



Welcome to ICS Addis Ababa

Making the Most of Your Move

At ICS, we understand that moving to a new country can be difficult for any family whether it is your first global move or you have moved many times before. This guide is meant to help parents plan a move and give suggestions to help in the transition to ICS, Addis Ababa and Ethiopia.

When you step off the plane in August at Bole International Airport you may be met by rain or at least a cool breeze due to arriving during the last six weeks of the rainy season. The rainy season in Addis Ababa starts in June and ends around the end of September; the weather during rest of the year is sunny and generally very pleasant. Your first view of Addis will probably be Bole Road, which is a hub for all types of modern shops, cafes, and restaurants. Bole Road represents the cosmopolitan view of Addis and shows that Addis Ababa is really a city in transition. In contrast, you will still see all kinds of animals such as sheep, cows and chickens in the streets on their way to market right alongside the cars, people and new buildings. Addis Ababa, a city with an estimated 4 million people, is a hub of Africa hosting many international organizations such as the United Nations, European Union, African Union and many more non-government agencies (NGO) and charities. Along with the hustle and bustle of a big city, you will also find that Addis Ababa is surrounded by hills and nature, which makes it a great place for nature lovers. In terms of community, Addis is regarded as one of the most safe and secure cities in Africa. Ethiopia is a religious country where multiple religions have co-existed peacefully for centuries. You will see and hear many Ethiopian Orthodox churches and notice monthly celebrations for Saint days. You will also see and hear many mosques near and around Addis.

When you arrive at ICS for the first day of school, you will see a beautiful campus located in a residential area of the city. The school campus boasts a running track, tennis courts, basketball courts, softball diamond, gymnasium and children's playground. You will see many people gathering and talking, so come in and join the ICS community.

Welcome!





HOW IT FEELS TO MOVE

One of the most important issues to anyone with children is their reaction to the news that they are moving and their adjustment to the new home. Being informed is very important to children. Keeping children in "the loop", consulting them about choices whenever possible, and including them in the family game plan will work wonders toward their adjustment.

Preschool Children

Infants, toddlers and preschoolers are not able to comprehend the meaning of the move or complex explanations. They are affected by the reactions and availability of their caretakers. They do best when things are predictable; thus keeping to a routine with familiar things and people eases the transition for them. Avoid making other changes at the same time as the move, such as toilet training or transferring to a new bed as to not overwhelm and confuse a young child.

Ages 5 to 6

Children in kindergarten or first grade may be vulnerable because they are in the process of separating from their parents and adjusting to teachers and social relationships. They may temporarily go back to behaviors typical of an earlier stage and become more dependent on their parents.

Ages 6 to 12

Elementary age kids are usually most concerned with how the everyday routines of their lives are going to change. Showing them pictures, videos and magazines of their new home will help a lot, as well as opportunities to do activities they like. They will also be concerned about fitting in with peers and dealing with different academic demands. They may also be better able to tolerate the 'new kid jitters' if a sibling will be at the same school.

Teenagers

Teenagers are most concerned with leaving their friends and with fitting in at the new school. They may react angrily to the move; even insist they're not going. This is usually due to the total lack of control they have over everything important in their lives; friends, school and jobs being disrupted. They are curious about the clothing, hairstyles, music, etc., that the kids in the new country will have. Getting connected with students at the new school via Facebook or email can be very reassuring.

Books To Help You Prepare

Grades K – 2

A Tiger Called Thomas / Charlotte Zolotow
Help! We're Moving / Dianna Booher
Will I Have A Friend / Miriam Cohen
Purple Cow to the Rescue / Ann Cole
Anno's Counting House / Mit Anno
Annie Bananie / Komaiko
The Wing Shop / Woodruff

Grades 5 and Up

Amber Brown Is Not A Crayon / Paula Danziger
Pick-Up Sticks / Sarah Ellis
Maybe Yes, Maybe No / Susan Patron

Grades 3 – 4

A Question Of Time / Dina Anastasio
Away Goes Sally / Elizabeth Coatsworth
Kitty From The Start / Judy Delton
Just The Two Of Us / Jan Greenberg
Aldo Applesauce / Hurwitz
Anastasia Again! / Lois Lowry
Good-bye Stacey, Good-bye / Ann Martin
The Kid In the Red Jacket / Barbara Park
Gaffer Samson's Luck / W. Paton
Amy Moves In / Marilyn Sachs
This Place Has No Atmosphere / Paula Danziger
Homesick / Jean Fritz





THE MOVE

Some tips and general information for parents

Before the Move

Talk to your children about their feelings (anger, grief, tears) regarding the move; acknowledging feelings is more effective than ignoring them.

Explain clearly why the move is necessary and talk about the decision. Explain the reason for the move in language appropriate to the child's age. If the move will mean difficult changes, parents must be honest about things that will and will not change. For older children include them, if possible, in any decision-making. Although children may not have veto power about the move, allow them control over certain things like the color of their new bedroom or their choice of after-school activities.

Help your children say "goodbye" to school, friends, family members, caregivers and anyone that is close to them; make sure there is enough time to say goodbye and that no one close is left out. It may be helpful to plan the first visit back home before setting out; this provides some relief to the thought that they will never see friends or family they left behind. Children will be less likely to feel alone if they are able to look forward to getting back together with friends.

