

# Living between 2 homes

**“It’s tiring having two homes...”**

**TROY, 11**

It’s true: one of the hardest things about your parents separating might be going between your two homes.

Having a routine can help make it easier to move to your other parents’ house. You might still feel sad, or a bit worries, but there are things that can help

## What’s my routine?

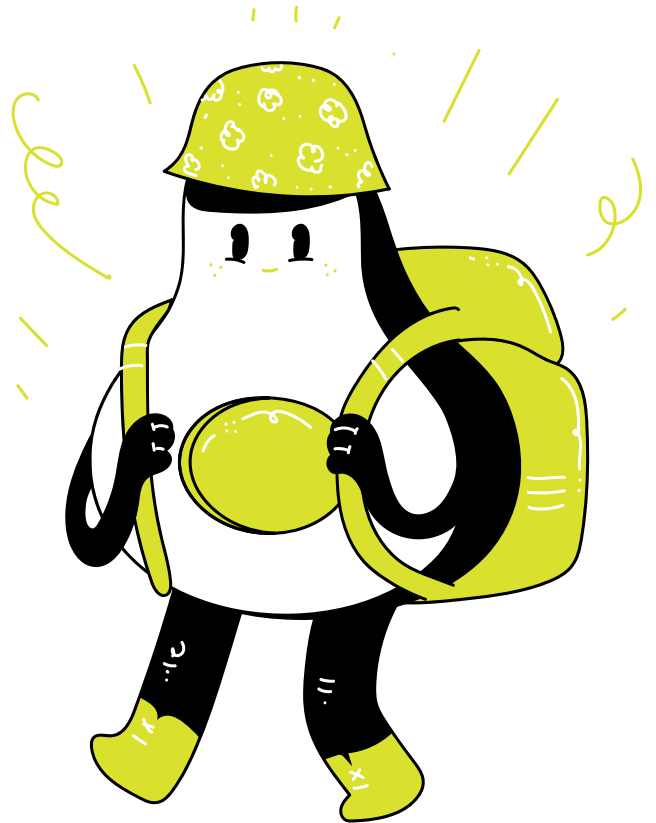
Figuring out your routine can be tricky. But a calendar can help.

If you choose to use a calendar, you can mark the important dates and events and when you will see each parent.

You can create your own special ‘to do’ list before you move.

### You can:

- Say a special goodbye to the pets (if you have any)
- Pack your favourite thing last
- Leave a little note for your parent to find and hide it in the kitchen
- You might even have a special thing you do when you arrive back at the other parents house too!



**Uniting**

**“It’s confusing. Sometimes I can’t remember whose house I’m going home to.”**

**AMY, 11**

### **Does anyone else find it this hard?**

If you feel this way, you’re not alone.

Many kids find moving between two homes exhausting – and confusing.

All the packing and unpacking... Remembering what to take to school because you’ll need it at the other house on the weekend.

Remembering your sports gear, library books and notes from school.

In each house, there are certain rules, bed times, chores, expectations and routines.

**Remember: It takes time to adjust to each house again when you move between homes.**

### **Here’s how some Anchor kids have described it:**

<p><b>“Sometimes it feels like I’m a snail going between two places without my shell.”</b></p> <p><b>MICHAEL, 15</b></p>	<p><b>“It’s like I am always unpacking and I forget things when I am at Dad’s so we have to go to Mum’s to get them.”</b></p> <p><b>ARI, 13</b></p>
<p><b>“I left my swimming bag at Mum’s... then I couldn’t go in the swimming carnival. I had to sit and cheer for everyone else all day.”</b></p> <p><b>JESSIE, 9</b></p>	<p><b>“I left my homework at Dad’s when I really needed to finish my assessment on the weekend. Mum wouldn’t take me over there to get it.”</b></p> <p><b>BRANDON, 14</b></p>

