by acknowledging that transitions are hard and it's ok to feel unsettled.
2. **Strengthen coping skills.** Listen to parents talk about their changes and help them reduce changes to manageable parts. Highlight past successes by highlighting how they have successfully navigated change before. Share simple strategies including calming tools like deep breathing or short grounding exercises. Encourage flexibility by discussing "plan B" to manage expectations.
3. **Help parents help their children.** Identify ways to create predictability for their children. Routines, traditions and schedules can give children a sense of stability amid change. Use stories, play and visual supports by sharing books or role playing scenarios that help children make sense of new situations. Calendars, picture schedules, and countdowns can give children a concrete understanding of expectations during times of change.
4. **Strengthen connection & support.** Encourage regular family check ins, both with you and with each other. Link families to community resources that can ease the stress during transitions. Build peer support by connecting families with each other. Stay consistently present for a family facing changes. Show up reliably as a trusted, steady source of support when everything else feels uncertain.