Give younger children a job to do – have them help box up their favorite toys, books and belongings; "labeling" their boxes with crayons and stickers. Pack these boxes last, so they will be unloaded first.

Create "goodbye" rituals" – making memory books painting and signing a tshirt, compiling photo albums, taping video memories; all tools to acknowledge relationships, helping children say goodbye consciously.

Be prepared for difficult reactions and be careful not to succumb to bribes or threats. Children are often naturally upset and angry about a move. Parents should not sugar coat or minimize their reactions, nor should they avoid a child's negativity. Some leniency may creep in – extra time spend on the computer or watching TV – however, it is important to set limits on behavior, but it is also important to accept their sadness.

Familiarize the children with the new place with maps, photos etc. Students may also be able to chat or email with other children/students prior to arriving. ICS has contact information for current parents and students available by request.

Make sure to bring important personal items with you in your hand luggage, including special toys for younger children and entertainment (DVDs, books) for older children.

During the Move

It can be tempting to literally "clean house" when moving. But this should be done carefully with respect to children's possessions. Discarding old toys or unused items may be necessary, but the loss of material things may overwhelm some children. Better to help them sort out the bulk of their things once they've moved in when they can feel more in control of their new environment. Have children of all ages pack a bag of essential, favorite, "can't live without" things to keep with them at all times.

After the Move

For the Family

Try to keep the family schedule as normal as possible. Stress often comes with change but maintaining structure will help give your child the extra security needed in the new environment. Allow the child to decorate his or her room with familiar things.

Find religious and community organizations. In Addis Ababa there are many churches and social clubs: Greek, Italian, various embassy clubs; these organizations can provide a ready structure of activities, contacts and resources for the whole family.

Stay connected to the previous home. The Internet is a mixed blessing for children in a transition situation. Email to far-away friends helps a child stay connected to a support system and provides an outlet for talking about the new home and experiences. But when a child spends long periods of time chatting with friends "back home" it can decrease the motivation to become involved with the new community and interfere with the adjustment to new friends. Wherever your home may be, it is nice to keep in touch by email or sending pictures of your new home. Your friends and family at home will miss you like you miss them – writing will be nice for them and you!

Do things you enjoy! Although you are in a different country, you can still enjoy some of the things you have previously. Some activities in Addis Ababa include swimming, tennis, hiking, and horseback riding.

Find friends to spend time with in things that you like to do or have in common with others in your similar situation. In Addis Ababa, there is a large social network of foreigners from everywhere. You are not alone – many people are doing the same thing that you are doing.

Be positive about your new environment; children pick up on parent's attitudes.

Keep a sense of humor and "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff" – Like many large cities, Addis Ababa can be trying at times and it is key not to focus on the day-to-day inconveniences.

Separate in your own mind the inevitable difficulties of childhood development from those of an international move. Don't blame every problem on their international-mobile lives.

Plan mini adventures in the new city to discover familiar things like movies, ice cream shops, and restaurants.

Bring the family to visit ICS, to become familiar with the campus, if school has not yet started.



How to Get Help

If you are having significant difficulties with the transition to life in Addis Ababa, seek help. ICS counselors are always available to discuss any transition issues or concerns you have about yourself and/or your family. The Welcome to Addis guide lists up-to-date community resources such as clinics, hospitals, psychologists and counselors.

In addition, your child's teacher is always available to discuss concerns about your children and the school nurse is always available for yourself and/or your family.

The ICS Welcome to Addis Guide is an invaluable resource for everything from packing tips to medical facilities in Addis. It is prepared by ICS parents and was updated in May 2010.

<http://www.icsaddis.edu.et/admissions/moving-addis>

To See and Do

- Ice Cream – Bruno's Italian Ice Cream behind Bole Medhane Alem Church
- Kid's Play Zone, cinema and cafes – Edna Mall in Bole Medhane Alem
- Laphto Fitness Center – has a bowling alley, billiards room, swimming pool and gym located in Old Airport near St. Gabriel Church
- Lion Park/Zoo – Siddist Kilo area; <http://kirba.wordpress.com/2009/12/18/a-morning-at-the-lion-park-in-addis-ababa/>

For Your Children

Be patient, some children will dive in, develop a support network of friends and become involved with school and activities without missing a beat. Other kids may need more time and help to feel acclimated and at ease. Be willing to seek **academic tutoring or extra help** from teachers if the academic system or language is new. It is difficult on the child's morale to be behind the peer group and additional encouragement and praise are needed.

Encourage your child to invite new acquaintances to your home when you are there, or organize playdates for younger children. It will provide both parents and children to meet new friends.

ICS has numerous sports for all ages; tennis, volleyball, basketball, football/soccer, and track and field are available. Encourage older children to become involved in a sports team or club. Teams and clubs provide a ready-made group of peers on a regular basis. It becomes easier for a child to then say "hi" and to avoid feeling like a stranger in the lunchroom. Parents can invite the team over for snacks to help the child build new relationships. In this way parents can get to know parents of new peers.