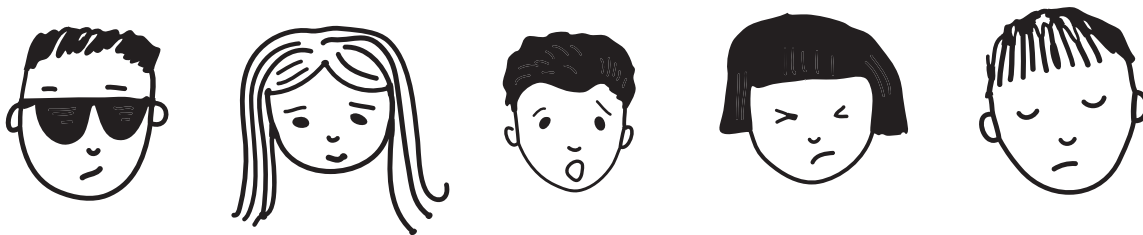


## Your needs matter

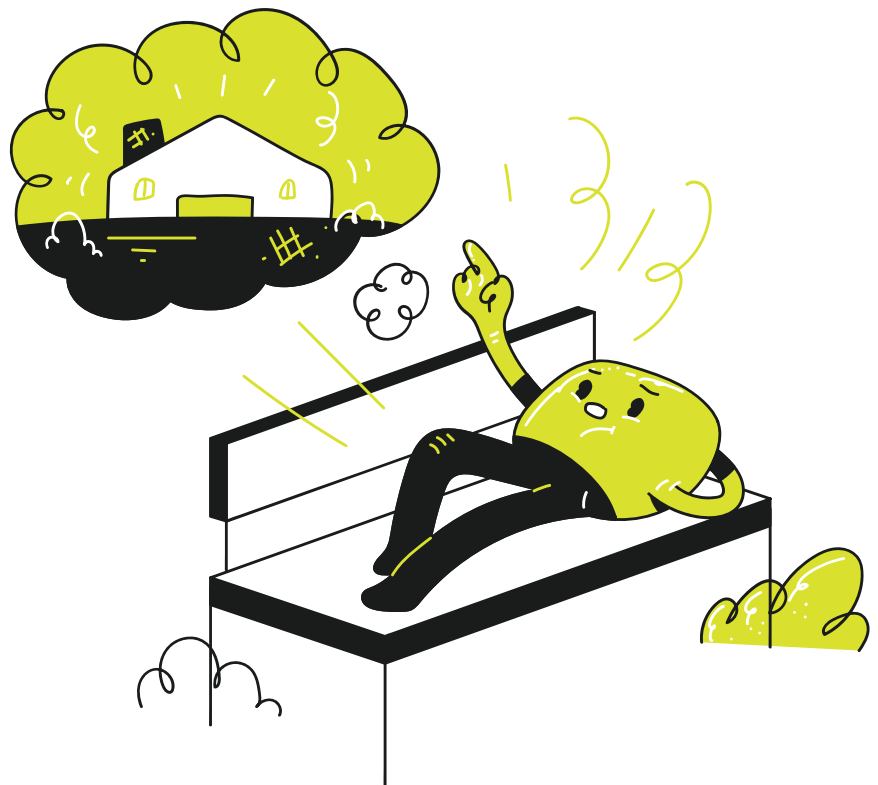
Worrying about causing your parents stress can make you more likely to hold your feelings in. You might be scared to hurt their feelings by expressing how you feel.

But your needs matter.

Feeling sad, frustrated, angry, resentful or unhappy about your living arrangements is totally normal.



With the right support and understanding, you will be able to adjust to living between two homes. And as you get older, those plans might need to change to meet your needs.



# Uniting

**“I don’t have any of my own space at my houses.”**

**MAYA, 14**

### **Where’s my space?**

It’s normal to want to have your own stuff around you and a space to call your own.

