



IMAGINE STEPPING INTO  
YOUR CHILD'S WORLD AND  
SEEING THINGS FROM HIS  
OR HER POINT OF VIEW.

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# Expect changes when you return

Although you know things have changed at home while you were away, you can't help thinking that everything will be the same. You will be surprised by at least one thing that has changed. You may be surprised by lots of things. As you begin to think about going home, consider what may be different. This is a good way to begin to deal with possible changes.

Expect changes in your children.

- Your children have grown physically, socially, and emotionally while you have been away.
- Your children may view you as a stranger or have new and different responses to you.
  - Your children may feel angry that you have been gone.
  - They may have forgotten what it is like to have you at home.
  - Your children may view you as a rival and feel jealousy toward you.
- Your children may not use words to express their feelings. Their behavior and body language may reveal more about their feelings than their words.
  - They may throw tantrums, become withdrawn, or revert in ways such as toilet training.
  - Before you react to their behavior, think about the causes. Be patient and understanding.
- If a child was born while you were away, it will take time for both of you to adjust.

Expect changes in your spouse.

- Your spouse is likely to be more independent.
- He or she may have developed new friendships or skills.
- Your spouse may have new ways of managing the children, household tasks, and so forth.
- If needed, seek professional help together.