

Individual relocation profile and relocation plan

Supporting children and adults with intellectual and sensory disabilities when moving house



Marijse Pol

Bartiméus
Expertise Centre Deafblindness

BARTIMEUS SERIES

Colophon

Bartiméus
PO Box 340
3940 AH Doorn
T 0900 – 77 888 99 (local rates)
Email: info@bartimeus.nl
www.bartimeus.nl

text: Marijse Pol
photos: Ingrid Korenstra
production: Pinta Grafische Producties

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Although every attempt has been made to reference the literature in line with copyright law, this proved no longer possible in a number of cases. In such cases, Bartiméus asks that you contact them, so that this can be rectified in a second edition.

Preface

Bartiméus is an organisation dedicated to people with visual disabilities. Clients who live at Bartiméus typically have additional intellectual, physical and/or other sensory disabilities. We have noticed that for these clients, moving house – even within the same institution – is a major process. It has a large impact on clients and thus also on the organisation and its staff. Therefore, it is important to be well prepared for the moving process to ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible.

In preparing for a move, a number of questions arise.

What is involved for people with intellectual and sensory disabilities? What is the impact of the move on people with disabilities? What should you take into account and who should be involved? How should client support be organised? The Individual relocation profile and relocation plan has been drawn up in an effort to answer these questions. The individual relocation profile and plan describe the preparations that the client's family and professionals can make to ensure the move proceeds as smoothly and efficiently as possible. To this end the client's parents or guardians and care providers are considered experts with respect to the client, but it should also be kept in mind that the client is an expert with regard to him or herself. It follows that the preparation for and the move itself is a joint process, whereby clients are enabled as far as possible to conduct the move independently and in their own way.

Marijse Pol

Bartiméus Expertise Centre Deafblindness

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Introduction

Moving house involves a change of location, space and possibly also people. It is considered a major life event that can have stressful and negative implications both for children and adults, with or without disabilities¹. People who live in residential facilities undergo major life events more often than people who live at home². Links have been found between psychological problems, attachment disorders and stressful events^{1,2}. Experiencing multiple life events has also been linked to depression, personality disorders and adjustment disorders³. However, if the change involved serves to increase quality of life, there may be fewer or no negative effects¹. Whether a life event is experienced as positive or negative is ultimately determined by how a person experiences the change⁴.

In any event, the consequences of moving should not be underestimated and the process as a whole should be properly supervised. To support the person who is moving, knowledge is needed of what is involved in a move and of how it is experienced. What does the move entail for the client? What direct and possibly indirect effects will it have? How can parents, the organisation and its staff anticipate these effects? These are just a few of the questions that this individual relocation profile and relocation plan should help you to answer.

The starting point of this profile and plan is to find out how family members and professionals can provide for the needs of the person who is moving. Particularly for people with disabilities, it is important first to examine and potentially modify the environment in line with their individual needs. People with disabilities, especially multiple disabilities (such as deafblindness), can be very vulnerable as well as highly dependent on their environment. To best serve their interests, this dependence must be taken into account, which means the moving process should begin on the side of the family/caregivers or care provider.

The individual relocation profile and plan is structured as follows.

First, background information is provided on individual characteristics that may have an impact on the move (and the way in which the client experiences it). This background information gives rise to questions about the person who is moving. The answers to these questions ultimately form the client's individual relocation profile. Based on this profile, an individual relocation plan can be drawn up with concrete steps to be taken. This lets everyone involved know what they need to do to ensure the move proceeds as smoothly and efficiently as possible. The individual relocation profile can be found in Appendix 1, the individual relocation plan in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 provides an example of a relocation profile and a relocation plan. Appendixes 1 and 2 are also available on the CD-ROM. You can

fill in these documents and print them out or you can first print them out and fill them in on paper and then place them in the client's file.

The relocation profile and relocation plan are designed for any individual who is moving house. The guidelines, tips and suggestions should therefore be seen as nothing more or less than potential ideas for the person moving. It requires knowledge and expertise on the part of the reader or person filling in the profiles to tailor the relocation profile and plan towards the client. The relocation profile and plan are very practical tools for preparing for the move, conducting the move itself and adjusting to the changes afterwards.

Needless to say: in this book we refer to the client, but son, daughter or resident may just as well be read. Likewise, the term carer is used, but parent, caregiver or statutory guardian may be equally applicable. This document is written with an internal move within a residential facility in mind, but the individual relocation profile and plan can also be used if the client is moving out of home to a residential facility or vice versa, or from one residential facility to another. Appendix 3 provides an example of a relocation profile.

The relocation profile

The relocation profile

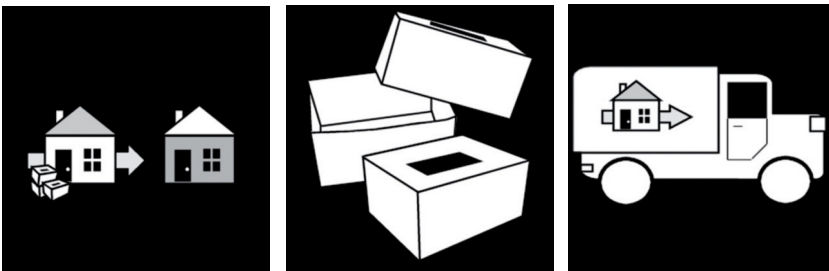
1 Moving

Knowing what a move can entail is essential in order to identify the practical matters that are going to change. Although one move can be bigger and more drastic than another, this does not necessarily mean the impact for the client is of the same order of magnitude. Every change should be treated with an equal amount of attention. The preparations for the move can best be divided into five separate aspects: communication, social-emotional, mobility, interior and daily schedule. These topics also return below in the three different phases of the relocation plan.

1.1 Communication

Naturally, what exactly will change in terms of communication differs per client. Does the client know what moving is? How long in advance can you communicate with the client about the move? Do the existing and new carers know how to communicate about this with the client?

The client is the most important person in this matter, and should be informed as far as possible about what is going to happen. Therefore, information about the move should be communicated with the client. To this end carers need to be aware of the different forms of communication that can be used to address the topic of moving. What you say, how you say it and when you say it depends on the client. It is essential to consider this not only before the move, but also during and after it. This topic will be further explained in Chapter 4. In addition, the relocation profile addresses the topic for each phase of the move under the heading *Communication*.



A number of pictograms about moving house.

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Although moving house is not uncommon for people with intellectual and sensory disabilities, moving can be a stressful event and have a large impact on a person's life.

Bartiméus Expertise Centre Deafblindness has developed an individual relocation profile and relocation plan in order to support people with intellectual and sensory disabilities when moving house. To ensure the move proceeds as smoothly and efficiently as possible, this book provides guidelines and tips for the phases before, during and after the move.

The individual relocation profile and relocation plan was written to guide those who support people with intellectual and sensory disabilities. Special attention is paid to people with deafblindness. The individual character of this book makes it appropriate for a wide audience. The book can be used for a person moving between houses within the same residential facility, from one residential facility to another, or from a home situation into residential facility.

This book provides background information that can be used to create a personal profile for the person moving house. It also offers guidelines for an individual relocation plan, with room for practical guidelines and agreements about how and when to do what in the different phases of the moving process.

