

Careful thought and planning, a conscious effort, and sometimes considerable expense are involved in maintaining relationships by long distance. When you pack your glassware and books for the move, you must also pack up bits and pieces of your past to ensure continuity of existence for yourself and your children. Perhaps this is why one refers to them as belongings - your books, not your children.

- What can you do to reduce the feeling that everything is out of your hands, that you have lost control of the direction your life is taking?
- What can you do about the inevitable bouts of homesickness?

Take something of home with you. Establish the means of continuing communication with family and friends not accompanying you. Take all the necessary odds and ends needed to celebrate the rites and rituals that bind your family together.

Pre-posting Activities:

- attend the pre-posting briefings organized by the Posting Centre; they cover many topics from preparation of inventories to Consular assistant training
- pick up a copy of the latest Post Report, Education Report and any other information available in the Posting Centre
- make an appointment with appropriate resource personnel in the Posting Centre for education, spousal employment counselling
- if appropriate, make an appointment with the EAP for personal counselling, for example, support groups in the post country
- visit PAFSO, the FSCA for information and contacts; they can put you in touch with people who have been to that post

Family Activities:

- take family albums; make special efforts to get pictures of relatives, home, neighbourhood, grandparents' farm, playgrounds and favourite leisure/recreation spots, your favourite places and those of your children
- take along a selection of Canadiana, books, postcards, tourist items to remind you and to teach your children about Canadian culture
- arrange for a few Canadian magazines either direct from the publisher or to be sent by relatives