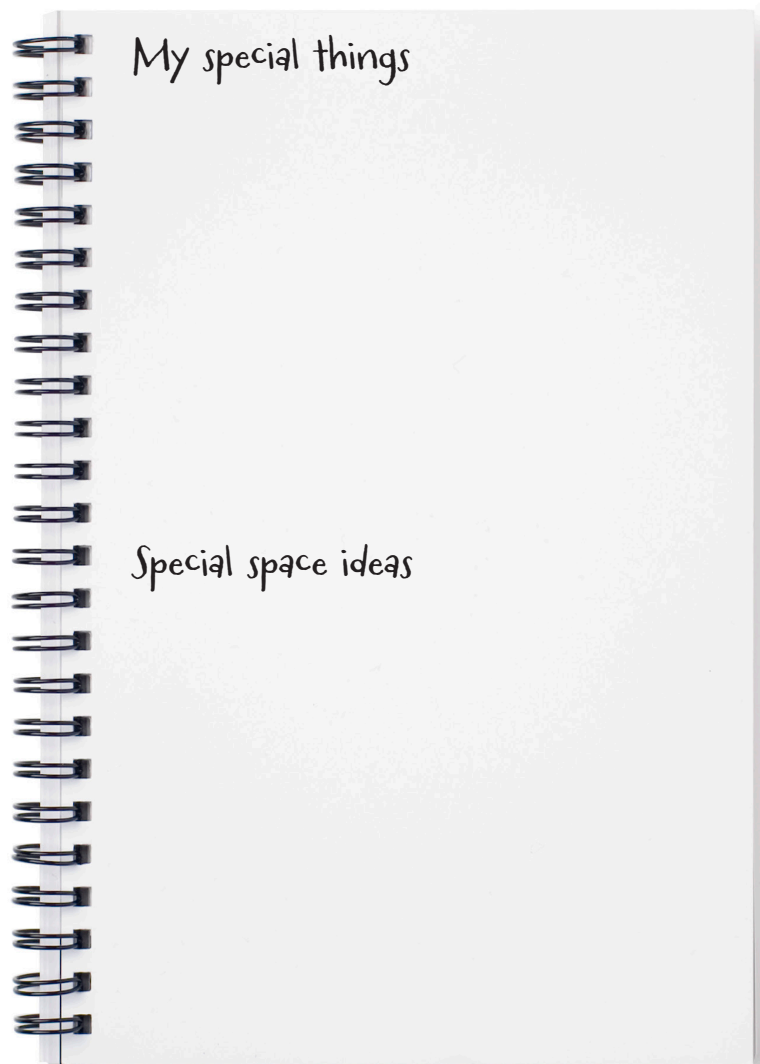
Ideally, you will have a new special place of your own. One that you can decorate, retreat to, listen to music or do your homework...

You might want some of your special things nearby like:

- Toys
- games
- photos
- posters
- pictures
- activities
- craft.

If you don’t have space set aside, you could ask your parents. If there’s no room, it could be a corner, drawer or box that’s just for your things.

**A special space just for you.**



## Top tips for travelling between 2 homes

### 1. Get organised

It can be hard to remember what to take between two homes. So it's really important that your parents support you with this process.

Ask for a shared calendar where you can note your important dates including:

- Parties
- Sporting events
- Homework due dates.

### 2. Keep a checklist

A checklist of things to pack can ease your mental load. The list can include:

- Clothes
- Uniforms
- Textbooks
- Toys or games.

### 3. Double up on the basics

Keep essential items at both homes so there's less to pack. Stuff like:

- Toothbrush
- Pyjamas
- Toiletries.

### 4. Make it feel like home

Think about the things that will make you feel comfy and cosy.

- Keep pictures of your other parent somewhere with you.
- Take special items (like the book you're reading or your favourite toy) to both homes.
- If you don't have your own bedroom, ask if you can store your special things in a safe place.

If you want to talk about what has happened in your family – or about living in two homes – it can be helpful to chat with a trusted adult, a school counsellor or even one of our Anchor counsellors. **Find people who listen.**

You can call this free kids helpline any time day or night:

**Kids Helpline 24/7 1800 55 1800**

