

Transcript - A Look Back on the Move Podcast

We just completed our cross country move and we've been settled into our new home in California for about a month. My 3-year-old son, James, this was his first long-distance trip and he did pretty well. We were concerned about potty-training issues since he was just recently potty trained. We were able to stop every two hours or so but we did put a Pull-up on him. But he was pretty good about letting us know when he had to go so it wasn't as big as a challenge as I had thought it would be.

The drive was really smooth. We made it in about four days, which was pretty good time for us. We were allotted eight days of travel time so we decided to take a few days for ourselves and relax and do some site-seeing and hit some of the vacation or tourist spots. We were able to stay at a Marine Corps base in Barstow, California, and there we were able to purchase tickets through the ITT Office for some of the tourist spots in California for Disney Land, California Adventure and some other spots.

In deciding on where to stay each night we looked for hotels on our GPS and also through the Internet on our cell phone. So, we were able to find some good deals through the Internet travel sites, which was helpful because you're not sure where you're going to be each day.

With James, we kept him occupied with the DVD player and he slept a lot, which was good. Most times he was fine during the drive. It was when we let him loose out of the car when we went to have lunch or dinner that he would get a little rambunctious and jump around and we would have to settle him down a little bit. We had more issues with him out of the car than in the car.

When we arrived to our new base we were put in temporary lodging for about a week. We were scheduled to move into our home and there were some delays. No one was living in our new home, but the turnover company had to make sure everything was good before we could move in, cleaning it and things like that. But it wasn't too much of an issue. We were able to get another night in the Navy lodge and stay in our same room.

One of the things we did first when we arrived was contact the Child Development Center on base, basically to confirm what day we would be able to start our son. And when our husband had called they notified us that they had dropped us from the waiting list and basically we would have to start all over again when we had started the process five months prior to our move. So this was a little bit upsetting. We called them back and said, both of us work - my husband and I work, so we really needed to get our son in daycare as soon as possible. We arrived in the middle of June and they were able to fit us in at the Child Development Center, and that would start on July 1. So, we had about a two-week period with him being at home with us.

One of the advantages, I think, of living on base is by going to the playground and the community center and different things like that, you tend to meet people. Even by dropping my son at the Child Development Center each morning, I meet other parents and we get to talk and get to know each other. So, I think a combination of all of those things have helped us meet some people and make some friends. When we first moved in, all of the neighbors here have been really great. They talk to you as soon as they see you. They ring your doorbell and bring you muffins, things like that which is new to us as well being the first time living on base. It's been really welcoming.

A few of the lessons learned from this move, we had done a DITY move and we probably going back, we know we're going back to Virginia, we would opt this time for a government move instead. It was just a lot of work. It's a huge move, moving cross country, so we've already made that decision. I think as soon as we organized everything and unpacked, we both said, okay, we're having the government move us on the way back. Because we had to do a lot of work.

We may stay at some military bases again at their temporary lodging facilities. That was a benefit, especially when you go through some desolate areas where you're really unfamiliar with the territory. When we hit California it was the middle of the Mojave desert and the first place we saw was Barstow Marine Corps base. So, that was great for us. We knew nothing. It was very kind of small town. So, we felt the safest and the most comfortable by doing that. So, we will probably hit at least one military temporary lodging facility on the way back as well.

Moving was challenging and a lot of work, but I think well worth it at the end. Because you get to see a whole other place and parts of the country that you would never have the opportunity to see otherwise. Especially with the government, they're footing the bill for a lot of the cost along the way so you can take advantage of that while you're in the military and get to see other places. There are pros and cons to every place you go, but overall I think it's a great experience for people and their children to be able to do.