Activities currently offered at various grade levels in the elementary school include Amharic, Art Club, ballet, basketball, Computer Club, dance, Elementary Leadership Council, Girl Scouts, Girls Lacrosse, gymnastics, Lego Club, Reading Club and Tae Kwon Do. In the middle and high school, there are additional activities such as Model United Nations, art studio, cultural dance, school newspaper, drama, ultimate Frisbee, fitness and conditioning, Chess Club and various tutoring opportunities. ICS also has an active National Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society, and a Student Council.



Allow your child a certain amount of "quiet time" with no commitments. Relocating takes a lot of energy and children need time to internalize the changes.



Ask open-ended questions and then be available to listen to your child either after school, at mealtime or bedtime. Children need to be able to share what they are experiencing in the new environment.



For You As Parents

Parents should also access their own network to gain information about the local culture for themselves and their children. Especially with teens, who are more apt to be on their own without adult supervision, it is important for parents to know where teens hang out, what's safe, and what to avoid.



Parents should be in contact with the school and other areas in which children are involved to monitor how they are making the transition. Parents should consider that transition might be progressing better at school than at home, or vice versa.

Be honest about how you feel and talk about how you feel – transition and change can be difficult. It's all right to be upset, to be sad and to grieve the loss of who and what you have left behind. Talking to other parents, friends, co-workers can help you to feel better. They can listen and may offer suggestions to make things easier for you.



Find a private place/person to vent – occasionally, you will just need somewhere or someone to talk with to discuss issues in your new environment. This is normal when moving to a new place and especially a new culture.

Exercise regularly – exercise releases stress and makes you feel good about yourself; it leads to a healthier overall person. Try new things - learn Amharic, take tennis lessons, go horseback riding.

The homemaker may face additional challenges since he/she will be faced with daily cultural immersion including but not limited to shopping, driving and language barriers. Find others who have been in Addis Ababa for 3 to 6 months and can help you find the basic things for your family that you will need immediately such as groceries and basic medications. Establish a routine for yourself and keep as busy as you are accustomed to being in your previous home.

Life At ICS



For many expatriate families, ICS is a community focal point, for parents as well as students. The campus is open to ICS families every day, and many facilities are available for parent use. Having a coffee on the cafeteria veranda, walking with new friends on the track, reading a story to children in the library, acting as the room parent for your child's classroom - these are all ways you can get involved at ICS.

Evening/ weekend group sports	Track	Library	Wireless internet	Parent Teacher Association	Parent involvement
Soccer, basketball, volleyball, tennis, ultimate Frisbee	Many parents run or walk on the ICS track	Students and parents can check out books for home use; this is especially useful during the time before your shipment arrives	Bring your own laptop and get connected, or use a school computer in the library	The ICS PTA is an active group of parents who will welcome your participation and who are a good resource for information	In events like Student- Parent Tennis Tournaments or Career Day, parents can give back to the school

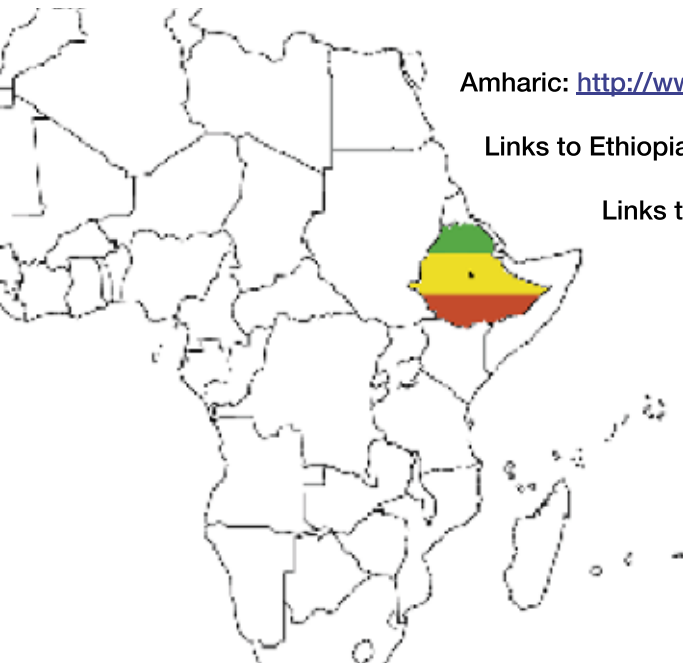
ICS Website - <http://www.icsaddis.edu.et/>

Welcome to Addis Guide - <http://www.icsaddis.edu.et/admissions/moving-addis>



ETHIOPIA

Learn about the new place where you live – no matter how it may seem, there are both good and bad things about this new place where you live. Find out about Addis Ababa and Ethiopia in general. What are the people like? What are their traditions? Holidays? What is their history? There is a lot to learn about ALL places in the world. Try to learn some basic Amharic; it always helps when dealing with locals for shopping and simple greetings.



Amharic: http://www.adoptionadvocates.org/ethiopia/faqs/FAQ_Amharic.pdf

Links to Ethiopian general culture: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_culture.

Links to Ethiopian History: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethiopian_history.